

04 October 2023

Title	PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT
Ward	Abbey
Planning Application Reference:	201104/FUL
Site Address:	10 Eaton Place, Reading, RG1 7LP
Proposed Development	Demolition of the existing building and redevelopment of the site to provide a residential building of up to 5 storeys (Use Class C3) and associated public realm improvements (amended description)
Applicant	Hamble Residential Limited
Report author	Matt Burns - Principal Planning Officer
Deadline:	Originally 10/05/2021, but an extension of time has been agreed with the applicant until 31 st October 2023
Recommendation	Delegate to the Assistant Director for Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services (AD PTPPS) to (i) GRANT full planning permission subject to the satisfactory completion of a Section 106 legal agreement or (ii) to REFUSE permission should the Section 106 legal agreement not be completed by the 31 st October 2023 (unless officers on behalf of the AD PTPPS agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement).
S106 Terms	<p>To include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To secure affordable housing on site consisting of four x 3-bedroom maisonettes. All at Reading Affordable Rent (RAR) tenure. <p>In the event that a Registered (affordable housing) Provider is not secured for the provision of the Affordable Housing on site, the units to be offered to the Council to be provided by the Council as Affordable Housing. In the event that neither a Registered Provider or the Council can come forward to provide Affordable Housing on-site, the developer to pay to the Council a default sum equivalent to 15% of the Gross Development Value of the development for provision of Affordable Housing elsewhere in the Borough. To be calculated (the mean average) from two independent</p>

	<p>RICS valuations to be submitted and agreed by the Council prior to first occupation of any market housing unit. In this event, the sum to be paid prior to first occupation of any market housing unit and index-linked from the date of valuation.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. To secure a zero-carbon offset contribution as per the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2019 to ensure the development provides a minimum of 35% improvement in regulated emissions over the Target Emissions Rate in the 2013 Building Regulations, plus a contribution of £1,800 per remaining tonne towards carbon offsetting within the Borough (calculated as £60/tonne over a 30-year period). As per formula in the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD. Payment would be triggered on commencement of development and would be index-linked. 3. To secure a construction phase Employment and Skills Plan (ESP) or equivalent financial contribution (£3, 845). As calculated in the Council’s Employment Skills and Training SPD (2013) – plan to be provided/ contribution payable (index linked) on commencement of the development. 4. To secure private waste collection arrangements for the development for all waste streams (general waste, recycling and food waste), including collection of waste directly from the communal bin store, use of a non-standard waste collection vehicle and stipulation that no bins are to be kept on the public highway at any time. <p>In order for Officers to work efficiently and effectively, it is suggested that minor changes to the Heads of Terms and details of the legal agreement during the negotiations, where necessary, are delegated to officers.</p>
<p>Conditions</p>	<p>To include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Time Limit – 3 years. 2. Approved plans. 3. Pre-commencement (excluding demolition) details of all external materials to be submitted and approved. 4. Compliance condition – dwelling mix only as approved. 5. Pre-occupation provision of all energy measures set out in the Energy and Sustainability Statement hereby approved. 6. Pre-occupation photovoltaic array details to be submitted and approved. 7. Pre-Commencement submission (excluding demolition) and approval of a design stage SAP assessment.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none">8. Pre-Occupation submission and approval of an as built SAP assessment.9. Pre-occupation provision of Sustainable Drainage Strategy.10. Pre-commencement (including demolition) demolition and construction method statement (including Transport and EP based requirements) to be submitted and approved.11. Compliance condition relating to hours of demolition/construction works (0800-1800hrs Mondays to Fridays and 0800-1300hrs Saturdays, and not at any time on Sundays and Bank or Statutory Holidays)12. Compliance condition relating to no burning of materials or green waste on site.13. Compliance condition relating to discovery of any unidentified contaminated land.14. Pre-occupation stopping up of existing vehicular access and reinstatement of footway .15. Pre-occupation notification of occupiers that they would not be automatically entitled to a parking permit.16. Pre-occupation provision of approved cycle parking.17. Pre-occupation provision of approved bin stores.18. Pre-occupation submission and approval of measures to prevent pests and vermin accessing bin stores.19. Pre-commencement (excluding demolition) submission and approval of all hard and soft landscaping details (including details of green/blue roof). Thereafter all landscaping to be carried out in accordance with approved details in the first planting season following occupation of the development with replacement planting required for first 5 years.20. Compliance condition that no vegetation clearance shall take place during the bird nesting season.21. Pre-commencement (excluding demolition) submission and approval of a biodiversity enhancement scheme including six swift bricks and four bat tiles or bricks.22. Pre-occupation submission and approval of an external lighting scheme, including details of how any lighting will not adversely impact wildlife.23. Pre-occupation implementation of the noise mitigation measures set out within the approved noise assessment and mitigation scheme.24. No mechanical plant to be installed unless a noise assessment and mitigation scheme has been submitted and approved.25. No fixing or installing of miscellaneous item to the external faces or roof of the building hereby permitted.26. Pre-occupation submission and approval of security strategy.27. Compliance condition that level access to the development shall be provided and retained
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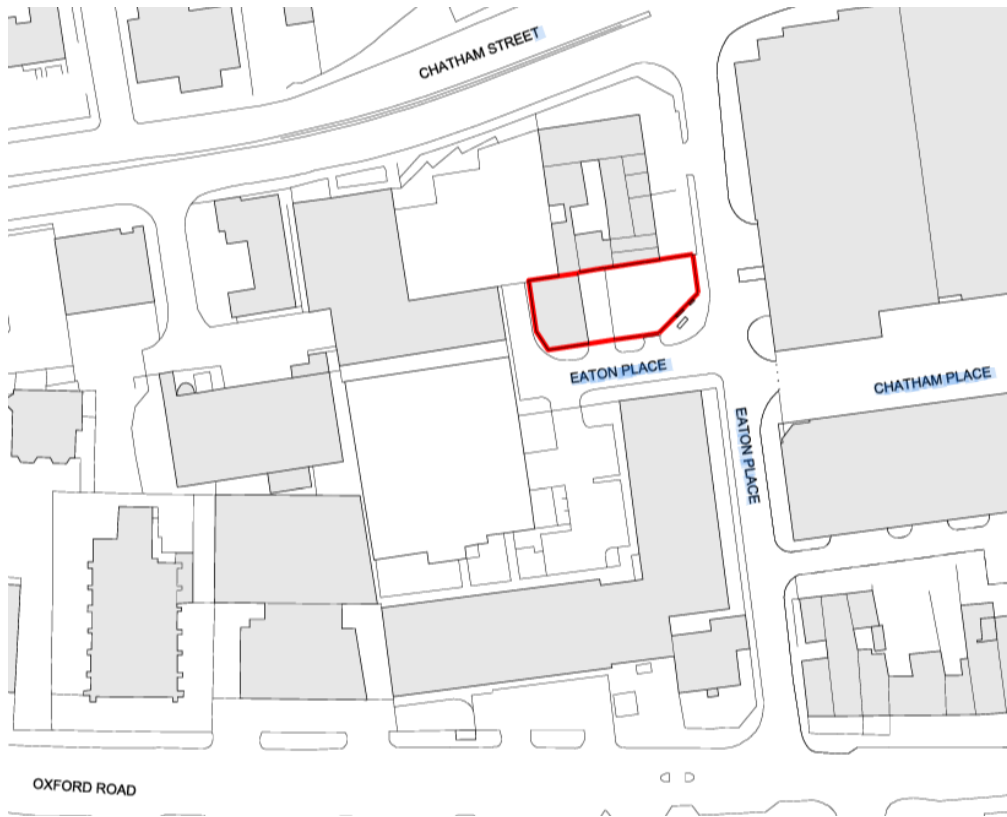
	<p>28. Pre-commencement submission (including demolition), approval and implementation of scheme of archaeological investigation.</p> <p>All pre-commencement conditions have been agreed with the Applicant.</p>
<p>Informatives</p>	<p>To include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Positive and Proactive Statement 2. Damage to the highway 3. Works affecting highways 4. Section 106 Legal Agreement 5. Thames Water informative 6. Pre-commencement conditions 7. Terms 8. Building Control 9. Complaints about construction 10. Encroachment 11. Community Infrastructure Levy 12. No automatic entitlement to parking permits 13. Future occupiers to be made aware of the proximity of existing live music venues

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The proposal is recommended for approval subject to a legal agreement and conditions as set out above.
- 1.2 The proposal would produce a residential scheme, including on-site affordable homes, provided within land allocated for housing within the Western Major Opportunity Area of the town centre, as defined by Policy CR12c of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019. The proposals would incorporate an appropriate design, ensure that there would be no unacceptable impact on neighbouring properties and provide suitable accommodation for future residents. The proposal would have no adverse transport impacts and would be acceptable in terms of ecology, biodiversity and sustainability. Whilst the development would result in harm to the setting of the adjacent grade II listed The Butler Public House, the level of harm identified is 'less than substantial' and in accordance with paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023) the significant public benefits of the development, including those outlined above, are considered to outweigh this identified harm and the application is therefore recommended to you for approval.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site is located on the west side of Eaton Place and contains a two-storey flat roof office building with car park to the front (east).



Site Location Plan





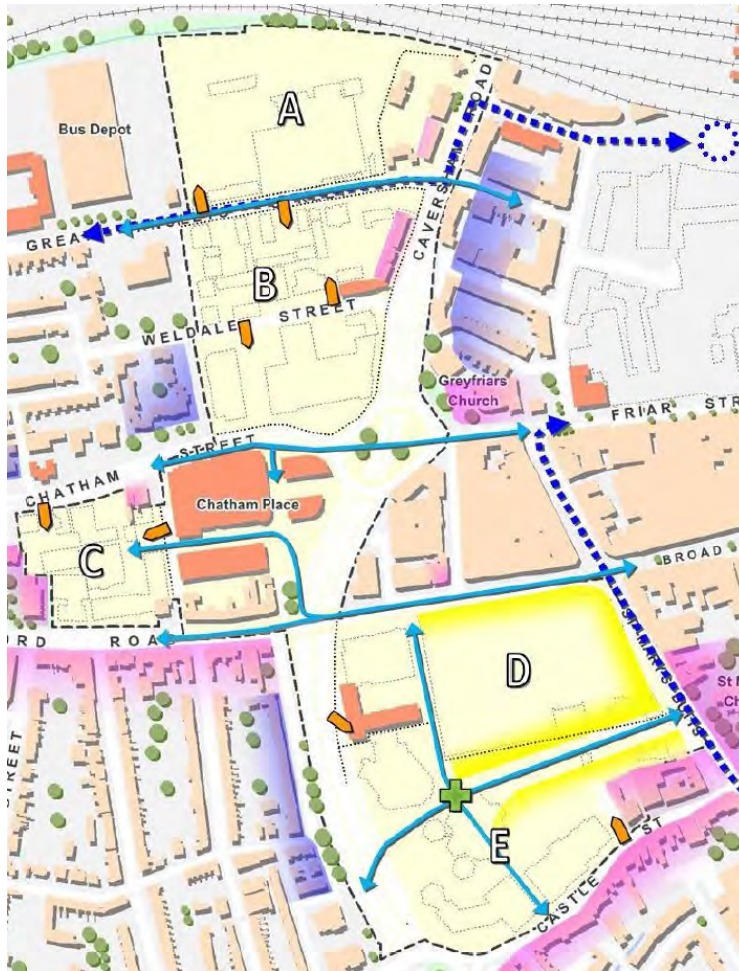
Photographs of the application site as existing

- 1.2 The site is located within the western part of the town centre and within the Reading Central Area, but is located just outside of the Central Core, Office Core and Primary Shopping Areas as defined by Policy CR1 (Definition of Central Reading). The site is located outside of, but adjacent to, the western tall buildings cluster within the town centre as identified by Policy CR10 (Tall Buildings).
- 1.3 The application site is also located within West Side Major Opportunity area within the town centre, as defined by Policy CR12, and forms part of a wider parcel of land that is allocated for development under part C of Policy CR12 (Chatham Street, Eaton Place and Oxford Road). The site allocation policy states that:

CR12c, CHATHAM STREET, EATON PLACE AND OXFORD ROAD

Development of this area will be primarily for residential, with potential for community uses. There may also be some small-scale retail and leisure uses on the Oxford Road frontage. This area is surrounded by heritage assets or low-rise residential, and inappropriate building scale at the fringes of the site will not be permitted. There is an opportunity to enhance the Oxford Road frontage, including with tree planting

Site size: 1.15 ha Indicative potential: 180-260 dwellings



Plan showing the West Side Major Opportunity Area within which the application site is allocated for development as per of the wider parcel of land labelled C

- 1.4 The area surrounding the application site contains a variety of uses and building styles. To the north of the application site is The Butler pub which fronts Chatham Steet, the main building of which dates from the 1830s and is Grade II Listed. The pub also has a series of later single storey extensions added in the 1870s which due to their age and historic connections to the use of the pub also form part of the listing. The rear extensions to the pub are located within the Policy CR12c site allocation area but the main pub building is not. Also, to the north of the stie is the recently constructed new-build residential development at the site of 115 Chatham Street which contains a three to five storey building of 54 flats (planning permission ref. 210349) which also forms part of the Policy CR12c site allocation area.
- 1.5 To the east of the application site on the opposite side of Eaton Place is the large 9 storey Q Park multi-storey car park building which also fronts on to Chatham Street. To the south of the application site is Eaton Court (no. 106-112 Oxford Road) which is a large L-shaped three-storey vacant office building which extends to the south along Eaton Place and fronts on to Oxford Road. This building also forms part of the Policy CR12c site allocation area and is subject to a pending planning application 210639 for demolition and residential redevelopment to provide three buildings

comprising 120 residential units (Use Class C3), along with car parking, cycle parking, servicing bay and associated landscaping, amenity space, plant and refuse areas and access arrangements. To the west is a two-storey car park serving Eaton Court with the Face Bar music venue located beyond this further to the west.

- 2.6 The site is located within an air quality management area (AQMA). The edge of the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area is located 50m to the south.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The application was originally submitted in March 2021 and proposed an 8-storey building containing 27 dwellings. At the time, officers raised significant concerns regarding the proposals with the applicant in relation to overdevelopment of the site and excessive scale. As a result plans for an amended, reduced and scaled down development, were submitted in February 2023. These amended plans superseded those originally submitted with the application and the application description has been amended accordingly. It is this amended scheme and plans which are considered as part of this report.
- 2.2 The amended application seeks full planning permission for demolition of the existing building and redevelopment of the site to provide a residential building 5 storeys (Use Class C3) and associated public realm improvements.
- 2.3 The proposal is to provide 15 new dwellings with the following unit mix:
- 3 x 1 bed flats
 - 8 x 2 bed flats
 - 4 x 3 bed maisonettes
- 2.4 The 4 x 3 bed maisonette units are all proposed to be affordable housing under the 'Reading Affordable Rent Tenure' (27% of the total number of units). These units would be located over the ground and first floor level of the building, with each maisonette having its own front door onto Eaton Place to the south as well as each having their own bin/cycle store. The maisonettes would have private balconies to the north elevation of the building at first floor level.
- 2.5 The 1 and 2 bedroom open-market units would be located on the second, third and fourth floors of the building and would have their own separate communal entrance on the west side of the building with the flats accessed via external deck veranda-style corridors to the north elevation of the building. Communal cycle and bin storage are proposed to the ground floor of the building. These units would have access to a landscaped communal roof top garden at fourth floor level.
- 2.6 A green/blue roof is proposed at fifth storey which would utilise surface water drainage for irrigation of roof top garden areas. Solar panels are proposed to the main roof of the building.

2.7 The development is proposed as car free with no vehicle parking spaces proposed.

2.8 Submitted Plans and Documentation:

2211027-TK01 Rev A Swept Path Analysis Refuse Vehicle
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 24th July 2023

052-TWA-XX-RF-DR-PL-11015 P4 Proposed Roof Plan
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 7th June 2023

052-TWA-XX-00-DR-PL-11000 P4 Ground Floor Plan
2211027-01 Proposed Highway Works
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 16th May 2023

052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-16001 P3 Proposed Site Section A-A
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-16002 P3 Proposed Site Section B-B
052-TWA-XX-00-DR-PL-10000 P2 Proposed Site Plan
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-19000 P2 Affordable 3B 6P Ground Floor Plan
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-19001 P2 Affordable 3B 6P First Floor Plan
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-19002 P2 2B 4P Typical Layout Plan
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-19003 P2 1B 2P Typical Layout Plan
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-17001 P3 Proposed North Elevation
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-17002 P3 Proposed East Elevation
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-17003 P3 Proposed South Elevation
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-17004 P3 Proposed West Elevation
052-TWA-XX-01-DR-PL-11001 P3 First Floor Plan
052-TWA-XX-02-DR-PL-11002 P3 Second Floor Plan
052-TWA-XX-03-DR-PL-11003 P3 Third Floor Plan
052-TWA-XX-04-DR-PL-11004 P3 Fourth Floor Plan
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-36100 P2 Cladding Bay Study 01 Bay Study 052-
TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-36101 P2 Cladding Bay Study 02 Bay Study 052-
TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-36102 P2 Cladding Bay Study 03 Bay Study
052-TWA-XX-00-DR-PL-99000 P3 Demolition Plan
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-07001 P3 Existing North Elevation
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-07002 P3 Existing East Elevation
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-07003 P3 Existing South Elevation
052-TWA-XX-XX-DR-PL-07004 P3 Existing West Elevation
052-TWA-XX-00-DR-PL-00002 P2 Existing Site Plan
052-TWA-XX-00-DR-PL-01000 P3 Existing Ground Floor Plan
052-TWA-XX-01-DR-PL-01001 P3 Existing First Floor Plan
052-TWA-XX-RF-DR-PL-01002 P3 Existing Roof Plan
052-TWA-XX-00-DR-PL-00001 P2 Site Location
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 2nd February 2023

Design and Access Statement, prepared by Anomaly Architects
Planning Statement, prepared by Icen Projects
Heritage and Townscape Assessment, prepared by Icen Projects
Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing Assessment, prepared by Point 2
Surveyors

Energy and Sustainability Statement, prepared by Cudd Bentley Consulting
Overheating Assessment, prepared by Cudd Bentley Consulting
SuDS Assessment and Drainage Design, prepared by Infrastruct CS Ltd
Transport Statement, prepared by Motion
Noise Assessment, prepared by Accon
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 2nd February 2023

Land Contamination Report, prepared by leap
Air Quality Assessment, prepared by accon uk
Received by the Local Planning Authority on 22nd February 2021

2.9 Community Infrastructure levy (CIL):

In relation to the community infrastructure levy, the applicant has duly completed a CIL liability form with the submission. Based upon the floor area of the proposed development the expected levy due would be £257,071, albeit this figure is likely to decrease slightly in practice in the event that the applicant applies for social housing relief for the affordable housing elements of the scheme.

3. **PLANNING HISTORY**

Application Site

031121FUL - Change of use to education facility – Granted. 07/10/2003.

Eaton Court 106-112 Oxford Road

190419OPA - Change of use from B1(a) (offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 58 units - Prior Approval not required. 14/05/2019.

210639FUL - Demolition and residential-led mixed use redevelopment to provide three buildings comprising 131 residential units (Use Class C3), one ground floor unit comprising flexible commercial floorspace (Use Class E & F2) and one ground floor unit comprising flexible commercial and residential floorspace (Use Class E, F2 & C3), along with car parking, cycle parking, servicing bay and associated landscaping, amenity space, plant and refuse areas, and access arrangements – Received 23rd April 2021. Under Consideration.

115 Chatham Street

150721FUL - Erection of part 4, part 5 storey building providing 16 residential units with associated parking and landscaping – Granted. 17/02/2015.

210349FUL - Demolition of the existing buildings on site and erection of a 3 - 5 storey building to provide 54 residential units (Class C3). Provision of private and communal external amenity areas, car and cycle parking and refuse storage – Granted. 17/12/2021.

The Butler PH Chatham Street

180366LBC - Internal and external alterations associated with the conversion and renovation of existing outbuildings to form hotel

accommodation - Listed Building Consent Granted. 05/03/2019. (Now expired, not implemented).

180365FUL - Conversion of existing outbuildings from tyre fitting & associated repairs (Class B1a) and part of existing pub (Class A4) to a 14-bed hotel (Class C1) with parking and associated works – Granted. 05/03/2019. (Now expired, not implemented).

230558FUL - Demolition of existing outbuildings and part of the existing pub, to construct an extension housing a 19-bed hotel room with parking (C1 use) and associated works – Application received 25/04/2023 but currently invalid.

230559LBC - Listed building consent for the renovation of the existing public house including the installation of a new access route within 85 Chatham Street, and the construction of a minor extension along Chatham Street continuing the established architectural language – Application received 25/04/2023 but currently invalid.

4. CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 RBC Transport – No objection subject to conditions to secure submission and approval of a construction method statement, provision of cycle and bin stores as proposed, reinstatement of kerb to existing vehicle access to site and to advise future occupiers that they would not be automatically entitled to an on-street parking permit. A section 106 obligation is also required to secure private refuse collection arrangements for the development.
- 4.2 RBC Environmental Protection – No objection subject to conditions to secure implementation of the development in accordance with the noise mitigation measures set out within the submitted noise impact assessment report, submission and approval of a construction method statement and details of bin stores, limitation of construction hours to standard working hours (0800 to 1800 Monday to Friday, 0800 to 1300 Saturdays and no working on Sundays or Bank Holidays) and to monitor the site for any unidentified contamination.
- 4.3 RBC Natural Environment – No objection subject to a condition to secure submission and approval of detailed landscaping arrangements, including details of the proposed blue/green roof.
- 4.4 RBC Housing – No objection, welcome the affordable housing offer, particularly the provision of all affordable units as 3 bed family sized units at 'Reading Affordable Rent' tenure.
- 5.5 RBC Waste – Whilst the proposed bin stores are large enough to accommodate the requisite number of bins for the development, the location of the communal store would not be suitable for Local Authority waste collection services due to its distance from the kerbside. Furthermore, a separate bin collection point, external to the building, is

not proposed and it is not clear where such a collection point could be provided without blocking the footway.

- 5.6 Ecology Adviser – No objection, subject to conditions to secure that any vegetation removal takes place outside of the bird nesting season (which is between March and August), submission and approval of landscaping and biodiversity enhancement schemes including details of biodiverse blue/green roof and an external lighting scheme for the development.
- 5.7 Lead Local Flood Authority – No objection subject to a condition to secure implementation of the proposed drainage (SuDS) scheme.
- 5.8 Thames Water – The developer would be required to obtain a build over agreement with Thames Water prior to commencement development given the application site is located within 3 metres of a public sewer. The developer should also be notified that driven construction piles are not permitted within 15m of a public sewer.
- 5.9 Berkshire Archaeology – No objection, subject to a condition to secure submission, approval and implementation of an archaeological written scheme of investigation.

Public

- 5.10 The following properties were notified of the application and submission of amended plans by letter:
- Eaton House 106-112 Oxford Road
 - Q Park 6 Chatham Place
 - The Butler PH 85-91 Chatham Street
 - 115 Chatham Street
 - Eaton Place Tyres Eaton Place
 - 1, 2, 4 & 6 Chatham Place
 - 7 Chatham Place
- 5.11 Site notices advertising the application and amended plans was also displayed at the application site and on Chatham Place.
- 4.12 Two objections to the proposed development were received in relation to the, now superseded, original plans, raising the following issues:

Comments received on original plans:

- Loss of privacy and overlooking to flats in Mayer House.
- Overbearing impact of scale of development in combination with the Q Park multi-storey car park building.
- Impact of the development on the historic character and setting of the Grade II Listed The Butler pub.
- The proposed development and external deck access to the north elevation would compromise implementation of planning permission ref. 180365FUL at the adjacent The Butler pub for conversion of rear outbuilding to a hotel, by way of overlooking

and loss of light to the hotel rooms (*Officer comment: this planning permission has lapsed*).

- The Butler Pub is an established live music venue. The proposed residential development should not prejudice continued use of the pub for live music.
- Concern that the proposed deck access to the north elevation of the development would not comply with current Building Regulations in terms of fire strategy.

5.13 An objection to the proposed development has been received in relation to the amended plans the owner of The Butler pub, raising the following issues:

- Overlooking and loss of privacy to The Butler pub, particular the rear courtyard area used for live music events, from the proposed deck access to the north elevation of the development.
- The Butler pub operates until 1am on Friday and Saturdays, Thursdays until midnight and until 11pm the rest of the week and for a set number of days per year a live event can take place on any day of the week until 1am. The proposed proximity of the building and location of balconies and habitable room windows to the north elevation of the building directly on the boundary with The Butler pub will result in amenity issues for future occupiers and undermine the ability of The Butler to operate its existing use effectively in the future.
- The submitted sunlight/daylight report fails to assess the impact of the development on The Butler.
- The submitted noise assessment fails to assess the impact of The Butler and associated live music events on future occupiers of the proposed development.
- No details of the fire risk associated with the development have been submitted with the planning application.
- Impact of the scale and proximity of the proposed development on the historic character and setting of the Grade II Listed pub.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states at Paragraph 11 “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”.

5.2 Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

- 6.3 For this Local Planning Authority the development plan is the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019) and the NPPF (2023). The relevant national / local policies / guidance are:

National Planning Policy Framework (2023). The following chapters are the most relevant (others apply to a lesser extent):

- 2. Achieving sustainable development
- 4. Decision-making
- 8. Promoting healthy and safe communities
- 9. Promoting sustainable transport
- 11. Making effective use of land
- 12. Achieving well-designed places
- 14. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- 15. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

National Planning Policy Guidance (2014 onwards)

Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019). The relevant policies are:

- CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change
- CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage
- CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- CC9: Securing Infrastructure
- EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- EN2: Areas of Archaeological Significance
- EN6: New Development in a Historic Context
- EN9: Provision of Open Space
- EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
- EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
- EN15: Air Quality
- EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
- EN17: Noise Generating Equipment
- EN18: Flooding and Drainage
- H1: Provision of Housing
- H2: Density and Mix
- H3: Affordable Housing
- H5: Standards for New Housing
- H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space
- TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy
- TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
- TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities
- TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging
- CR1: Definition of Central Reading
- CR2: Design in Central Reading
- CR3: Public Realm in Central Reading
- CR6: Living in Central Reading

CR12: West Side Major Opportunity Area

Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are:

- Affordable Housing SPD (2021)
- Employment Skills and Training SPD (2013)
- Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)
- Planning Obligations under Section 106 SPD (2015)
- Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019)

Other relevant documents:

- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3
- Reading Borough Council Tree strategy (2021)

7. APPRAISAL

The main matters to be considered are:

- Land use principles
- Development density, unit mix and affordable housing
- Design considerations and effect on character and heritage
- Amenity Matters
- Transport
- Natural Environment
- Sustainability
- Other Matters
- Equalities impact

Land use principles

- 7.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (2023) encourages the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land) and seeks that all housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The accessibility of the site, located within the Reading Central Area as defined by the Reading Local Plan (2019), is considered acceptable for the proposed development in accordance with Policy CC6 (Accessibility and Intensity of Development) whilst the provision of new housing would align with the broad objectives of Policy H1 (Provision of Housing) in assisting in meeting the annual housing targets.
- 7.2 The site forms part of the West Side Major Opportunity Area (MOA) which is allocated for residential development in the Reading Local Plan (2019) under policy CR12c (Development in the West East Side Major Opportunity Area). The vision for the West Side MOA, which also includes parts of Caversham Road, Weldale Street, Chatham Street, Hosier Street and Broad Street Mall) is for the area to “*be a mixed-use extension to the west of the centre containing high-quality mixed-use environments and fostering stronger east-west links into the central core*”.

- 6.3 Policy CR12 continues by stating that development in the West Side MOA will:
- i) Contribute towards providing a mix of uses including residential. Development for education will be an acceptable part of the mix;
 - ii) Help facilitate greater pedestrian and cycle permeability, in particular on key movement corridors and east-west links through the area and between development areas and the station, including improved crossings of the IDR where achievable;
 - iii) Safeguard land which is needed for mass rapid transit routes and stops;
 - iv) Provide additional or improved areas of open space where possible, generally in the form of town squares, and provide additional green infrastructure where possible;
 - v) Give careful consideration to the areas of transition to low and medium density residential and conservation areas and conserve and, where possible, enhance listed buildings and conservation areas and their settings;
 - vi) Give careful consideration to the archaeological potential of the area and be supported by appropriate archaeological assessment which should inform the development;
 - vii) Demonstrate that it is part of a comprehensive approach to its sub-area, which does not prevent neighbouring sites from fulfilling the aspirations of this policy, and which contributes towards the provision of policy requirements that benefit the whole area, such as open space; and
 - vii) Give early consideration to the potential impact on water and wastewater infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water and make provision for upgrades where required.
- 6.4 It is considered that the proposed development meets all of these overarching objectives, as will be demonstrated in more detail throughout this report.
- 6.5 More specifically, the application site forms part of the wider Chatham Street, Eaton Place and Oxford Road sub-area under Policy CR12c which states that: *“Development of this area will be primarily for residential, with potential for community uses. There may also be some small-scale retail and leisure uses on the Oxford Road frontage. This area is surrounded by heritage assets or low-rise residential, and inappropriate building scale at the fringes of the site will not be permitted. There is an opportunity to enhance the Oxford Road frontage, including with tree planting”*. The policy indicates that the wider sub-area has an indicative potential for 180-260 dwellings.
- 6.6 Again, it is considered that the proposed development meets the objectives of this policy, as will be demonstrated in more detail in this report.
- 7.7 The broad principle of the proposal for residential development is therefore considered to be acceptable and in accordance with policies CC6, H1 and CR12. The details of the proposed development are now considered within the rest of this report.

Development density, unit mix and affordable housing

- 7.8 The application proposes a development density of 365 dwellings per hectare (15 dwellings/ 0.041-hectare site). Although a high-density development, it is noted that there is no prescribed local policy density upper limit for town centre sites, with the indicative development density for the wider Policy CR12c sub-area being for a high-density development at 226 dwellings per hectare. Paragraph 5.4.15 of the supporting text to the policy clarifies that the number of dwellings is, to an even greater extent than other areas, an indication only and that development capacity can vary significantly on high density town centre sites.
- 7.9 In addition, Policy H2 (Density and Mix) outlines an indicative density of above 70 per hectare in town centre locations, with factors such as site characteristics, accessibility and need to achieve high quality design and minimise environmental impacts informing the appropriate density. Therefore, detailed matters such as design and standard of accommodation, which are assessed later in this report, will inform the suitability of the density of development that is proposed. .
- 7.10 Part v) of Policy CR12 notes that development within the West Side MOA should *“give careful consideration to the areas of transition to low and medium density residential and conservation areas and conserve and, where possible, enhance listed buildings and conservation areas and their settings”*. This will be assessed in more detail in the design and heritage section elsewhere in this report.
- 7.11 In terms of unit mix Policy CR6 (Living in Central Reading) seeks that residential developments within the town centre area should incorporate a maximum of 40% of 1-bedroom units and a minimum of 5% of 3-bedroom units. The application proposes 3 x 1-bedroom flats (20%), 8 x 2-bedroom flats (53%) and 4 x 3-bedroom maisonettes (27%) and is therefore policy compliant in this respect. Policy H2 also sets out that the mix of residential development proposed should contribute towards meeting the identified housing needs of the Borough. Figure 4.6 of the within the supporting text to Policy H2 sets out that there is most need within the borough for family sized units of 2 and 3 bedrooms. In this respect the high proportion of 2- and 3-bedroom dwellings proposed by the development is considered to be a notable benefit in terms of contributing to the identified housing needs within the Borough.
- 7.12 In terms of affordable housing, Policy H3 (Affordable Housing) states that development proposals of 10 or more dwellings should provide 30% on-site provision of affordable housing. The application proposes that 4 x 3 bed maisonette units within the development would all be provided as affordable housing under the ‘Reading Affordable Rent’ tenure’. This equates to a provision of 27% of the total number of units as affordable housing.

- 7.13 Whilst the proposed affordable housing provision would be marginally below the policy requirement, the RBC Housing Manager welcomes the proposed affordable housing to be provided as part of the development. This is because it is proposed that all the affordable units would be provided at 'Reading Affordable Rent' tenure which goes above and beyond the minimum tenure mix sought by the adopted RBC Affordable Housing SPD, which seeks at least 62% of units to be provided at this tenure level and a maximum of 38% of units to be under shared ownership tenure (or similar).
- 7.14 In addition, the Housing Manager as welcomes that all four affordable units would be 3-bedroom family sized maisonettes spread across the ground and first floors of the development, each with their own front door accessed from Eaton Place to the south and each with their own bin and cycle stores. This would meet the identified need for family sized dwellings within the Borough identified under Policy H2.
- 7.15 In overall terms, Officers consider that the benefits of the provision of all the affordable housing units as 3-bedroom family sized maisonettes at the 'Reading Affordable Rent' tenure, which go beyond the minimum requirements sought by the Affordable Housing SPD and meet an identified need for family sized units, would outweigh the marginal under provision in terms of number of units (27% of units compared to 30% sought by Policy H3). Therefore, the proposals are considered to be acceptable in respect of affordable housing.

Design considerations and effect on character and heritage

- 7.16 Paragraph 199 of the NPPF states that "Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification." Paragraph 202 goes on to state "Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal...".
- 7.17 Policy EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment) seeks to protect heritage assets and their settings and where possible, enhance them. Policy EN6 (New Development in a Historic Context) seeks that new development displays sensitivity to historic context.
- 6.16 Policy CC7 (Design and The Public Realm) states that "all development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area". The NPPF in paragraph 130 c) states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments "are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.
- 6.17 The application site is located on the northwest edge of the West Side MOA (Major Opportunity Area). The site allocation area Policy CR12c

sets out that the area is surrounded by heritage assets, low-rise residential and that inappropriate buildings of scale at the fringes of the allocation area will not be permitted.

- 6.18 In contrast to the existing office building, the proposed development would fill the application site and, as such, would be narrow and rectangular in form. The footprint of the proposed building would 'step' in at the western and eastern ends of the site where plot tapers and narrows further. The proposed building would be four full storeys in height with a recessed fifth storey which would be set in from the edge of the lower floors to the north, east and south elevations of the building.



Proposed Site Plan

- 6.19 As discussed above, the site and immediate surrounding area is located within West Side MOA which is an area allocated for significant redevelopment at a higher density than existing.
- 6.20 The character of the surrounding area has already begun to evolve with the completion of the large Q Park multi storey car park and Chatham Place residential development located on the opposite side of Eaton Place to the east and southeast of the application site which consists of modern buildings of between seven to eighteen storeys.
- 6.21 In addition, to the northeast of the application site is the recently completed development of a modern building of between three and five storeys containing 45 flats on the former site of 115 Chatham Street. Further redevelopment of a significant area directly to the south and east of the application site at Eaton Court, an existing three storey office building, is also proposed under planning application 210639, albeit this application has not yet been determined. This proposes a redevelopment to provide 120 residential units across a series of buildings of between five and seven storeys.
- 6.22 At a total of five storeys in height the proposed building would be set significantly below the height of the Q Park and Chatham Place developments to the east and would reflect the maximum height of the

recently completed residential development at 115 Chatham Street to the north-west of the site. The existing office building to the adjacent site to the south at Eaton Court would sit at the fourth storey height of the proposed building therefore not presenting a significant change or step in massing from this adjacent site as existing. Furthermore, the site at Eaton Court is located more centrally within the MOA and therefore it considered reasonably possible that a higher density development may come forward on this site in future. Current undetermined planning application ref. 210639 at Eaton Court proposes buildings of between five and seven storeys.

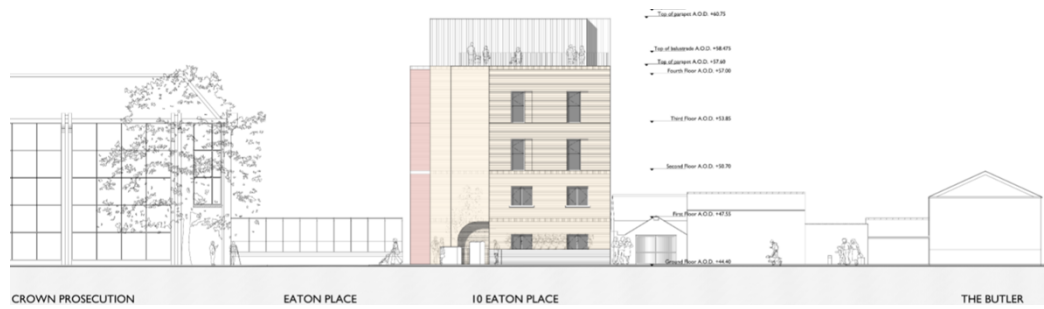
- 6.23 There is also still evidence of lower density developments nearby, most notably the presence of the two-storey Grade II Listed pub directly to the north of the application site. The main public house building is located adjacent to but outside of the MOA but the single storey outbuilding and extensions to the rear are included within it. At five storeys the proposed building represents a step-up scale of development from that of The Butler, albeit still at a much lower level than the scale of many of the larger modern buildings found in the immediate vicinity.



Proposed north elevation and west to east street-scene section



Proposed west elevation and north to south street-scene section



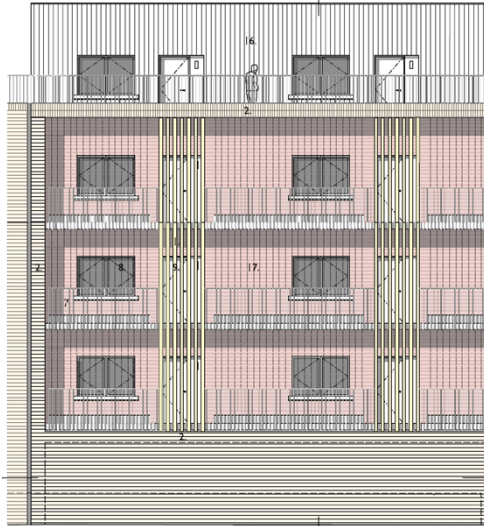
Proposed east elevation (facing Q Park) and north to south street-scene section



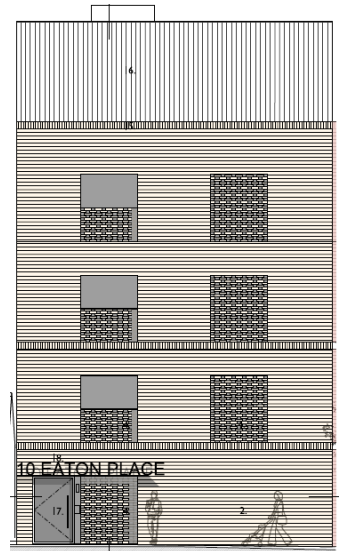
Proposed north elevation (facing The Butler PH) and west to east street-scene section

- 7.26 In general townscape terms it is considered that the scale of building proposed is suitably transitional and acknowledges the site's location within the MOA where higher density development is anticipated but also in terms of its position towards the edge of the MOA and between the larger scale Chatham Place and Q Park buildings and the smaller scale of buildings to the West along Chatham Street.
- 7.27 In terms of materials both red and light buff brick are proposed as the primary finishes to the building. Existing buildings surrounding the site display a wide range of materials from the grid like metal structure and timber louvres of the adjacent Q Park and the red brick and colourful painted brick and render of The Butler PH, albeit red brick remains the predominant material with buff brick also present along Chatham Street. In this respect the proposed use of materials is considered appropriate for the existing and evolving character of the area.
- 7.28 It is considered that the proposed building displays a good level of architectural detail and variation through use of red and buff brick, stepping of the building footprint to the western and eastern ends, parapet detailing and contrasting white glazed terracotta cladding to the recessed fifth storey, where a communal landscaped roof terrace is proposed to the eastern side of the building. Characterful white arches formed from pre-cast concrete are also proposed to the south elevation of the building at ground and first floor level where the individual front entrance doors to four maisonettes and upper floor covered balconies would be located. In particular the proposed entrance doors would add some much-needed enlivenment and surveillance to Eaton Place at street-level.

7.29 The proposed external decked access lined with steel balustrading to the north elevation of the building also provides visual interest to the upper floors of the building. A varied material finish would also be provided to the west elevation of the building from where the entrance to the flats located at third, fourth and fifth floor of the building would be located which would incorporate hit and miss brick detailing to the windows of the stair core and circulation corridor.



Proposed deck access to north elevation



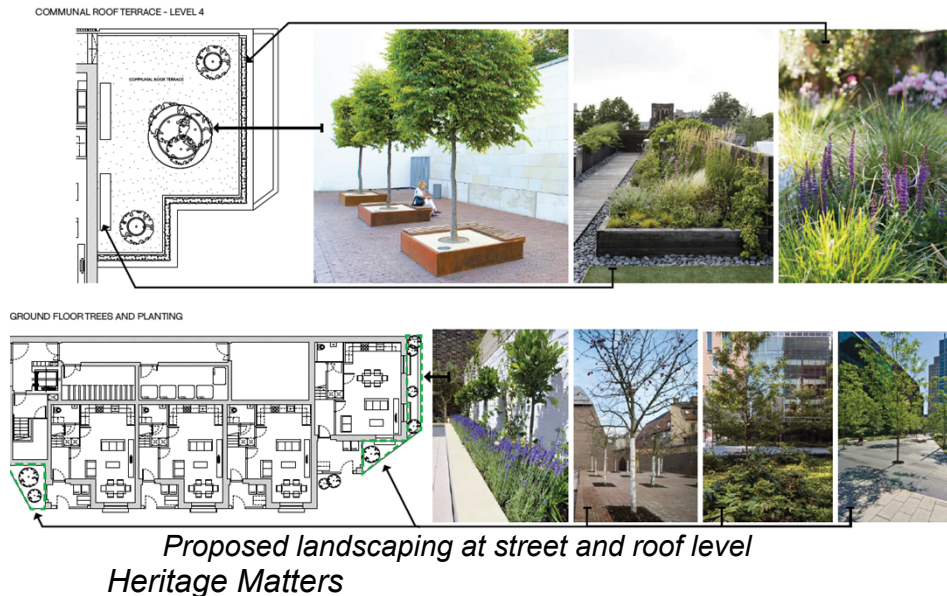
Proposed hit and miss brickwork detail to west elevation

7.30 It is considered that the proposed development would be a significant enhancement to the contribution of the site to the character and appearance of the surrounding area when compared to the site as existing and would that the development responds positively to its local context and in terms of the wider aspirations for development within the MOA.



Visual of the proposed development looking northwest from Eaton Place. In the foreground is a visual interpretation of potential future development on the site of Eaton Court but which is not approved. The Butler PH can be seen behind the proposed development in the background

7.31 the proposals also incorporate landscaping both at street-level and to the roof top of the building within the communal terrace. At street-level small tree species planting is proposed around the western and eastern edges of the development where the footprint of the building steps in. The existing site, aside from overgrown vegetation, in the vacant car park is devoid of greenery and the landscaping is lacking generally within the surrounding area. The proposed introduction of landscaping within the development, particularly that at street-level if considered to be a welcome addition and visual enhancement to this part of Eaton Place.



7.32 In terms of impact of the proposed development on heritage assets, as described above the proposals have a close direct relationship and shared boundary with the Grade II Listed The Butler PH to the north. The pub was originally built in the 1830's and is a two-storey brick building with shallow pitched roof. The building has a typical 'pub front' in the central bays which is deemed of importance in the listing description, described as having "6 sided central moulded panel with the traditional Old Ready Abbey sign (restored)".

7.33 The application is accompanied by a Heritage and Townscape Assessment (HTA) which concludes that the significance of the listed building is derived from its architectural interest as a surviving example of a classic pub building from the era and by way of the architectural composition and detailing of the colourful front elevation of the building. Officers and the Council's Conservation and Urban Design Officer, (CUDO) agree with this conclusion. Views of the front elevation of the pub and its setting are obtained looking south from Chatham Street.



Grade II Listed The Butler Pub



View of The Butler Pub looking south across Chatham Street

- 7.34 The submitted HTA goes on to describe that the setting of the Grade II Listed pub has been eroded over time through introduction of the adjacent large modern developments to Chatham Street (Q Park and Chatham Place) which have urbanised and modernised the setting to the extent that the value and contribution to the significance of the pub from its setting is reduced. Officers and the CUDO agree that the large modern buildings so close to the pub have severely detracted from its setting and its significance as a listed building. In particular the Q Park building is highly visible within views of the pub along Chatham Street and also to views looking north along Eaton Place.
- 7.35 Historic England Guidance on the setting of heritage assets (Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3) sets out that

where the significance of a heritage asset has been compromised in the past by unsympathetic development to the asset itself or its setting, consideration still needs to be given to whether additional change will further detract from, or can enhance, the significance of the asset.

- 7.36 The application site is located directly to the south of the pub. The area to the rear of the main pub building contains later additions in the form of a series of extensions. These later additions also form part of the listing by way of their curtilage location, albeit they are considered to be of less significance given they are later additions to the building and their more functional form. The existing car park area and two storey utilitarian style office building contained within the application site, whilst not being prominent features, are poor quality and unsympathetic features which do not contribute positively to the setting of the listed building. Loss of the office building and car park would not result in any harm to the setting of the pub or its significance.
- 7.37 Whilst, as discussed above, officers consider the proposed development to be well thought out and to be an improvement to the visual appearance and character of the existing site and Eaton Place generally, it is recognised that the development of a multi-storey residential block immediately to the rear of the grade II listed pub building would undoubtedly add to the cumulative negative impact on the setting of this Listed Building. Any introduction of a building of this, or similar, scale and mass on the site would introduce new built form which would alter views to/from the pub along Chatham Street and Eaton Place and are considered to cause harm to the setting of the Listed Building.
- 7.38 In this respect the level of harm to the setting of the listed building must be assessed. Whilst juxtaposing with the modest scaled listed building, the proposed scale and massing of the development is considered appropriate in such a central location and within the defined MOA and is considered to make the most of the opportunities presented by the wide-ranging scale and uses of surrounding buildings. Whilst each planning application must be considered on their individual merits, it is also it is also reasonably likely that further, higher density, development will come forward in the surrounding MOA in future.
- 7.39 The detailed design of the building is considered to be of a good quality. Notably, the proposed predominant use of light buff brick to the decked access to the north elevation of the building which would be seen in the backdrop of the listed pub and its principal elevation when viewed from Chatham Street. It is considered that these materials would soften and lighten views of the development in this direction and allow the distinctive colourful front façade of the pub to retain its prominence as a landmark feature to Chatham Street. The proposed development would also create a new standalone identity on the site rather than seeking to directly replicate or compete with the scale of the more modest listed building.



Visual of proposed development behind The Butler PH looking south from Chatham Street. Q Park shown in the foreground to the east with the recently completed residential development at 115 Chatham Street shown adjacent to the west fronting Chatham Street. Red brick buildings in the background are not approved and are a visual interpretation of potential future development on the site of Eaton Court

- 7.40 Furthermore, it is clear that the significance of this listed building in particular is derived more from its historic and architectural interest and functional connection as pub serving the surrounding urban area (as with any town centre pub), rather than from any sense of isolation (like a standalone monument or isolated farmhouse), which in this case was enforced through the insensitive removal of traditional terraced rows to Chatham Street in the mid-20th Century. It is not considered that the development in terms of its sale and design would threaten the continued function of the listed building as pub. This matter will also be assessed further within the amenity section of this report.
- 6.37 It is considered no benefit to the pub's historical significance that it should remain surrounded by utilitarian style buildings and uses. For the pub to once again be read as part a regenerated Chatham Street and Eaton Place incorporating residential developments is considerable to be a benefit of the scheme and one which accentuates its juxtaposition as being a historic community surrounded by larger modern developments. This would aid in improving the legibility and understanding of its setting and traditional function as a place of meeting for the surrounding community.
- 7.42 In the context of the above and returning to the national and local policy tests which govern the considering of such proposals on the setting of designated heritage assets, officers consider that level of harm caused to the setting of the Listed Building would be 'less than substantial', and result in a limited negative impact on the character and appearance of this building. As described earlier in this report, paragraph 202 of the NPPF states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this

harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal as discussed in other sections of this report.

- 7.43 The Caste Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area is located 60m to the south of the application site where Eaton Place joins Oxford Road. Given this separation and also the presence of existing large buildings between the application site and conservation area the proposed development would not impact upon views into and out of this conservation area and is not considered to impact on its setting.
- 7.44 There are also other listed buildings present within the wider surrounding area. Closest of which includes grade II listed Mannson House 104 Oxford Road located 60m the south of the site and grade II listed 118 Oxford Road located 90m to the west of the application site. Given these separation distances it is not considered that the proposed development would interfere with the setting of these listed buildings.

Amenity Matters

- 7.45 Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) seeks to protect the amenity of existing and future occupiers. Policy EN15 (Air Quality) and Policy EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) seeks to protect surrounding occupiers from the impact of pollution.

Noise and disturbance

- 7.46 Both the Face Bar and The Butler Pub are popular and important parts of the town's night-time economy. As recognised community/leisure facilities and entertainment venues, there is a need for officers to ensure that future residents of this development are able to suitably co-exist without prejudicing the commercial viability of these venues.
- 7.47 In this regard, the proposal is considered to trigger the 'Agent of change' principle which is reference under paragraph 187 of the NPPF. This states that 'Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (such as places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs). Existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established. Where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development (including changes of use) in its vicinity, the applicant (or 'agent of change') should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed'.
- 7.48 A detailed noise assessment has been submitted with the application which considers noise from both The Face Bar nightclub and the Butler Pub as well as other general commercial and traffic noise from the surrounding area.
- 7.49 The noise assessment identifies that noise from Face Bar will not be intrusive to future occupiers of the development given the separation

distance between the two sites which is 40m. Furthermore, the closest elevation of the development to Face Bar contains the lift and stair core only and no habitable room windows, whilst the recently completed residential development at 115 Chatham Street would also shield the proposed development from noise impacts. For similar reasons the noise assessment also concludes that noise from more distant Chatham Steet Motor works garage (114-116 Chatham Street) located 55m to the north west of the application site on the northern side of Chatham Street would also not be intrusive to potential future occupiers of the development.

- 7.50 In regard to The Butler, the submitted noise assessment sets out that the application site was surveyed during a period when live entertainment events were happening and also during a period when a live entertainment event was not taking place at the venue. The assessment concludes that in order to reduce intrusive noise to acceptable levels inside the proposed flats, improved insulation, glazing with an enhanced performance along with high-performance mechanical ventilation will be required. The mechanical ventilation is required given internal noise levels within the proposed flats would likely exceed target levels during live music events. A combination of all or some of these measures will be required for each elevation of the proposed development, with the north elevation being most adversely affected given this would be located directly on the shared boundary.
- 7.51 The noise assessment also considered external noise levels within the communal and private amenity spaces of the development and concludes that the majority of private balconies would be within the relevant target noise level. However, the predicted noise level to the roof top communal amenity area would likely exceed target levels. Therefore, a solid balustrade of a minimum 1m in height is proposed at the edges of the communal area to achieve the lowest practicable noise level to this space.
- 7.52 The Council's Environmental Protection Officers have reviewed the submitted noise assessment in detail and are satisfied that it has been carried out to an appropriate standard and that the recommended mitigation measures could ensure that noise levels within the flats would not exceed recommended levels and provide acceptable living conditions for future occupiers in terms of noise. Implementation of these measures would be secured by condition.
- 7.53 Officers have considered the objection received from the owner of the neighbouring Butler Pub. It should firstly be noted that often, a pub and residential uses are commonly seen as compatible uses. Most urban and rural pubs across the country are traditionally located next to or within close proximity of a residential use. In Reading itself, there are a number of successful and longstanding pubs which operate successfully with similar characteristics to the application site, which itself was once next to a terrace of houses.
- 7.54 With the use of the proposed noise mitigation measures, officers are of the view that the proposed residential development to the rear of the pub

would not adversely affect the ability of the pub to continue to operate and provide live entertainment events, as protected by the 'agent of change' principle. Notwithstanding this, national guidance also suggests that developers should inform potential purchasers/occupiers of the mitigation measures available to reduce the risk of later complaints to these adjoining venues. This advisory note can be included as an informative on any permission granted.

Privacy

- 7.55 The closest existing residential occupiers to the development would be at the recently completed development at 115 Chatham Street to the north west of the site. The closest part of this adjacent site contains the car park and the neighbouring building would be located six metres from the proposed development at its closest point. The closest elevations of the proposed development would be the west and north which consist of stair core windows and the communal decked access, such that not undue loss of privacy for existing or future occupiers are considered to result. The angled relationship between the two developments also reduces the potential for any overlooking or loss of privacy.



Plan showing relationship of proposed development to existing surrounding buildings

- 7.56 New residential occupiers are also proposed to the south of the application site at Eaton Court under adjacent planning application ref. 210639, albeit this application has not yet been determined. Based on the currently submitted plans for this adjacent site the closest proposed habitable room windows would be located 12.5m to the south on the opposite side of Eaton Place within a building of six storeys. Given the site's location within the town centre and MOA where higher density development and close relationships between buildings are commonplace, it is not considered that this relationship is unacceptable in terms of loss of privacy or overlooking impacts.
- 7.57 The proposed development would be sited on the shared north boundary of the site with The Butler PH. As a public house and entertainment

venue it is not considered that there would be any unacceptable relationships with this building in terms of privacy. An existing residential flat is located to the first floor of the pub, within the main building, and has rear facing windows which would look towards the proposed development. However, the back-to-back distance between the proposed development and the flat would be 20m which is considered sufficient to prevent any undue overlooking or loss of privacy.

- 7.58 In overall terms it is not considered that the proposed development would result in any unacceptable impacts in terms of overlooking or privacy for existing or future occupiers.

Daylight/Sunlight

- 7.59 A daylight/sunlight report has been submitted with the application which considers the impact of the development on light levels to existing surrounding residential developments as well as light levels within the development itself.
- 7.60 The closest residential property is the recently completed development at 115 Chatham Street to the north west of the application site. The daylight sunlight report concludes that of the 27 habitable rooms within 115 Chatham Street that face the proposed development 19 achieve the suggested level of daylight and sunlight recommendation by the BRE (Building Research Establishment) standards in the existing situation. As a result of the proposed development 18 of these 19 windows would continue to receive daylight which meets BRE recommended levels. Of the 8 rooms which do not currently meet BRE recommended levels, these would be further adversely affected by introduction of the proposed development; albeit the report concludes that the change in luminance experienced would not be material and unlikely to change the level of amenity experienced in the affected rooms.
- 7.61 The submitted assessment also considers the impact on receipt of daylight and sunlight to Mayer House (Chatham Place) located to the south-east of the application site and concludes that facing habitable room windows to this building would continue to fully adhere to the BRE Guidelines if the proposed development were to be implemented.
- 7.62 In terms of the internal levels of daylight and sunlight within the proposed development the report concludes that 75% of the habitable rooms within the development would achieve the levels of daylight and sunlight recommended by BRE and that this is considered to represent a good level of compliance for a town centre development. The windows receiving the lowest light levels within the development would be the ground floor windows to three of the maisonettes to the south elevation which serve open plan living room/kitchen/dinning areas. The kitchen areas located to the rear of the rooms furthest from the window are worst impacted. However, the daylight and sunlight report identifies that the living and dining parts of the rooms, located closest to the windows, would receive reasonable daylight levels.

- 7.63 In overall terms, given the site's location within the town centre where high density developments in close proximity to one another are common, it is considered that the proposed development would not have any unacceptable impacts on receipt of daylight and sunlight to existing surrounding residential dwellings and that good levels of daylight and sunlight would be provided within the proposed development.
- 7.64 Whilst the submitted daylight and sunlight assessment does not consider the relationship of the development with that proposed by the currently undetermined planning application on the adjacent site to the south at Eaton Court, officers are satisfied that the separation distance to this development at 12.5m, which is greater than that to 115 Chatham Street, is such that daylight sunlight impacts are unlikely to be significant. Particularly, within the context of the sites town centre location where similar relationships between buildings are common. The daylight sunlight assessment also does not consider the impact of the development on The Butler pub to the north given that this is a commercial premises. Whilst there is an existing flat to the first floor of the pub, the 20m separation from the development to the flat is considered sufficient to ensure there would be adverse loss of daylight to this dwelling. On this basis, with the building in use as a pub and live entertainment venue, officers do not identify that there would be any unacceptable impacts in terms of daylight and sunlight.

Air Quality

- 7.65 The site is also located within an AQMA (Air Quality Management Area) where Policy EN15 (Air Quality) seeks to ensure existing and future occupiers are not adversely impact by poor air quality. An air quality assessment has been submitted with the application which concludes that the air quality levels measured nearby by are below the limit values which would trigger the need for further mitigation. Given the development is car-free it is also considered unlikely that the development itself would result in increased emissions. Environmental Protection Officers are satisfied that the development would not result in significant exposure or emission of air borne pollutants and no mitigation is necessary.

Standard of Accommodation for Future Occupiers

- 7.66 All dwellings have been proposed to meet or exceed the nationally described space standard (as outlined in Policy H5) for the type of dwelling/number of bedrooms. All habitable rooms would be served by at least one window and all units are considered to be served well in terms of outlook. The proposed 4 x three-bedroom maisonettes, spread across ground and first floors, in particular are well-sized and considered to provide a high standard of amenity.
- 7.67 In terms of outdoor space, Policy H10 states that “... flats may be provided with communal outdoor space, balconies and/or roof gardens”. In this instance, the four proposed maisonettes, would each be served by two private amenity balconies to the north and south elevations of the

building. The eleven smaller flats proposed from second to fourth floor level would have access to a 51.4m² communal roof terrace (accessed via the main stair core). The roof terrace would be enhanced by soft and hard landscaping features.

- 7.68 Policy H10 acknowledges that developments within central Reading are more constrained and unlikely to provide outdoor space to the same level as houses in other parts of Reading. Officers are satisfied that the development provides adequate private and communal outdoor amenity spaces for future occupiers given the site's town centre location. Furthermore, the development would be located 500m from Victoria Park which contains open space and play equipment for families and opportunities for more formal recreation.

Accessibility

- 7.69 The proposed development would accord with Policy H5(e) in providing all dwellings as accessible and adaptable units in line with M4(2) of the Building Regulations. Level access from the existing pavement would be provided at the entrance to the communal stair and lift core leading to the upper floor flats and this would be retained via condition.

Safety and Security

- 7.70 Crime and the fear of crime can have a major impact on quality of life and the wellbeing of a building occupants. Enabling occupants to feel safe and secure is therefore essential and is supported by Policy CC7. The proposed development would introduce and enhance natural surveillance of Eaton Place through ground and upper floor windows. Notably the proposed introduction of four street level front doors to the maisonette dwellings to the south elevation of the building which face onto the key pedestrian and/or cyclist movement corridor along Eaton Place, which is identified within the Western MOA under Policy CR12, creating activation and surveillance to this route.
- 7.71 The development incorporates communal access and facilities to its western elevation for occupier of the flats located at second floor level and above. A condition is recommended to secure a security strategy to demonstrate how access to the building and communal space would be managed and controlled.

Waste

- 7.72 Policy CC5 (Waste Minimisation and Storage) states that development should promote layouts and designs that provide adequate, well-designed spaces to facilitate waste storage.
- 7.73 In this respect the ground floor maisonettes would each have their own secure bin store located adjacent to the covered front entrance doors from Eaton Place where there would be adequate space for storage of general waste, recycling and food waste. The flats located on the 2nd floor

and above would have access to a communal bin store area on the ground floor of the development.

- 7.74 RBC Waste Officers have reviewed the proposals and are satisfied that both the communal and private bin stores would be of sufficient size to accommodate the required size and number of bins for general waste, recycling and food waste and a condition will secure their provision and retention.
- 7.75 On the advice of Environmental Protection Officers, a condition is recommended to secure submission and approval of details of measures to ensure all bin stores within the development are secure from pests and vermin.
- 7.76 In terms of waste collection arrangements the development does not incorporate space for on-site servicing and therefore waste collection would be from kerbside. RBC Waste Officers have advised that the location of the communal bin is too distant from the kerbside to utilise RBC waste collection services. Furthermore, RBC Transport Officers have advised that there is insufficient turning space within the part of Eaton Place which runs parallel to the west elevation of the building where the communal bin store is located to allow an RBC refuse collection vehicle to turn around and leave in forward gear without overrunning the footway. Any incidence of footway overrun is considered hazardous and not acceptable from a highway safety perspective. In addition, a key pedestrian and cycle movement corridor is identified within the Western MOA (under Policy CR12) which runs past the south elevation of the building where the overrun would occur. It is not acceptable for new development to jeopardise functionality of this corridor.
- 7.77 Given the conflict identified above in relation to RBC waste collection for this particular development applicant has proposed that all dwellings would be served by private refuse collection arrangements. This would be secured via a section 106 obligation. This obligation would include a requirement for waste collection to be undertaken using a non-standard smaller waste collection vehicle to ensure the vehicle can turn around within the road without overrunning the footway and causing a hazard to pedestrians. A swept path turning diagram has been provided to demonstrate how the proposed non-standard waste could turn and RBC Transport Officers are satisfied that this arrangement is acceptable from highway safety perspective.

Transport

- 7.78 Policies TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway related matters), TR1 (Achieving the Transport Strategy) and TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging) seek to address access, traffic, highway and parking relates matters relating to development.
- 7.79 Eaton Place forms a junction with Chatham Street which in turn forms a junction with Oxford Road (A329) which is a main transport corridor and a

red route 'no stopping' corridor. Located within the town centre the area is well served by rail and bus links and also contains the largest proportion of public car parking spaces in the Borough.

- 7.80 The development is proposed as car-free. RBC Transport Officers consider that a car free development is acceptable in this location given the sustainable location of the site close to the town centre, good public transport links, including walking distance to Reading and Reading West Stations as well as nearby Oxford Road being part of the Reading Cycle Network. There is an existing dropped kerb at the site which provides access to the current on-site car park. This will need to be stopped up and realigned with the footway if the development takes place and implementation of would be secured by condition should planning permission be granted. .
- 7.81 There are also extensive parking restrictions, preventing unauthorised parking, in the area. A condition and informatives would also be attached to any planning permission to confirm that future occupiers of the development would not be automatically entitled to a parking permit. This will ensure that the development does not harm the existing amenities of the neighbouring residential properties by adding to the already high level of on-street car parking in the area. RBC Transport Officers have advised that the recent adjacent development at 115 Chatham Street (planning permission ref. 210349) provided a car club space on the local highway that would be available for use by future occupiers of the proposed development at 10 Eaton Place. The number of dwellings proposed by the current application is not considered to justify the provision of a dedicated car club for this development in its own right.
- 7.82 In accordance with the Council's current adopted standards each 1- and 2-bedroom unit would require 0.5 cycle parking spaces each and each 3-bedroom unit 1 cycle parking space. Therefore, a total of 11 cycle storage spaces (rounded up from 10.5) are required for the whole development. 13 cycle parking spaces would be provided a part of the development which would be in excess of the Council's minimum standards. Each of the independently accessed maisonettes would have their own dedicated cycle store space for one cycle under the covered porch accesses. The cycle storage for upper floor flats would be in a communal store at ground floor level access from the communal access to the building from the west elevation. These arrangements are considered suitable and would be secured by condition.
- 7.83 The development has the potential to cause noise and disturbance to existing surrounding occupiers and result in additional vehicle movements on the surrounding highway network during the construction phase of the development. Therefore, a condition is recommended to secure a construction method statement to ensure that appropriate mitigation measures are put in place.

Natural Environment

- 7.84 Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network) seeks that development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity and should provide for a net gain of biodiversity wherever possible by protecting, enhancing and incorporating features of biodiversity on and adjacent to development sites and by providing new tree planting and wildlife friendly landscaping and ecological enhancements wherever practicable. Policy EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland) states that individual trees, groups of trees, hedges and woodlands will be protected from damage or removal where they are of importance, and Reading's vegetation cover will be extended. Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) sets out that good design should incorporate appropriate landscaping.
- 7.85 A bat survey report has been submitted with the application and concludes that the risk of bats being affected by the demolition of the existing building is minimal. The survey report has been reviewed by the RBC Ecology Adviser who is satisfied with the conclusions of the report and that the survey was undertaken to an appropriate standard. Notwithstanding this, bats are known to be present within the surrounding area and therefore a condition is recommended to ensure that any details of external lighting proposed are submitted and approved prior to installation to ensure that this would be wildlife friendly.
- 7.86 The vacant car park on the site currently contains overgrown vegetation which has the potential to be used by nesting birds. Therefore, a condition is also recommended to ensure that vegetation clearance is undertaken outside of the bird nesting season to ensure birds are not harmed during any construction works associated with the proposed development.
- 7.87 Aside from the overgrown vegetation within the existing hard standing car park, the application site is devoid of greenery or other vegetation. RBC's Ecological Adviser is satisfied that the street and roof level landscaping proposed and green roofs at fourth and fifth floor level would ensure the development results in a net gain in biodiversity. Details of provision of at least six swift bricks and four bat tiles building into the walls of the proposed building would be secured by way of condition.
- 7.88 The RBC Natural Environment Officer is also satisfied with the landscaping principles provided as part of the application and given the site's location within an air quality management area the inclusion of small tree planting to the Eaton Place frontages of the development is considered appropriate. The Officer also welcomes the inclusion of the green roof which would also double as a 'blue roof' and collect rainwater via attenuation tanks to irrigate the garden areas within the development. Full details of all landscaping and the green/blue roof would be secured by conditions.

Sustainability

- 7.88 Policy CC3 (Adaption to Climate Change) seeks that proposals should incorporate measures which take account of climate change. Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing) seeks that all major new build residential

development is built to zero carbon homes standards, which as per the adopted Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019) requires development to achieve a minimum 35% improvement above the dwelling carbon emission rate target defined in the Building Regulations with a financial contribution to off-set the carbon performance of the development to zero. Development should also achieve the higher water efficiency defined in the Building Regulations. Policy CC4 (Decentralised Energy) also requires development to demonstrate how consideration has been given to securing energy for the development from decentralised sources.

- 7.89 The application is accompanied by an energy and sustainability statement which sets out that the development is projected to achieve a 68.05% improvement in the dwelling carbon emission rate defined by the 2013 Building Regulations which would exceed the minimum 35% improvement required by Policy H5. The statement advises that this level of improvement would be achieved by a number of passive design and energy efficient measures incorporated within the development including use of high thermal performance building materials and use of energy efficient lighting and heating temperature controls. A total of 67 photovoltaic panels are also proposed to the roof of the building which further contribute to the projected improvement in the dwelling carbon emission rate; as well as providing an on-site decentralised energy source in accordance with Policy CC4. Implementation of the development in accordance with the proposed energy strategy would be secured by way of condition.
- 7.90 As per the requirements of Policy H5 a financial contribution, to off-set the improvement in the dwelling emission rate of the development to zero carbon, would be secured by a section 106 agreement obligation. This obligation would require an 'as built' report demonstrating the actual carbon performance of the development to be submitted to and approved by officers prior to occupation of the development to allow the precise level of contribution required to be calculated (and also the offset contribution to be paid prior to occupation of the development).
- 7.91 It is also proposed that the development would incorporate a range of design measures to in response to Policy CC3 (Adaptation to Climate Change) including being car free and providing dedicated cycling parking, a sustainable drainage scheme (SuDS), including blue/green roof to improve drainage conditions across the site, landscaping scheme and building materials with high thermal efficiency.
- 7.92 In accordance with Policy EN18 (Drainage and Flooding) all major development must incorporate SuDS to ensure that runoff rates would be no greater than existing conditions of the site. The policy also goes on to state that wherever possible SuDS provision should maximise ecological benefits linking into the existing Green Network and incorporate tree planting and landscaping. The SuDS strategy has been submitted with the application which includes a management and maintenance scheme. The Council's Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) Officer has revised the scheme and considers it to be acceptable noting that the proposed

blue/green roof would ensure run off rates across the site would reduce from existing. Implementation of the development in accordance with the SuDS strategy is recommended to be secured by condition.

- 7.93 Subject to the recommended conditions and section 106 obligations it is considered that the application has demonstrated that the proposed development would comply with Policies CC3, CC4, H5 and EN18.

Other

Archaeology

- 7.94 Policy EN2 requires that developers should identify and evaluate sites of archaeological significance and that where remains are identified and cannot be preserved 'in situ' they should be properly excavated, investigated and recorded.
- 7.95 Berkshire Archaeology have reviewed the proposals and have advised that there is potential for archaeological remains of various periods below ground in the surrounding area but remains of such significance that they would merit preservation in situ are not likely to be present. Therefore, it is considered sufficient to secure submission, approval and implementation of a written scheme of archaeological investigation prior to commencement of development on site.

Employment Skills and Training

- 7.96 Policy CC9 (Securing Infrastructure) seeks that development that would result in employment should provide mitigation in line with its impacts on labour and skills. As a major category residential development and in line with the adopted Employment Skills and Training SPD (2011), the development is expected to provide a construction phase employment and skills plan to demonstrate how it would benefit the local employment market or an equivalent financial contribution towards local skills and training. This obligation would be secured as part of proposed section 106 legal agreement. It would be the choice of the developer whether they seek to provide an employment or provide the equivalent contribution. In the event they choose to pay the contribution then officers have calculated this to be £3, 845.

Representations Received

- 7.97 Matters raised are considered to be addressed in the Appraisal section of the report above.

Equalities Impact

- 6.92 When determining an application for planning permission the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this

planning application. Therefore, in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the proposed development.

8 CONCLUSION

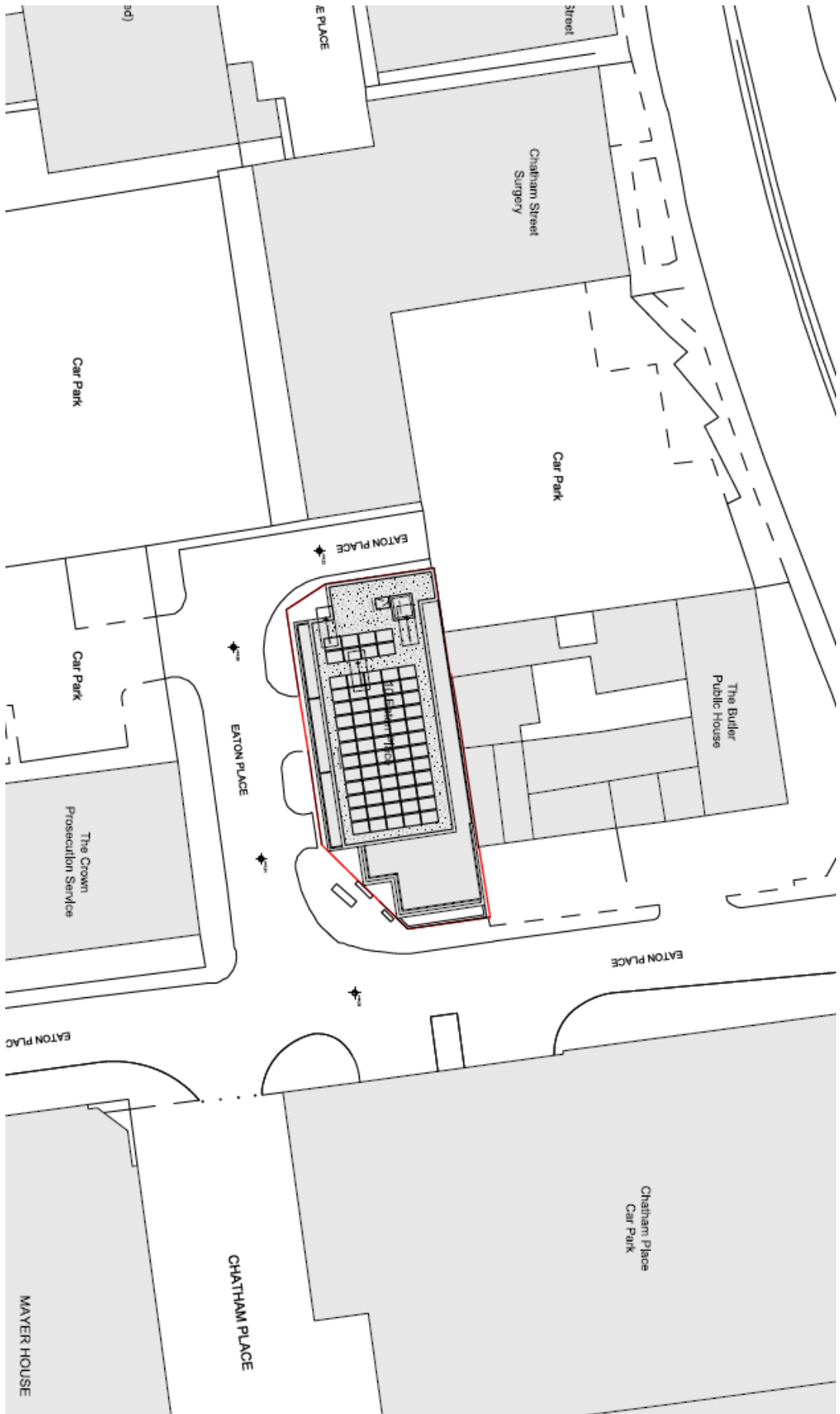
- 8.1 The proposal would see a residential scheme provided on underutilised land allocated for housing within the Western Major Opportunity Area defined by Policy CR12c of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019. The principle of development in land use terms is therefore considered acceptable. The overall dwelling mix proposed by the development is acceptable in accordance with the requirements of the local plan.
- 8.2 Economically, during the construction phase the proposed development would clearly contribute to and encourage associated economic activity by directly sustaining jobs in the borough. This would be supported further by a construction phase Employment Skills and Training Plan which can be secured via the Section 106 legal agreement. In the longer term, future occupants of the proposed dwellings will contribute to the viability and vitality of businesses in local area. Other related economic benefits include CIL contributions and the matters set out in the S106 Heads of Terms. The development would therefore clearly perform a positive economic role.
- 8.3 In terms of the social role, the proposals would fulfil one of the NPPF's core aims to 'boost significantly the supply of housing' (para. 60) and deliver a range of homes of different types and tenures. The proposal would contribute to meeting the Borough's identified housing need and of a mix and density appropriate to its sustainable location.
- 8.4 The proposal would provide 4 x 3-bedroom affordable homes at an above policy tenure mix with all four units to be provided at Reading Affordable Rent level. This would ensure a supply of good quality, secure and affordable housing to meet identified local housing needs. The development would therefore make a welcome contribution to improving access to local affordable housing to meet local needs and would constitute a significant and tangible public benefit in accordance with Policy H3 of the Local Plan.
- 8.5 In design terms, the site is currently a underutilised site next to a listed building. The proposed development is considered to positively improve the character and appearance of the immediate area, by providing much needed visual uplift to a long-vacant commercial site with open car parking and activity/surveillance to improve this site positioned between two busy arterial routes along Chatham Street and Oxford Road.
- 8.6 In terms of health and wellbeing, as described, the development is considered to create a good quality level of residential accommodation that would not prejudice or prevent future occupiers from enjoying a good quality of life. Adequate mitigation measures have been included within the development to protect future occupiers from existing live entertainment venues nearby. Accordingly, the above health and

wellbeing factors are considered key material social benefits and comply with Policy CC8 of the Local Plan.

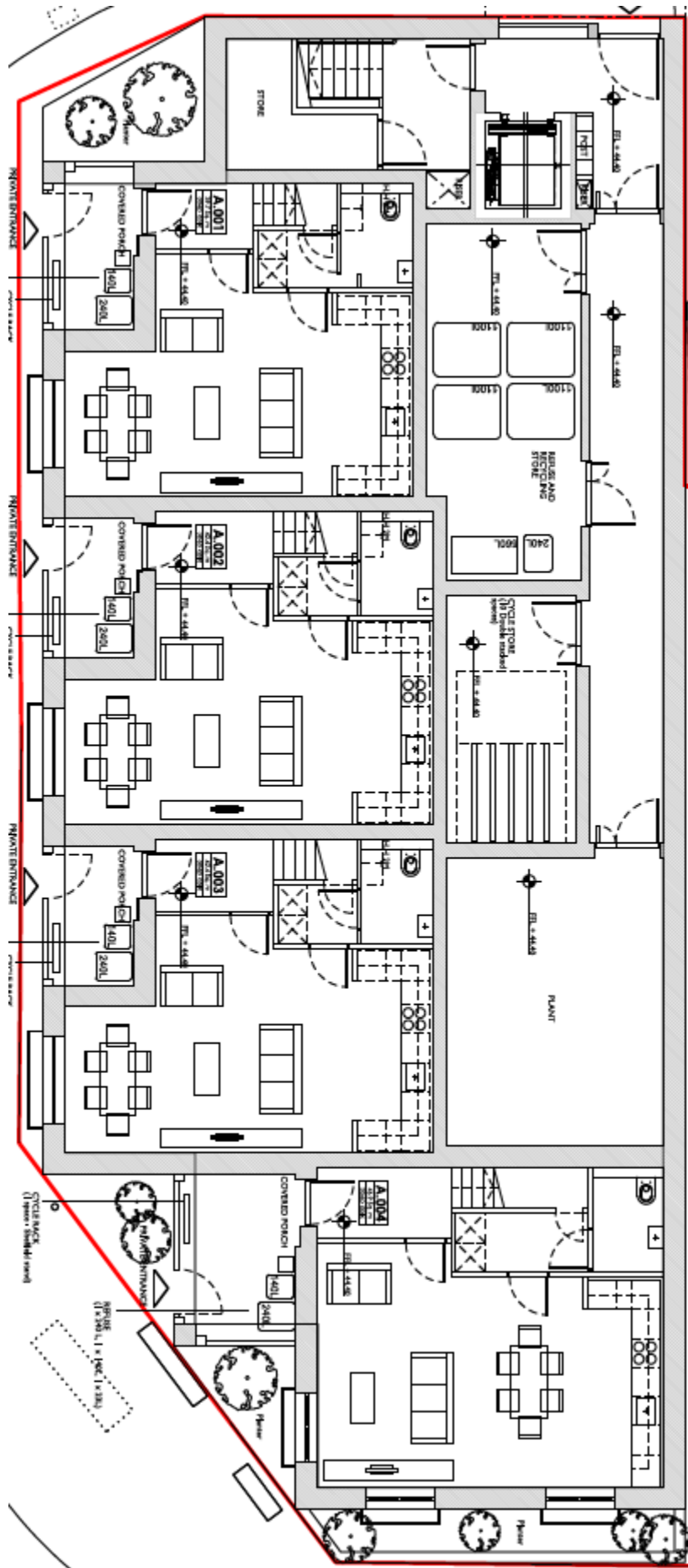
- 8.7 With regard to the natural environment and the role this development will play in meeting the challenge of climate change, it is recognised that this residential development has demonstrated compliance with the Council's enhanced energy efficiency and sustainability standards. The proposals would also provide a net gain in on-site biodiversity and albeit to a lesser extent, landscaping, including small tree planting within a designated air quality management area. By utilising allocated previously developed land, the proposal will meet the Council's spatial strategy for the location of new development by reusing land of low environmental value.
- 8.8 In terms of sustainable transport and supporting the Council's key objective of reduced car usage and improved air quality, the proposal would be car free and provide desirable cycle facilities for residents.
- 8.9 Finally, with regard to the historic environment, officers do consider that the proposal would on the whole have a negative impact (i.e. it would cause harm) to the existing setting of the The Butler Pub as a result of the introduction of built form of a greater scale directly to its rear which would be visible in the backdrop of views of the significant principle front elevation of the pub. As made clear, in this instance, Officers consider that the harm caused to the setting of the Listed Building would be 'less than substantial'. As described earlier in this report, para 202 of the NPPF states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 8.10 As concluded above, officers are of the view that the above public benefits of the development are significant and would outweigh the 'less than substantial harm' caused to the setting of the Butler Pub through the introduction of the development. This complies with national requirements and that of Policy EN1 of the Local Plan.
- 8.11 When applying an overall critical planning balance of all material considerations presented, the application is recommended for approval, subject to the recommended conditions and completion of a S106 Legal Agreement.

Case Officer: Mr Matt Burns

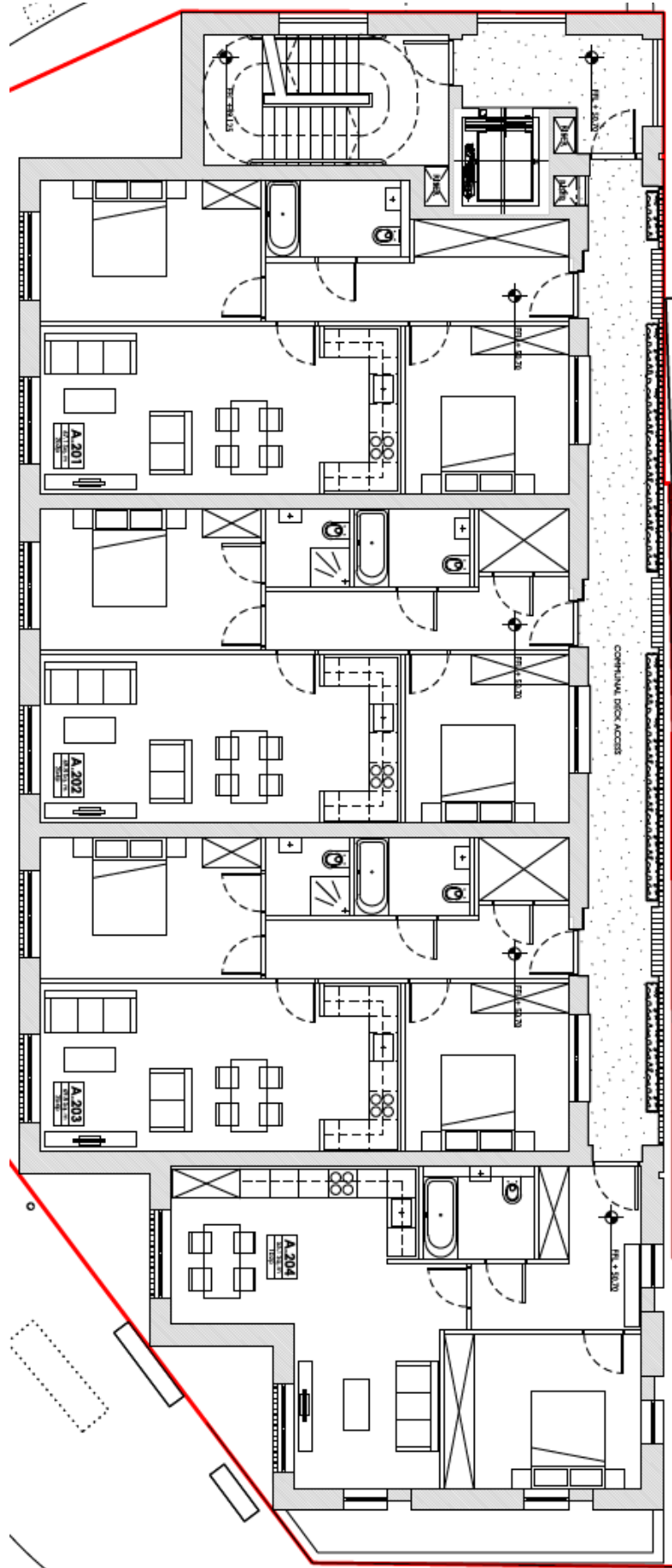
Proposed Plans shown below:



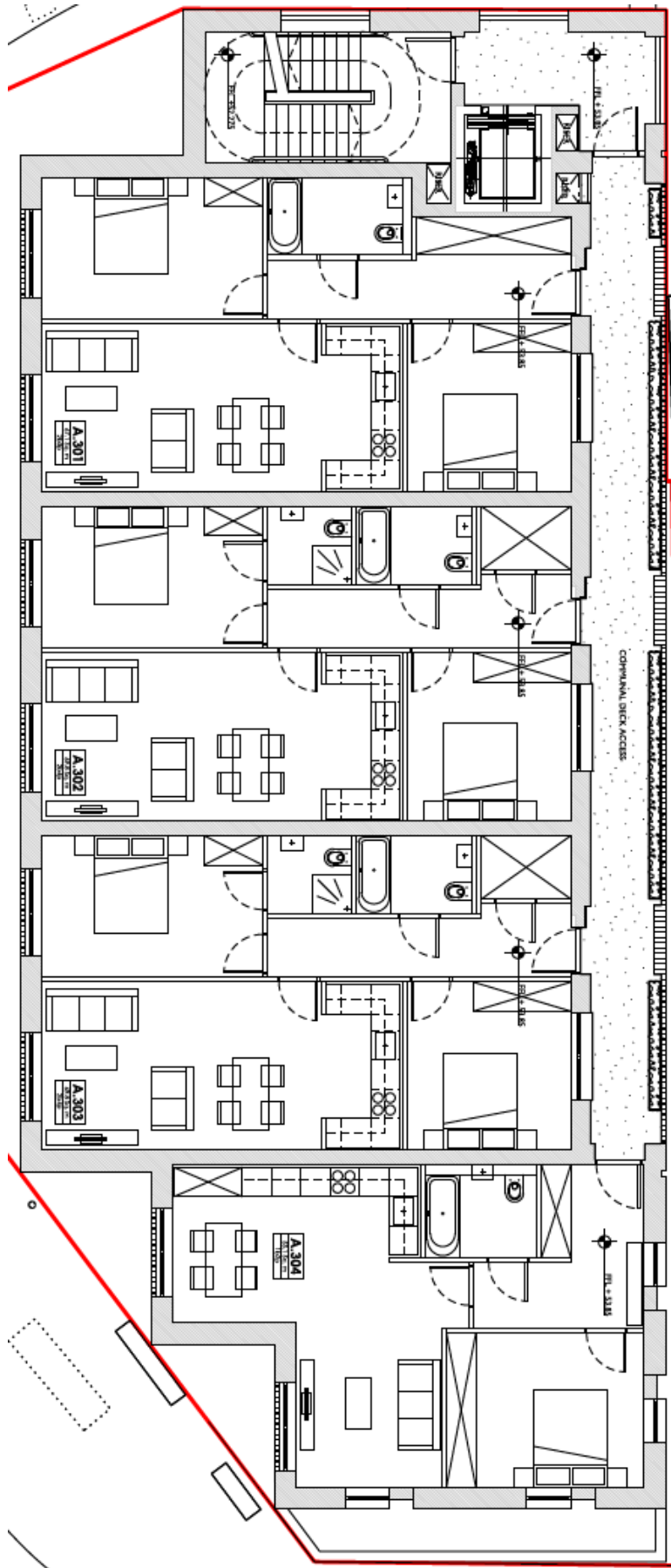
Proposed Site Plan



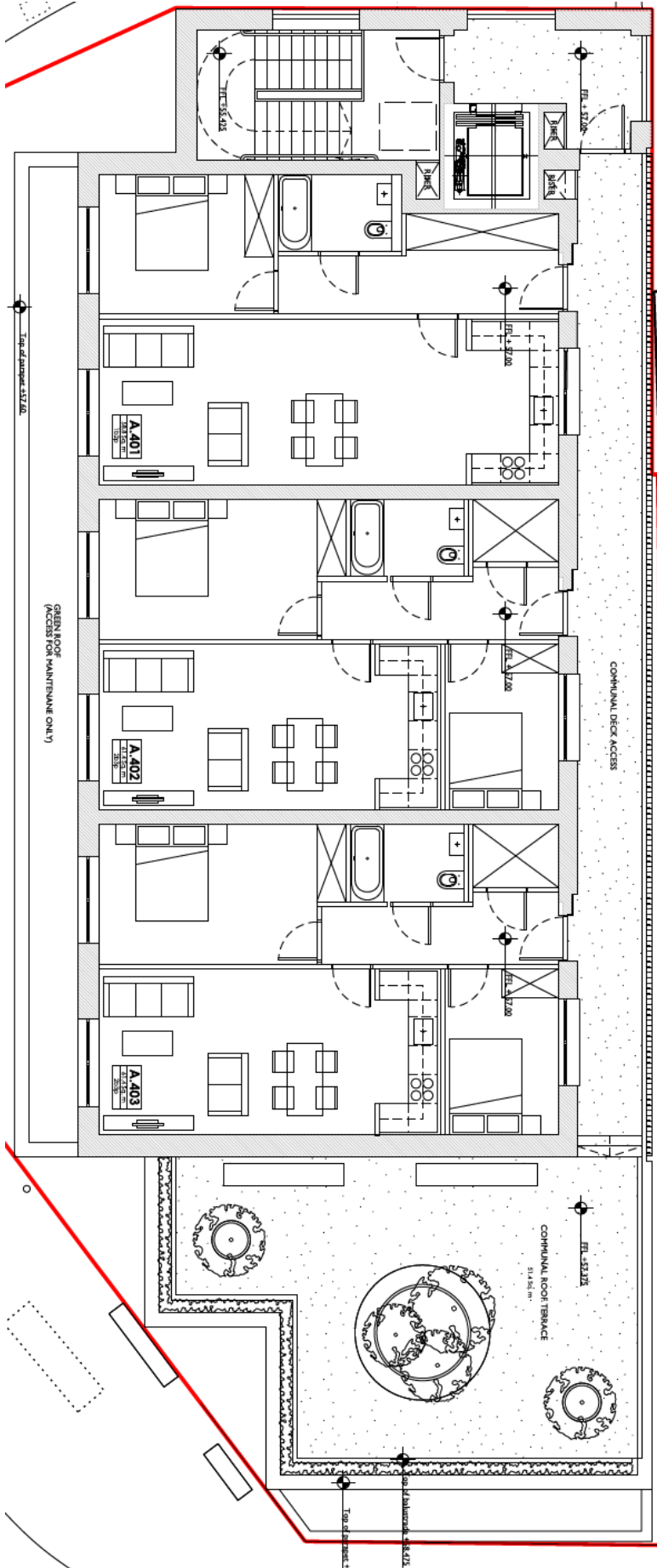
Proposed Ground Floor Plan



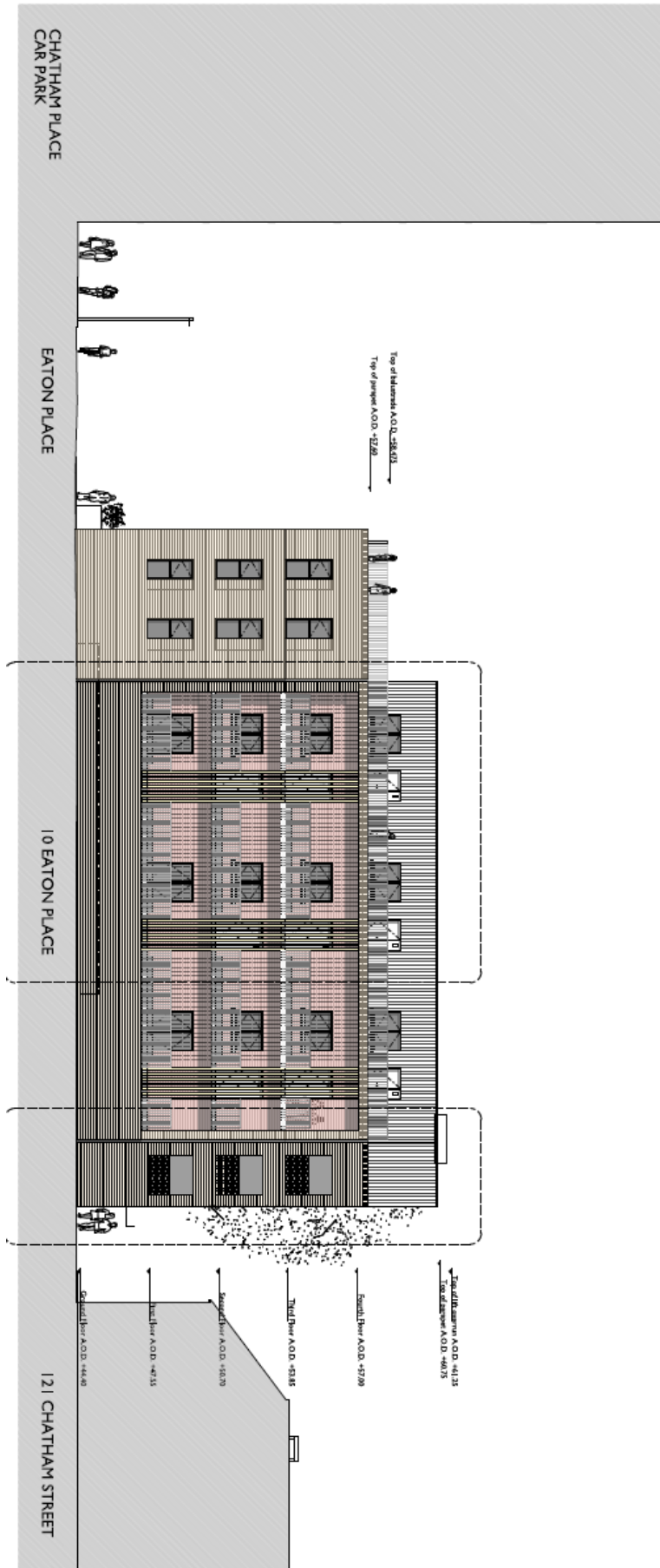
Proposed Second Floor Plan



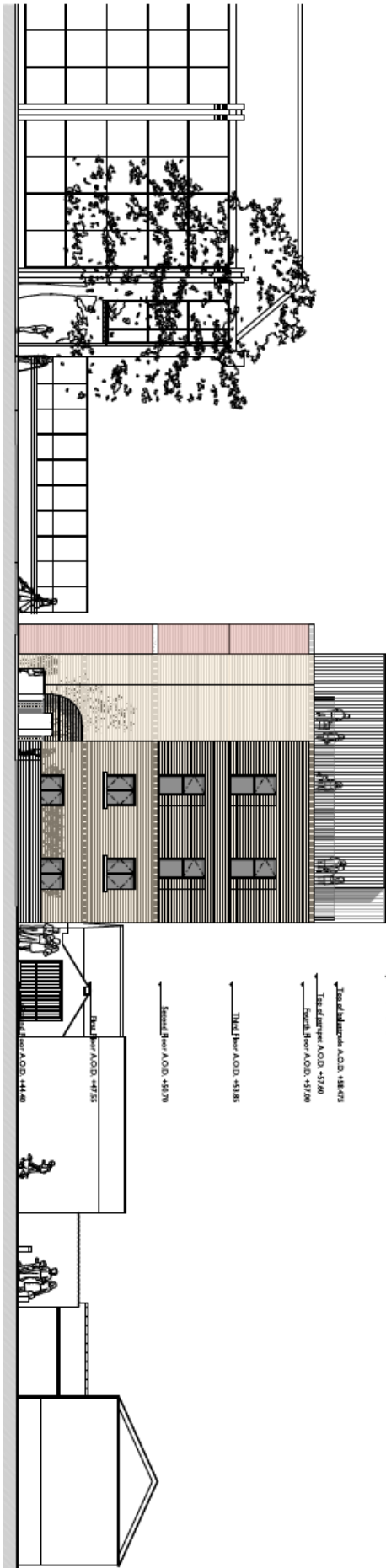
Proposed Third Floor Plan



Proposed Fourth Floor Plan



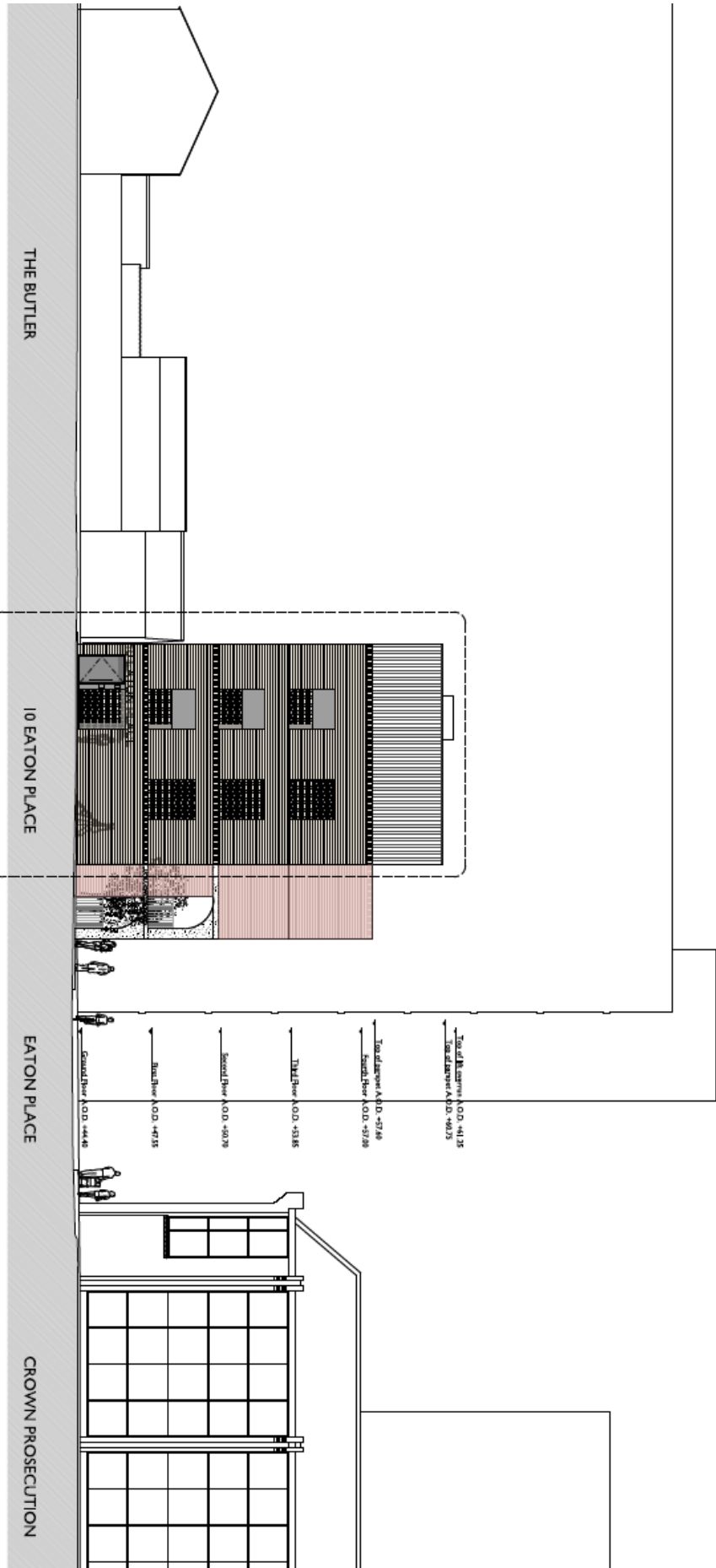
Proposed North Elevation and Street-Scene



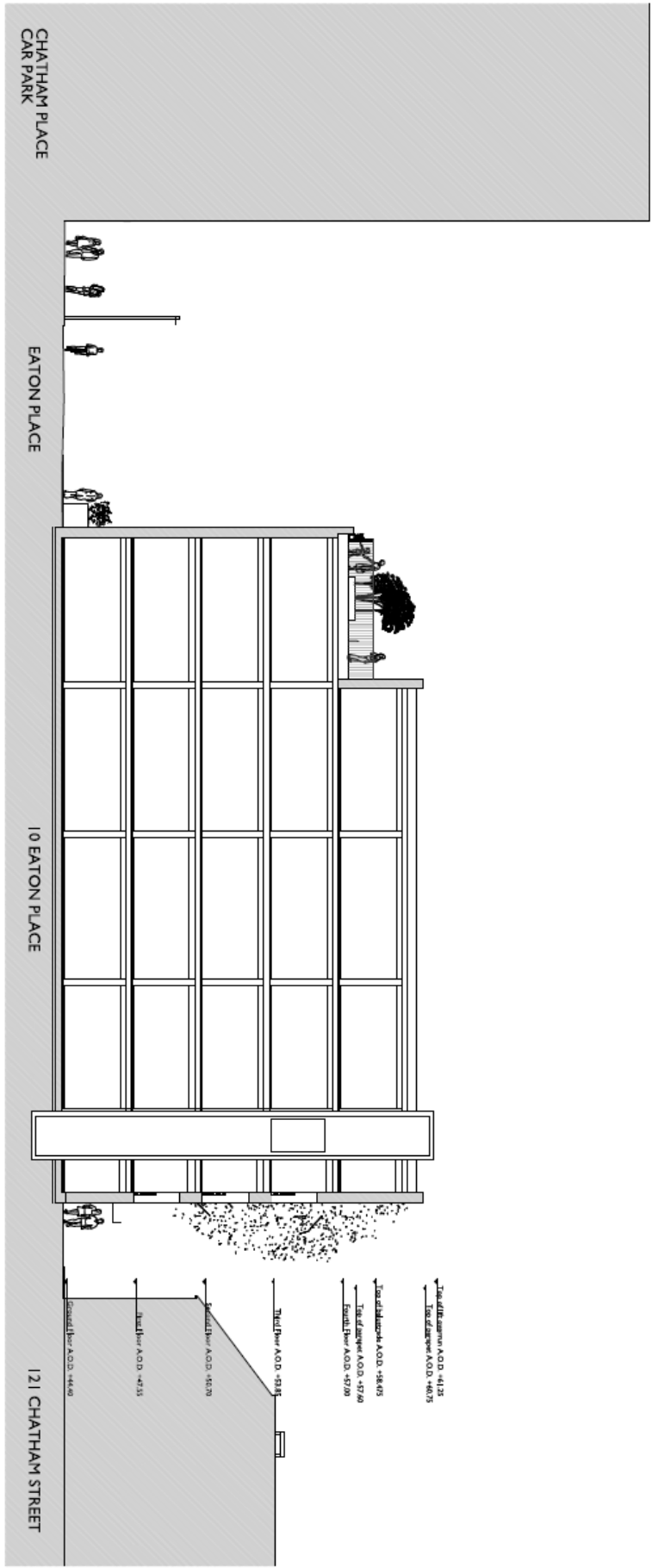
Proposed East Elevation and Street-Scene



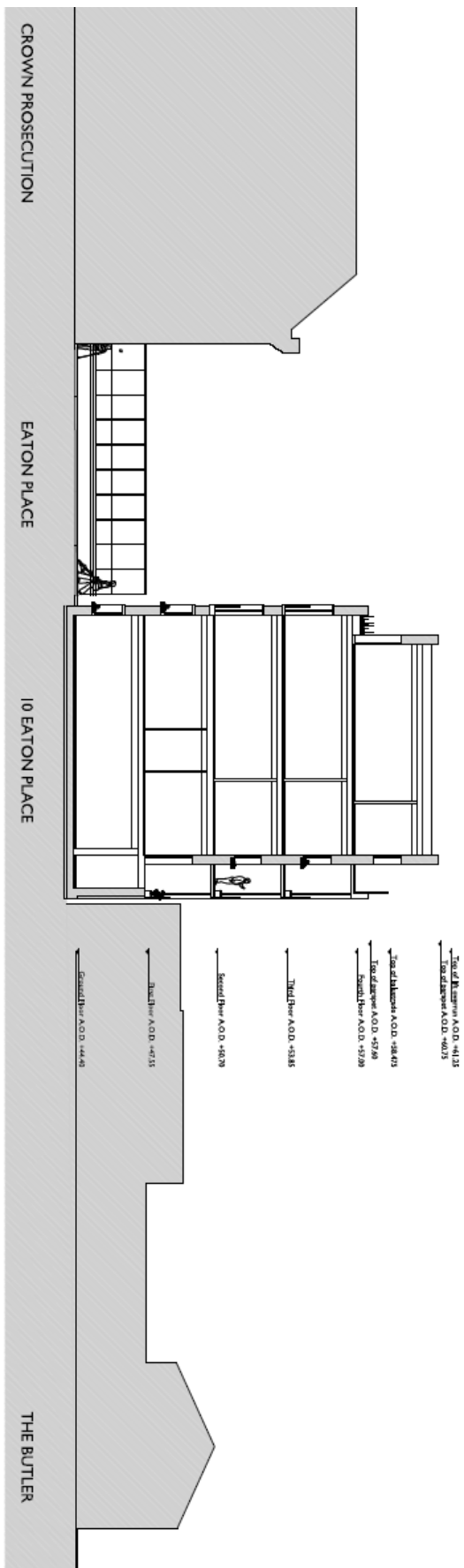
Proposed South Elevation and Street-Scene



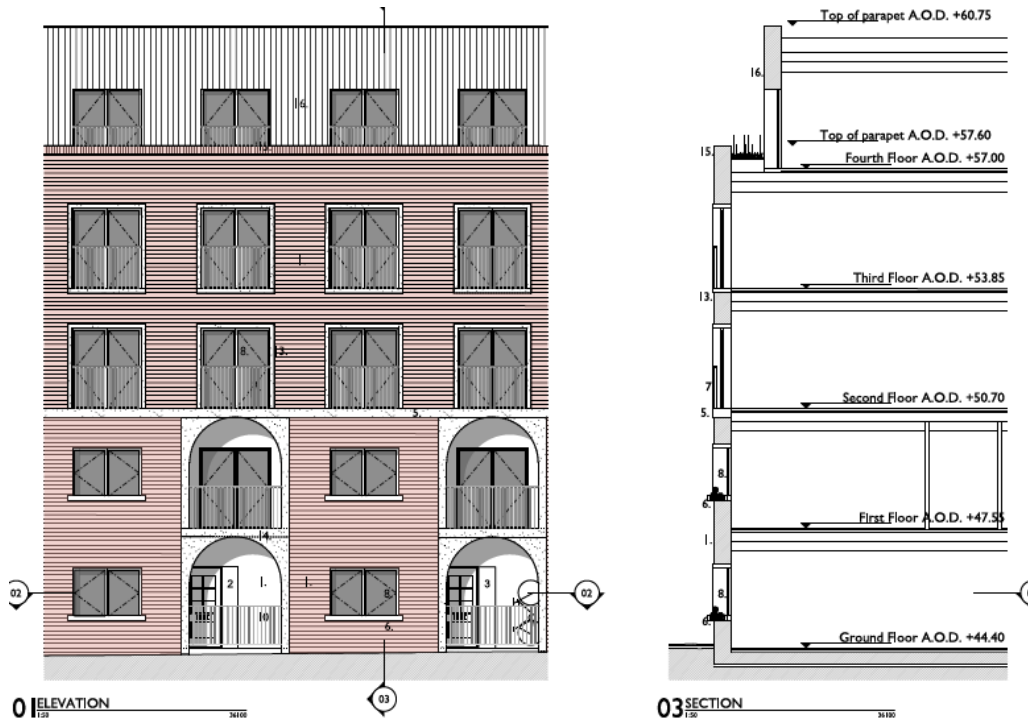
Proposed West Elevation and Street-Scene



Proposed East to West Site Section

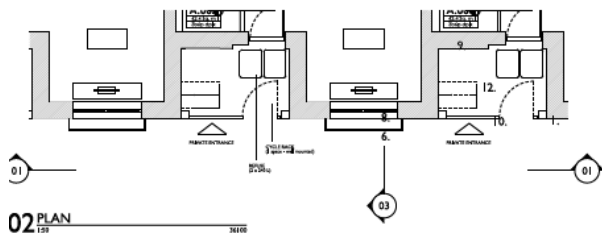


Proposed North to South Site Section



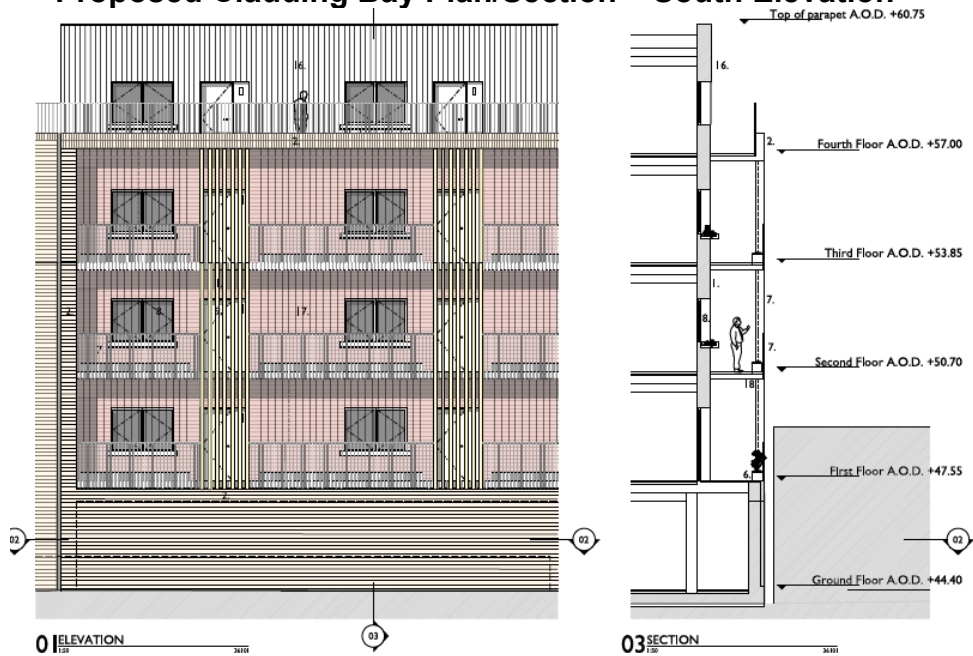
01 ELEVATION

03 SECTION



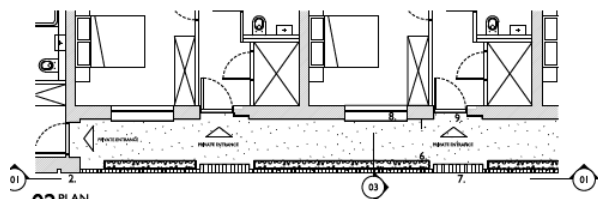
02 PLAN

Proposed Cladding Bay Plan/Section – South Elevation



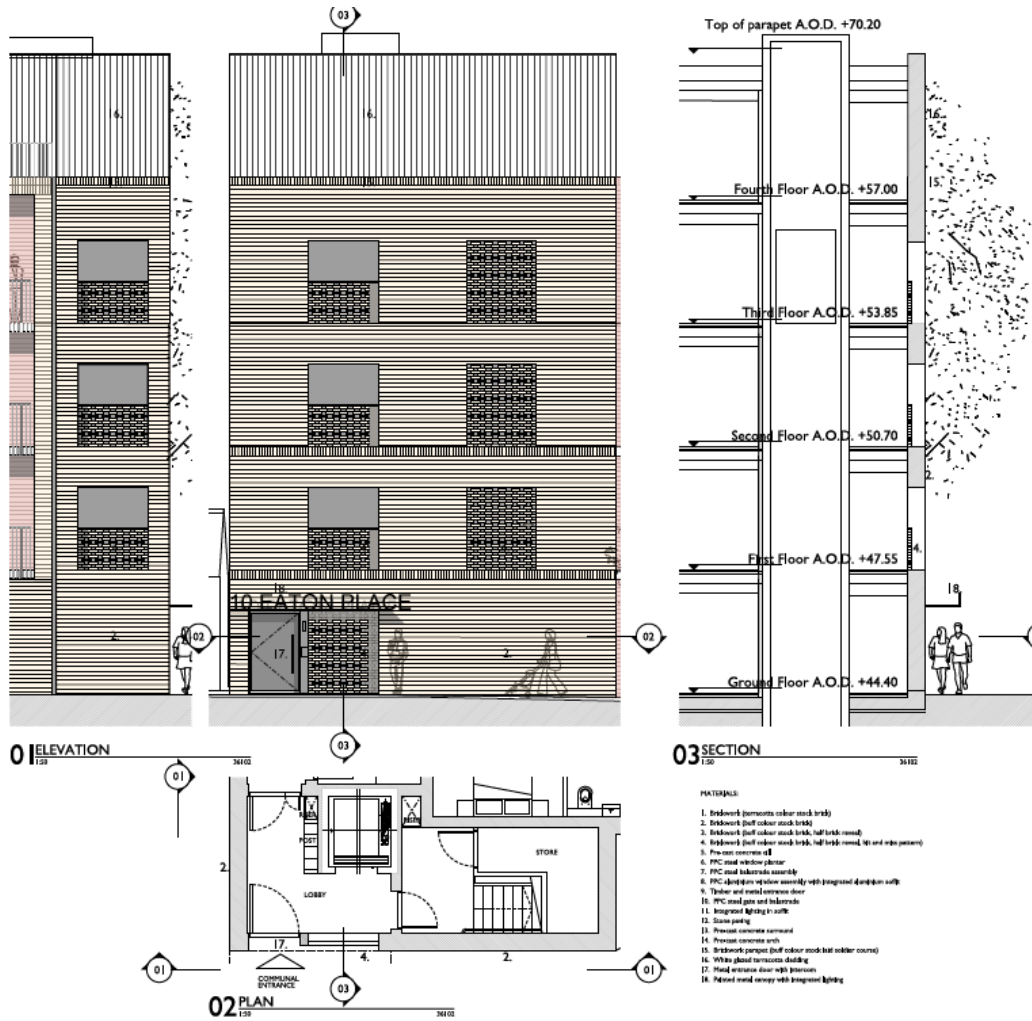
01 ELEVATION

03 SECTION

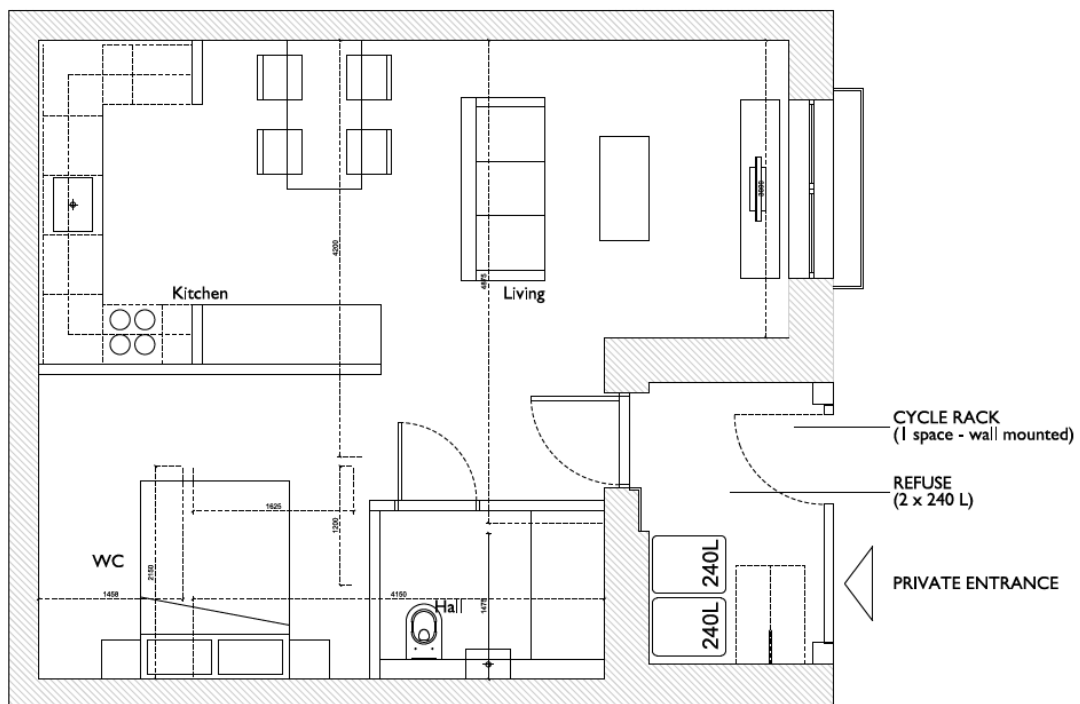


02 PLAN

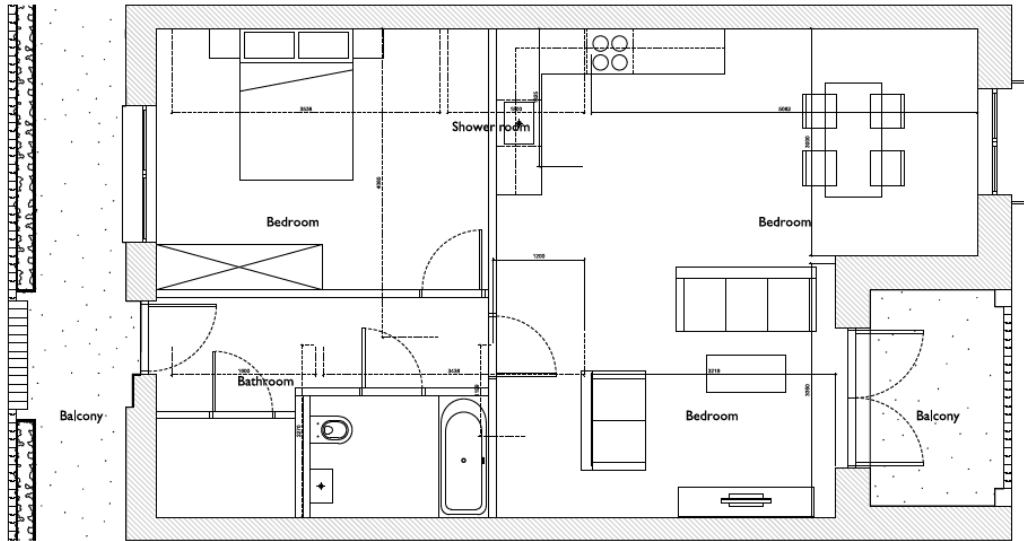
Proposed Cladding Bay Plan/Section – North Elevation



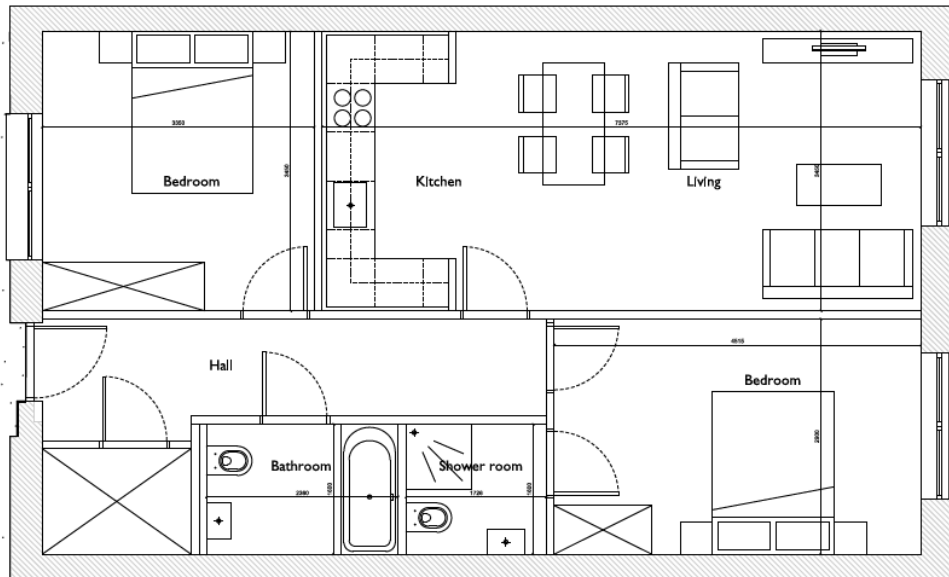
Proposed Cladding Bay Plan/Section – West Elevation



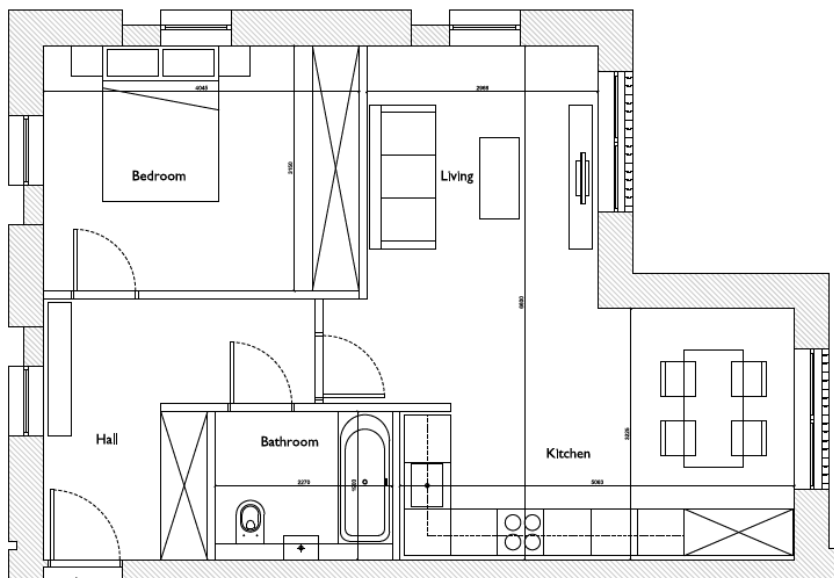
Maisonette Detailed Floor Plan – Ground Floor



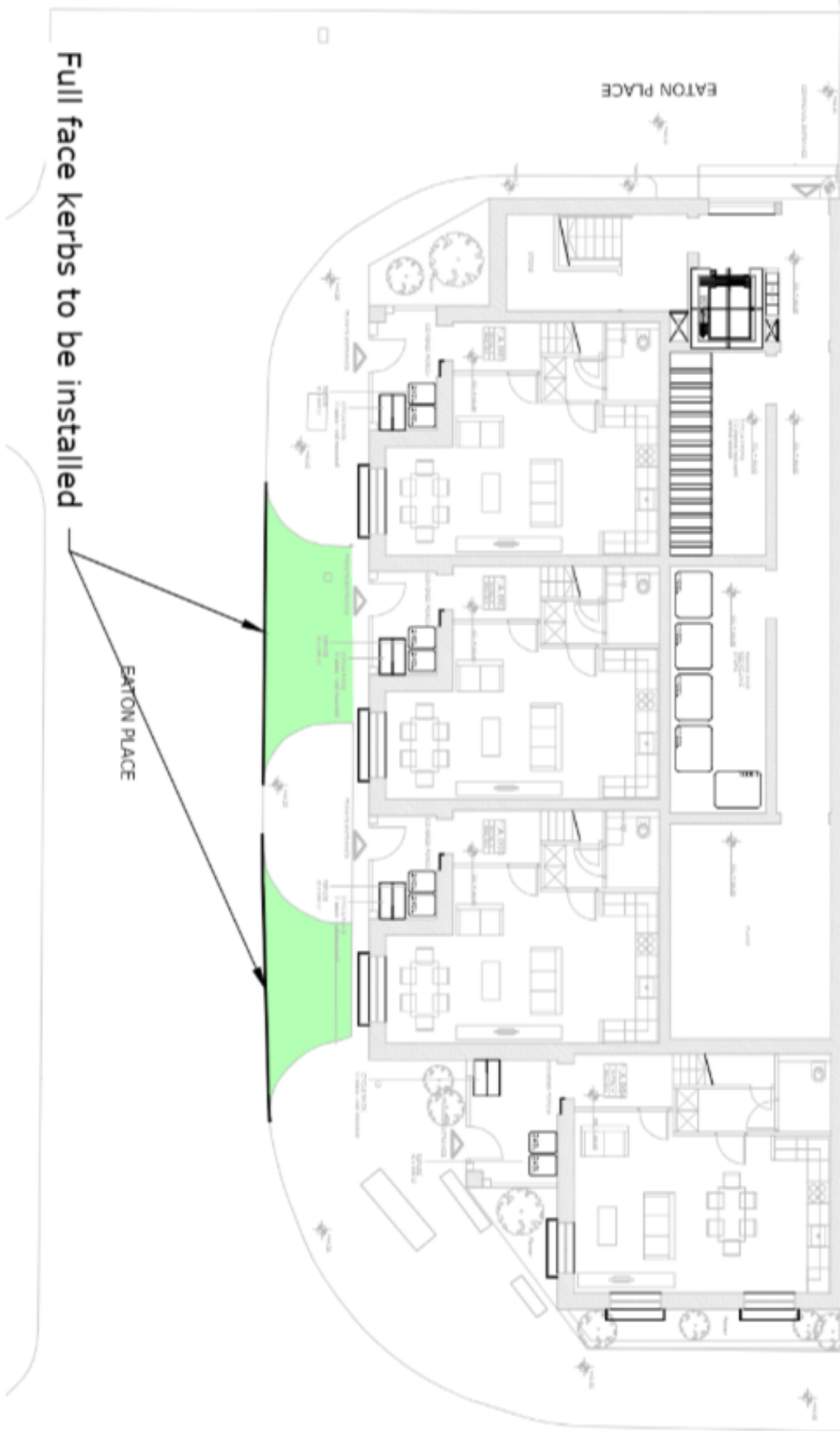
Maisonette Detailed Floor Plan – First Floor



Typical Detailed Floor Plan Layout of flat (to 2nd floor and above)



Typical Detailed Floor Plan Layout of flat (to 2nd floor and above)



Proposed Highway Works Plan (Reinstatement of footway and kerbs)



Proposed Visual Looking north west from Eaton Place



Proposed visual looking south from Chatham Street