

## COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

ITEM NO.8

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019

**Ward:** Katesgrove

**Application No.:** 181117

**Address:** 34-36 & 38 Southampton Street, Reading, RG1 2QL

**Proposal:** Erection of a basement and 4-storey building to provide 11 (1x studio, 8x1-bed & 2x2-bed) residential units (Class C3) and associated works following the demolition of the existing buildings (basement & 3- storey public house at No's 34-36 Southampton Street and 2-storey residential building at No. 38)

**Applicant:** MacNiven Quays Ltd

**Date Valid:** 6/8/18

**Application target decision date:** Originally 5/11/18, but an extension of time has been agreed with the applicant until 27/03/19

**26 week date:** 4/2/19

### **Recommendation:**

As in main report from 6<sup>th</sup> February committee report (Appendix 1), except the date for the legal agreement to be completed changing to 27<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and the rewording of condition 20 to be as follows:

20. No change to the unit mix (1xstudio, 8x1-bed and 2x2-bed units) shall be made to the development hereby permitted without written approval from the Local Planning Authority.

### **1. Deferral at 6<sup>th</sup> February 2019 PAC meeting**

- 1.1 The proposal was deferred at the 6<sup>th</sup> February Planning Applications Committee (PAC) meeting for three main reasons. The first reason was to enable an accompanied site visit to take place. This is scheduled to take place on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> February. Secondly, members sought more information regarding the potential air quality implications for future occupiers. Thirdly, members were seeking further visual information and commentary/clarity regarding the proposed materials and design quality of the proposal.
- 1.2 In terms of air quality, it is reaffirmed (further to paragraph 4.35 of the main report - appendix 1) that an air quality assessment, undertaken by Accon UK, has been submitted for consideration as part of the application. The application site is located within an air quality management area and therefore, in accordance with Policy CS34, the proposal must demonstrate that it will not result in any further deterioration of air and water quality and where possible, results in an improvement in overall quality (paragraph 11.16 of the supporting text to Policy CS34). Furthermore, Policy DM19 also states that development should have regard to the need to improve air quality and reduce the effects of poor air quality, with effects required to be mitigated where necessary. The applicant has undertaken the necessary assessment using an appropriate methodology, considering the potential impacts during construction and post construction (on future occupiers and from the development itself).

- 1.3 The assessment demonstrates that during the construction phase a negligible impact is envisaged, providing that industry standard best practice mitigation measures are put in place. The recommended demolition and construction method statement condition specifically includes securing noise and dust measures, thereby ensuring this in practice (condition 4 of the main report at Appendix 1).
- 1.4 In terms of the impacts on future occupiers, it has been evidenced that none of the National Air Quality Objectives (NAQO's) are exceeded at any of the identified sensitive receptors on site. This is in terms of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and particulate matters (PM). For NO<sub>2</sub>, there is a significant risk if the annual mean nitrogen dioxide concentration is greater than 40µg/m<sup>3</sup>; The worst case annual mean predicted concentration, at ground floor level, is well below this level at 30.4µg/m<sup>3</sup>. Moreover, notwithstanding the report submitted by the applicant, Environmental Protection officers also note that there is actually a NO<sub>2</sub> diffusion tube at the exact site of the development. In the past three years where data is available (2015-2017) in all instances the levels between ground and first floor level are below 40µg/m<sup>3</sup> level where there would be a significant risk for future occupiers. For PM, the concentration levels are significantly below the objective levels and the annual number of days which exceed the NAQO 50µg/m<sup>3</sup> limit is 0, below the 35 day guidance limit. Specialist Environmental Protection officers are content that whilst acknowledging that this is a sensitive location in terms of pollutant levels, there is no basis, in line with policy and guidance, to require mitigation measures to be provided; put another way, it has been demonstrated that the proposed development will not negatively impact on future occupiers due to air quality reasons.
- 1.5 Finally in terms of air quality impacts from the development itself, as no on-site car parking is proposed, nor CHP, no worsening of air quality would occur.
- 1.6 Turning to design based matters, the applicant is in the process of providing additional visual material and physical samples of the proposed materials. The applicant has confirmed that whilst these are not ready at the time of the writing of this report (15<sup>th</sup> February), these will be provided at the scheduled member site visit on 28<sup>th</sup> February. Accordingly, the visual material will be relayed in an update report. The submission by the applicant will also be published on the Council's website once it is received, [via this link](#) (click on the 'View Plans & Documents' option and go to the final page of documents). The physical samples will be able to be viewed at the PAC meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> March, and/or subsequent to the member site visit by contacting the case officer.
- 1.7 Appendix 1 comprises the main report for when this item was considered at the 6<sup>th</sup> February PAC meeting. Appendix 2 comprises the update report for when this item was considered at the 6<sup>th</sup> February PAC meeting.

**Case Officer: Jonathan Markwell**

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## **APPENDIX 1 - MAIN REPORT FOR 6<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2019 PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**

### **COMMITTEE REPORT**

<b>BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES READING BOROUGH COUNCIL</b>
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<b>ITEM NO. 12</b>
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**PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 6<sup>th</sup> February 2019**

**Ward:** Katesgrove

**Application No.:** 181117

**Address:** 34-36 & 38 Southampton Street, Reading, RG1 2QL

**Proposal:** Erection of a basement and 4-storey building to provide 11 (1x studio, 8x1-bed & 2x2-bed) residential units (Class C3) and associated works following the demolition of the existing buildings (basement & 3- storey public house at No's 34-36 Southampton Street and 2-storey residential building at No. 38)

**Applicant:** MacNiven Quays Ltd

**Date Valid:** 6/8/18

**Application target decision date:** Originally 5/11/18, but an extension of time has been agreed with the applicant until 27/02/19

**26 week date:** 4/2/19

**RECOMMENDATION**

Delegate to Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services to (i) GRANT full planning permission subject to completion of a S106 legal agreement or (ii) to REFUSE permission should the legal agreement not be completed by the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2019 (unless officers on behalf of the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement). The legal agreement to secure the following:

- Provision of a deferred affordable housing contribution mechanism;
- Should the building subsequently be extended / altered (to create further units) or units subdivided then contributions to affordable housing would apply on a cumulative basis;
- An Employment, Skills and Training Plan (construction phase only) financial contribution of £1,705.

And the following conditions to include:

1. Time Limit - 3 years
2. Approved plans
3. Pre commencement (barring demolition) details of all external materials (including samples and manufacturers details which demonstrates type, colour, texture and face bond), including: all bricks, cladding, glazing (including rooflights to lightwells), window frames/cills/surrounds, doors, balustrades, guttering and downpipes and boundary treatments
4. Pre-commencement demolition & construction method statement (including noise and dust measures);
5. Pre-occupation details and implementation of cycle parking and subsequent maintenance;
6. Pre-occupation implementation of bin storage facilities and subsequent maintenance;
7. Pre-occupation notification of postal addresses (restricting parking permits)
8. No automatic entitlement to parking permits
9. Pre-occupation implementation of approved noise mitigation scheme
10. Construction hours
11. No burning of waste on site
12. Pre-commencement programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation

13. Pre-commencement (barring demolition to ground level) hard and soft landscaping details
14. Implementation of the approved landscaping no later than during the first planting season following the date when the development is ready for occupation
15. Landscaping maintenance / replacement for a period of 5 years
16. Pre-occupation details of boundary treatments (including wildlife friendly gaps), to be completed prior to first occupation and maintained as such thereafter
17. Pre-occupation evidence of 50% of dwellings achieving a minimum 19% improvement in the dwelling emission rate over the target emission rate
18. Pre-commencement (barring demolition) submission of SuDS implementation, maintenance and management plan. Completion of SuDS scheme prior to first occupation and thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved plan/details.
19. Pre-occupation requirement for the means of access (specified as a shared access) to be available for use
20. Notwithstanding the provisions of the GPDO 2015 no change to the unit mix (1xstudio, 8x1-bed and 2x2-bed units) shall be made to the development hereby permitted without express planning permission from the Local Planning Authority.
21. Pre-occupation details of obscure-glazed, fixed-shut windows (up to 1.7m) for 3 windows at first floor level (serving unit 4) and 3 windows at second floor level (serving unit 7), both on the south elevation, completion prior to first occupation of units 4&7, and maintenance as such thereafter.
22. Only the areas specified as external terraces shall be used for such purposes and no other flat roofed areas shall be used as external terraces without permission from the local planning authority.

**Informatives:**

1. Positive and Proactive Statement
2. Highways
3. High density residential development and car parking
4. Sound insulation
5. Section 106 Legal Agreement
6. Thames Water sewer pre-application required
7. Pre-commencement conditions
8. Building Control
9. Terms and conditions
10. No advertisement consent approved as part of this application
11. CIL

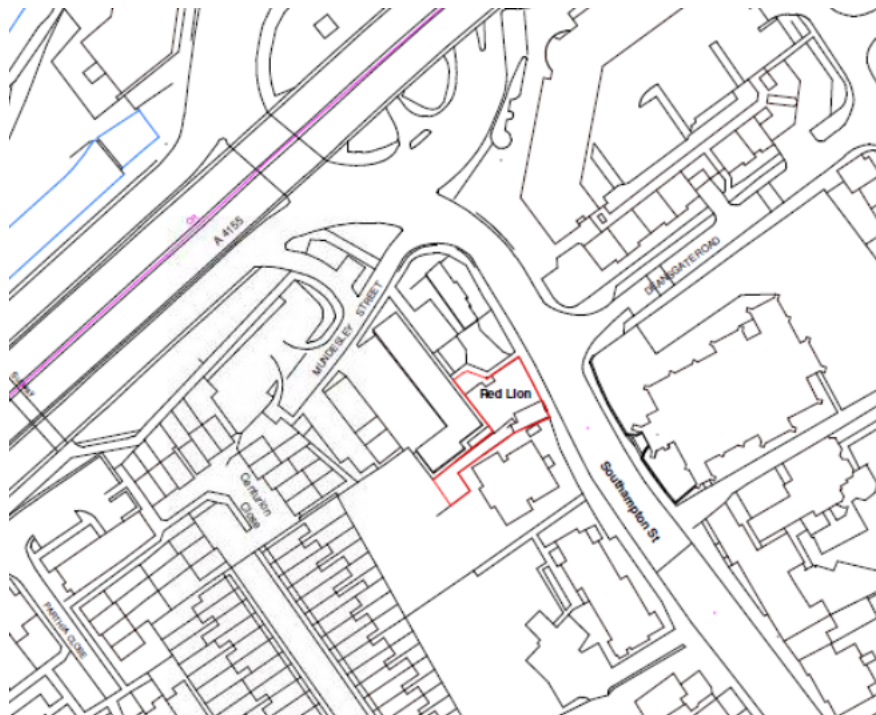
## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The application site is located on the west side of Southampton Street, opposite the junction with Deansgate Road. The site comprises a vacant former public house (The Red Lion - No's 34-36) and a smaller No. 38 building most recently in use for residential purposes. More specifically, the Red Lion is understood to have ceased trading in 2016 and comprises a cellar, ground floor bar/lounge with kitchen facilities to the rear and ancillary accommodation above at first and second floor level. No. 38 is a modest two-storey building and includes a link to a narrowly accessed amenity space to the rear (overgrown and inaccessible at the time of the officer site visit).
- 1.2 The application site is located within the Reading Central Area Action Plan (2009) boundary, but is not specifically allocated for any future use. The site is also located within an archaeological priority area and an air quality management area.



It is located within Flood Zone 1, although Flood Zone 2 is within 10m of the site to the north.

- 1.3 The site is also located outside, but opposite, the boundary of the Market Place / London Street Conservation Area. The Grade II listed St Giles' Church is within the Conservation Area and is located opposite the application site (to the east fronting Southampton Street). The Church is identified within the Conservation Area appraisal as a landmark building. The St Giles' War Shrine, is also Grade II listed. To the north of the site No's 26 and 28 Southampton Street (beyond the advertisement boards and adjacent to the traffic lights leading to the roundabout) are Grade II listed. Both these listed buildings are located outside the boundary of the Conservation Area. The Conservation Area and listed buildings are detailed in full in the RBC Historic Buildings Consultant comments at section 4ii below.
- 1.4 The surrounding area comprises a mix of uses, predominantly residential to the south along Southampton Street, such as the neighbouring 3-storey Solent Court and supported housing at Hamble Court. To the west are two-storey business units within St Giles Court. To the north are the aforementioned advertisement boards, listed No's 26&28 (in commercial use) and the roundabout/flyover leading towards the town centre / Oracle Shopping Centre / River Kennet. To the east are modest two-storey residential properties fronting Deansgate Road and the already mentioned listed Church.
- 1.5 The application is being considered at Planning Applications Committee as the proposal constitutes a major development (10+ residential units). The site in relation to the wider urban area is shown below, together with a site photograph and an aerial view.



Site Location Plan (not to scale)



Site photograph from Deansgate Road



Aerial view from the north

## 2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 Full planning permission is sought for the erection of a basement and 4-storey building to provide 11 Class C3 residential units (1x studio, 8x1-bed & 2x2-bed) and associated works, such as cycle and waste storage facilities, a shared external amenity area to the rear and rooftop photovoltaic panels. These proposed works will follow the demolition of the existing buildings at the site (basement & 3- storey public house at No's 34-36 Southampton Street and 2-storey residential building at No. 38). This application represents a re-submission of a previously withdrawn application at the site (see relevant history below).

- 2.2 During the course of the application a number of revisions have been made and additional information has been submitted. For example, originally proposed external balconies at first and second floor level on the south elevation have been omitted and arrangements around the bin store / bedroom for unit 3 at ground floor level have been altered. Moreover, extensive discussions have been undertaken regarding scheme viability and a revised viability report has been submitted during the application. None of the changes to the scheme were considered by officers to be of a nature or extent to warrant formal re-consultation taking place.
- 2.3 In terms of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), the applicant duly completed a CIL liability form as part of the submission of this application. This details that the former public house (331 sqm) was last occupied for its lawful use on 01/07/2016 and No. 38 Southampton Street (64sqm) was last occupied on 01/07/17. On the basis of this information (together with the plans to evidence the floorspace figures), when a decision is subsequently issued, from a CIL perspective the floorspace at No. 38 can be deducted (as it will have been occupied for 6 continuous months in the previous 36 months), but the public house will not. Accordingly, when the proposed 682sqm floorspace is noted, the CIL liable floorspace will equate to 618sqm. With a 2019 indexed CIL rate for residential accommodation of £148.24 per square metre, this equates to a CIL contribution of £91,612.32. The standard CIL based informative is recommended to be included on the decision notice.

### **3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

Application site:

- 3.1 172328 - Erection of a basement and 4-storey building to provide 12 (3x studio, 6x1-bed & 3x2-bed) residential units (Class C3) and associated works following the demolition of the existing buildings (3-storey public house at No's 34-36 Southampton Street and 2-storey residential building at No. 38). Withdrawn 11/05/18.

34-36 Southampton Street (Former Red Lion Public House) only:

- 3.2 171033 - Demolition of existing former public house and new build construction to provide up to 8 residential dwellings, with associated hard landscaping and amenity space. Withdrawn prior to validation.

38 Southampton St only:

- 3.3 121449 - Certificate of lawfulness for existing use as a 1-bed house. Certificate granted 17/12/12.

### **4. CONSULTATIONS**

#### **i) RBC Transport Development Control**

- 4.1 Southampton Street (A327) is a one way (South to North) main transport corridor and is located within Zone 2 (the primary core area). The site is also on the periphery of Zone 1, the central core area, which lies at the heart of Reading Borough, consisting primarily of retail and commercial office developments with good transport hubs. The site is very well connected, being a five minute walk to



the Oracle Shopping Centre with a high level of public transport accessibility and access to public car parks.

- 4.2 Considering vehicular parking first, in accordance with the adopted SPD the development is required to provide a parking provision of 1 space per flat and 1 visitor parking space, therefore equating to a total of 12. The proposal seeks a car-free development, which given the close proximity to the town centre is deemed acceptable. However parking conditions and informatives will be applied to prevent any future occupants of the new flats from obtaining residents and visitor parking permits for the surrounding residential streets where parking is under considerable pressure. Southampton Street and the surrounding road network all have parking restrictions preventing on-street parking. Double yellow lines run along the front of the development preventing on street parking and a residential parking permit scheme operates in roads in close proximity to the site.
- 4.3 Turning to consider cycle parking, in accordance with the Borough's Parking Standards and Design SPD, a minimum provision 0.5 cycle storage spaces should be provided per flat. These should be conveniently located and lockable with a covered store. The Design and Access statement states 6 (the required minimum) covered cycle storage areas are to be provided, with an indication of locations detailed on the ground floor plan (all externally located, some within private amenity spaces, others in the rear access route towards the shared amenity space. However, no details regarding the exact design of the stores or the exact type of provision has been provided, with this instead secured via a pre-occupation condition.
- 4.4 Bin storage should not be located further than 15m from the access point of the site to avoid the stationing of service vehicles on the carriageway for excessive periods, and should comply with Manual for Streets and British Standard 5906: 2005 for Waste Management in Buildings. Appropriate details of the bin storage areas (part internal & one external store next to unit 3) have been illustrated on submitted plans, with a compliance condition ensuring these are implemented prior to first occupation and maintained thereafter.
- 4.5 Finally, owing to the nature of the proposals and proximity to prominent highways / nearby residential occupiers, a demolition and construction method statement will be secured via pre-commencement condition. This will need to be carefully formulated, implemented and managed owing to the constraints of the site (almost 100% site coverage) and the challenging nature of any redevelopment proposal (from a development perspective in such close proximity to a major interchange).
- 4.7 In summary, Transport does not have any objections to this proposal subject to the conditions stated below and informatives in relation to highways works and parking permits:
- Pre-commencement demolition & construction method statement;
  - Pre-occupation details and implementation of cycle parking and subsequent maintenance;
  - Pre-occupation implementation of bin storage facilities and subsequent maintenance;
  - Pre-occupation notification of postal addresses (restricting parking permits)
  - No automatic entitlement to parking permits

ii) **RBC Historic Buildings Consultant**

4.8 In addition to the usual statutory national and local legislative and planning policy framework, the site is also located opposite the boundary of the Market Place and London Street Conservation Area. The Conservation Area was designated in 1972 and extended in 1982. The latest version of the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area Appraisal document was adopted by Reading Borough Council in 2007 (Conservation Studio, 2007).

4.9 Area 2 of the Conservation Area Appraisal (Church Street) is relevant:

Church Street links London Street to St Giles' church and thereby to Southampton Street. In addition to St Giles' Church, the Friends Meeting House (not easily seen because it is set back behind a modern single storey extension) is a key building with a secluded burial ground to the rear (north). On the south side of the street is a modern housing development (outside the conservation area) that stands on the site of the Tin Works that made tins for Huntley and Palmer's biscuits. Nos 4-6b, on the north side, is a row of 19th century buildings, three of which are listed. The eastern end of the street is narrow and confined. It opens out at a road junction between church and historic houses and, unfortunately, modern development and a view northward of the tall multi-storey car park dispel the historic character promoted by the old church, vicarage and graveyard opposite. St Giles' Church is one of the three medieval churches of Reading, much altered and 'restored' by J.P. St Aubyn in 1873. This character area, located between the noise and pollution of traffic in London Street and Southampton Street has a distinctively quiet atmosphere enhanced by the trees and greenery of the churchyard.

4.10 In terms of the features that make a positive contribution to the historic character and appearance of this sub-area of the conservation area, the following are stated:

- Narrow entrance from London Street with attractive view of St Giles' church spire;
- St Giles' Church and vicarage;
- Friends Meeting House and secluded burial ground;
- Row of 19th century houses on north side;
- Prevalent use of brick;
- Tranquil atmosphere;
- Green open space of St Giles' churchyard;
- Remnants of historic floorscape (stone setts and kerbs at edge of carriageway);
- Typical early 20th century parish hall (Southampton Street);
- Trees and greenery adjacent to St Giles' Church and Friends Meeting House;
- Pedestrian friendly area with infrequent traffic.

4.11 Conversely, the features that have a negative impact on the historic character and appearance of this part of the conservation area are identified as:

- Modern single storey extension spoils the setting and appearance of the listed Friends Meeting House;
- The wide intersection of Church Street and St Giles Close, surrounded by modern development, erodes historic character between the historic buildings of Church Street and St Giles' Church;
- Modern housing development intrudes upon historic character;
- Poorly maintained road and pavement surface;
- Wheelie bins intrude upon the historic streetscene;

- Unsightly security fence attached to north side of St Giles' church.
- 4.12 Turning to identified nearby Listed Buildings, further to the introduction section above, the following are described in full:
- No 26 Southampton Street Grade II. Early C19. 2 1/2 storeys altered. Grey brick headers with red brick dressings and quoins. Cogged eaves cornice to tiled roof. Right hand part of house original with 1 window, tripartite casement, segment headed on Ground floor and mansard roof with end chimney and dormer. Left hand part may be a C20 rebuild with slight break: 1 range of windows, 3 light casement on ground floor and a 5 light, probably reused, oak mullion casement on 1st floor; also parapet with cogged cope, no attic. To left it is treated like No 28. The garden railings are cast iron arrow head with patterned bars to gate.
  - No 28 Southampton Street Grade II. Apparently C17 in fact an early C20 replica, timber framed and jettied brick infill, herring-bone below left hand 1st floor windows. Tiled roof with end chimneys. Jetty beams stop chamfered Right hand bay breaks forward slightly with 1 range of 2 light casements. Left hand bay has 3 close-set casements on 1st floor and shop window on ground floor, door panelled and stained to appear early C17.
  - Church of St Giles and Churchyard Tombs, Church of England. The small mediaeval church was rebuilt 1872 by J P St Aubyn in Early English style retaining only the C13 aisle walls and Perpendicular west tower. Ashlar steeple 1873. Flint faced with stine dressings. Tiled roof. 3 bay aisled nave and slight transept. The tracery lancet windows except i. plate tracery twin 2-light lancets in belfry. ii. 3 light Perpendicular west window. iii. Good decorated-type transept windows. iv. Geometric east window. Tower joins at skew and has corner and side buttresses. Pointed west door. Traces of mediaeval walling on south and west sides. 3 bay chancel with flanking chapels. Interior: rich Early English-style chancel. Norman fragments in tower (a capital possibly from the Abbey). Early C16 brass to John and Jane Bowyer. A number of good C18 memorial tablets and a good sculpted memorial to Harwood Awberry (date 1748) by Peter Scheemakers. The graveyard retains much of its C19 atmosphere and contains a number of good tombs. To south-west - 3 chest tombs, the nearest to the church corner is best: early C19 to Thomas Patrick Sourdon, tapering sides, cross gabled capping with corner antefixae. The 2 others are circa 1840 with fluted corners. To north-west and east - another good group of both table and pyramidal-capped tombs. The best is to William Granger circa 1840 - similar to the Sourdon tomb (see above) with incised corner piers. Also notable (1) William Green and Woodard family vault - a late C18 chest tomb. Circa 1811, Portland stone, moulded plinth, oval panels to front and back. A number of tombs at the east end face true east (ie aligned slightly differently from the chancel).
- 4.13 Moving on to explore the existing application site buildings, 34-36 Southampton St is described first. This is the unlisted Red Lion public house, which is a building which retains some architectural character. It is immediate outside the Market Place and London Street Conservation Area, and to the west of the Grade II Listed St Giles' Church. The building is isolated from its historic context, being flanked by a modern housing development and the busy Southampton Street, which are identified as detracting from the historic character of St Giles' Church and the setting of the Conservation Area.
- 4.14 More specifically, The Red Lion is a three bay, cellar and part-two, part-three storey brick building, finished in white render. It is likely to date from the late Victorian era and retains 12 pane sash windows at first storey level and a later third storey extension with six sash windows. The pitched roof is hidden behind a front

parapet wall and there are gable end chimneys. Internally the pub is of a standard open-plan layout with little identifiable as being of architectural or historic interest at ground floor level. Ground floor windows are boarded but appear to be modern replacements from the interior.

- 4.15 The first floor level main room includes two small fireplaces, suggesting a removed wall, with the main dividing timber showing signs of deflection. There are two 6 over 6 sashes with glazing bars; one original Victorian, one replacement. Externally there are c. 9 pattrass plates applied to the north wall, presumably related to cracks which have been filled and patched up from ground floor to roof. The rear of the pub building is subject to a single storey extension. A Victorian staircase survives from first floor level to second floor level.
- 4.16 In terms of No. 38 Southampton Street, this is a small, unlisted cottage-style building attached to the Red Lion and forms a separate building. The building is two storeys high (although the roof has recently been altered), built of brick with timber-framing visible internally and rendered externally. It has a plain tile roof and a large brick chimney stack. The separate building is of one bay wide but originally seems to have been of 2 or 3 bays, with the remaining bays incorporated into the Red Lion, with the addition of modernising (Victorian) face lift from a render finish and parapet wall at roof level.
- 4.17 Internally there are large bressumer with supporting timbers and ceiling/floor joists visible at ground floor level all painted bright blue. The first floor front bedroom has a large bressumer with ceiling/floor joists visible; these have been painted bright blue. The remains of a fireplace are visible at this level. The rear bedroom has no visible timber framing, probably due to its enclosure in plasterboard. Windows have been replaced with modern casements. The attic level, within the roof, has been boarded out and the roof structure is not visible. The whole first floor level floor is uneven and sloping and the passageways and doors have the character of a small cottage.
- 4.18 Turning to the proposals, these in short consist of the demolition of both buildings and the erection of a basement and 4-storey building to provide 11 residential units and associated works. With regard to the demolition works first, the proposals are supported by a Heritage Statement and Structural Surveys. The Heritage Statement estimates the Red Lion to be a late 19th century public house with most of its value being invested in the aesthetic value of the front elevation. This conclusion is considered appropriate, although the Heritage Statement gives this only low value. The Heritage Statement identifies No. 38 as being either a 17th lobby entry house or an 18th century pair of cottages with a large central shared stack with most its value being its evidential value. This conclusion is considered appropriate, although the Heritage Statement gives this evidential value as only low value.
- 4.19 Overall, it is considered that the front elevation of the Red Lion retains some aesthetic interest and character which contributes to the settings of the Listed Buildings. No. 38 also retains some aesthetic interest as an idiosyncratic cottage style building with large chimney stack in the streetscene, as well as evidential value for the survival of internal timber framing potentially from the 17th century. However, it should be noted that Historic England's Principle of Selection for Listing (2010) states:

However, the general principles used are that:

- before 1700, all buildings that contain a significant proportion of their original fabric are listed;

- from 1700 to 1840, most buildings are listed;
- after 1840, because of the greatly increased number of buildings erected and the much larger numbers that have survived, progressively greater selection is necessary;
- particularly careful selection is required for buildings from the period after 1945;
- buildings of less than 30 years old are normally listed only if they are of outstanding quality and under threat.

- 4.20 No. 38 contains a relatively large proportion of fabric which could potentially date from before 1700 (i.e 17th century) or from the 1700 to 1840 (i.e 18th century). Therefore, whilst it is debatable whether it is listable, it is certainly considered potentially a non-designated heritage asset. As the Red Lion incorporates part of the historic fabric of No. 38 (this was not available for inspection at the time of the officer site visit) and also has aesthetic value invested in its main front façade this too could be considered a non-designated heritage asset.
- 4.21 These buildings therefore require justification for their demolition. The supporting documentation includes structural surveys of the Red Lion PH and No. 38 by Scott White and Hookins, structural and civil engineers. Both reports identify significant structural defects in the buildings. Within the Red Lion these are visible externally, principally in the north gable.
- 4.22 In terms of the proposed replacement building, the proposed replacement design consists of a four storey building in a modern idiom, which largely follows the existing footprint of the Red Lion and No. 38. The proposed height has been dropped by c.0.5m. The streetscene drawings show the design is not overly dominant in comparison to surrounding buildings. The proposed materials would consist of red brick delineated with grey brick infill panels and red snap headers to the centre panel with glazed bricks around the doors and chestnut rain screen cladding to the top floor. The glazing would consist of aluminium composite windows and doors with Juliet balconies and glass balustrades.
- 4.23 In conclusion, whilst the retention of the Red Lion and No. 38 would be the preferred result it is accepted it has structural defaults which may make this difficult. Statutory designation as Listed Buildings by Historic England has not been forthcoming. In view of the lack of statutory protection for these buildings and the identified structural problems there are no objections in principle to the proposed replacement building.

### **iii) Reading Design Review Panel (DRP) Comments July 2018**

- 4.24 Context: DRP had previously considered pre-application proposals and application proposals 172328 at the site, raising numerous concerns on both occasions. Application 172328 was later withdrawn (see relevant history section above). DRP subsequently assessed further proposals in July 2018 (after the submission of this application, but prior to its validation). The applicant submitted plans, seeking to take into account these further DRP comments, prior to the validation of the current application. The comments below were made before the plans submitted at the time of validating this application.
- 4.25 Comments: In light of the shortfalls in the previous design, the panel outlined that it was a welcome sight to see a change in guard for the architecture with what seemed to be a thought out and methodical approach to design on the site. The current iteration as designed showed progression from the old proposal and



comments from the planning department and the DRP had been applied to help aid the revised approach.

- 4.26 Overall the design shows betterment in design with aspects design integrity and contextual legibility.
- 4.27 The building footprint is still designed to enable apartment area rather than understanding its constraints and there are issues in overlooking and face-face values which will seriously diminish both the existing and new occupants of the residential apartments. This is clearly something that with more thought can be addressed and changed but currently the scheme has a quantum of non-compliant units.
- 4.28 The apartments internally are designed to fit within an odd footprint which looks to respond to the site constraints but is detrimental to a rational layout. This in itself is not a big issue but requires the architect to think more carefully about the layout, circulation and accessibility of the units.
- 4.29 Moving to the main façade, the design has moved a considerable step in the right direction from previous iterations; however there are still some aspects which require more thought - these are as follows -
- The main façade design at first and second floor shows great potential however at ground the architecture is lost to a façade made up of ramps, undercrofts, stairs and further façade setbacks. This needs to be addressed as the building loses its integrity and grounding.
  - Use of topography and innovative internal layouts could further help façade design by rationalising the ground floor.
  - Balconies set on the corner neighbouring the residential apartments are good in theory but dissolve the constancy of the façade design and pose overlooking and face-face distance issues.
  - More detail work needs to be done on the top floor although this in principle is a step in the right direction however its current design gives the impression of it being an afterthought.
  - The window proportions look to be correct in the façade however the ground floor need to reference the historic blocks found a few doors down and relate to this architecture for consistency in design.
- 4.30 The presentation tabled very little in terms of physical detailing of the building however there was strong methodology on materials and the approach the applicant had taken to this was justified.
- 4.31 The key to this becoming a successful design will be in the brick detailing and the applicant along with the council should both explore this in more detail as brick can be used well and also misused in later pre-start conditions to dumb down a design. We suggest that this item is detailed in the planning report and a brick / bricks decided upon pre planning decision so the finish and exact detailing can be carried forward.
- 4.32 What seemed to stand out in the design and presentation from the applicant was process. This process is key to both review panel and applicant being able to understand and explain the design presented and also challenge the final outcome with guided commentary. It was a welcome sight to see the architect present this scheme with some passion and justification against a backdrop of evidence and

methodology. This was missing in all previous iterations of the design and presentations.

- 4.33 There still seems to be pressure on the site for quantum and this still overly shows through into the design and will need to be carefully thought through. Further to this the timing of the application seems to have rushed parts of the design which are evident in the lack of physical detailing and understanding of constraints and opportunities this site can provide. The Applicant should be allowed the time to tweak the design given the above in hand with the council so both parties can understand the final iteration of the scheme and its process.

**iv) RBC Environmental Protection**

- 4.34 There are possible concerns in relation to noise impact on development, air quality and the construction and demolition phase. In terms of noise impacts, a noise assessment has been submitted. This shows that the recommended standard for internal noise can be met internally, if the recommendations from the assessment are incorporated into the design. Accordingly, a condition is recommended for the glazing and ventilation to be installed in advance of the occupation of any residential unit, in accordance with the specifications recommended within the acoustic assessment submitted.
- 4.35 In terms of the proposals potentially worsening air quality in the area, an air quality assessment has been submitted which shows that predicted levels of pollutants of concern (NO<sub>2</sub> and PM) are below the level would require mitigation measures. Accordingly, the proposals are considered appropriate in this regard. In terms of air quality and increased emissions, the proposals do not include parking or CHP, so there is no expected worsening of air quality. However during development there will be some methods which may have small adverse impacts. Some measures to reduce impacts are recommended in the report submitted, which should also be incorporated within the separate construction method statement too.
- 4.36 In relation to the construction and demolition stages, there are potential concerns regarding noise, dust and bonfires associated with the construction (and demolition) of the proposed development and possible adverse impact on nearby residents (and businesses). As such, measures to control noise and dust during the demolition and construction phase will be secured via condition (within the method statement recommended by Transport Planning). Separate conditions will also relate to construction hours and there being no burning of materials/green waste on site. With such conditions secured, no environmental protection concerns are raised with the proposals.

**v) RBC Planning Natural Environment**

- 4.37 The site is within a 10% or less canopy cover area in the Tree Strategy. As such, any opportunities for planting should be maximised. It is noted that the proposals include a communal garden, which is positive, albeit not particularly large and confined to the rear. New landscaping will enhance this area and the design and layout of the hard and soft landscaping should be designed in conjunction with the onsite drainage connecting planting pits with the proposed soakaways and drainage systems in this area so that the trees and smaller plants can filter surface water within the site. Given the existing context, the proposals are considered appropriate subject to conditions in relation to:

- Pre-commencement hard and soft landscaping details
- Implementation of the approved landscaping no later than during the first planting season following the date when the development is ready for occupation
- Landscaping maintenance / replacement for a period of 5 years
- Pre-occupation details of boundary treatments (including wildlife friendly gaps), to be completed prior to first occupation and maintained as such thereafter

**vi) RBC Ecology Consultant (GS Ecology)**

- 4.38 The site is surrounded by habitat of good suitability for use by commuting and foraging bats - a churchyard with trees 25m from the site, open greenspace 25m to the west and the River Kennet 130m northwest. This application is a resubmission of planning application 172328. The bat survey report (Aspect Ecology, April 2018), submitted previously, is still valid. The bat survey report was undertaken to an appropriate standard and concluded that the risk of the works affecting roosting bats is minimal. The building does possess some minor suitable bat roosting features, however, the site is subject to high levels of ambient light, draughts and is located beside a busy road. Moreover, no bats or sign of bats were observed during the survey. As such, since the proposals are unlikely to affect bats or other protected species, there are no objections to this application on ecological grounds.

**vii) Reading UK CIC**

- 4.39 Reading UK CIC advise that under the Council's Employment Skills and Training SPD the applicant is required to submit details of a local Employment and Skills Plan (ESP), or financial contribution for employment and training projects in the borough. This is in respect of the construction phase only, owing to the nature of the proposed scheme (residential only). In this case the applicant has indicated a preference for a financial contribution, which is an accepted approach in principle. The contribution, using the SPD formula, amounts to £1,705 and is required to be secured in full via s106 legal agreement.

**viii) RBC Housing**

- 4.40 The policy requirement for an 11-unit scheme is 3.3 on-site affordable housing units, which in practice would equate to 3 units and a financial contribution to secure the remainder of the 30% affordable housing. However it is understood that a viability submission has been made, which will dictate whether any affordable housing can be provided in this instance.

**ix) RBC Valuations / BPS Chartered Surveyors**

- 4.41 RBC Valuations instructed BPS (on behalf of the local planning authority) to carry out an independent assessment of the viability submission as part of this application. For context, at the time of the previous application (172328, later withdrawn - see relevant history above) BPS also provided a similar assessment based on the viability submission at that time. The initial BPS review as part of this application found that the scheme was sufficiently viable to provide an affordable housing provision (on site or financial contribution).
- 4.42 This initial conclusion was rebutted by the applicant, following discussions and a meeting with officers and BPS. Updated information submitted by the applicant included the submission of a Red Book valuation of the existing buildings and a full cost plan (rather than a BCIS assessment), with three separate viability scenarios

then tested - 1) Proposed scheme with 30% affordable housing on an EUV+ benchmark basis; 2) Proposed scheme with 100% private housing on an EUV+ benchmark basis; 3) Proposed scheme with 100% private housing on an EUV benchmark basis. In all three scenarios a significant deficit was identified by the applicant.

- 4.43 The rebuttal / updated viability report was subject to a further separate independent review by BPS, including BPS undertaking their own assessments and inputting these to form their own viability position. In short, BPS concludes that both a 30% affordable housing scheme and a 100% private sales proposal returns a clear deficit. On this basis BPS conclude that the scheme cannot viably provide an affordable housing contribution. This is in contract to BPS's previous conclusion and is principally attributed to a justifiable increase in build costs by the applicant. On this basis BPS suggest a late stage review mechanism (deferred payment via s106 legal agreement), based on actually incurred build costs, is pursued by the local planning authority.
- 4.44 RBC Valuations are satisfied that BPS has thoroughly assessed the viability submissions by the applicant. In line with the latest BPS conclusion, RBC Valuations consider it essential and necessary (in light of established planning policies and cases in the Borough) for the provision of a deferred affordable housing contribution mechanism to be secured. This is required so that if the viability context changes at the time of the scheme being built/ready for occupation (based upon an updated viability appraisal), an affordable housing contribution (typically a commuted payment) could instead be secured at this future juncture. By incorporating a deferred affordable housing mechanism, which will enable the Council to share in any subsequent uplift in actual value, this is considered the best this scheme can achieve in terms of affordable housing. With this secured RBC Valuations are content that the proposals are policy compliant in this regard.
- x) **RBC Lead Local Flood Authority (Via RBC Transport, in conjunction with RBC Streetcare Services Manager - Highways)**
- 4.45 The SuDS (sustainable urban drainage system) proposals are confirmed to be acceptable in principle, as per the drainage report submitted with the proposals. This is subject to a pre-commencement (barring demolition) condition to secure details of an implementation, maintenance and management plan of the sustainable drainage scheme and for the scheme. Thereafter the overall SuDS system shall be implemented prior to first occupation and thereafter be managed and maintained in accordance with the approved details.
- xi) **Berkshire Archaeology**
- 4.46 The site is located within an area of Reading known to have been developed and occupied during the medieval period, with St Giles Church located on the opposite side of Southampton Street, originally built in the 13th Century to serve the community within this area. There is therefore the potential for medieval and later archaeological remains to be located within the area of the site. In addition the Heritage Statement describes No 38 as having 17th century origins.
- 4.47 The proposed footprint of the new building occupies to the same footprint as the existing buildings so there is likely to be some level of truncation of archaeological remains. The Heritage Statement proposes a scheme of archaeological building recording prior to and during demolition if permission is granted. This work should also include archaeological monitoring of the below ground demolition works, if it

is found that below ground archaeological remains may survive within the site a scheme of archaeological work will be required following demolition. The scope of the work will be dependent on the findings during the monitoring of the demolition work.

- 4.48 Therefore a pre-commencement condition is recommended requiring approval of a written scheme of archaeological investigation is attached to any planning permission granted, to mitigate the impact of the development.

**xii) Historic England (HE)**

- 4.49 HE was not formally consulted on this application, as HE responded to a previous consultation request for application 172328 detailing that they were not required to be notified or consulted under the relevant statutory provisions.

- 4.50 However, after the submission of information by the applicant included a report by Historic England (Advice report 1457872, dated 21/12/18, in respect of whether the application site buildings should be listed or granted a Certificate of Immunity from Listing), HE was informally contacted by officers. This confirmed the authenticity of the report, which concluded:

*After examining all the records and other relevant information and having carefully considered the architectural and historic interest of this case, the criteria for listing are not fulfilled and a Certificate of Immunity from listing should be issued.*

**REASONS FOR DESIGNATION DECISION**

*The Red Lion Public House and 38, Southampton Street, Reading are not recommended for statutory listing for the following principal reasons:*

*Degree of Architectural interest:*

*\* the Red Lion has been greatly altered internally, with the loss of almost all of its original internal features and plan form at ground floor level. Externally, it is of a standard design for its period and has also undergone unsympathetic alteration;*

*\* the adjacent house, 38 Southampton Street, is earlier but is a fragmentary survival, and appears to have lost much of its historic fabric, original appearance and plan.*

*Countersigning comments:*

*Agreed. The Red Lion public house and 38 Southampton Street are too altered to be listed. A Certificate of Immunity should be issued. SG 19/11/18*

- 4.51 Furthermore, in correspondence with HE, it was also confirmed to officers that The Secretary of State has confirmed that he does not intend to list the building(s) and is minded to grant the Certificate of Immunity. A final decision on this is yet to be formally issued, but is expected by the end of January (if this is subsequently confirmed to officers it will be confirmed in an update report).

**xiii) Thames Water**

- 4.52 Thames Water advise that sewer records do not indicate any shared drainage within the site, but there may be newly transferred sewers that Thames Water haven't yet mapped and aren't aware of. If the site owner finds shared drainage, the sewers may need to be diverted, as Thames Water do not allow new builds over public sewers. They will need to submit a pre-development application to Thames Water and then discuss any potential diversions with the engineer dealing with their application. An informative stating this is recommended.

**xiv) Public consultation**

- 4.53 Notification letters were sent to nearby occupiers on 07/08/18, with the statutory time period expiring on 28/08/18. A site notice was erected on 13/08/18, expiring on 03/09/18. A press notice was published on 16/08/18, expiring on 06/09/18. A total of 6 responses have been received, comprising 1 in support and 5 objections.
- 4.54 Summarising the response in support first, Riverside Direct, Hamble Court (Southampton Street) does not have any objections and welcome the proposal, stating:
- We have been consulted throughout the process including the initial proposal that had been planned in 2017.
  - The residents at Hamble and Solent Court (RG1 2QT) have also been consulted and updated when we have had consultations with Macniven Quays Ltd and are supportive.
  - We would be pleased to see the project progressing as it would improve the surrounding area. The pub which is located at the proposed development site has now become a derelict building. It also appears to have been subject of some squatting, which has not helped the external environment and this has promoted rubbish being left in and around this location.
  - We consider that the proposed development would be a welcome addition to the street and serve to improve the local area.
- 4.55 The 5 objections received have been from a planning consultant on behalf of the neighbouring landowner (Wexham Homes) to the north and the following addresses: Calbourne Drive, Calcot, RG31; Kingsdown Parade, Bristol, BS6; Reeds Avenue, Earley, RG5; Chalvey Road West, Slough, SL1. A summary of the issues raised are:
- 4.56 Loss of existing use
- With the right maintenance the building should stay as a commercial property and not be changed as domestic use.
  - The destruction of this pub would be a loss of community amenity, jobs and tax income to Reading. The pub could clearly be viable in the right hands, by proximity to the centre.
  - The public house appears, according to the submission, to not have been marketed appropriately for continued use. No facts or figures are provided as to poor sales figures, barrel downturn etc.
  - Admiral Taverns being unable to make a success of the pub and therefore everyone else is likely to struggle is slightly laughable if it wasn't about to lead to the destruction of an historic building in the name of greed. Admiral Taverns tied pub company model contributes to the downfall of public houses, not their success. Admiral Taverns at one time operated The Nags Head, now one of the most successful pubs in the town.
  - Wexham Homes asks the LPA must be very careful about permitting further losses of the public house (community assets), with suggested justification being based on clear and compelling evidence to show to: the public traded unprofitably for at least three years; analysis of alternative means of operation; at least 12 months marketing at reasonable rates for its lawful use.
  - Wexham Homes has concerns over the level of justification provided by the applicant: lack of physical evidence of trading performance; second hand information; unqualified assertions; lack of substantive evidence; lack of justification as to whether the pub would be an attractive proposition to possible alternative purchaser/landlords. Suggestion that the marketing was not as a public

house at all (redevelopment instead). Wexham Homes does not therefore consider this a serious attempt to market/ sell the building as a public house.

#### 4.57 Loss of existing building

- Wexham Home considers it appropriate to look into the possibility of formally recognising the heritage value of the existing building.
- Wexham Homes support the approach detailed in the response from Cllr James as the most logical means of preserving the irreplaceable heritage value of the building.
- If retaining the building is genuinely structurally impossible, practically impossible or non-viable Wexham Homes emphasises that, as a minimum, consideration should be given to retaining the front facade at least, with an appropriately designed building to the rear whether this is to be in purely residential use or retained as a community public house or perhaps a mixed used, incorporating some residential and a smaller public house.

#### 4.58 Impact on neighbouring land to the south

- The proposal is reliant on the adjacent Wexham Homes site for access over land that Wexham Homes owns. Wexham Homes is concerned that the proposed development appears to rely on access from the land between the application site and the Wexham Homes site, which it describes as a “shared access” but that Wexham Homes believes is its land.
- The proposal is reliant on the adjacent Wexham Homes site for the open outlook required to provide adequate living conditions for future residents.
- Wexham Homes believes the proposal would therefore significantly prejudice its ability to develop its site and bring forward the benefits of highly sustainable new housing that it sees as the main benefit of the application proposal.
- Proposal ignores the land to the north and its potential to provide beneficial development. Wexham Homes site has already been the subject of pre-application discussions with Reading Borough Council (Officer note: these took place in September 2017; no further formal pre-application enquiries or application submissions have since been made).
- Wexham Homes emphasise that comprehensive redevelopment remains its preferred approach if the applicant is prepared to engage in genuinely constructive dialogue.

#### 4.59 Scale / Design

- The proposed development is overbearing in scale.
- Effect on listed building and conservation area as the proposed scheme is incongruous with the surrounding area.
- Layout and density of the proposed redevelopment will have a greater scale and massing than the former Red Lion PH, therefore, this will have a negative impact on the area.
- The proposal is excessively large, overtly contemporary, monolithic 4-storey block that has been reduced in height by only some 50cm. Wexham Homes is particularly unconvinced that the scale of the building has been reduced by using different materials, introducing opaque glass balconies and moving it slightly away from its eastern boundary; and the design still relates far more to development further from the site beyond the flyover that dominates the streetscene to the north; rather than the historic context of the immediate street scene.

#### 4.60 Transport

- The proposed development will cause parking problems.

#### 4.61 Amenity

- The proposed development will cause noise problems.
- Overlooking/loss of privacy to adjoining land owned by Wexham Homes Ltd.
- Loss of light or overshadowing to adjoining land owned by Wexham Homes Ltd. The detrimental impact of this, has not been quantified in the daylight and sunlight assessment.
- Wexham Homes is very concerned that adequate living conditions can only be provided to the future occupiers of the proposed flats in the northern part of the new building by relying on the open, undeveloped current state of its site to the north. The proposed new building would have a wide, 4-storey northern elevation set very close to the site's northern boundary (the southern boundary of the Wexham Homes site) that would include the only/ main window to ten main habitable rooms (three kitchen/dining/living rooms and seven bedrooms); and an important kitchen window.

#### xv) Councillor responses

#### 4.62 Cllr James believes the applicant should be recommended to the planning committee for refusal, with concerns summarised as follows:

- Numerous Katesgrove Ward residents are rather concerned and dismayed with the proposed development.
- The scheme will not provide a social, environmental and economic benefit to the area, hence, it cannot be classed as a sustainable development.
- There is more harm to be caused by this incongruous form of development, as this application is not sympathetic to the heritage location of the property and does not preserve or enhance the setting of neighbouring listed buildings or the adjacent conservation area.
- The white stucco on the former Red Lion PH provides a positive contribution to the setting of the Church of St Giles and the listed buildings. The demolition of the former Red Lion PH is inappropriate due to the fact that it does have historical importance.
- This proposed scheme will have a devastating impact on the listed buildings due to its design and appearance being not in keeping with the local vicinity in which the application site sits, therefore, this should be taken as a material consideration in deciding/recommending this application.
- Questions as to whether the buildings are viable for listing and reference to the need to take account of building features in any proposal (e.g. Wellington Arms redevelopment on Whitley St).

### 5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 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.

5.2 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.

5.3 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'.

5.4 The application has been assessed against the following policies:

5.5 **National**

National Planning Policy Framework (2018)

National Planning Policy Guidance (2014 onwards)

5.6 **Reading Borough Local Development Framework - Adopted Core Strategy (2008) (Altered 2015)**

- CS1 Sustainable Construction and Design
- CS2 Waste Minimisation
- CS3 Social Inclusion and Diversity
- CS4 Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
- CS5 Inclusive Access
- CS7 Design and the Public Realm
- CS9 Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities
- CS14 Provision of housing
- CS15 Location, Accessibility, Density and Housing Mix
- CS20 Implementation of the Reading Transport Strategy
- CS22 Transport Assessments
- CS23 Sustainable Travel and Travel Plans
- CS24 Car / Cycle Parking
- CS29 Provision of Open Space
- CS33 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- CS34 Pollution and Water Resources
- CS35 Flooding
- CS36 Biodiversity and Geology
- CS38 Trees, Hedges and Woodlands

5.7 **Reading Central Area Action Plan (2009)**

- RC5 Design in the Centre
- RC6 Definition of the Centre
- RC7 Leisure, Culture and Tourism in the Centre
- RC8 Drinking Establishments
- RC9 Living in the Centre

5.8 **Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012) (Altered 2015)**

- SD1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- DM1 Adaptation to Climate Change
- DM2 Decentralised Energy
- DM3 Infrastructure Planning
- DM4 Safeguarding Amenity
- DM5 Housing Mix
- DM6 Affordable Housing

DM10 Private and Communal Outdoor Space  
DM12 Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters  
DM18 Tree Planting  
DM19 Air Quality

## **5.9 Reading Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents**

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

## **5.10 Other relevant documentation**

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking (Historic England, 2015a)  
Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England, 2015b)  
Historic England's Advice Notes (HEANs) 7: Local Heritage Listing (May 2016)  
Historic England's Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings (2010)  
Reading Tree Strategy (2010)  
DCLG Technical housing standards - nationally described space standard (2015)  
BRE Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight - A guide to good practice, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (2011)  
Market Place / London Street Conservation Area Appraisal (2007)

## **6. APPRAISAL**

### **6.1 The main issues are considered to be:**

- i) Land use principles considerations, including provision of affordable housing
- ii) Demolition, scale, appearance, design and effect on heritage assets
- iii) Housing density, mix and affordable housing
- iv) Quality of accommodation for future occupiers
- v) Impact on neighbours / nearby occupiers
- vi) Transport
- vii) Trees, landscaping and ecology
- viii) Sustainability, energy and SuDS
- ix) Other matters - archaeology, advertisements, s106, pre-commencement conditions & equality

#### **i) Land use principles**

### **6.2 The proposal would result in the loss of a former public house (last occupied for its lawful use on 01/07/2016) at part of the site. As such, the loss of the Class A4 use forms the first consideration in any redevelopment proposal at the site. With regard to local adopted policy, given the public house is located within the RCAAP area, Policy DM15 (which considers public houses outside the Central Area) does not apply. Although Policies RC6 and RC8 can be applied, they do not provide any specific protection to public houses. Set against this local policy vacuum, it is noted that paragraph 92 of the NPPF seeks decisions to plan positively for community facilities such as public houses, guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and ensure established facilities are able to develop and modernise and are retained for the benefit of the community.**

- 6.3 Set against this backdrop it is noted that 5 objections have been received to the application, some of which touch on these matters (see paragraphs 4.55 & 4.56 above for details). These are duly noted. In support of the proposals the applicant has supplied a range of information relating to the history/disposal/marketing of the public house, which concludes with the applicant considering that it has been demonstrated that the public house use was unviable, despite marketing attempts.
- 6.4 Officers consider that the competing viewpoints are finely balanced, but ultimately it is considered that the public house has been vacant for a considerable period of time, the objections have not demonstrated the specific benefits / facilities provided by the public house when it was most recently in use (to evidence it as a community facility of value - as referenced in the NPPF), it is not a designated asset of community value (unlike some other public houses in the Borough) and there are nearby alternative public house facilities which can provide suitable benefits for the local community. On balance, it is therefore considered by officers that it would not be sustainable (if tested at appeal) to resist the principle of the loss of the public house use at the site. Instead, the loss of the public house use is considered appropriate by officers.
- 6.5 As a result of the loss of the existing use being considered appropriate, it is confirmed that the principle of a proposed residential use at the site is consistent with the broad objectives of Policy CS14 and the wider NPPF. The provision of 11 residential units, equating to an uplift of 10 when the existing single unit at No. 38 is taken into account, would assist the Borough in meeting its annual and plan period housing targets, in line with Policy CS14. Accordingly, the land use principles at the site are considered to be established.

ii) **Demolition, scale, appearance, design and effect on heritage assets**

- 6.6 Considering first the demolition of the existing buildings, it is pertinent to first note that the applicant is scheduled to shortly receive a certificate of immunity from statutory listing (as per section 4xii above). Should this be formally confirmed prior to the committee it shall be reported in an update report. Despite this, it is nevertheless considered by officers that both application site buildings are non-designated heritage assets (as identified by the Historic Buildings Consultant in section 4ii) above. Accordingly, justification for the demolition of both buildings is required. In support of the application detailed reports outlining the structural defects in the buildings have been submitted. Officers have also visited the site to personally witness these, for example most prominently in the north gable. In short, officers consider that subject to the design of the proposed replacement building being acceptable, the demolition of the existing buildings have been sufficiently justified and is considered appropriate by officers.
- 6.7 With the above in mind, due consideration of the proposed replacement building is required. Considering first the scale and massing of the building, at four-storeys (and part basement) it is acknowledged to be of a greater scale than the existing part-two, part-three (and cellar) storey buildings. The footprint of the proposed building generally follows that of the existing, although the massing to the rear (proposed to be consistent with the front) is far greater than the existing part-single-storey element. It is noted at the time of the previous application (172328) officer concerns were raised in relation to the overall scale and massing of the proposed building. Although it is acknowledged that the reduction (in comparison with the previously withdrawn application) is limited to 0.5m, a more thorough analysis of the surrounding area has been provided as part of this submission, including accurate and detailed long streetscene elevations. Set within this

context of the additional justification provided, officers are now content that the proposed scale/massing is not significantly out of context with the prevailing character and instead would assimilate satisfactorily in terms of its scale/massing (also set within the context of the existing building too). However, officers also acknowledge and consider that the proposed massing is the maximum permissible at the site, owing to the site and surrounding area characteristics. These conclusions were also made by the Reading Design Review Panel when considering the proposals in July 2018 (see section 4iii above).

- 6.8 Turning to consider the appearance of the proposed building, a contemporary design approach has been followed, which both the RBC Historic Buildings Consultant and Reading DRP are satisfied with (see sections 4ii & 4iii above for details). In particular, the DRP commended the architect on the evidence base and clear understanding of the nearby context in justifying the proposed design approach, in sharp contrast to previous iterations. There is a strong vertical rhythm in the proposed building, with a clearly defined base (ground floor level), middle (first and second floors) and top (third floor). The ground floor includes a legible step-free entrance (assisted by glazed brickwork either side of the entrance - the entrance has been simplified to respond to the DRP comments about the 'integrity and grounding'), while the windows are consistent with language on the floors above. The middle element is regular and consistent in its rhythm, with DRP pleased with the window proportions. At top floor level this element is set-back and more lightweight in form to help it appear satisfactorily subservient.
- 6.9 A particularly important feature is considered to be the south-east corner elevation, as it is highly visible in long views along Southampton Street when approaching from the south (particularly owing to the footprint as existing/proposed, in contrast to the set-back neighbour of Solent Court). At the outset of the application, external balconies were proposed at this point from ground to second floor level, with DRP commenting that these "dissolve the constancy of the façade design and pose overlooking and face-face distance issues". Subsequent to this and further officer feedback the balconies have been omitted to maintain the consistent approach considered to be required by DRP and officers.
- 6.10 With regard to the detailed design of the proposal, the primary materials consist of red brick, delineated with grey brick infill panels (both characteristic of the area - e.g. nearby Church Street). Additional richness to the design is provided through the provision of glazed bricks either side of the ground floor entrance (to provide added emphasis and therefore assist legibility), while the set-back third floor is more lightweight with larger expanses of glazing and grey rainscreen cladding. The proposal also includes aluminium composite windows and doors (grey finish) with lightweight single panes of glass forming Juliet balconies, as set within the reveals. At ground and top floor level the balustrades will comprise galvanized flat metal railings. In principle the choice of materials is considered to achieve a suitable balance between utilising features common in the local area, whilst in itself being of a more modern overall idiom which creates a character of its own, and in-turn positively contribute to the overall character of the wider area. It will be especially important to secure further details (including physical samples and manufacturers details) of all facing materials, to ensure the envisaged design quality is implemented in practice (noting the words of caution raised in this regard by Reading DRP). Accordingly, a pre-commencement (barring demolition) condition is recommended to secure full details of the proposed materials.

- 6.11 In respect of the effect of the proposals on the setting of nearby listed buildings (as identified in full in section 4ii above) and the character and appearance of the adjacent conservation area, no substantive concerns have been raised by the RBC Historic Buildings Consultant. More specifically, the proposals would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the designated heritage assets and, when weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (as outlined elsewhere in this appraisal), the proposals are considered to be appropriate in this regard. With the condition secured in relation to materials, as set out previously, this is another safeguard in protecting the nearby heritage assets, by helping to ensure that the detailing of the design help tie the more contemporary building to the surrounding area.
- 6.12 In overall terms, the proposed replacement building is considered appropriate in all design/heritage regards, subject to the aforementioned materials condition. This is in line with Policies CS7, CS33 and RC5 predominantly. Accordingly, the principle of the demolition of the existing buildings are also considered to have been suitably justified too.

iii) **Housing density, mix and affordable housing**

- 6.13 The application site is located within the boundary of the Reading Central Area Action Plan, where the density range is specified to be above 70 dwellings per hectare. In this instance the provision of 11 units on a 0.0332ha site would equate to 331 dwellings per hectare. Although a high density development, the site characteristics (brownfield site/extent of the existing building) and accessibility means it is sustainable location, thereby counting in favour of officers concluding that the density is appropriate.
- 6.14 Turning to consider the proposed mix of units, 1x studio, 8x1-bed and 2x2-bed units are proposed. Policy RC9 details that a mix of different sized units are required and ideally a mix of 1, 2 and 3-bed units should be provided. In this instance no 3-bed units are sought, with only studio/1/2-bed units proposed. Furthermore, there is a predominance of studio/1-bed units. However, as the scheme is below 15 units, the 40% 1-bed maximum / 5% 3-bed minimum guide detailed in Policy RC9 cannot be applied. Although the proposed mix is not considered ideal, it nevertheless does provide a (albeit somewhat limited) mix of unit sizes and is therefore considered adequate by officers. It is recommended that a condition is secured whereby, notwithstanding the provisions of the GPDO 2015, no change to the unit mix (1xstudio, 8x1-bed and 2x2-bed units) shall be made to the development hereby permitted without express planning permission from the Local Planning Authority. This is to safeguard the mix altering to potentially unacceptable mixes in the future, while also having a dual benefit of not altering the sales values of units (which could improve scheme viability) without this being managed and assessed by the local planning authority.
- 6.15 With regard to affordable housing, in line with Policy DM6, a 30% on-site provision is required (equating to 3.3 units). In this instance the applicant is seeking to provide nil affordable housing and has submitted viability justification (as referenced in Policy DM6 in instances where proposals fall short of the policy target). As outlined at section 4ix) above, the viability submission has been assessed on behalf of the local planning authority by BPS Chartered Surveyors. After concerns with the conclusions of the initial appraisal were raised by BPS, a more detailed viability submission was submitted and BPS has subsequently concluded that the scheme cannot viably support an affordable housing contribution. Although naturally disappointing to officers in light of the pressing

need for affordable housing in the Borough, the nil provision at this point in time has been suitably evidenced in a robust manner, in line with the circumstances allowed by Policy DM6.

- 6.16 Notwithstanding this, BPS and RBC Valuations both consider that there is a sufficient basis to secure a deferred affordable housing contribution mechanism, which would enable the Council to share in any subsequent uplift in actual value, based on a later re-appraisal of viability. The applicant has confirmed agreement to the principle of this mechanism, with the exact details to be secured within the s106 Legal Agreement.
- 6.17 Furthermore, officers also consider it necessary to secure a further s106 legal agreement obligation relating to affordable housing in this case. This relates to contributions to affordable housing applying on a cumulative basis (rather than individual application basis) should the building be extended / altered (to create further units) or units subdivided (e.g. a 2-bed unit becomes 2 separate 1-bed units) in the future. This is also necessary in part due to (future) conversions resulting in a change of use under 10 units (as could be proposed at a later date) not attracting affordable housing contributions (as per the application of Policy DM6). Hence, in practice, each part of any future proposal at the site shall make an appropriate contribution to affordable housing, having regard to the contribution that would arise from a single assessment across all components.
- 6.18 Typically any additional contribution would take the form of a financial contribution to affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough, given the likely difficulties of incorporating further on-site provision in this instance. Such an approach was sought and considered appropriate on appeal by the Planning Inspectorate elsewhere in the Borough in June 2018 (see Ref 170251 at City Wall House, 26 West St Appeal Ref: APP/E0345/W/17/3188270) and is being sought to be applied where relevant on other current proposals in the Borough (e.g. 180591 at Mulberry House at the 6<sup>th</sup> February Planning Applications Committee).
- 6.19 The applicant is agreeable to the principle of a S106 Legal Agreement in terms of both obligations. If these elements are secured as recommended, although acknowledging and accepting that no on-site / off-site affordable housing provision or financial contribution is provided at this stage, this has been specifically evidenced, justified and independently reviewed as such, as Policy DM6 allows for. Thus, on balance, this is considered the best possible contribution towards affordable housing in this instance. The proposal is therefore considered to be policy compliant in this regard.

iv) **Quality of accommodation**

- 6.20 The internal layout of the proposed units are arranged so as to create an adequate overall standard of living accommodation for future occupiers. Although the internal shape of some of the units are irregular in some areas, the overall size of the units all comply with the national space standards, as do the bedrooms. Furthermore, all rooms include dedicated storage spaces, have suitable floor to ceiling heights and are all either dual or triple aspect (providing suitable outlook and the option of natural ventilation). In addition, all units will either have access to small private amenity (garden or terrace) areas (units 1, 3, 10, 11) or access to the shared amenity area to the rear of the site. The first and second floor units also include Juliet balconies. As such, suitable external amenity space is provided, within the context of the inherent physical constraints of the site and RCAAP location.

- 6.21 From an Environmental Protection perspective, as detailed at section 4iv) above, the submitted noise assessment has demonstrated that future occupiers will not be unduly harmed by nearby noise sources. This is subject to a condition ensuring the glazing and ventilation is carried out in accordance with the stated methodology prior to occupation. From an air quality perspective the submitted report has suitably demonstrated that no specific mitigation measures are required in this instance. Another welcomed element is the provision of one fully-adaptable wheelchair accessible unit at ground floor level (unit 3), with step-free access provided to the ground floor off Southampton Street. Although lifetime homes standards are no longer considered within the planning regime, the applicant has outlined that 10 of the 11 units are lifetime home compatible.
- 6.22 Transport observations at section 4i) above confirm that cycle and waste provision is suitable and will be secured via condition. With specific reference to waste and recycling provision, that this is proposed to be serviced via a 'shared access' off Southampton Street. It is noted from a consultation response by the neighbouring landowner (and subsequent responses from the applicant) that there is a boundary dispute regarding the ownership of this land. This is not a planning matter and not of concern to the local planning authority unless there is little or no prospect of a satisfactory access to the development. In this instance each of the units are accessed solely from within the red-line of the application site, with only the bin storage relying on the 'shared access', albeit only one of the four bins would be reliant on the access, as the main store could potentially be accessed through the building (although this would naturally not be preferred). However, based on the proposals at this point in time and the need for the development to provide suitable waste and recycling facilities, it is considered necessary to include a pre-occupation condition requiring the means of access to be available for use. Should the applicant subsequently encounter difficulties in this regard, it is considered that alternative locations/layouts could be considered by the applicant and considered as either non-material or minor-material amendments to the scheme (the type of application would depend on the nature of any such future proposal).
- 6.23 There are some acknowledged shortfalls in the proposed accommodation, such as the provision of the living/dining/kitchen room being at basement level and being served solely by two rooflights, thereby limiting outlook/natural ventilation and access to day/sunlight at this point. However, this unit is a maisonette and both bedrooms would be at ground floor level, with the rooflight acting to ensure the ground floor bedroom is set back adequately from the highway. Thus, on balance, this unit is considered to be adequate. In wider terms in relation to day/sunlight matters, at the time of previous application 172328, the then submitted day/sunlight assessment was independently reviewed on behalf of the local planning authority by BRE, who concluded that a good level of daylight provision would occur for future occupiers. In terms of sunlight, this varies across the site owing to the proximity of existing nearby buildings around the site, meaning south facing rooms receive ample sunlight and others would receive most sunlight in the morning. The internal layout has not significantly changed in this application to arrive at a different conclusion (an updated day/sunlight report has been submitted) and is therefore considered appropriate.
- 6.24 Finally, with terms of overlooking between future units, the layout of the building has been suitably designed to ensure future occupiers will not suffer from a loss of privacy from existing nearby buildings or other units within the scheme itself. The orientation of windows is generally such that opportunities for direct overlooking is minimised, with this only possible at acute angles instead. To protect the

amenity of future occupiers of units 4 and 7 (from nearby overlooking from Solent Court), it is however considered necessary to secure by condition the three windows on the south elevation serving unit 4 at first floor level, and the three windows above at second floor level on the south elevation serving unit 7 as obscure glazed and fixed shut (up to 1.7m). This is not considered to significantly compromise the quality of accommodation, as internally these windows serve large dual aspect living/dining/kitchen rooms.

- 6.25 It is acknowledged that there is a direct 10.3m distance between kitchen windows associated with Solent Court (to the south) and the south elevation windows associated with units 6 (first floor), 9 (second floor) and 11 (third floor). The proposed boundary fence would prevent overlooking at ground floor level. At first and second floors this would mean overlooking between kitchens (at Solent Court) and dual aspect living/dining/kitchen rooms (at the application site), while it would be kitchen to bedroom (and terrace) at third floor level (all based on the internal layouts shown on the plans). Although acknowledged not to be ideal, within the context of the site being located within a tight urban grain within the RCAAP area, the level of harm from these limited instances is not considered to significantly reduce the amenity of future occupiers or compromise the overall quality of accommodation proposed.
- 6.26 Similarly, it is noted that a number of windows are proposed on the north side elevation of the proposed building. It is acknowledged, partly as a result of the public consultation response from Wexham Homes (see section 4xiv for details), that this presently undeveloped (barring advertisement boards) land could come forward in the future (although it is noted to not be allocated land and no application has been submitted for residential development at the site - only a pre-application submission in 2017). In short, it is considered by officers that a future proposal at the neighbouring site would not necessary significantly compromise the standard of accommodation of future occupiers and it is not possible to resist the proposals on this basis.
- 6.27 Overall it is considered that the proposals comply with policies RC9 and DM4 and would provide an adequate standard of accommodation for future occupiers.

**v) Impact on neighbours / nearby occupiers**

- 6.28 Considering first privacy and overlooking matters, as detailed in the quality of accommodation section above, the application site is located within a dense urban location. The increase in residential accommodation at the site therefore means that there will inevitably be increased opportunities for loss of privacy/overlooking for existing nearby occupiers. However, a number of steps have been taken to minimise the impacts, primarily on the neighbouring Solent Court. The aforementioned obscure glazed windows on the south elevation at first and second floor level (towards the front of the building), will protect the amenity of occupiers within Solent Court. The proposed third floor level at the application site includes set-back windows and a small terrace. This is at a greater height to Solent Court, meaning any loss of privacy would be at acute angles at this point. To the rear, as already discussed in the quality of accommodation section above, the 10.3m distance between kitchen windows at Solent Court and living/dining/kitchen windows for units 6 and 9 is not ideal, but the loss of amenity for Solent Court occupiers is not considered harmful enough to warrant the refusal of the application on this basis. St Giles Court to the west is in commercial use, downplaying loss of privacy/overlooking issues.



- 6.29 Public consultation responses have raised concerns regarding overlooking/loss of privacy to adjoining land owned by Wexham Homes. No planning application has been submitted in respect of this land and it is therefore difficult to resist the proposals on the basis of a possible hypothetical scenario on an unallocated neighbouring site. Officers are however content that the proposals do not necessarily preclude the possibility of neighbouring land coming forward in the future, at which point any such proposal would be considered on its merits.
- 6.30 Turning to consider day/sunlight matters, as referenced in the quality of accommodation section above, BRE independently reviewed the assessment submitted as part of withdrawn application 172328 at the site. The overall massing of the site has not changed significantly enough to warrant BRE re-assessing the updated assessment submitted as part of the current application. Instead, the conclusions previously referenced by BRE are considered to be applicable in this instance too. More specifically, although BRE note that some Solent Court units will suffer a loss of daylight, this is considered a 'moderate adverse' impact as it applies to kitchens, rather than living rooms or bedrooms, and elsewhere 'minor adverse' impacts would occur. Furthermore, BRE identifies Solent Court as possibly being a 'bad neighbour' (large building with windows close to the site boundary), for which a greater loss of light could be acceptable. BRE also confirms that loss of sunlight to neighbouring buildings is not an issue, as the relevant windows face within 90 degrees of due north (so are not required to be tested). On the basis of the BRE review, officers are content that the impact on existing neighbouring occupiers is not significantly harmful.
- 6.31 With regard to visual dominance and the overbearing effects of a development, it is fully acknowledged that for occupiers of Solent Court (in particular) the proposals represent a far greater neighbouring building in comparison with the existing context. Although in parts (particularly to the rear of the application site) this could be considered as overbearing, the level / nature of this would not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of these existing occupiers, within the context of the dense urban location. To the west St Giles Court is in commercial use, downplaying this element, while all other buildings are too distant to be significantly impacted.
- 6.32 It is noted that the proposals include a number of external terrace areas, but none of these are of a size/nature to result in significant noise/disturbance to nearby occupiers. However, a large expanse of flat roof is proposed, shown to serve photovoltaics. Owing to its size and potential noise disturbance to nearby occupiers, a condition is recommended which states only the areas specified as external terraces shall be used for such purposes and no other flat roofed areas shall be used as external terraces without permission from the local planning authority. Potential noise disturbance to nearby occupiers during the demolition and construction stage will be managed through the recommended demolition and construction method statement and hours of construction conditions.
- 6.33 No other significant adverse impacts are envisaged for nearby occupiers in respect of any other consideration referenced at Policy DM4. As such, on balance, the proposals are considered appropriate in this regard.

vi) **Transport**

- 6.34 Transport officers are satisfied with the proposals subject to a number of conditions, as summarised at section 4i) of this report. With these conditions all

included in the recommendation, the proposals are considered appropriate in this regard.

**vii) Trees, landscaping and ecology**

- 6.35 Both the Natural Environment officer and Ecology consultant are satisfied with the information submitted with the application from these perspectives, as detailed at sections 4v) and 4vi) of this report. More specifically, the Natural Environment officer is basing this conclusion on a number of conditions, which are all included in the recommendation at the outset of this report. Accordingly, the proposals are considered to comply with policies CS7, CS36 and CS38.

**viii) Sustainability, energy and SuDS**

- 6.36 The Design and Access Statement submitted in support of the proposal incorporates commentary in respect of sustainability and energy matters. More specifically the proposals will include a variety of sustainability and energy features, including Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery systems and the provision of photovoltaics at roof level. Although in principle such features are welcomed and considered appropriate, no formal assessment has however been submitted. Accordingly, a pre-occupation condition will instead secure written evidence that at least 50% of the dwellings will achieve at least a 19% improvement in the dwelling emission rate over the target emission rate, as per Part L of Building Regulations (2013). This shall ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with sustainable building standards, in accordance with Policy CS1. With this secured the proposals are considered appropriate from a sustainability and energy perspective.
- 6.37 In terms of SuDS, as per section 4x) above, the proposals are considered to be acceptable subject to a pre-commencement (barring demolition) condition. This will secure a SuDS implementation, maintenance and management plan, and the subsequent completion of the SuDS scheme prior to first occupation, which would thereafter managed and maintained in accordance with the approved plan/details.

**ix) Other matters - archaeology, advertisements, s106, pre-commencement conditions & equality**

- 6.38 Archaeology - As per the Berkshire Archaeology consultation response summarised at section 4xi) above, the proposals are considered appropriate in this regard subject to a pre-commencement condition securing a written scheme of archaeological investigation at the site.
- 6.39 Advertisements - the proposed south elevation shows a 2mx1m sign at first floor level. No advertisement consent application has been sought, so this is shown purely as an indicative feature by the applicant, with separate consent likely to be required in due course, at which time the local planning authority would assess this accordingly. An informative will be included on the decision notice to clarify this.
- 6.40 Section 106 Legal Agreement - As per the Reading UK CIC consultation response in section 4vii) above, it is necessary to secure a construction stage Employment Skills and Training Plan via s106. In this instance the applicant has indicated a preference for a financial contribution, which amounts to £1,705 (as per the SPD formula). This head of term, together with the affordable housing terms outlined earlier in this appraisal, will be secured via legal agreement. It is noted that

Policies CS9 and DM3 allow for necessary contributions to be secured to ensure that the impacts of a scheme are properly mitigated. It is considered that each of the obligations referred to above would comply with the National Planning Policy Framework and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in that they would be: i) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, ii) directly related to the development and iii) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

- 6.41 Pre-commencement conditions - In line with section 100ZA(5) of the Town and Country Planning Act (as amended) discussions are being undertaken with the applicant regarding pre-commencement conditions. The applicant agreed to the following conditions on 25/01/19: demolition and construction management statement; and, a programme of archaeological work. In addition, the following pre-commencement (barring demolition) conditions have also been communicated/agreed with the applicant: materials; hard and soft landscaping; SuDS.
- 6.42 Equality - In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. 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.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The proposed development would result in the redevelopment of a brownfield site, set within a dense urban environment, and create 11 residential units. The loss of the existing public house use and the buildings themselves have been considered to have been justified, while the proposed design is supported after the submission of revisions following officer and Reading DRP advice. It has been shown that an adequate standard of accommodation would be provided, while existing nearby occupiers would not be significantly impacted.
- 7.2 The non-provision of a contribution towards affordable housing at this stage is disappointing, but this has been evidenced and justified through a viability submission. Instead officers have negotiated a deferred affordable housing mechanism and a further requirement for affordable housing being applied on a cumulative basis should future proposals seek to subdivide or extend the building to create further residential units. Therefore, in overall terms, when applying a critical planning balance, the merits are considered to outweigh the shortfalls of the proposals. The proposals are subsequently considered to be acceptable within the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. As such, full planning permission is recommended for approval, subject to the recommended conditions and completion of the S106 Legal Agreement.

### **Drawings:**

- 100 Rev A Location Plan, as received 22/06/18
- 200 Rev C Existing Site Plan, as received 22/06/18
- 299 Rev A Existing Basement Plan, as received 22/06/18
- 300 Rev A Existing Ground Floor Plan, as received 22/06/18
- 301 Rev A Existing First Floor Plan, as received 22/06/18
- 302 Rev A Existing Second Floor Plan, as received 22/06/18
- 303 Rev A Existing Roof Plan, as received 22/06/18

400 Rev B Existing East Elevation, as received 22/06/18  
401 Rev B Existing South Elevation, as received 22/06/18  
402 Rev B Existing West Elevation, as received 22/06/18  
403 Rev B Existing North Elevation, as received 22/06/18  
500 Rev A Existing Long Section AA, as received 22/06/18  
501 Rev B Existing Short Section BB, as received 22/06/18  
502 Rev A Existing Short Section CC, as received 22/06/18  
202 P 01 Rev A Site Plan - as proposed, as received 27/07/18  
202 P 02 Rev B Ground Floor Plan - as proposed, as received 10/10/18  
202 P 03 Rev B First Floor Plan - as proposed, as received 10/10/18  
202 P 04 Rev B Second Floor Plan - as proposed, as received 10/10/18  
202 P 05 Rev A Third Floor Plan - as proposed, as received 27/07/18  
202 P 06 Roof Plan - as proposed, as received 22/06/18  
202 P 08 Rev B Elevations & Sections (with fences) - as proposed, as received 10/10/18  
202 P 09 Rev B Communal Garden Plan - as proposed, as received 25/01/19  
202 P 10 Rev B Site Plan - as proposed, as received 25/01/19  
202 P 11 Rev A - Elevations & Sections with no boundary treatment - as proposed, as received 25/01/19  
202 P 12 Rev B Streetscape: As existing & as proposed, as received 25/01/19

**Other documents:**

Supporting letter from MacNiven Quays Ltd dated and received 22/06/18  
310 Rev A Existing Street Views, as received 22/06/18  
Structural Survey & Report undertaken on behalf of Vogue Assets Ltd by Scott White and Hookins Ref ML/ASm/W01719 Rev 004 dated 18/06/2018, as received 22/06/18  
Reading, 38 Southampton Street, RG1 2QL - Report on further investigation structural survey by Scott White and Hookins Ref W01869 Rev A dated and received 22/06/18  
Noise Impact Assessment by ACCON UK, Ref A3353/N/001, dated 15/06/18, as received 22/06/18  
Air Quality Assessment by ACCON UK, Ref A3353/AQ/001, dated 14/06/18, as received 22/06/18  
Drainage Statement by Scott White and Hookins Ref W01869 Rev A dated and received 22/06/18  
Drainage Strategy Drawing W01869-SWH-ZZ-EA-DR-C-0100-P02, as received 22/06/18  
Transport Statement by Glanville Ref: TR8170374/MB/DW/011, Issue 8 dated 13/06/18, as received 22/06/18  
Heritage Statement by Forum Heritage Services, Revised June 2018, as received 22/06/18  
Planning, Design and Access Statement Addendum - Open Space Statement by Vocalism, dated and received 22/06/18  
Design and Access Statement by Somorjay & Tallis Architects, Rev A, dated 27/07/18, as received 30/07/18  
Daylight and Sunlight Assessment by ACCON UK, Ref A3048/DS/009, dated 08/08/18, as received 13/08/18  
Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment Report by Aspect Ecology, dated April 2018, as received 27/07/18  
Statement relating to loss of Public House, Reading, dated 16/07/18, as received 27/07/18  
202 P 07 Rev A GIA comparison - as existing & as proposed, as received 27/07/18  
Advice Report 'Red Lion Public House and 38 Southampton Street, Reading' by Historic England dated 21/12/18, as received 16/01/19  
Letter from MacNiven Quays dated & received 05/10/18  
Letter from MacNiven Quays dated & received 18/01/19

**Information submitted on a private and confidential basis:**

Viability Report for Vogue Assets Ltd by DJC Housing Consultants Ltd, dated June 2018, as received 22/06/18

Viability Rebuttal Report for Vogue Assets Ltd by DJC Housing Consultants Ltd, dated November 2018, as received 30/11/18  
Email from MacNiven Quay Limited 'RE: Reading, 34 - 38 Southampton Street - 181117', dated & received 21/01/18

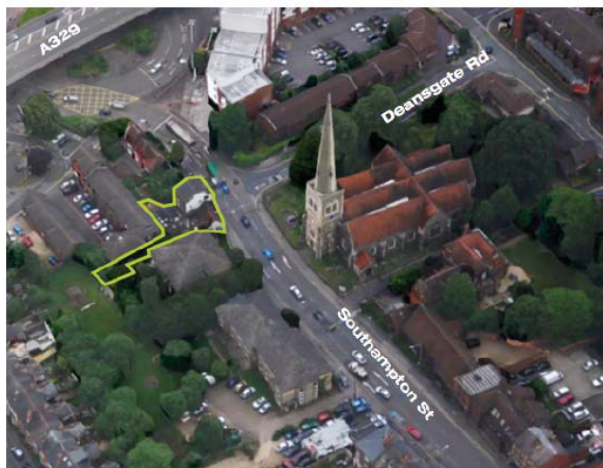
**Case Officer:** Jonathan Markwell



Birds Eye view from the North



Birds Eye view from the East



Birds Eye view from the South



Birds Eye view from the West

### Aerial views from the Design and Access Statement



The Southampton Street frontage.





View from the north with the listed No's 26 & 28 Southampton Street on the right.



Looking north from outside Solent Court



From Southampton Street looking north





Another view from Southampton Street looking north



Looking south from Mundesley St



Looking south from Crown St / Peel St junction





The west side of Southampton St, to the south of the application site



Above: Public house ground floor (ceiling had partly fallen in); Below: Ground floor bar.



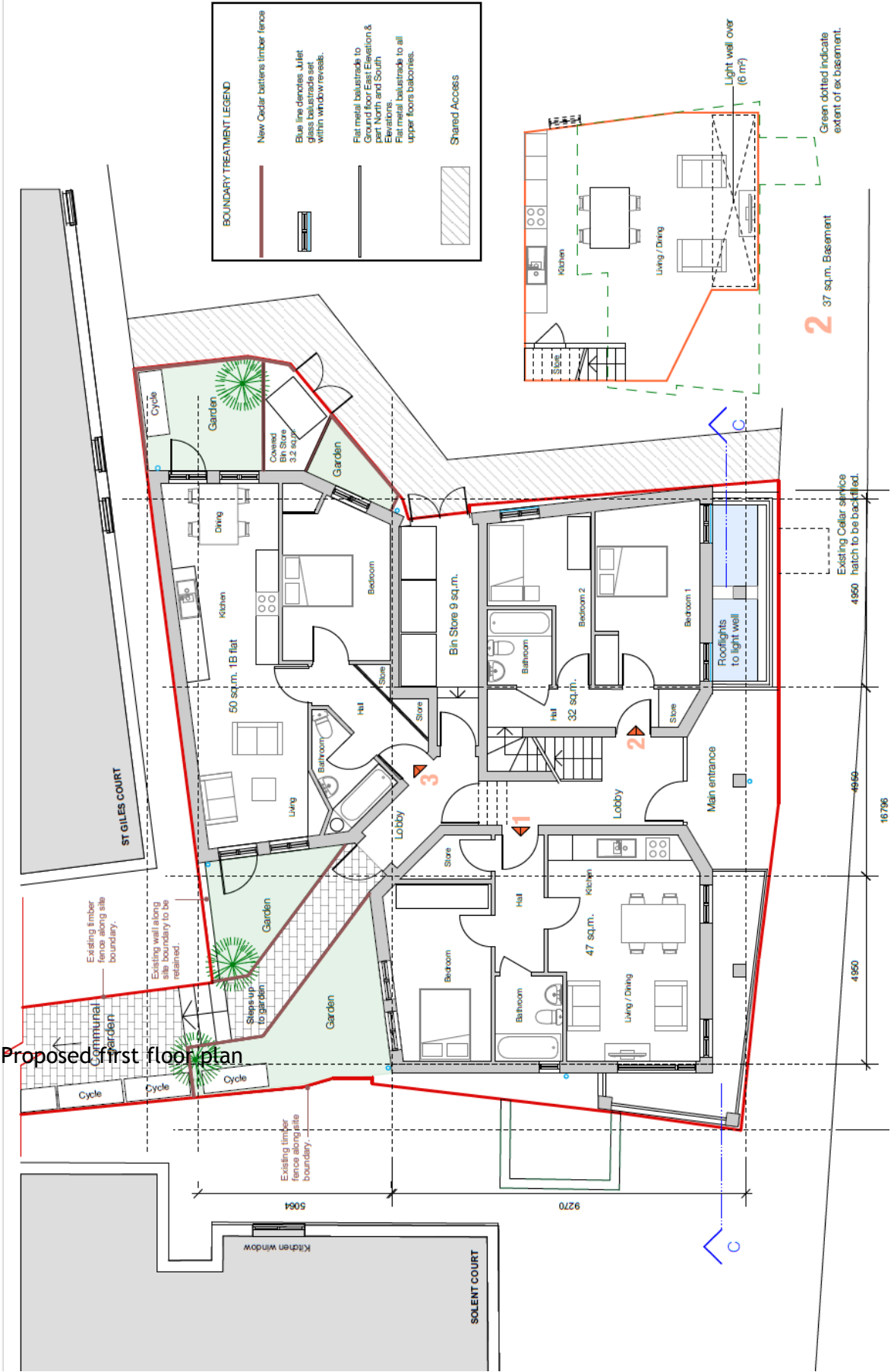


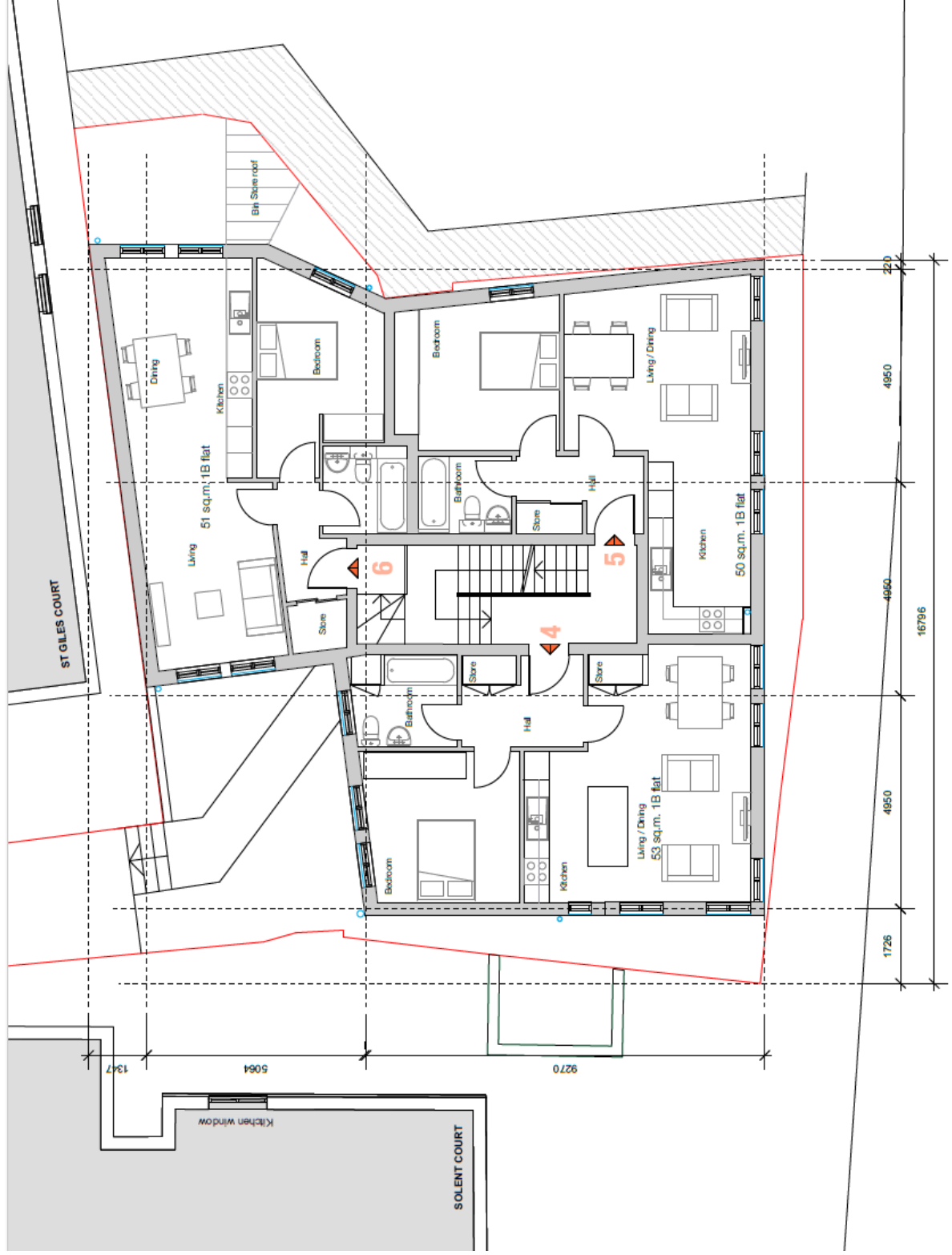
Proposed site plan / roof plan



Proposed rear amenity space / cycle storage facilities.

Proposed basement and ground floor plan

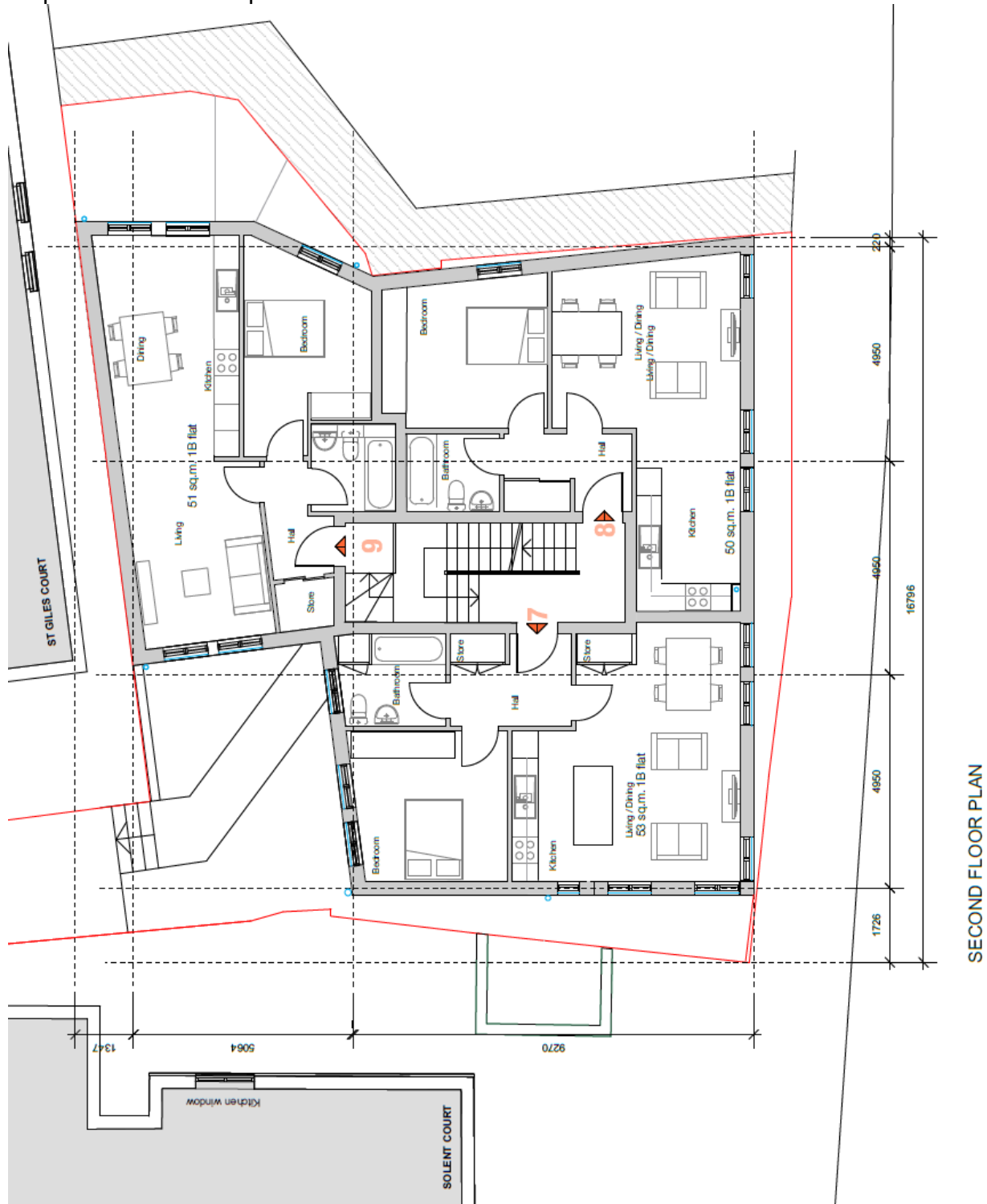




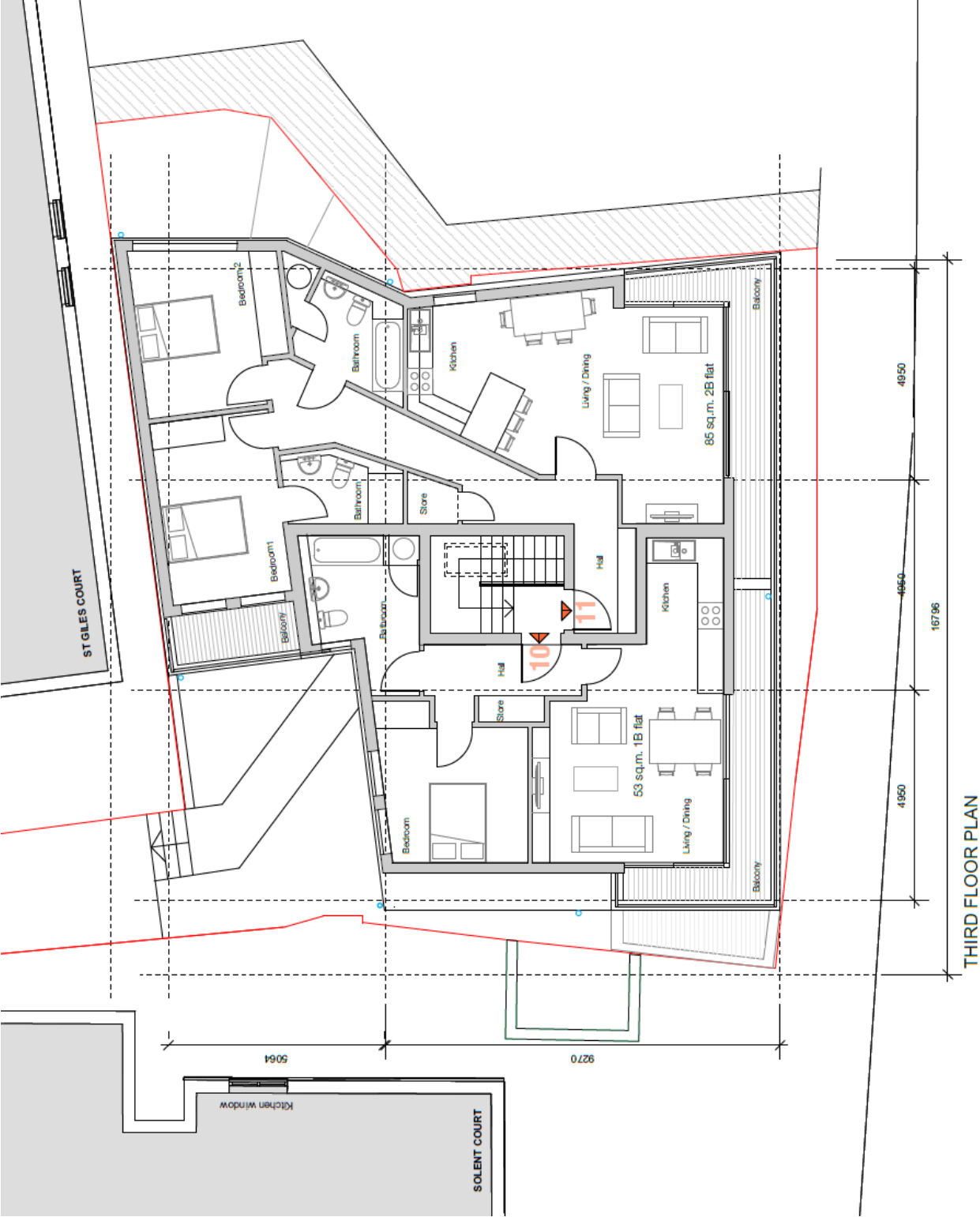
FIRST FLOOR PLAN

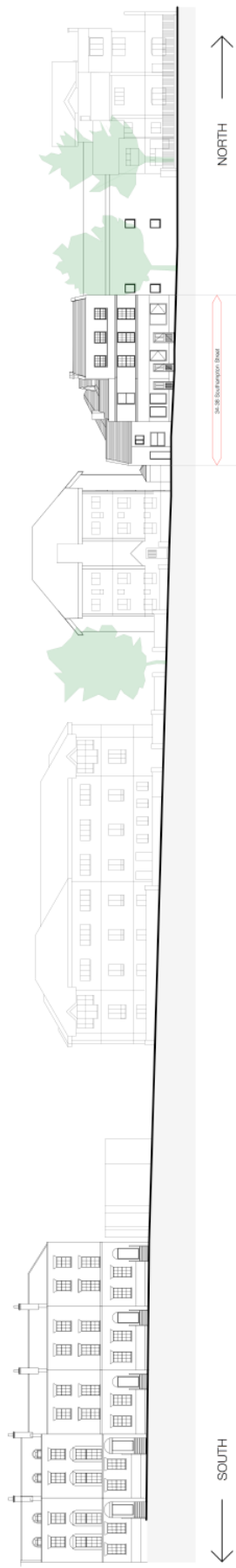


Proposed second floor plan

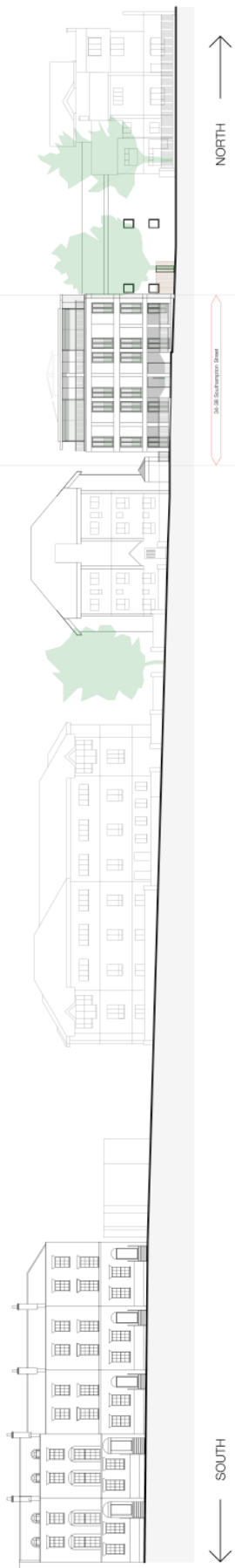


Proposed Third Floor Plan



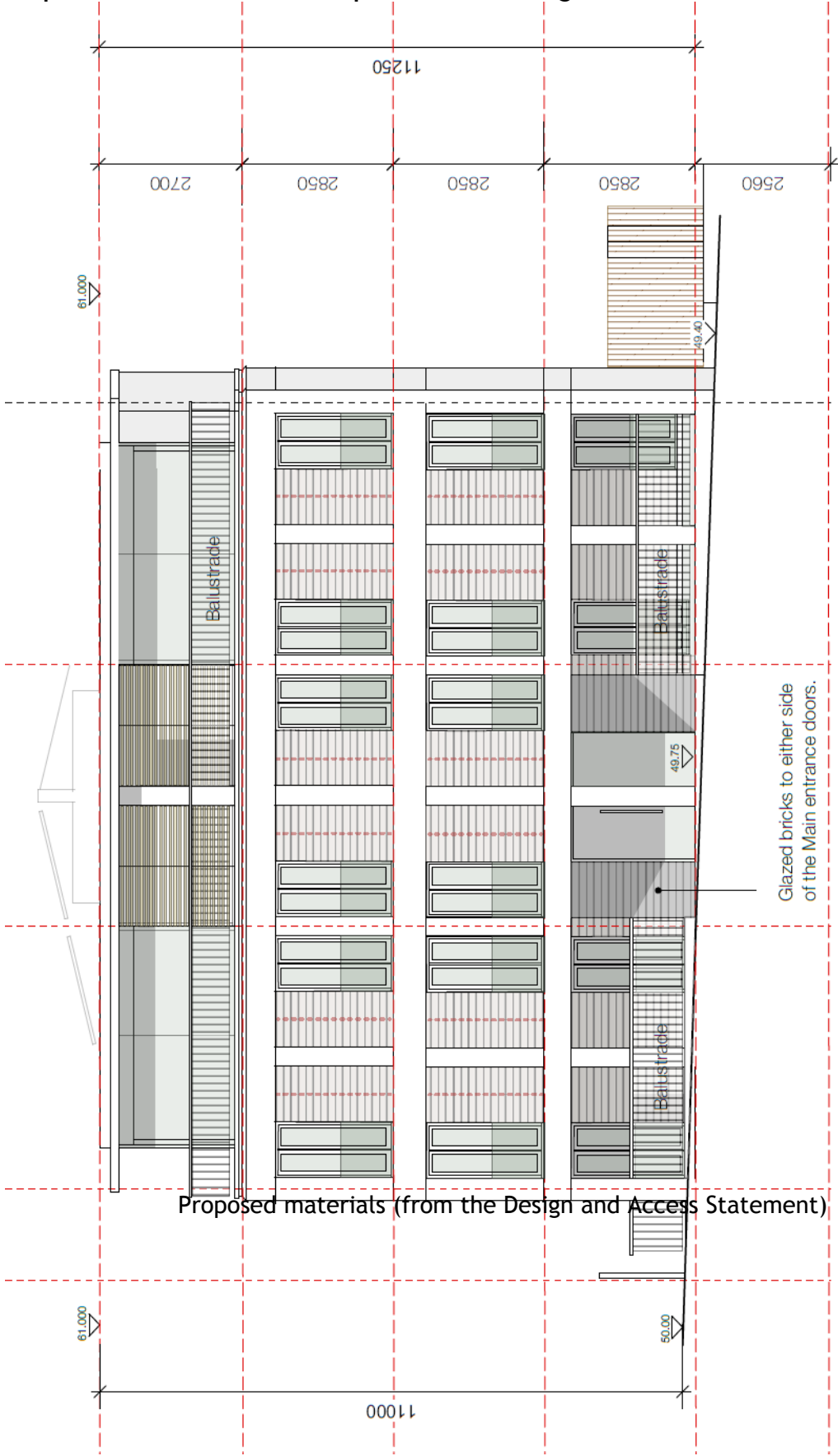


STREETSCAPE: AS EXISTING



STREETSCAPE: AS PROPOSED

Proposed elevations - Southampton Street frontage



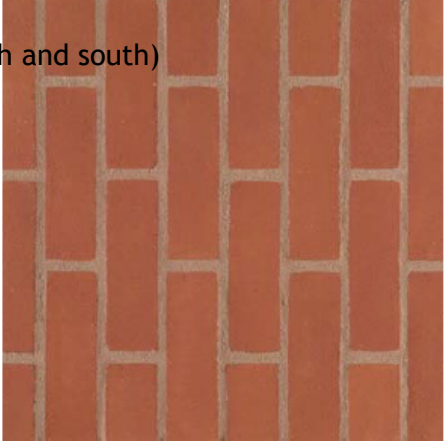
East Elevation



Materials

The main building material will be a light purple grey clay stock brick which will be tonally similar to that used on adjacent listed buildings. The lines of the main structure will read as a brick batten, faced with a red brick, contrasting with the infill on the infill, but still reflecting the vernacular. Each brick infill panel will feature a vertical row of snap header bricks, on the centre line and also in red, alluding to typical local historical brick detailing. Windows will be aluminium faced timber. They will be inward opening for ease of individual cleaning and guarded by a clear toughened and laminated glass panel.

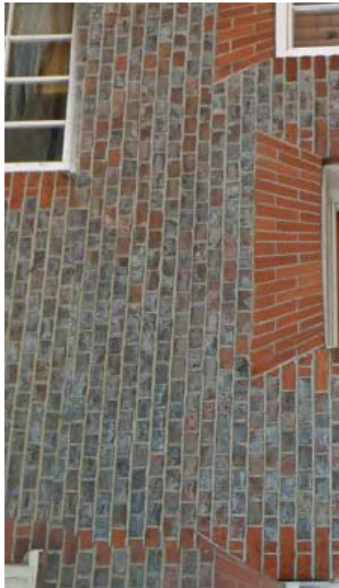
Proposed side elevations (north and south)



Proposed Red Stock bricks



Brick detailing and colours samples of Historic buildings in the surrounding area.



Proposed Grey Multi Stock bricks



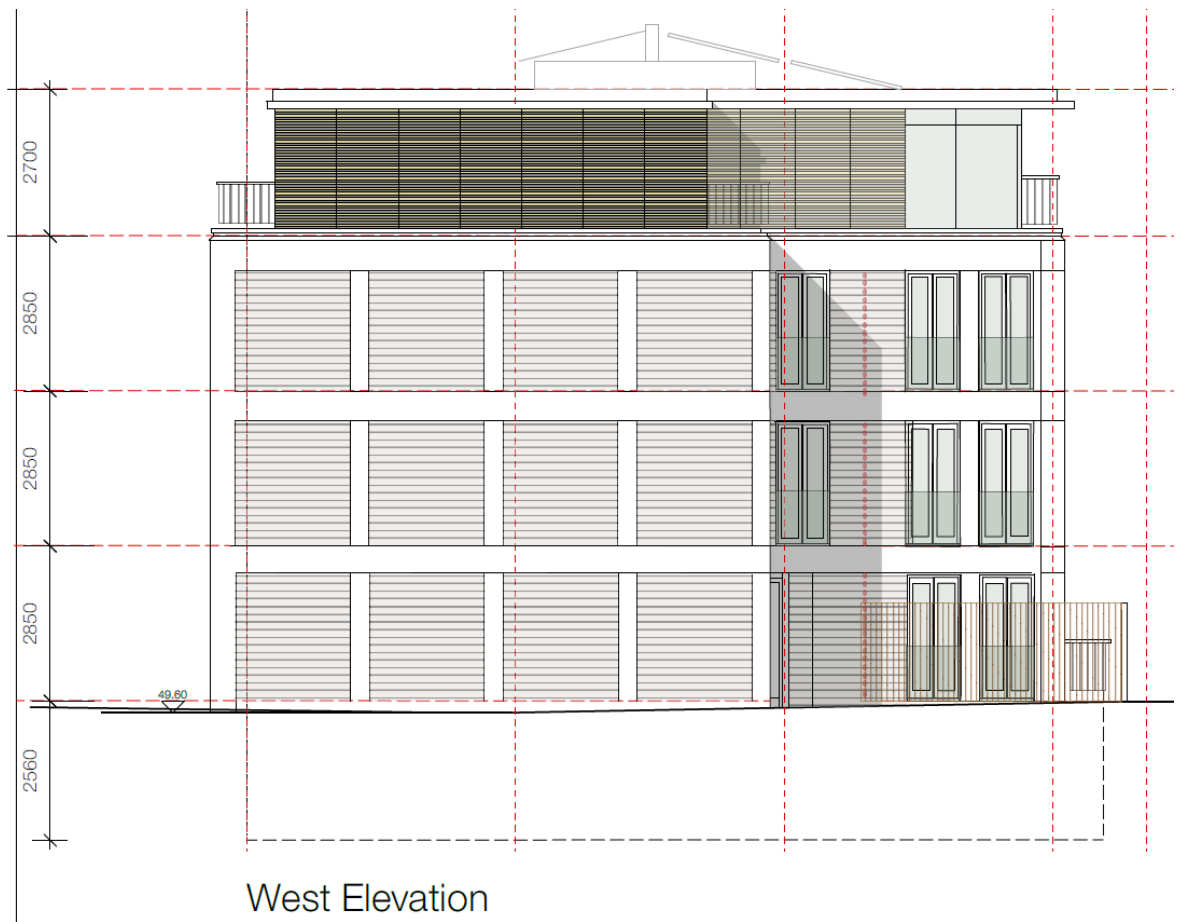
Extract of the proposed Front (East) Elevation



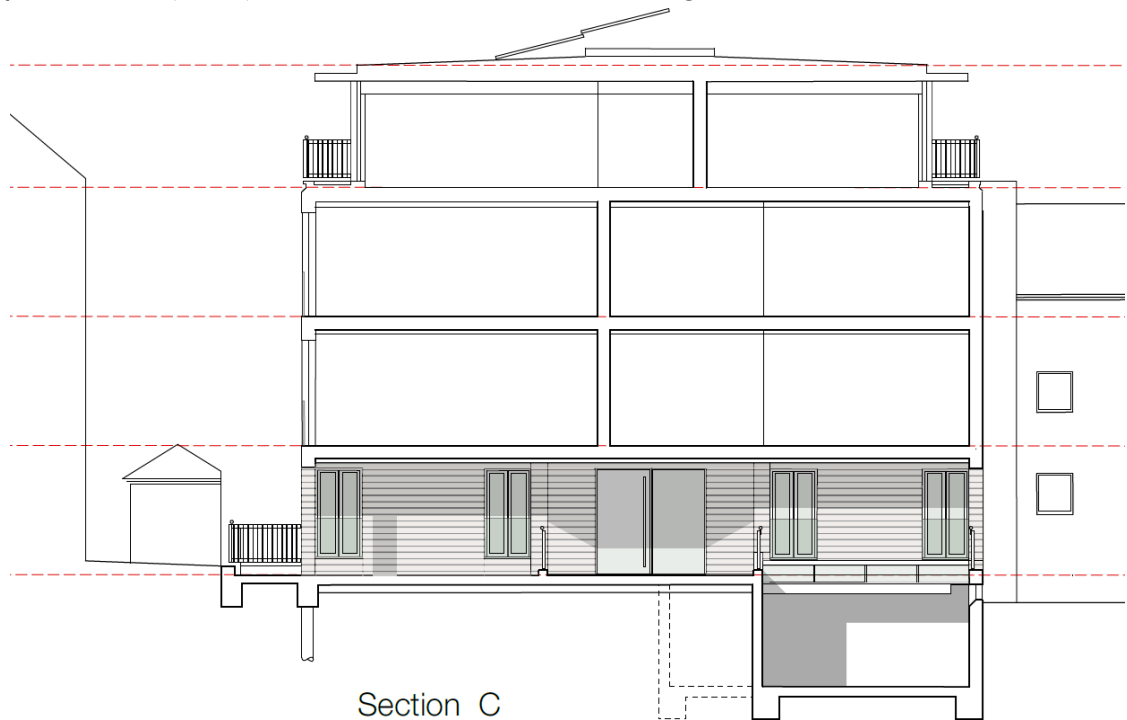
South Elevation



North Elevation



Proposed rear (west) elevation and section showing the basement and roof PV



## **APPENDIX 2 - UPDATE REPORT FOR 6<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2019 PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**

### **UPDATE REPORT**

**BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES**

**READING BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 6<sup>th</sup> February 2019**

**ITEM NO. 12**

**Page: 121**

**Ward:** Katesgrove

**Application No.:** 181117

**Address:** 34-36 & 38 Southampton Street, Reading, RG1 2QL

**Proposal:** Erection of a basement and 4-storey building to provide 11 (1x studio, 8x1-bed & 2x2-bed) residential units (Class C3) and associated works following the demolition of the existing buildings (basement & 3- storey public house at No's 34-36 Southampton Street and 2-storey residential building at No. 38)

#### **Recommendation:**

As in main report, barring rewording of condition 20 (omissions denoted by ~~strikethrough~~):

20. ~~Notwithstanding the provisions of the GPDO 2015~~ no change to the unit mix (1xstudio, 8x1-bed and 2x2-bed units) shall be made to the development hereby permitted without express planning permission from the Local Planning Authority.

### **1. Certificate of immunity from listing update**

- 1.1 Further to section 4xii) and paragraph 6.6 of the main report, on 28/01/19 Historic England (HE) confirmed the certificate of immunity from listing. More specifically, having considered HE's recommendation, the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has decided not to add Red Lion Public House and 38 Southampton Street, Reading to the List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. Accordingly, HE confirmed that the Minister hereby certifies that he does not intend to list the building.
- 1.2 Under section 6(2) of the 1990 Act, the effect of this certificate is to preclude the Secretary of State from listing Red Lion Public House and 38 Southampton Street for a period of five years from the date of issue (28/01/19), and to preclude the local planning authority from serving a Building Preservation Notice (BPN) on the building during that period.
- 1.3 The reasons for the decision were as already stated at paragraph 4.50 of the main report.

### **2. Further public consultation responses**

- 2.1 Subsequent to the completion of the main report, three further public consultation responses have been received. These are addressed below.
- 2.2 First, an objection has been received from an unspecified address on Southampton Street (2 submissions made at separate times, but of an identical nature). Secondly, a further response has been received from Calbourne Drive, Calcot, RG31 (previous objections were received at the time of the initial consultation, as reported at section 4xiv of the main report). Both responses from the Southampton Street and Calbourne Drive addresses are identical and are summarised as follows:

- a) Disheartened and astonished regarding the way in which the consultation process has been run. Concerns that Article 15 of the Development Management Procedure Order has not been followed as the application does not appear on the website from a postcode search. This is unfair and unjust on the residents of Reading as the whole point of the public consultation is so that anyone can respond to a planning consultation. In addition to individuals who might be directly affected by a planning application, community groups and specific interest groups (national as well as local in some cases) may wish to provide representations but in this case would be unable to do so as it is unlikely they would have the application number.
  - b) The Red Lion Public House is a great iconic building and no similar building exists within Reading.
  - c) The pub has been neglected by the current owners; the previous tenants were given a premium to leave the premises and forfeit their lease.
  - d) Not clear in the structural report prepared by Scott White and Hookins if the building is deteriorating and likely to collapse. RBC's house surveyor should assess whether it can be retained rather than demolished.
  - e) The proposal would be an over-development of the site.
  - f) The proposed design is poor and cumbersome and the proposed development would be large and dominant which is out of keeping with the street scene (agree 100% with previous officer comments at the time of application 172328) and contrary to policies CS7 and RC5.
  - g) The amenity for future occupiers is abysmal due to having an unacceptable lack of outlook which comes from the quality of rooms, and flat layouts being compromised.
  - h) The amenity of the existing nearby occupiers would be an unacceptable visual dominance due to the significant increase in massing proposed at the side/rear of the application site. As such, the existing/future occupiers of Solent Court would suffer significant detrimental impacts to their living environment, contrary to policy DM4.
- 2.3 Officer responses: a) Officers are content that the consultation requirements have been met. Owing to a technical issue, the application did not appear from the planning search function on the website via a postcode search. This was rectified when the matter was brought to the attention of officers. Throughout the consultation period the proposals could be found via an address search. Furthermore, responses were received from various addresses, as per section 4xiv of the main report. It is noted that one of the further respondents had commented at the time of the initial consultation in August 2018; b), d) e) & f) Please see sections 4ii), 4iii), 6ii) and 7 of the main report; c) Officers are content with the loss of the existing use, as per section 6i) of the main report; g) Please see section 6iv) of the main report. h) Please see section 6v of the main report.
- 2.4 Thirdly, an observation has been received from Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee (noting it has not commented on application 181117), subsequent to the publication of the main report. This queried the accuracy of the information which assisted HE in recommending the buildings should not be listed (more specifically whether the pub was pre or post 1840 - as referenced in separate) and sought for HE to reconsider the listing description on this basis.
- 2.5 Officer response: Officers fed the correspondence from Reading CAAC (including submissions at the time of application 172328) into HE. HE replied confirming that the evidence/argument put forward by the CAAC did not seem to provide any relevant new information not considered during HE's assessment. This was then fed

back to Reading CAAC, who acknowledged HE's response and thanked officers for pursuing this.

### **3. Further Councillor response**

- 3.1 Subsequent to previous comments received from Cllr James, as detailed at section 4xv) of the main report, a further response has been received withdrawing the original concerns raised. The further response, in full, is as follows:

After careful consideration and further conversation with the developers, I have decided to withdraw my objection of the Red Lion site. Although it would always be preferable to retain original features, I acknowledge that it is challenging given alterations made to the site and previous structural damage, and that developers have made an effort to act on previous feedback from residents in terms of the design.

Creating more housing is a priority in Reading and any additional units is important with a town with such high need. I welcome this element of the application, however, I would like to see a firm commitment to affordable housing.

**Case Officer: Jonathan Markwell**