

01 November 2023



Reading
Borough Council
Working better with you

Title	PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT
Ward	Battle
Planning Application Reference:	221345
Site Address:	Curzon Club, 362 Oxford Road, Reading, RG30 1AQ
Proposed Development	Outline Application for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of a building of up to five storeys containing 30 flats, ground floor retail space and associated parking, with landscaping reserved.
Applicant	City Wide Serviced Apartments Ltd
Report author	Tom Bradfield
Deadline:	27/01/2023
Recommendations	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 1st of February 2024 (unless officers on behalf of the AD PTPPS agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement).
S106 Terms	<p>To secure affordable housing on site consisting of ten units (30% provision) on site, to be three one bedroom units and four two bedroom units of Reading Affordable Rent and two one bedroom units and one two bedroom units of Shared Ownership. Reading Affordable Rent (RAR) tenure would be capped at 70% of market rent as per published RAR levels.</p> <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 12.5% 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 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> <p>Zero carbon offset financial contribution of £30,528.</p>

	<p>Employment, Skills and Training and Construction financial contribution of £8,000.</p>
<p>Conditions</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Full - time limit - three years 2. Approved Plans 3. Materials (samples to be approved) 4. Use Restriction (Class E) 5. Detailed Design (Undercroft gate) 6. EV Charging Points 7. Cycle Parking (pre-commencement) 8. Refuse Collection (to be approved) 9. Parking Permits 1 (notification to LPA) 10. Parking Permits 2 (notification to occupants) 11. Vehicle Parking (As Specified) 12. Vehicular Access (To Be Approved) 13. Construction Method Statement 14. Noise Assessment and Mitigation (To be submitted) 15. Mechanical Plant (Noise) 16. Ventilation and Extraction (To be submitted) 17. Contaminated Land Assessment 18. Remediation Scheme (To be submitted) 19. Remediation Scheme (Implement and Verification) 20. Unidentified Contamination 21. Hours of Construction/Demolition 22. Hours of Deliveries/Waste Collection 23. Hours of Opening/Operation 24. No Bonfires 25. Waste Storage 26. Sustainable Drainage (To be approved) 27. Sustainable Drainage (As Specified) 28. Archaeology 29. Biodiversity Enhancements 30. Tree Protection Measures 31. Green Roofs 32. Thames Water – Piling Method Statement 33. SAP Assessment – Design Stage 34. SAP Assessment – As Built
<p>Informatives</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive and Proactive • Pre-commencement conditions • Highways • S106 • Terms and Conditions • Building Regulations • Complaints about construction • Encroachment • Contamination • Noise between residential properties • CIL • Parking Permits • Thames Water

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 redevelop a vacant site within a District Centre. It would provide both market housing and policy compliant affordable housing. The proposals would have 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, be acceptable in terms of ecology, biodiversity and sustainability. The application is therefore recommended to the committee for approval.

2. Introduction and Site Description

- 2.1. The site is on the north side of Oxford Road and contains a vacant private members club, the Curzon Club. The site has been vacant since 2020 when the club closed due to lack of membership and the need for significant repair works. The building itself is three storeys and faces onto Oxford Road. It is not statutorily or locally listed, and is not within a Conservation Area.
- 2.2. Immediately to the north is a vacant site, which has planning permission for a residential redevelopment of 26 flats (ref. 201391) and has a current pending appeal for a similar scheme. Further north is the West Village residential development. To the east and south are rows of two/three storey terraced properties in a mix of residential and commercial use. To the west is a strip of landscaping with some mature trees, a small shoppers' car park with a row of retail units with residential above beyond, and the pedestrian entrance to the Tesco superstore.
- 2.3. The site is within the Oxford Road West District Centre and an Air Quality Management Area.



3. The proposal

- 3.1. This application seeks to demolish the existing building on site and erect a part four, part five and part six storey building containing a 125sqm retail unit, parking and servicing at ground floor with 30 residential units at upper floors. The unit mix would be as follows:

Type	Market	Affordable	Total
1 bedroom flat	8	5	13 (43%)

2 bedroom flat	12	5	17 (57%)
Total	20 (70%)	10 (30%)	30 (100%)

- 3.2. The tenure split for the affordable housing would be 70% Reading Affordable Rent (four 2 bedroom units and three 1 bedroom units) and 30% Shared Ownership (one 2 bedroom unit and two 1 bedroom units).
- 3.3. 15 car parking spaces would be provided at ground floor, alongside cycle parking, waste and recycling storage, servicing and plant. This would be accessed through an undercroft from Oxford Road.
- 3.4. The proposal includes rooftop amenity space, green roofs and solar panels at roof level behind a parapet.
- 3.5. The application is for an Outline Planning Permission, with landscaping reserved. Given landscaping is the only reserved matter, and there is no landscaping within the site other than green roofs and the roof terrace, in this case the proposals are tantamount to a full application.
- 3.6. An unaccompanied site visit briefing note was produced and issued prior to committee.
- 3.7. The applicant has submitted the following documents for consideration:
- Planning and Affordable Housing Statement
 - Air Quality Assessment
 - Contaminated Land Statement
 - Ecology Statement
 - Daylight/Sunlight Report
 - Fire Strategy
 - Noise Impact Assessment
 - External Daylight Study
 - 3D Visuals
 - FRA and SUDS Statement
 - Energy Assessment
 - Energy & Sustainability Report
 - Transport Statement
 - Design & Access Statement
 - Existing and Proposed Drawings

4. Planning history

221005	Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed Demolition of Building. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) - Schedule 2, Part 11, Class B
	Prior Approval Granted 1st February 2023

5. Consultations

- 5.1. The following consultation responses were received from statutory and internal consultees:

RBC Transport

- 5.2. The Transport Strategy team raised some concerns regarding the access width, which originally was 3m wide. This has been amended to 4.8m wide, and is now considered

acceptable. The provision of car parking would be below the Council's standards, but would be acceptable as the site has good access to public transport and on-street restrictions would limit overspill. Cycle storage would be acceptable. Conditions relating to Parking Permits, CMS, EV charging points and refuse & recycling were requested.

RBC Housing Development

- 5.3. The Housing Development Team appreciate the 30% affordable housing offer, and have confirmed that the tenure mix and unit mix is acceptable and policy compliant.

RBC Waste & Recycling

- 5.4. No objection to the proposals

RBC Environmental Protection

- 5.5. No objections subject to conditions relating to noise, air quality, contaminated land, bin storage and construction management plan.

RBC Ecology

- 5.6. The submitted ecology information is acceptable and demonstrates that there are no bats present. Conditions relating to biodiversity enhancements and green roofs requested.

RBC SUDS

- 5.7. Proposed scheme is acceptable in principle, subject to conditions.

Thames Water

- 5.8. No objection subject to a condition relating to piling and several informatives.

Public Consultation

- 5.9. 179 neighbouring properties were consulted by letter and two site notices were displayed at the application site, one in front of the building on Oxford Road, and one adjacent to the car park.

- 5.10. One response was received and raised the below points:

- There are too many flats in Reading
- No more development should be approved until sales agreed for existing vacant dwellings

6. Legal context

- 6.1. Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

- 6.2. 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) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF paragraph 12).

- 6.3. In this regard, the NPPF states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Plan 2019 according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

- 6.4. Accordingly, the latest NPPF and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

National Policy – National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023

Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development

Section 4 - Decision Making

Section 5 - Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

Section 6 - Building a strong, competitive economy

Section 8 - Promoting healthy and safe communities

Section 9 - Promoting sustainable transport

Section 11 - Making Effective Use of Land

Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places

Section 14 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

Policies:

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

EN2: Areas of Archaeological Significance

EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network

EN15: Air Quality

EN16: Pollution and Water Resources

EN17: Noise Generating Equipment

H1: Provision of Housing

H2: Density and Mix

H3: Affordable Housing

H5: Standards for New Housing

H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space

RL6: Protection of Leisure Facilities and Public Houses

TR1 Achieving the Transport Strategy

TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

Supplementary Planning Documents

Affordable Housing (2021)

Planning Obligations under S106 (April 2015)

Sustainable Design and Construction (Dec 2019)

Employment, Skills and Training (2013)

Parking Standards and Design (2011)

7. Appraisal

7.1. The main considerations are:

- Principle of Development
- Design, Character and Appearance of the Area
- Neighbour Amenity
- Future Residents Amenity
- Unit Mix and Affordable Housing
- Transport
- Ecology
- Sustainability
- S106 Legal Agreement

Principle of Development

- 7.2. The NPPF and Local Plan seek to make best use of previously developed land within built up areas.
- 7.3. The proposal would redevelop a vacant brownfield site in a sustainable location to create a mix of uses. The retail use at ground floor level would be appropriate given the site's location within a District Centre. Residential use would be acceptable at upper floors in this mixed-use area.

Loss of existing use

- 7.4. Local Plan Policy RL6 relates to leisure facilities and public houses, and resists their loss.
- 7.5. Given the site was last in use over three years ago as a private members club (*sui generis*), it would not fall within the types of uses protected by policy RL6. Although the use itself is not protected by policy, the building would have been available for hire for parties or other functions, which would now be lost. There are other facilities nearby which could provide alternative community functions, such as the Oxford Road Community Centre or nearby public houses such as the White Eagle or Royal Albion. There are also multiple places of worship with function spaces nearby, and Battle Library.
- 7.6. The site has been out of use for over three years, and the building is not in a good state of repair. Significant repair costs were a large part of the reason for the closure of the club several years ago, combined with dwindling memberships and the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic. Given the club has not been reopened or taken on by an alternative provider, and there are alternative venues nearby, it is considered that the loss of the use would be acceptable. location.
- 7.7. Furthermore, in February 2023, Prior Approval was granted for the building's demolition under reference 221005.

Loss of the building

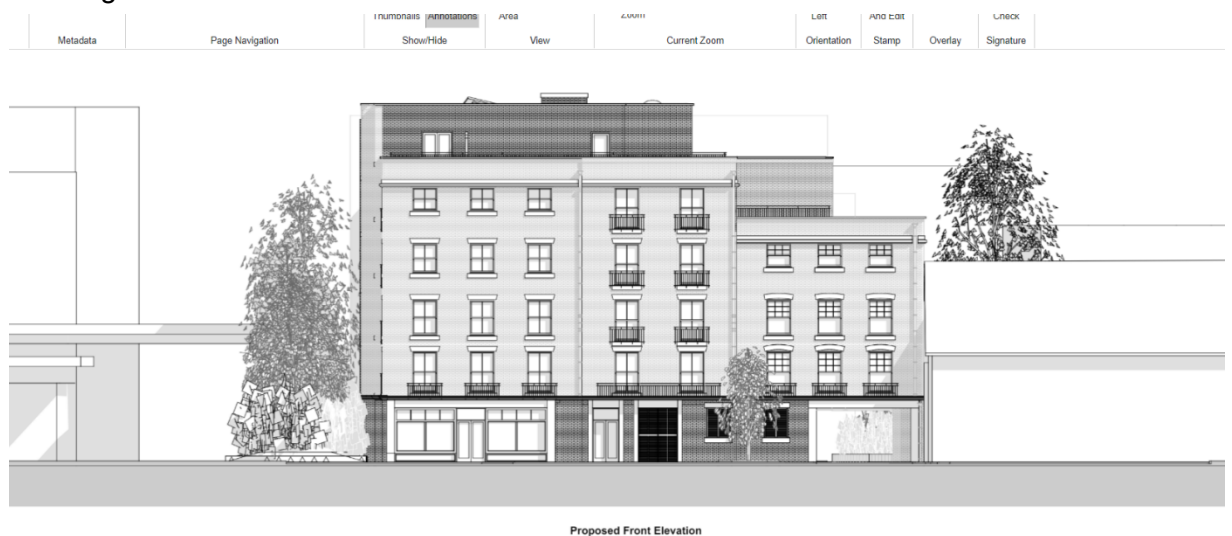
- 7.8. The NPPF 2023 requires decisions to have regard to the significance of non-designated heritage assets, and for a balanced judgement to be made which has regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
- 7.9. The existing building is not Listed, Locally Listed or within a Conservation Area. It is an attractive building, and does provide some benefit to the street scene in this part of Oxford Road. However, given the building is not protected, and benefits from Prior Approval for its demolition, the loss of the building would not be likely to outweigh the benefits of the proposed redevelopment of the site.
- 7.10. Overall, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in principle, subject to detailed assessment as below.

Design, Character and Appearance of the Area

- 7.11. 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 (such as increased densities)".
- 7.12. The proposal would result in the demolition of the existing building. Whilst the existing building has some design merit, it is not a designated heritage asset, and its conversion would not be practicable to secure the density of development that this site could support. Its loss would be outweighed by the significant benefits of the proposed scheme. Furthermore, Prior Approval has been granted for its demolition.
- 7.13. The proposal would be set at the corner of Oxford Road and the wide pedestrian entrance into Curzon Street and the supermarket on Moulford Mews. It is a prominent corner

location on Oxford Road, which is readily visible, particularly when travelling west to east, given the gap in built form comprising the shoppers' car park and landscaped area between the site and Cholsey House to the west. It would serve as an entry point into the more densely developed site to the north, which extends to between five and eight storeys in height, alongside the supermarket.

- 7.14. Along the Oxford Road frontage, the building would be four storeys at the eastern end, rising to five storeys on the corner before stepping up again to six storeys towards the northern side of the site. The massing would relate well to both the larger development to the north and the smaller scale buildings along Oxford Road due to its stepped profile, whilst still providing a strong corner building which turns the corner. A common theme in Reading, and in particular on Oxford Road, is the prominence of corner buildings, be it through a different design, roof pitch or a larger scale. The proposal would represent a modern interpretation of this, and the scale would provide a bookend to the row of buildings which continue to the east of the site.

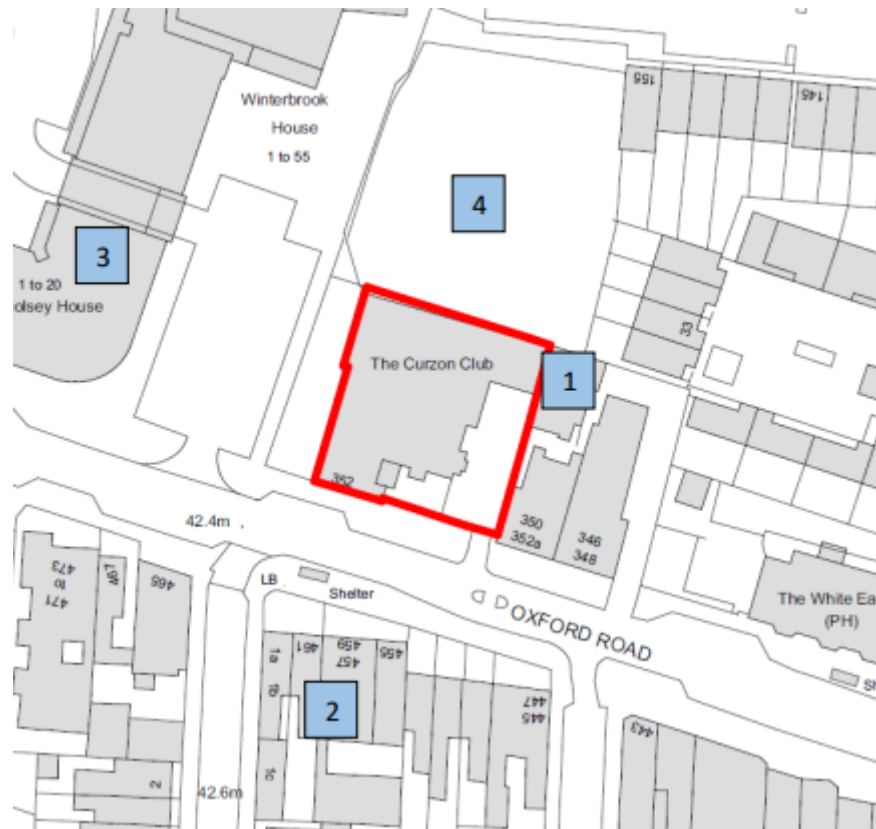


- 7.15. The building would be reminiscent of a Victorian style, with varied window styles and strong vertical façades. It would have a flat roof, with brick banding and an active frontage at ground floor level through the inclusion of a retail unit. The use of alternating brick types and the varied fenestration size and types links to the varied style of buildings present along Oxford Road. The proposal would provide a prominent, interesting end point to the row of buildings which continue to the east, and through the stepped form and verticality of the facades would provide a suitable corner building.
- 7.16. The proposals have evolved through the application process, with a reduction in height, changes to the roof forms and an introduction of different brick styles. The current proposal would bring the historic and varied nature of this part of Oxford Road together to create a modern addition to the street scene, which would be an appropriate addition.
- 7.17. Overall, the proposal would be acceptable in terms of its design, scale and massing, and would be in keeping with the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

Neighbour Amenity

- 7.18. Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) of the Reading Borough Local Plan states that development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties.
- 7.19. The closest residential use is directly to the east, at 350a Oxford Road (Location 1 on the below plan). This property has four windows facing south, directly towards the rear of 350 Oxford Road. There are residential uses directly opposite the site on the south side of Oxford Road (Location 2), and to the west in the Cholsey House flats (Location 3) on the other side of the car parking area over the shops. To the north of the site is the vacant land which does has permission for redevelopment for residential, but as yet this has not

been implemented (Location 4). The below plan identifies these locations, and is taken from the submitted Daylight and Sunlight Assessment.



- 7.20. The proposal would be set away from the eastern boundary by approximately 5m at the closest point. The proposed building would step back further from this boundary the further north it goes. The proposal would be of a size, scale and in a position that would not result in any harm to the most immediate neighbour through the creation of a sense of enclosure or an overbearing presence. To the north, the building would be set off from the boundary by 3m, and would be positioned to ensure that there would be no harm to future development at the adjacent site through a sense of enclosure or overbearing presence.
- 7.21. The applicant has submitted a daylight/sunlight study which shows that there would be a reduction in daylight and sunlight to the windows at the neighbouring property to the east (number 350a), it would not likely be noticeable and would comply with the relevant Building Research Establishment (BRE) guidance. The assessment also took into account windows of properties on the south side of Oxford Road and at Cholsey House and concluded that there would be no harm.
- 7.22. The assessment identified that there would be some impact on the windows at the proposed development to the north (permitted but not yet constructed), given the relatively unrestricted view these windows would enjoy. The assessment concluded that although these windows would be affected, there would only be a minor adverse impact, according to the BRE guidance.
- 7.23. The proposals would have windows which face north towards the currently undeveloped site. The applicants have amended the scheme to ensure that these windows would either be obscure glazed or be angled to ensure that there is no direct overlooking. Furthermore,

privacy screening is proposed on the balconies on the northern boundary to prevent overlooking. It is not considered that there would be any loss of privacy for neighbouring residents, either current or future.

- 7.24. The proposals would not result in any harm to neighbour’s living conditions, and would therefore accord with Local Plan Policy CC8.

Future Residents’ Amenity

- 7.25. Local Plan Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing) states that new build housing will need to comply with the nationally prescribed space standards. Policy H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space) requires dwellings to be provide with functional private or communal open space where possible. Local Plan Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) requires that homes should also have adequate natural light, outlook and privacy.
- 7.26. The units in the proposal would all meet the floorspace standards, and many would benefit from private amenity space. Communal amenity space would also be provided at roof level.
- 7.27. The units would all benefit from adequate daylight and sunlight, and given the position of the building, orientation of windows and position of balconies, would ensure adequate privacy for future residents.
- 7.28. The proposal has demonstrated that there would be no noise or disturbance between the uses on site through submission of a noise impact assessment, and conditions are recommended to secure mitigation where necessary.
- 7.29. The proposal has also demonstrated that there would be no harm to future residents as a result of air quality through the submission of an Air Quality Assessment. Conditions are recommended to secure relevant mitigation measures.
- 7.30. Overall, officers consider that the proposal would provide suitable future living conditions for residents on a suitable development site within a District Centre, and is therefore considered to comply with the Local Plan policies above.

Unit Mix and Affordable Housing

- 7.31. Local Plan Policy H2 states that wherever possible, residential development should contribute towards meeting the needs for the mix of housing set out in figure 4.6 of the Local Plan, in particular for family homes.
- 7.32. The proposal would provide 30 units at the following mix:

Type	Market	Affordable	Total
1 bedroom flat	8	5	13 (43%)
2 bedroom flat	12	5	17 (57%)
Total	20 (70%)	10 (30%)	30 (100%)

- 7.33. The proposal would provide a good mix of unit sizes within a District Centre, with a slightly higher percentage of larger two bedroom units. Three bedroom units are not required by Policy H2 within Local Centres, and so this higher proportion of two bedroom units is welcomed. This would be in accordance with Local Plan Policy H2.
- 7.34. Local Plan Policy H3 requires development to make an appropriate contribution towards affordable housing to meet the needs of Reading Borough. For a development of this size, 30% of the total dwellings are expected to be provided as affordable housing. If proposals fall short of the policy, then the developer should clearly demonstrate the circumstances justifying a lower contribution through an open-book viability assessment.

- 7.35. The proposal would provide a policy compliant level of on-site affordable housing, with an acceptable mix and slightly higher proportion of Reading Affordable Rent units. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable.

Transport

- 7.36. Policy TR1 of the Local Plan requires developments to promote and improve sustainable transport. Policy TR3 states that consideration will be given to the effect of a new development on safety, congestion and the environment. Proposals should provide acceptable access to the site and ensure that there would not be a detrimental impact on the functioning and safety of the transport network.
- 7.37. The current site has a vehicle access from Oxford Road, which would be retained, as well as a small car park to the side/rear of the building.
- 7.38. The site fronts Oxford Road, which is a designated “Red Route” no stopping corridor, and has parking restrictions along the majority of its length. The site is well served by buses and is within walking distance of Reading West station.
- 7.39. The proposal would provide vehicle access directly from Oxford Road, via a 4.8m wide access point, using the same location as the existing access. This is considered acceptable in transport terms, and would provide adequate space for vehicles to safely enter and exit the site.
- 7.40. The proposal would provide 15 car parking spaces, which is below the Council’s adopted Parking Standards. Given the site is well served by public transport and the surrounding roads have significant on-street restrictions, the under-provision of car parking spaces is acceptable in this instance. Future residents would be restricted from parking permits by condition.
- 7.41. The proposal would provide adequate levels of cycle parking and EV charging points within the basement parking area.
- 7.42. The proposal would include waste and recycling storage within the basement level, with direct access from Oxford Road. There is an existing loading bay on Oxford Road outside the site, which has historically been used by waste and recycling collection vehicles to collect bins from the Curzon Club, and it is proposed that this would continue. The Waste and Recycling team had no objections to this arrangement.
- 7.43. Overall, the proposals would represent an appropriate development in transport terms, and it would comply with the Local Plan.

Ecology & Landscaping

- 7.44. Policy EN12 seeks to protect existing green space, ensure that there would be no net loss of biodiversity, and where possible to demonstrate that there is a net gain for biodiversity.
- 7.45. The proposal is accompanied by an ecological survey which demonstrates that there would be no impact on existing species at the site. The site currently has no vegetation or trees. The proposal would introduce green roofs and a landscaped communal roof garden, which would significantly improve the ecological offer. There would be no ground-level landscaped areas within the site. Given the relatively constrained nature of the application site within a District Centre, the current lack of landscaping within the site, the immediately adjacent mature landscaped area, proximity to West Village Park to the north, the provision of a commercial unit at ground floor and the introduction of greening at roof level, it is considered that the proposal would be acceptable in this regard.
- 7.46. Several conditions are recommended to ensure that the proposals would provide landscaping details, the installation of swift bricks and details of green roofs is carried out to ensure adequate biodiversity net gain on site.

Sustainability

- 7.47. Local Plan Policy H5 'Standards for New Housing' seeks that all new-build housing is built to high design standards. In particular, new housing should adhere to, water efficiency standards in excess of the Building Regulations, zero carbon homes standards (for major schemes), Policy CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction) and Policy CC3 (Adaption to Climate Change) seeks that development proposals incorporate measures which take account of climate change.
- 7.48. An energy and sustainability statement was submitted as part of the application. This demonstrates that the proposal would not meet zero carbon targets, but would achieve a 41.88% improvement above the carbon emissions level required by the Building Regulations. through higher fabric standards and the low carbon and renewable energy systems, namely photovoltaic panels and air source heat pumps.
- 7.49. The Council's Sustainable Design and Construction SPD states in paragraph 3.11 that "in achieving Zero Carbon Homes for major residential developments, the preference is that new build residential of ten or more dwellings will achieve a true carbon neutral development on-site. If this is not achievable, it must achieve a minimum of 35% improvement in regulated emissions over the Target Emissions Rate in the 2013 Building Regulations, plus a Section 106 contribution of £1,800 per remaining tonne towards carbon offsetting within the Borough (calculated as £60/tonne over a 30 year period."
- 7.50. Residual emissions would be offset with a carbon offset payment of £1,800 per tonne, in accordance with Policy H5 and the SPD. This contribution would be £30,528.
- 7.51. Although it is unfortunate that the proposed development cannot achieve Zero Carbon, the submitted Sustainability Statement demonstrates that the development achieves a 35% improvement along with a carbon offsetting in the form of a financial contribution, which will be secured through a S106 legal agreement. Officers are therefore satisfied that the development would be policy compliant in this regard.
- 7.52. Policy EN18 requires all major developments to incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) with runoff rates aiming to reflect greenfield conditions and, in any case, must be no greater than the existing conditions of the site. The applicant has submitted a Surface Water Drainage Strategy which demonstrates that the proposed drainage rate would be a reduction when compared against the Brownfield runoff rate and provides a pipe network to the attenuation tank. As such, the proposal complies with Policy EN18 and is considered acceptable subject to the conditions recommended above.

Legal Agreement

- 7.53. The overarching infrastructure Policy CC9 (Securing Infrastructure) allows for necessary contributions to be secured to ensure that the impacts of a scheme are properly mitigated. The following obligations would be sought and as set out in the recommendation above:
- To secure affordable housing on site consisting of ten units (30% provision) on site, to be three one bedroom units and four two bedroom units of Reading Affordable Rent and two one bedroom units and one two bedroom units of Shared Ownership. Reading Affordable Rent (RAR) tenure would be capped at 70% of market rent as per published RAR levels.
 - 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 12.5% 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 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.

- Zero carbon offset financial contribution of £30,528.
- Employment, Skills and Training and Construction financial contribution of £8,000.

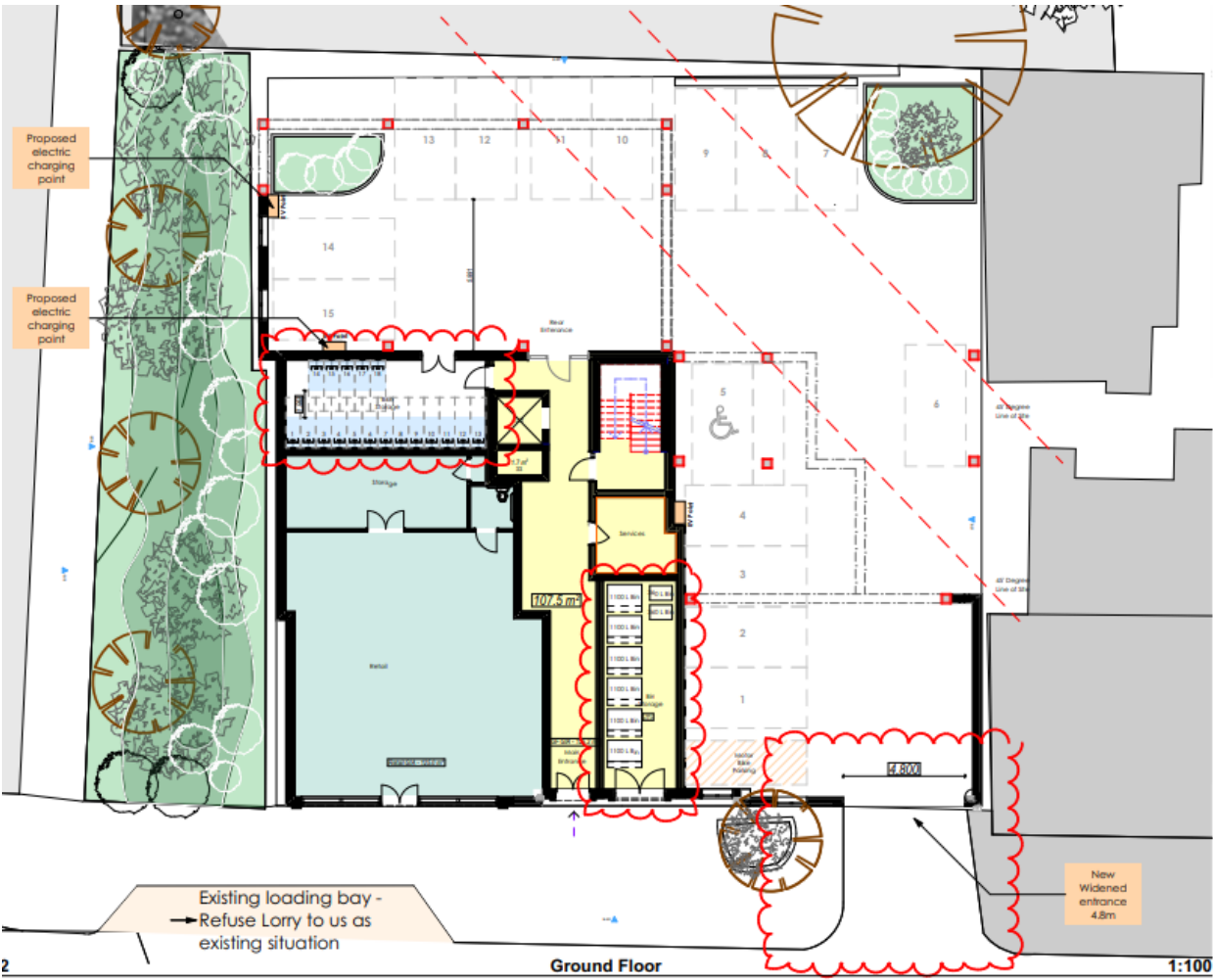
8. Equality implications

- 8.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 8.2. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular application

9. Conclusion & planning balance

- 9.1 As with all applications considered by the Local Planning Authority, the application is required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, as per Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 9.2 When determining a planning application, the planning balance must be applied. The proposal would provide 30 residential units, with a policy compliant affordable housing offer, which carries significant weight, as well as a retail unit within a District Centre and a well designed building which would complement the character and appearance of the area. The proposals would have an appropriate level of car and cycle parking, acceptable servicing arrangements and would meet requirements with regards noise and air quality. There would be some minor adverse impacts to neighbour's living conditions, the loss of the use, the building and a lack of ground floor level landscaping. However, given the significant benefits of the proposal, most notably the provision of high quality housing and a policy compliant Affordable Housing offer, it is considered that the proposals would, on balance, be acceptable.
- 9.3 Officers have applied a suitable planning balance when reaching this conclusion. As such, this application is recommended for Approval.

Appendix – Selected Plans and Elevations



Proposed Ground Floor Layout



First, second and third floor layouts (showing proposed building to the north under ref. 201391)



Proposed Front Elevations (Street and close up)



Proposed Western Elevation (top showing proposed development at adjacent site under ref. 201391)



CGI views

