Heritage Statement

Nos.27-32 Market Place, Reading

March 2022

Turley
Heritage

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Client
Watercrown Bracknell Limited

Our reference
MOUH3000

Date
March 2022

1. Introduction

Background and Purpose of this Report

1.1 This built Heritage Statement has been prepared by Turley Heritage on behalf of Watercrown Bracknell Limited (our 'Client' and the 'Applicant') to provide appropriate and proportionate information to the local planning authority regarding the heritage asset impacts associated with proposals for the reuse, conversion and associated works of alteration to Nos.27-32 Market Place (the 'Site') within central Reading. This accompanies an application for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for this scheme.

1.2 As background, both Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent have been approved by Reading Borough Council (RBC) for the part reuse and part redevelopment of a larger site area for a mix of uses including hotel, which included not only this application Site but also the adjoining vacant former Bristol & West Arcade (Nos.173-175 Friar Street). This approval dates from 21 July 2021 (LPA reference numbers 210163FUL and 210164LBC).

1.3 Also material is the previous approval again of both Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent by RBC for the redevelopment of that larger site in a mix of uses, albeit residential-led. This approval dates from 9 January 2019 (LPA reference numbers 180358FUL and 180359LBC).

1.4 Importantly, both approved applications have established the acceptability of the principal of significant change on Site and across this larger site, and in this way RBC have also recognised the public benefits that could be offered by the reuse and revitalisation of the currently vacant historic buildings, as well as those associated with a new mix of uses, built development, high quality architecture and landscape across the larger site area.

1.5 These previously approved schemes have been subject to extensive pre-application discussions with RBC, Historic England (HE) and other stakeholders through consultation. This new application scheme – now focussed on the Site of Nos.27-32 Market Place – has also been subject pre-application engagement with RBC prior to this submission.

1.6 The requirement for this new report stems from Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which requires that special regard be given to the desirability of preserving the special interest of listed buildings or their settings. Section 72 of the act also places a duty upon the local planning authority in determining applications for development affecting conservation areas to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

1.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 provides the Government's national planning policy for the conservation of the historic environment. In respect of information requirements, it sets out that

'In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.'[1]

1.8 Paragraph 195 then sets out that local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of heritage assets that might be affected by proposals, including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of proposals in order to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

Structure and Contents of this Report

1.9 In accordance with the legislative and policy requirements outlined above, **Section 2** of this report firstly confirms the relevant heritage assets within the Site and its vicinity, the significance of which would likely be affected by direct or indirect impacts from the scheme proposals at application. These have been confirmed for assessment through desktop analysis and also site survey by our team, and also broadly follow the scope of heritage assets previously identified in discussion with RBC as part of the now approved 2019 and 2021 application schemes. For ease of reference, the Boundary Map for the conservation area is included in ***Appendix 1***, as well as the full List Entries for the listed buildings on Site itself at ***Appendix 2***.

1.10 **Section 3** of this report then provides a description of the historical development of the Site and its surroundings within the town centre of Reading, in order to establish a wider temporal and physical context, and so to inform an understanding and appreciation of the Site's contribution to the significance of the identified heritage assets in the later sections.

1.11 **Section 4** provides a series of statements of heritage significance for each of the scoped-in designated heritage assets relevant to the new development proposals for the redefined Site of Nos.27-32 Market Place. This begins with an assessment of the significance of the Market Place / London Street Conservation Area, in terms of its character and appearance, with specific reference made to the Site and any contribution it makes to the significance of the conservation area as a whole.

1.12 This is followed by statements of heritage significance for each of the listed buildings within the Site itself, which assess the special architectural and historic interest of these other designated heritage assets, and also consider the relative contribution of their external and internal elements to overall significance. This section also provides a series of more focussed statements of heritage significance for the other identified listed buildings that would likely be affected indirectly by the new scheme through change to their shared townscape setting, and includes a review of the contribution of the Site to their significance as part of that setting.

[1] MHCLG, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 – para. 194

1.13 Overall, **Sections 2-4** comprise our built heritage baseline, which has been undertaken on the basis of a review of existing published information, and desktop archival / historical research, followed by on site survey. This analysis is proportionate to both the importance of each of the identified heritage assets and the relative impacts of the development proposals for the Site. It should also be noted that this baseline work builds on that previously prepared by our team in 2017-18 as part of the early design process for both the previous and now approved 2019 and 2021 application schemes for the larger site.

1.14 This baseline should also be updated, where appropriate, to reflect the existing condition of the Site and in particular the schedule of stabilisation / consolidation and essential repair works that have been undertaken by the previous owners of the listed buildings on Site. These works were commenced in 2021 in liaison with officers / members at RBC. For further reference, ***Appendix 4*** is a copy of the Review Report prepared by ROC Associates on 18 January 2022 following a return inspection of the listed buildings Nos.27-32 Market Place. This report has reviewed the works that have been completed as part of the condition survey and report of recommendations previously prepared on behalf of Sonic Star Properties Ltd on 30 April 2020 (revised 5 November 2020).

1.15 **Section 5** provides an overview of the application proposals for this Site, and an assessment of their likely impacts on the particular significance of each of the heritage assets identified. These heritage impacts are then assessed overall in light of the relevant legislative and planning policy context.

1.16 ***Appendix 3*** to this report sets out in full the relevant heritage legislation, and national and local planning policy and guidance for change within the historic environment, including the statutory duties of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, national policy in the NPPF 2021 and supported by NPPG, and local Development Plan for RBC.

1.17 **Section 6** draws together a summary of the findings and conclusions of this report with regard to built heritage impact assessment.

2. Heritage Assets

Introduction

2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 (or the 'Framework') defines a heritage asset as:

"A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest."[2]

Designated Heritage Assets

2.2 Designated heritage assets are those which possess a level of heritage interest that justifies designation and are then subject to particular procedures in planning decisions that involve them. A designated heritage asset is also defined as:

"A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation."[3]

Conservation Area: Market Place / London Street

2.3 The Site (Nos.27-32 Market Place) is entirely located within the Market Place / London Street Conservation Area, which was first designated by RBC in 1972.



Figure 2.1: Extract of Conservation Area townscape appraisal map[4]

[2] MHCLG, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 - Annex 2: Glossary

[3] MHCLG, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 - Annex 2: Glossary

[4] RBC, Market Place / London Street Conservation Area Appraisal, 2007

2.4 The Market Place / London Street Conservation Area Appraisal document was adopted by RBC in 2007. The conservation area boundary map from this document is included at ***Appendix 1***, and an extract from conservation area townscape appraisal map (character area 1) is included above (Figure 2.1). The boundary of the conservation area is indicated by a thick black line, statutory listed buildings are coloured red, and "buildings of townscape merit" that are defined as positive contributors to the conservation area are coloured in green[5]. Other annotations are described in full in *Appendix 1.*

2.5 The proposed scheme would have a direct impact on the significance of this conservation area through the reuse, as well as works of alteration and or extension, to the historic buildings on Site.

Listed Buildings

2.6 The Site includes a number of statutory listed buildings of special architectural and or historic interest. The scheme would have a direct impact on their significance, through change of use and associated works of alterations and or extension to their fabric, features and character. The listed buildings directly affected by the development proposals are listed below as short summaries:

Nos.27-28 Market Place

2.7 Nos.27 and 28 Market Place were included at grade II and for group value on the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest on the 22 March 1957. The List Entry (also included as ***Appendix 2***[6]) describes the building as:

"… Early C17 possibly older. 3 storeys and attic. Double jettied timber-frame with stucco infilling, pebbledashed. Tiled roof with crested ridge and ornamental cast iron gutter to eaves. Moulded 2nd floor jetty. 2 dormers. 2 original bay windows with mullion windows on each floor. Decorative lead work in upper part of windows. C18 shop front retained to ground floor with coved fascia and engaged columns. Outer doors, 5 panel (raised and fielded) with plain overlight to right, modern door to left (to No 29). Interior: 1st floor ceilings divided into panels by moulded strips."

The Coopers Public House

2.8 The former Coopers public house at Nos.29-31 Market Place was included at grade II and for group value on the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest on the 26 July 1973. The List Entry describes the building as:

"… C17 altered. False exposed timbering to front with 4 bays of 3 light casements in stucco infill. Wooden modillion cornice to parapet. Tiled roof. 2 C20 dormers. Rusticated stucco on ground floor with glazing bar shopfronts (modern to left, early C19 to right) and central entrance, pilastered doorpiece with fluted caps and scroll brackets to open pediment. 2 panel door with high arched radiating fanlight. Timber framing in gables to rear. Interior contains re-used fittings probably from C16 or C17 house. The Lounge Bar has oak panelled portion with good C16 or early C17 strapwork overmantel. 4 fluted

[5] Nos. 172 and 175 Friar Street are identified on the townscape appraisal map as "buildings of townscape merit", however the numbering is in error and only No. 175 falls within the boundary of the Site, whereas No. 172 is intended to refer to No. 171 that adjoins the Site to the west.

[6] Historic England: The National Heritage List for England (website)

Doric columns flanked by 2 enriched Doric columns and with 'wild men' herm-pilasters. Modillion cornice. The exit to No 29 has a fine door with circa 1600 decoration of recessed niche panels: to outside Ionic female herms, to interior fluted Ionic pilasters."

No.32 Market Place

2.9 No.32 Market Place was included at grade II, albeit specifically for group value, on the statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest on the 14 December 1978. The List Entry describes the building as:

"… Mid C19 . 4 storeys with bands between floors. Painted brick. 3 bays, glazing bar sash windows with segmental heads and keys. Moulded cornice to blocking course. Concealed roof. Modern ground floor premises with retrains of moulded fascia cornice over. Included for group value."

2.10 There are also a number of other listed buildings within the conservation area and the vicinity of the Site; the significance of which would likely be affected by the new development proposals as a result of change within part of their shared townscape setting and local views. These other listed buildings are therefore included in our heritage baseline analysis within this report, and listed below (with their respective grades of listing) as:

- Church of St Laurence (grade I)
- Town Hall Chamber and Offices and Clocktower (grade II*)
- Nos.23-26 Market Place (grade II)
- Former Trustee Savings Bank, Nos.34-36 Market Place (grade II)
- Corn Exchange Arcade Entrance, Market Place / Market Way (grade II)
- Queen Victoria Jubilee Statue (grade II)

2.11 All these listed buildings have been confirmed for assessment through desktop analysis and also subsequent site survey by our team. This also follows the scope of designated heritage assets previously agreed with RBC as part of our past submissions in relation to both the approved 2019 and 2021 application schemes.

Non-Designated Heritage Assets

2.12 The NPPF[7] identifies that heritage assets include both designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

2.13 RBC maintains a "list of locally important buildings and structures", which has existed since February 2013 and has continued to be added to in a piecemeal fashion. The Reading Sites and Detailed Policies Document (SDPD) 2012 first established that that the Council intended to develop such a local list. It is our assessment that the significance of no identified locally listed buildings would be affected by the proposed development on Site, either directly or indirectly.

[7] MHCLG, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 - Annex 2: Glossary

3. Historical Development of the Site

3.1 Within the Site the plots of Nos.27 and 28 Market Place, the former The Coopers public house (Nos.29-31) and No.32 Market Place have been continuously developed since the Early-Modern period, and possibly earlier. The earliest map to show the application site is John Speed's Map of Reading, dated 1611. Here, the corner of Friar Street and Market Place is lined by a curved row of pitched-roof buildings, opposite St Laurence's Church which stands at the edge of Reading Abbey's precinct. The plots of Nos.27 and 28, The Coopers public house and No.32 Market Place have therefore been continuously developed since the medieval period, and possibly earlier. The List Entries for Nos.27 and 28 Market Place and The Coopers public house date both of these buildings to the 17th century; but the schematic nature of Speed's map means that they are not yet individually identifiable.

3.2 Within the urban block formed by Friar Street, Market Place, Cross Street and Broad Street, Speed's map shows an area of open space behind the building lines, which appears to be divided into gardens and small orchards. Interestingly, a central path runs north-south, whilst two others, running perpendicular, quarter the space. Fragments of these early through-routes between Friar Street, Broad Street and the Market Place are considered to have survived as part of the urban block today, in the form of the Bristol and West Arcade.



Figure 3.1: John Speed's Map of Reading, 1611 (locations of Nos.27 and 28, The Coopers public house and No.32 Market Place circled)

3.3 Charles Tomkins' map, published in 1802, shows that by the early-19th century the space within the urban block had been partially developed in a piecemeal manner, with additional buildings behind the main building lines. The route between Friar Street and Broad Street, through the urban block, is still discernible, and there also remains a smaller passage in the general location of The Coopers public house, leading to a yard space, and accessed only from Market Place.

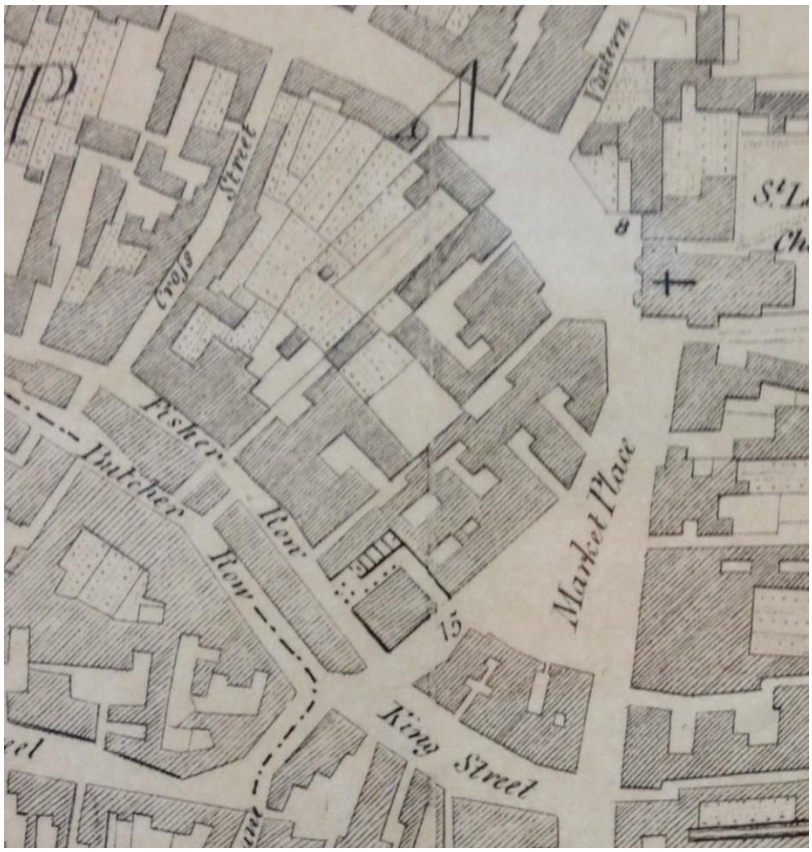


Figure 3.2: Charles Tomkins' Map of Reading, 1802

3.4 An engraving dated 1843 shows a view of the Market Place, looking north towards St Laurence's Church. Here, the timber-frame and oriel windows of Nos.27 and 28 are just visible where the building line begins to curve round to Friar Street, and the taller southern flank wall of No.26 Market Place is also extant. In the 1843 engraving, The Coopers public house (though not yet in use as a public house) is arranged as three properties (Nos.29-31) over three bays, and the List Entry also dates this short row to the 17th century. The Coopers public house abuts the Trustees Savings Bank, dated by the List Entry to the mid-19th century, and this arrangement shows that No.32 Market Place had not yet been constructed. A second photograph of 1860 shows that by this date, No.32 was extant between Nos.29-31 and the Trustees Savings Bank. The construction of No.32 necessitated the demolition of the southern-most bay of The Coopers public house.



Figure 3.3: Engraving dated 1843 showing Nos.27 and 28 Market Place, and the original three bays of The Coopers public house. No.32 Market Place is not yet extant



Figure 3.4: Photograph dated 1860, showing No.32 (L), The Coopers public house (C) and Nos.27 and 28 (R)

3.5 The 1877 Ordnance Survey (OS) map shows in detail the building footprints for the listed buildings at Nos.27 and 28, The Coopers public house, and No.32 Market Place. Nos.27 and 28 are enclosed on three sides within the built form, and this is considered unusual. Medieval plots are typically long and narrow, and this pattern of close-knit, slim burgage plots is borne out by the rest of the building line to Friar Street and Market Place. It is considered likely that at some unknown point, the rear portion of Nos.27 and 28 was amalgamated into the ownership of The Coopers public house, thereby producing the tangled layout of building footprints shown in the OS map.

3.6 The adjoining site of Nos.173-175 Friar Street is occupied by multiple different buildings, including public houses and a hotel. The route of the passage between Friar Street and Broad Street, through the urban block, appears to have been blocked by the built form of the Corn Exchange and Market; however it is thought likely that because of the public nature of these buildings, a through-route was probably maintained which is not highlighted on this map. The narrow through-passage and yard space accessed from the Market Place and seen in Tomkins' 1802 map is still discernible in 1877, but has also been amalgamated as part of the interior of The Coopers public house.



Figure 3.5: OS 1877 (Nos.27 and 28 marked in blue, Nos.29-31 in red and No.32 Market Place in yellow)

3.7 By the late-19th century, the Goad Fire Insurance Map of 1895 shows that all the listed buildings within the application site and its immediate vicinity were extant. The use of colour coding in this map is particularly useful for identifying the location of the once-open passageway within The Coopers public house, which runs between No.29 and No.30 to the covered yard space within the urban block. The yellow colouring indicates that this was ceiled with timber.



Figure 3.6: Goad's Fire Insurance Map 1895

3.8 Comparison of the 1934 and 1957 OS maps shows that the adjoining site of Nos.173-175 Friar Street was redeveloped with the existing buildings in the mid-20th century, their new frontages then awkwardly misaligned with the established building line.

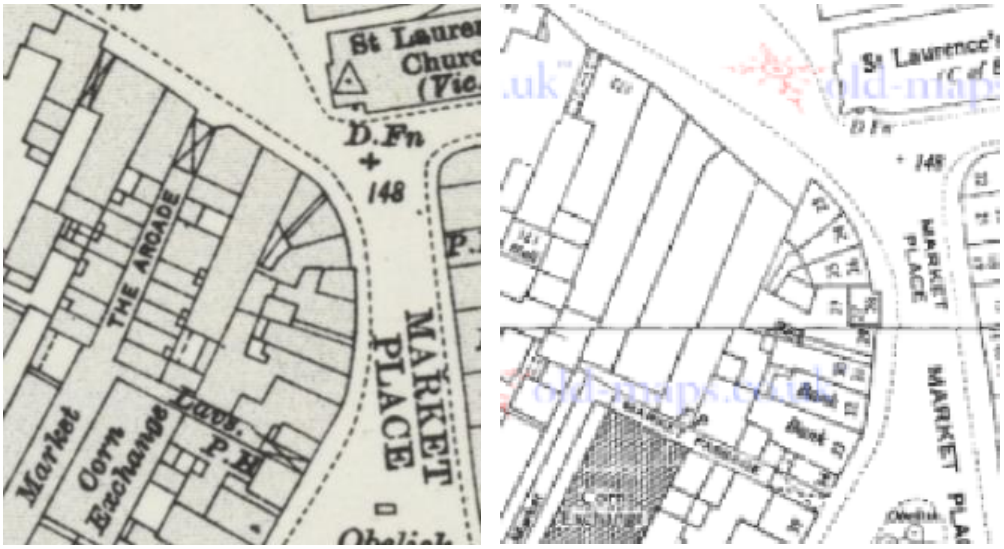


Figure 3.7: OS maps of 1934 (L) and 1957 (R) with Nos.173-175 Friar Street rebuilt

4. Heritage Significance and Setting

Introduction

4.1 The NPPF 2021 defines the significance of a heritage asset as:

"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting."[8]

4.2 The NPPF defines the setting of a heritage asset as:

"The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral."[9]

4.3 Historic England has published general guidance with regard to the preparation of statements of heritage significance, and how the proper analysis of the significance of heritage assets should be used to inform an assessment of impacts on that significance as a result of proposed change / application.[10]

4.4 Historic England also provides guidance[11] in respect of the setting and views of heritage assets, providing detail on understanding setting and views and the associated assessment of the impact of any changes. This presents a series of attributes of a setting which can be used to help assess its contribution to the significance of a heritage asset. These can comprise the asset's physical surroundings; the experience of the asset; and the asset's associative attributes.

4.5 Historic England has also has provided further guidance in the past for their staff (and others) on their approach to making decisions and offering guidance about all aspects of England's historic environment.[12] This provides advice on how to assess the contribution of elements of a heritage asset, or within its setting, to its significance in terms of its "heritage values". These include: evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal. This supplements the established definitions of heritage significance and special interest set out in founding legislation and more recent national planning policy and guidance / advice.

4.6 It is also recognised as part of our own process of built heritage appraisal that historical, functional and or visual inter-relationships exist between a number of the identified heritage assets, for example where a conservation area provides the key element of the setting of a statutory listed building or buildings that contributes to their significance.

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[8] MHCLG, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 – Annex 2: Glossary

[9] MHCLG, National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021 – Annex 2: Glossary

[10] Historic England: Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance 2019

[11] Historic England, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets, 2017 (2nd Ed.)

[12] English Heritage (now Historic England) Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance, 2008

Designated Heritage Assets

Conservation Areas

4.7 Conservation Areas are designated by virtue of their special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Guidance has been published in respect of conservation areas by Historic England, and this provides a framework for the appraisal and assessment of the special interest and significance of a conservation area.[13]

Listed Buildings

4.8 Listed buildings are defined as designated heritage assets that hold architectural or historic interest. The principles of selection for listed buildings are published by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and supported by Historic England's Listing Selection Guides for each building type.[14]

Baseline Appraisal

4.9 The built heritage baseline analysis we have set out in **Sections 2-4** of this report is proportionate to the importance of both the surrounding conservation area and relevant listed buildings; in terms of the contribution of the Site itself to that designated area or as part of a shared townscape setting, respectively. These proportionate statements of heritage significance are intended to provide a sufficient level of description to understand the likely impacts of future change through the proposed development of this new scheme on Site, given its nature and extent.

4.10 Our analysis has been undertaken on the basis of an initial review of existing published information, and desktop archival / historical research, followed by on site survey. It should also be noted that this baseline work builds on that previously prepared by our team in 2017-18 as part of the early design process for both the previous and now approved 2019 and 2021 application schemes. It is noted that photographs included in this section of the report date from 2018.

4.11 This description of the baseline for the Site should also be updated, where appropriate, to reflect the existing condition of these properties, and in particular the schedule of stabilisation / consolidation and essential repair works that have been undertaken by the previous owners of the listed buildings on Site. These works were undertaken in 2021 in liaison with officers / members at RBC. Accordingly, and for further reference, ***Appendix 4*** is a copy of the Review Report prepared by ROC Associates on 18 January 2022 following a return inspection of the listed buildings Nos.27-32 Market Place. This report has reviewed the works that have been completed as part of the condition survey and report of recommendations previously prepared on behalf of Sonic Star Properties Ltd on 30 April 2020 (revised 5 November 2020).

[13] Historic England, Advice Note 1, Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management. 2019 (2nd Ed.)
[14] DCMS. Principles of Selection for Designating Buildings, 2018

Market Place / London Street Conservation Area

Historical Development

4.13 The settlement of Reading was established at the lowest point of the River Kennet, where it could be forded. The original crossing place was at today's Bridge Street, and here the roads from Oxford, Southampton, Bath and London converged. Reading's location on the Kennet, near its junction with the Thames, means that it is in a favourable position for waterborne trade as well as passing traffic on the roads, and the origins of the settlement are therefore probably commercial.[15] The foundation of Reading Abbey by Henry I also fostered the growth of the town. This was located in the area of today's Forbury, transferred to the Benedictine order in the mid-13th century, and grew steadily so that my the mid-14th century it had become one of the richest abbeys in the country.[16] Its royal patronage made it one of the main pilgrimage sites in England, and inevitably a population grew up around it which made a living from the many people visiting the town. St Laurence's Church, on the corner of Friar Street and the Market Place, and very close to the former site of the Abbey, was built in the Norman period to serve the population which established itself around the Abbey.

4.14 In its earliest years, the principal route through Reading followed Southampton Street, Bridge Street and St Mary's Butts in a north-south direction, past St Mary's Church and the original nucleus of the town. As the influence of the Abbey grew, the route along London Street and Duke Street to the Market Place outside St Laurence Church became more popular, and shifted the focus of the town eastwards. It is this 12th century route which forms the back-bone of the Market Place / London Street Conservation Area. Reading Abbey was largely destroyed during the Dissolution of the Monasteries, after which its building materials were steadily quarried for reuse elsewhere in the town. Despite the loss of this key draw to the town, Reading continued to thrive on a range of trades and industries, including cloth and leather manufacture, and silk weaving.

4.15 As has already been touched on in Section 3, one of the first maps to show the town of Reading in detail is John Speed's Atlas of Great Britain, surveyed in 1611. This shows that the settlement was arranged in a broadly triangular shape to either side of the River Kennet. Friar Street formed one side of the triangle; with Southampton Street, Bridge Street and St Mary's Butts forming a second side, and London Street, Duke Street and Market Place the third. A church is located at each apex: St Laurence's, St Mary's and St Giles'. In Speed's map, the buildings on the application site comprise closely-packed individual houses, probably occupied by merchants or artisans. These houses in the block form a square, and back onto an area of open ground which is divided into various different plots.

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[15] *A History of the County of Berkshire: Volume 3*, ed. P H Ditchfield and William Page (London, 1923).

[16] Historic England: The National Heritage List for England (website)

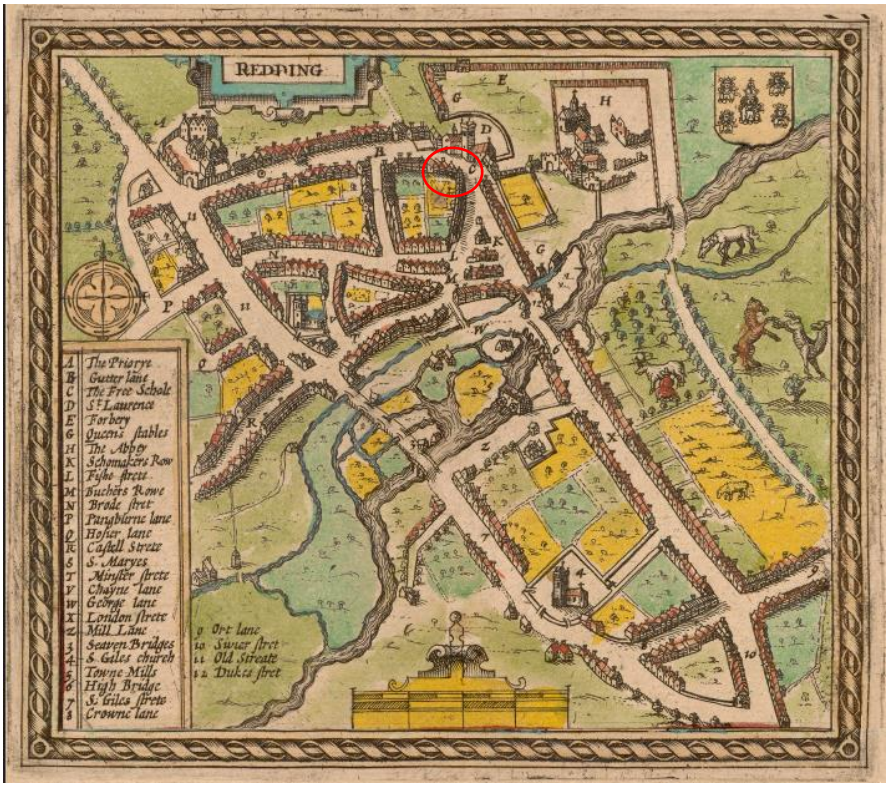


Figure 4.1: Figure John Speed's Atlas of Great Britain, 1611 (application site circled)

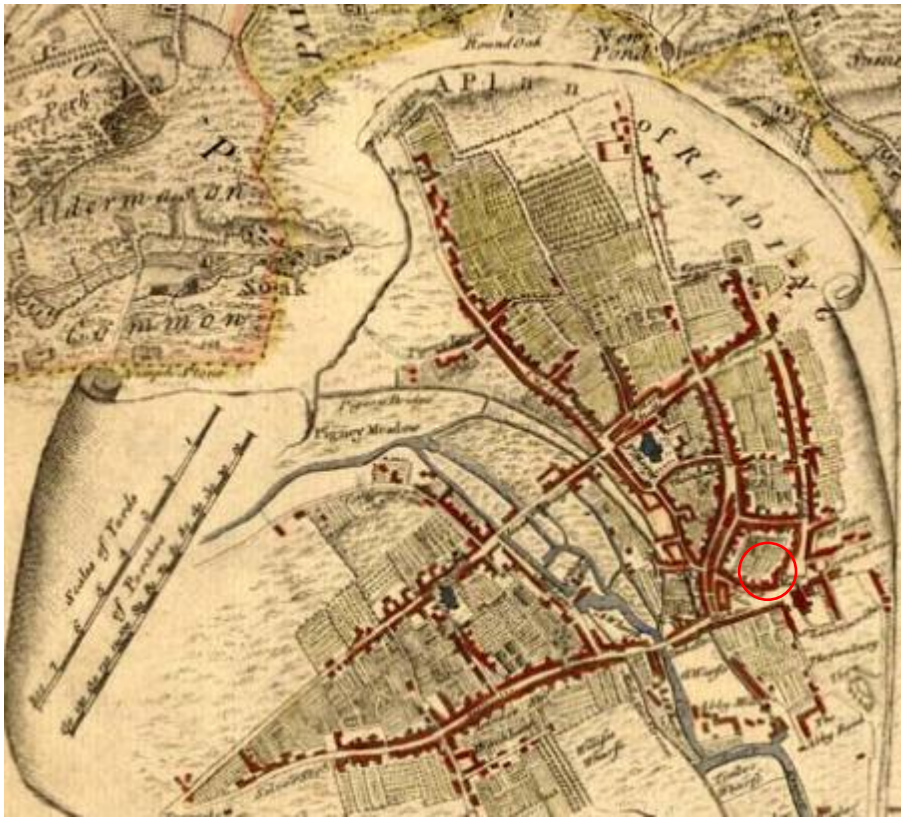


Figure 4.2: John Rocque's Map of Reading, 1761 (north is to the right, application site circled)

4.16 Rocque's Map of Reading shows that the town remained contained within the medieval, triangular street pattern well into the 18th century, though some additional linear development had expanded westwards along Castle Hill and Bath Road, and eastwards along London Road. Whilst the town itself remained relatively contained, its role and reputation grew in importance when work began in the early-18th century to make the both the Rivers Kennet and Avon navigable. This encouraged further trade and connection with Bath and Bristol in the west, and London in the east. Construction began on a canal to connect the two rivers in 1894, and this was completed in 1810. This created a continuous water bourn route between Bristol and London, passing through Reading. This location on a key transport route from east to west caused Reading to flourish as an important layover location for journeys on the waterway.

4.17 Both Charles Tomkins' and Edward Weller's maps of Reading, surveyed in 1802 and 1840 respectively, show the town in slightly more detail. To either side of London Street, Duke Street and Market Place the town filled out over the early decades of the 19th century. The medieval linear development along the three main routes expanded outwards with new streets and development, as a result of the improvements in transport and infrastructure in the town, and its status on the key transport route of the Kennet and Avon Canal. Tomkins' map shows the Small Town Hall to the immediate north of St Laurence's Church, which was built in 1785.[17]

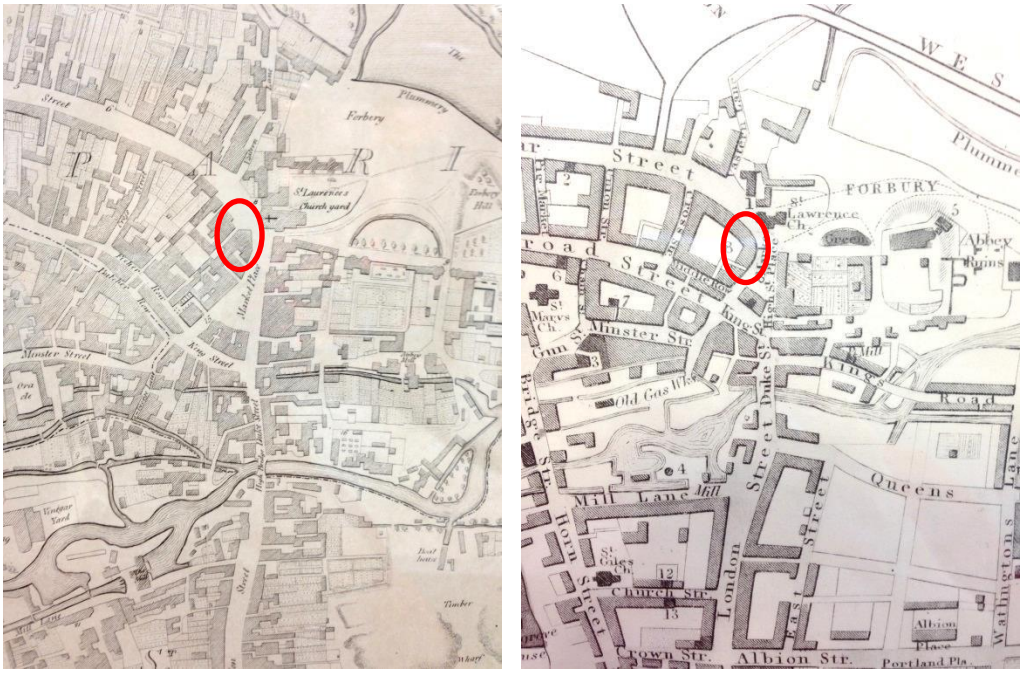


Figure 4.3: Charles Tomkins' (L) and Edward Weller's maps of Reading

4.18 The Great Western Railway opened through the town in 1840, and as with the canal, this catalysed further growth and expansion. Major industries now began to be established in the town, including the biscuit manufacturers Huntley and Palmers, which by 1900 was the largest biscuit manufacturer in the world and employed over 5,000 people in the town.

[17] Historic England National Heritage List for England.

4.19 An early Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1877 shows the extent of development in the conservation area over the course of the 19th century. The linear form of the medieval route of London Street, Duke Street and Market Place remained clearly discernible, along with the medieval narrow-fronted plots lining the streets. The most densely developed area was north of the River Kennet, around the Market Place itself, and along the 12th century routes of Broad Street and Minster Street, whilst to the south there remained several areas of gardens, small orchards and open ground. Additional streets had been laid with groups of terraced housing out to either side of the main spinal route, and industrial uses were concentrated along the banks of the river.

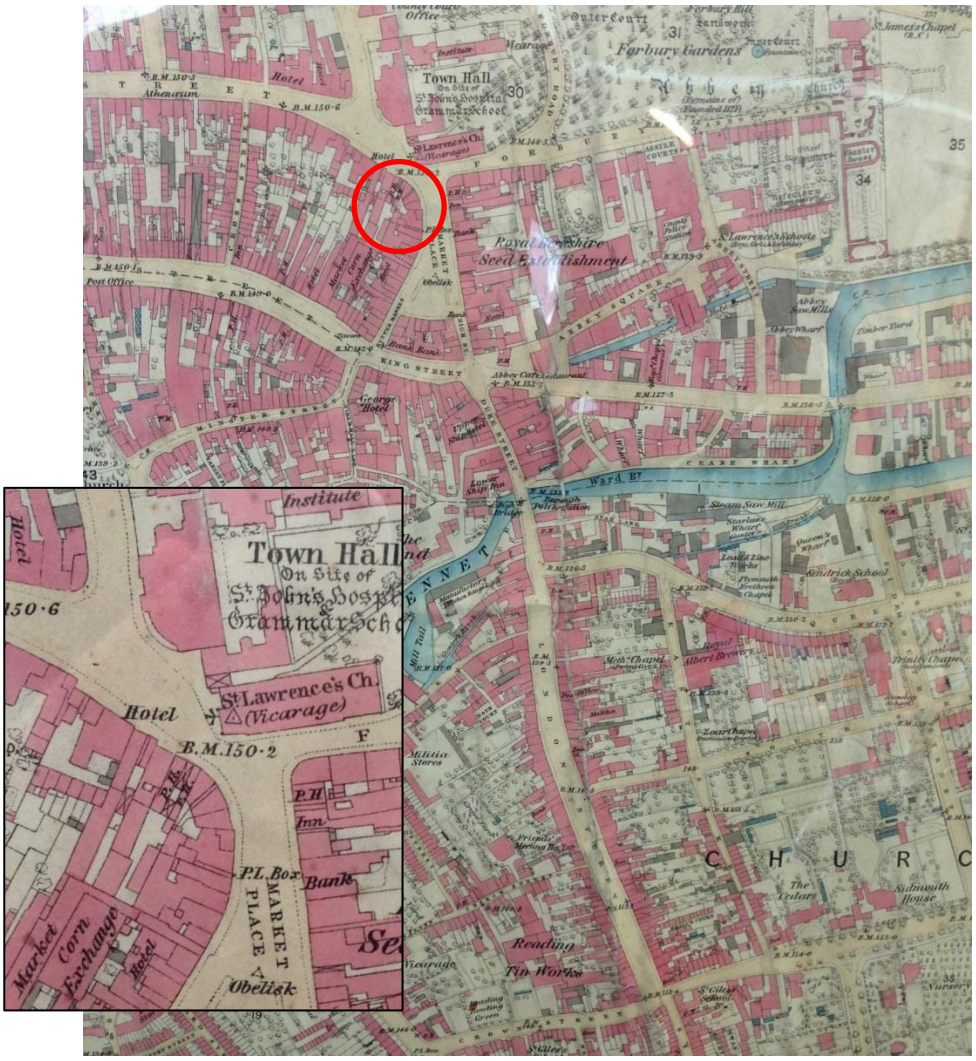


Figure 4.4: Ordnance Survey (OS) map 1877 (with extracted inset for the application site)

4.20 This is the first map to show the individual building plots within the building lines of each street. The listed buildings at Nos.23-26 Market Place, Nos.27 and 28 Market Place, Nos.29-31 Market Place (The Coopers public house), No.32 Market Place (all within the Site), and also the Trustees Savings Bank and the entrance to the Corn Exchange, are depicted on this plan. The Town Council Chamber and Offices were also extant, having been completed in 1875. The adjacent, now listed, Concert Hall was added between 1879 and 1882, whilst the Art Gallery and Museum were constructed

in 1897. In *A History of the County of Berkshire,* written in 1923, the town's 19th century growth is described:

"Reading has grown very rapidly of late years; a great increase of population took place at the end of the 19th century, when the nearer western suburbs were laid out, but in 1850 it was still a small and pretty town, whose wider streets and open green spaces counteracted many of the evils of defective sanitation."

4.21 By the mid-20th century, the OS map of 1947 shows that Reading had grown to become much denser and built-up, so that the early triangular street pattern had been both in-filled and surrounded by further streets of housing and industry. However, the medieval street pattern of London Street, Duke Street and Market Place remained, with its fine-grained street pattern of narrow-fronted plots fronting the road.

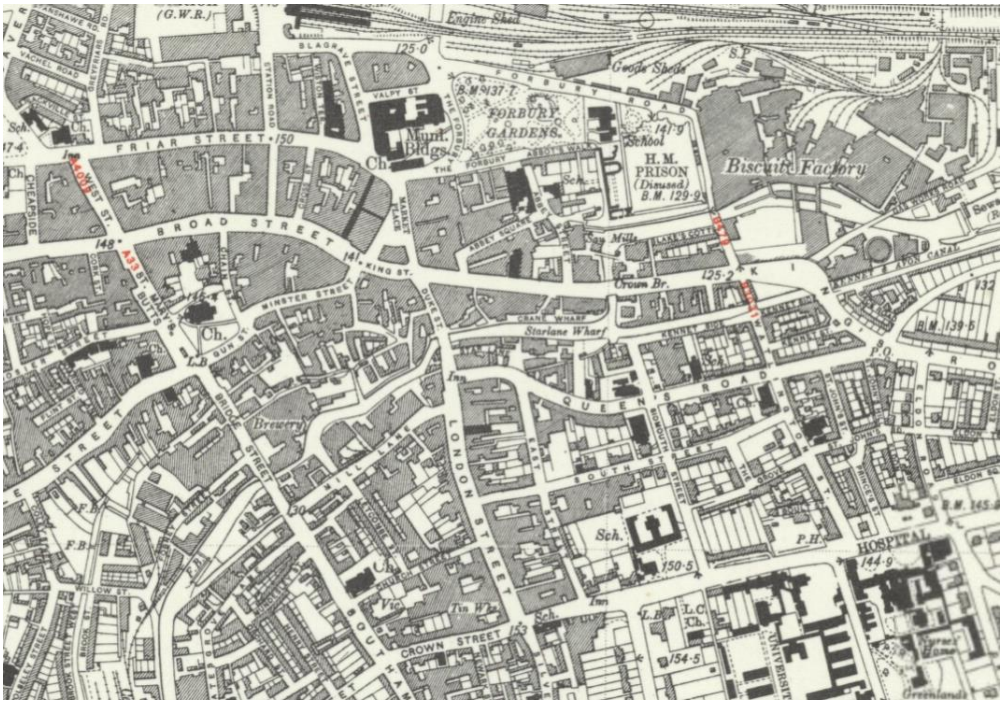


Figure 4.5: OS map 1947

4.22 In the late-20th century a great deal of redevelopment occurred in the town, which included the removal of parts of the historic core to construct modern office buildings and shopping centres. Many buildings along the east side of the Market Place were renewed, along with the buildings at the eastern end of Friar Street. Larger-scale redevelopment has occurred close to the Inner Distribution Road, which was constructed between 1969 and the late-1980s. It is this road, more than any other late-20th century development, which has impacted upon the character of the conservation area and the town as a whole. It now bisects the conservation area just south of the river, and involved the demolition of a great deal of Reading's historic core and building stock.

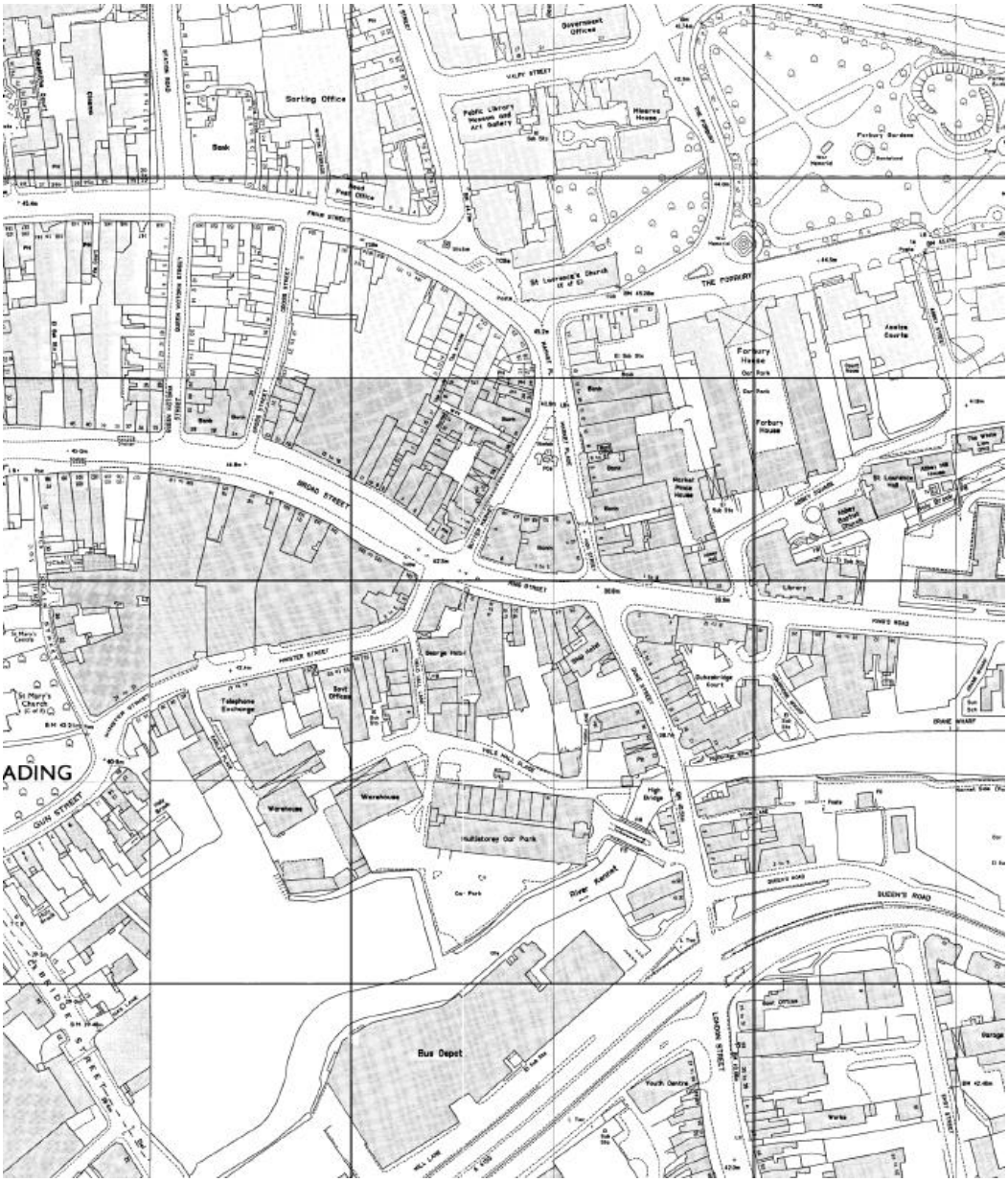


Figure 4.6: OS map 1980-88, showing the Inner Distribution Road bisecting the conservation area

Character and Appearance

General Characteristics

4.23 The scale of buildings in the conservation area varies between two, three and four storeys, with only very few modern office developments reaching five storeys. The predominant building material is brick, in a variety of colours and often stuccoed, contributed principally by the historic 17th, 18th and 19th century building stock that said, there are some very few surviving examples of timber-frame construction at Nos.27 and 28 Market Place, No.88 London Street and Nos.3 and 5 London Road. The medieval churches of St Laurence and St Giles stand out in their use of flint, a distinctive, vernacular building material. Twentieth century redevelopments sometimes conform to the preponderance of brick construction, but in several places a less-sympathetic material palette has been introduced, using concrete. Many more recent buildings have paid little heed to their historic context in terms of scale, materiality or detailed design.



Figure 4.7: A predominantly brick material palette is interspersed with some surviving timber framed buildings, and modern concrete structures

4.24 Several buildings in the conservation area, particularly along London Street, have retained 19th and early-20th century shopfronts which testify to the importance of this route historically, as a main approach road to the town's Market Place and principal shopping area on Broad Street. The predominant use in the conservation area remains commercial, though there is a small proportion of residential use to the upper levels of buildings along the main route, and a more prevalent residential character to secondary roads such as Church Street and South Street.

4.25 The bridge over the River Kennet on Duke Street creates a break in the building line along the road which, coupled with the mature tree on the river bank, creates a welcome hiatus to the densely-packed frontage. The river is an important feature of the conservation area, where it reflects the motive for Reading's original settlement in this location. Aside from the open space created by the watercourse, the only other

open spaces in the conservation area are the graveyards of St Laurence's Church, St Giles' Church and the Friends Meeting House on Church Street.



Figure 4.8: The graveyard of St Laurence's Church is one of the few areas of open green space in the conservation area

Area 1

4.26 The Market Place / London Street Conservation Area Appraisal divides the conservation area into four different character areas.[18] The area of London Street to the south of the Inner Distribution Road is identified as Area 1. This strongly linear route is very broad, which creates long views up its length, taking in the buildings which line each side. These building lines contain a mixture of architectural styles and ages, and represent a broad cross section of individual plots dating from several centuries in the development of the town. Some remain from the 16th and 17th phase in the development of the town, whilst a greater number of 18th and 19th century elegant houses have survived to reflect the popularity of this area as a fashionable part of town.



Figure 4.9: London Street is a broad, strongly linear route, with a high number of surviving historic buildings

[18] Reading Borough Council. Market Place / London Street Conservation Area Appraisal. 2007.

4.27 The majority of buildings fronting London Street are either listed, or identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal as buildings of townscape merit, and this high concentration of historic buildings contributes to a high-quality townscape with plenty of visual interest. The historic buildings in this character area are interspersed with a small amount of modern redevelopment; primarily focussed along East Street at the eastern boundary of the conservation area, and to the north and south ends of London Street. To the immediate south of the Inner Distribution Road, however, there is an area of much larger-scale office redevelopment which does not reflect the finer grained street scene on London Street to the south, and diminishes the historic character of the area.

4.28 Historically, London Street was primarily residential in character and use, but overtime commercial premises have occupied the majority of the buildings along this medieval street, and it is now characterised by a preponderance of business and professional uses. As one of the original principal routes through the town, it has also historically been fairly wide. Today, modern alterations to the road to create bus stops and lay-by parking have increased the vehicular traffic and dominance of the road way so that the street's character is much more emphatically urban than its provincial origins. The route of the Inner Distribution Road across the north end of the character area severs London Street from the town centre, and compromises the legibility of the road as a key part of Reading's medieval street pattern. The broad, open junction, the constant high level of traffic and the noise associated with this major road also detract from the overall historic appearance of the area.

Area 2

4.29 The boundary of the conservation area and Area 1 extends westwards from London Road, in a spit which encompasses Church Street and St Giles' Church, thereby taking in one of Reading's three medieval churches. As one approaches eastwards along Church Street, the spire of St Giles can be glimpsed, framed between two listed buildings.



Figure 4.10: Area 2 of the conservation area encompasses Church Street and St Giles' Church, and is much more tranquil in character than the bustle of London Road

4.30 Though modern development has encroached upon the historic character of this area, the medieval church, along with other listed buildings and buildings of townscape merit, and remnants of the historic floor scape, remain to reflect the role of this street as part of the historic layout of the town. The narrow proportions of Church Street give it the atmosphere of a town alley, and this reflects the tight knit layout which emerged as the town grew. These enclosed proportions, together with a more residential character and the green open space of St Giles' Churchyard, contribute to a tranquil atmosphere entered from the relative bustle of London Street.

Area 3

4.31 The two lateral divisions of the River Kennet and the Inner Distribution Road make this area the most disparate of the four character areas. Whilst the River Kennet creates a welcome break and open space in the otherwise continuous building line, the Inner Distribution Road is described by the Conservation Area Appraisal as:

"… a wide, characterless dual-carriageway that completely disrupts the historic street pattern and spoils the continuity of the Duke Street / London Street route to and from the town centre."[19]

4.32 There is a close mix of old and new building stock here. Much the larger-scale, modern development of the Oracle Shopping Centre and neighbouring office buildings are located around the junction between Duke Street and the Inner Distribution Road, and the Conservation Area Appraisal highlights that the high proportion of undistinguished modern development dilutes the historic character of the area.



Figure 4.11: Unsympathetic, large-scale modern development dilutes the historic architectural character of the conservation area

4.33 Nineteenth century commercial buildings are focussed around the crossroads at King's Road and Duke Street, which is a busy junction and a local landmark. Several historic buildings nearby are notable; including Barclays Bank on King Street, of architectural interest for its ornate Italian palazzo style, and The George Hotel, first mentioned in the early-15th century, with the present building dating from the 17th or 18th century.

[19] Reading Borough Council. Market Place / London Street Conservation Area Appraisal. 2007.

Area 4



Figure 4.12: View eastwards along Friar Street to the key landmark buildings of St Laurence's Church and the Town Hall



Figure 4.13: Views of the set piece of the Town Hall and St Laurence's Church from The Forbury, Friar Street and Blagrave Street

4.34 The application Site is located within Area 4, which encompasses the Market Place and the environs of St Laurence's Church and the Town Hall complex. These are the key buildings of the conservation area as a whole, which as a group constitute the defining architectural image of Reading. Key views of these buildings are available from the surrounding streets, including Duke Street and Market Place, Friar Street and Blagrave Street, and The Forbury. St Laurence's Church and the Town Hall complex overlook the Market Place and Town Hall Square, where a large area has been pedestrianised. The lack of roads allows for a better appreciation of these key buildings, where one is less-distracted from views across the open space by vehicular traffic or noise. Good views of the church and Town Hall complex, and particularly the deliberately-placed Clock Tower, are also available from further away on Duke Street to the south and on Blagrave Street to the north.



Figure 4.14: Longer townscape views of the church and Town Hall



Figure 4.15: The buildings on the west side of the part-pedestrianised Market Place date from the 17th-19th centuries



Figure 4.16: 18th and 19th century buildings on the south side of the Market Place

4.35 Visual interest and character is derived from the historic buildings which survive on the corner of Friar Street and Market Place, including Nos.23-27, Nos.27 and 28, Nos.29 and 31, No.32, The Trustees Saving Bank, and the entrance to the Corn Exchange. On the opposite side Nos.13-16 dates from the late-19th century and is built in a Renaissance palazzo style, whilst the listed buildings facing north on the lower side of the triangular Market Place survive from the 18th century, and also contribute positively to the remaining historic character in the area. The Simeon Obelisk in the centre of the triangular Market Place, and the statue of Queen Victoria outside the Town Hall, are also local features which enhance the conservation area and create a distinctive sense of place.



Figure 4.17: Local details and features give the conservation area a sense of place

4.36 The *Buildings of England* volume for Berkshire describes the Market Place as *"… a triangular space of no particular distinction"*[20], and it is considered that this verdict is a result of the considerable building and infrastructure which occurred in the post-war and late-20th century period. For example, a photograph of c.1893 shows the view from Friar Street, in front of the Town Hall, across to the St Laurence's Church.





Figure 4.18: The high-quality 19th century building on the site of No.173-175 Friar Street was replaced in the 20th century by a new, bland and undistinguished building

4.37 The building line on the south side of Friar Street is comprised of a four-storey, broad-fronted 19th century commercial building, incorporating the entrance into a market arcade. It is a building of great visual detail and interest, built in the Gothic style, and the appearance of the brickwork indicates that it may have echoed the grey and red colouring of the Town Hall, opposite. However, in the mid-20th century either immediately before or after the Second World War, this high-quality building was demolished and replaced with the current, bland and undistinguished range at No.173-175 Friar Street. This reconstruction also created an awkward kink in the formerly smooth, curved building line.



Figure 4.19: The reconstruction at Nos.173-175 Friar Street has created an awkward kick-out in the previously smooth, curved building line

[20] Pevsner, N. *The Buildings of England: Berkshire.* Yale University Press 2002.

4.38 Similarly, along the east side of the Market Place extensive bomb damage during the Second World War necessitated the redevelopment of several sites. Instead of the fine-grained building line packed with visual interest shown in a late-19th century photograph, this building line is now comprised of several unsympathetic, Brutalist structures which have significantly compromised the historic character and appearance of this medieval space. The high level of vehicular traffic through the Market Place, including numerous large buses, also detracts from the character of this key historic space.



Figure 4.20: The historic character of the east side of Market Place was eroded heavily in the post-war period

4.39 Though located very close to Broad Street, the principal shopping street in Reading, the environs of the Market Place and Town Hall Square appear fairly worn out and under-used. Many of the buildings are underused, whilst the condition of the public realm is deteriorating. Just outside the boundary of the conservation area the vacant 20th century buildings at No.173-174 Friar Street presents an unkempt and run-down appearance, directly overlooking the key space of the Town Hall Square. Architecturally, this building also falls below the standard set by surrounding historic buildings, and make at best a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of this historic townscape.



Figure 4.21: No.173-175 Friar Street present an unkempt and run-down appearance, directly overlooking the key space of the Town Hall Square

Summary of Significance

4.40 Market Place / London Street Conservation Area principally derives its significance from the principal spinal route running through Reading, made up of London Street, Duke Street and Market Place. This constitutes one of the principal medieval approach roads to the heart of old Reading. It leads directly to the historic core of the town, which is focussed on the landmark space of the Market Place, and the key buildings of St Laurence's Church and the Town Hall complex. This grouping makes up the defining image of Reading and its architecture. The ruins of Reading Abbey also remain to the immediate east of St Laurence's Church, and these also reflect the long role of this area at the epicentre of Reading's history and growth.

4.41 This strongly-linear conservation area contains some rare surviving timber-framed buildings of the 16th and 17th centuries, as well as several good examples of the Georgian townhouse typology in London Street, a great deal of 19th century commercial architecture, and some considerable 20th century development. This broad cross section of building ages and styles reflects the continuing importance of the route over time, as well as the changing uses found along its length; the evolving tastes and fashions in domestic and commercial architecture; and the social ambitions of the early occupants.



Figure 4.22: The Town Hall and St Laurence's Church dominate the open space, whilst No.175 within the Site (to the far right) is recessive within the street scene and blends with the background architecture

Contribution of the Site

4.42 All existing buildings within the application Site are statutorily listed, and these are each considered to make a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area, in particular the street scene to Market Place. They form a distinctive group of different historic and architectural complexity and interest. The significance and special interest of these listed buildings is assessed in the following part of this Section of the report.

Listed Building: Nos.27-28 Market Place

Architectural Interest

4.43 The timber-framed mixed commercial and residential building at Nos.27 and 28 Market Place was built in the early-17th century, but may retain fabric from an earlier building on the site. The building is a good example of the vernacular tradition of timber box framing; the most widespread form of timber framing in England.[21] The 18th century shopfront with pilasters to either side of the windows, and the upper floors with impressive oriel windows, presents a striking elevation to the Market Place which reflects its history as a fairly high-status merchant's townhouse.



Figure 4.23: Nos.27-28 Market Place

4.44 This principal elevation has undergone some alteration in the late-19th or early-20th century. A photograph of 1860, and a line drawing of 1885, both show the house with timber-framed casement windows with square lights. By 1915 another photograph shows that these had been replaced with the existing fixed windows. Whilst the timber frame would originally have been infilled with lime render, the age of the existing roughcast is unclear. It may be a product of the late-19th or early-20th century, when techniques like pebble dashing and roughcast render became more popular as a method of building maintenance. However, overall the external appearance of the building appears well-preserved.

[21] Historic England. Listing Selection Guide, Domestic 1: Vernacular Houses

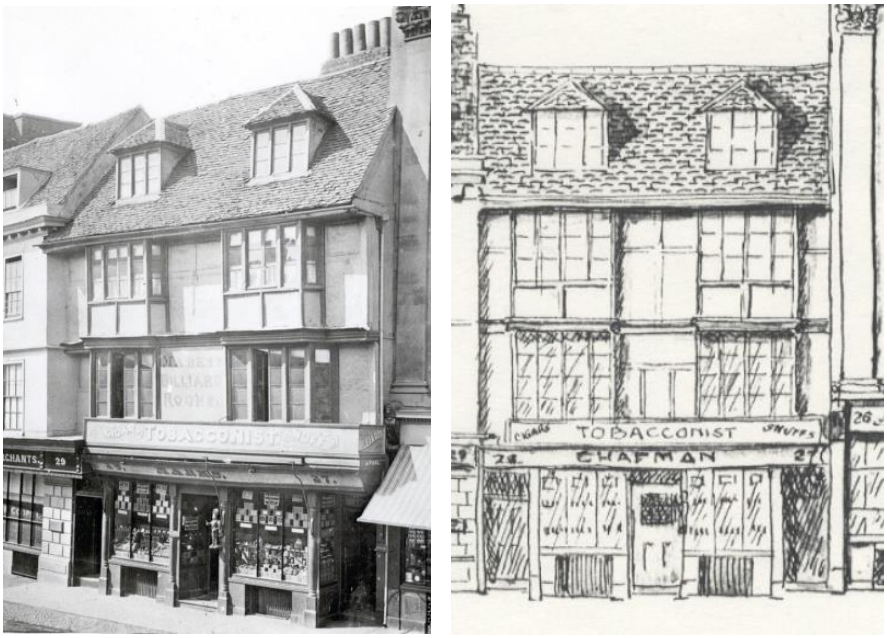


Figure 4.24: Photograph of 1860 and drawing of 1885

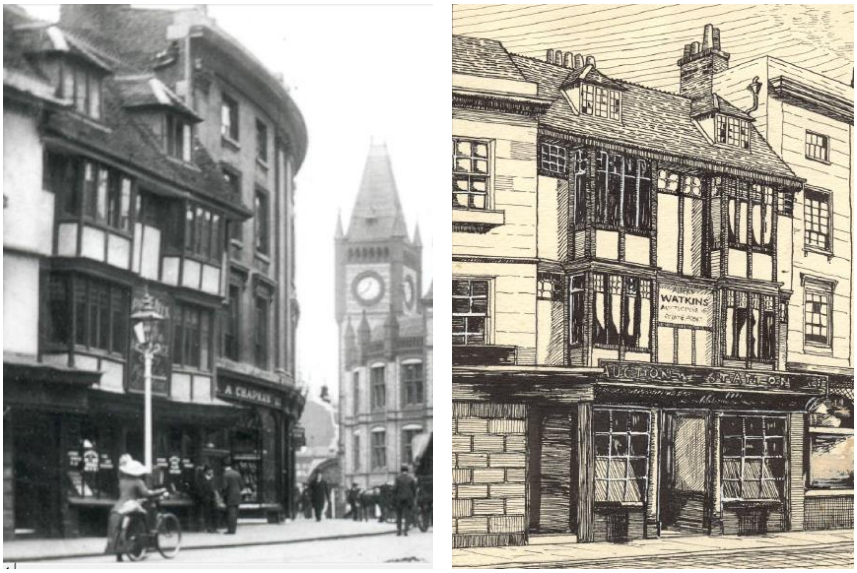


Figure 4.25: Photograph of 1915 and drawing of 1925 showing replacement windows

4.45 The roof of Nos.27-28 is clad in red clay tiles, with crested ridge tiles at the pitch and two dormer windows in the front slope. Though the roof tiles are likely to be a Victorian or later replacement of the original covering, the roof form is considered to be intact. The 1860 photograph, above, shows a broad chimney slab to the rear with a row of chimney pots; however, as found today this appears to have been rebuilt, and the chimney pots lost. The roof structure was not inspected internally. The rear and flank elevations of the building are entirely enclosed within the building line and urban block.



Figure 4.26: The roof forms of Nos.27-28 Market Place

4.46 Internally, Nos.27 and 28 Market Place is a single room in depth. As described in Section 3, this is considered unusual. Medieval plots are typically long and narrow, and this pattern of close-knit, slim burgage plots is borne out by the rest of the building line to Friar Street and Market Place. It is considered likely that originally, the building would have been two rooms in depth with a central chimney stack. However, at an unknown point, the rear portion of Nos.27 and 28 was amalgamated into the ownership of The Coopers public house. Neither desk-based nor archival research has established a specific date for this change of ownership, but assessment of the fabric within The Coopers public house, which comes later in this section, indicates that it probably occurred in the early-19th century.



Figure 4.27: Estimated original footprint of Nos.27-28 (blue line). The rear room has now been absorbed as part of The Coopers public house

4.47 Throughout the interior of the building, surface-level refurbishment has been carried out to replace doors and floor surfaces, and to repaint walls and ceilings. A single staircase runs from basement to third floor level, and is located in the rear north corner of the building. Whilst the staircase itself is modern, its proportions and its position in the rear corner against the party wall indicate that its location is likely to be original.



Figure 4.28: A single, narrow staircase runs throughout the building

4.48 At basement level, a thick timber beam runs laterally across the ceiling in the main room, and is part of the original building structure. The fireplace in the centre of the room is made of timber, to a very simple design, with dark red tiles in the cheek plates indicative of a late-19th or early-20th century date. The single-room floor plan extends forwards of the building line at this level, to a vault space at a lower level beneath the Market Place. This generous space is indicative of the building's early commercial use, and would have provided storage facilities for both the business premises at ground floor, and possibly for the household above. It may be that the street vault is a remnant of an earlier building on this site, re-used as part of the redevelopment. Other than these features, there is very little surviving at this level which is of historic or architectural interest.

4.49 The building's commercial premises would originally have been located at the ground floor, and this would therefore have been an important space within the building, where everyday business and trade would have been carried out. As at basement level, an original timber beam runs laterally across the ceiling. The shallow depth of the building, combined with the broad, glazed frontage means that this is a very bright space, appropriate for use as a shop or other business premises.



Figure 4.29: Timber beam and fireplace at basement level



Figure 4.30: Vault space under the street at basement level reflects the building's historic use as commercial premises



Figure 4.31: Ground floor shop frontage

4.50 The first floor level would historically have had high-status in the hierarchy of floor levels across the building, possibly used for more private or administrative business functions, or as the principle living accommodation. Externally, the striking oriel windows and projecting jetty articulate this status. Internally, the breadth of the windows and the moulded strips on the ceiling are used to express the importance of this level. Ceiling ornament, even in more modest houses, was becoming common by the early-17th century when this house was built, and often took the form of grid-like

coffering.[22] This feature is considered to be historic, if not original, and contributes to an understanding of the building as a good-quality merchant's house. The timber ceiling joists are exposed within this room, and some historic cornicing survives whilst openings in the wall show that the lath and plaster structure is also still extant.



Figure 4.32: Views of the room at first floor level

4.51 At second floor level the floor plan has been more heavily partitioned, though desk-based and archival research has not revealed a date for these alterations. There are two rooms at this level, each with a window overlooking the street, along with some further divisions to create cupboard space. Again, the beams of the timber frame are exposed though, interestingly, at this level they lie flush with the ceiling rather than standing proud from the surface as seen on the lower three levels. There is also a small, carved console bracket against the rear wall in the larger of the two rooms. The fireplace surround is designed Edwardian style, and though its age is uncertain it is considered that this and the other surviving fireplaces in the building date from the late-19th or early-20th century phase of the building's occupation.

[22] Ed. Calloway, S. *The Elements of Style: An Encyclopedia of Domestic Architectural Detail. Octopus Publishing Group Limited.* 1991.



Figure 4.33: Views at second floor level

4.52 The uppermost floor of the building is within the roof space, and the proportions of the staircase are particularly small when ascending to this level. Its modest surface treatment and mean proportions clearly express the low status of this floor, relative to the size and proportions of rooms below, and this is a characteristic typical of historic domestic buildings. The simple, small timber fire surround is also testament to this status.



Figure 4.34: Smaller proportions and modest features express the lower status of this upper floor level within the hierarchy of levels through the house

4.53 The floor structure is exposed, and the sawn floorboards are not considered to be of any great age. The principle rafters and purlins of the roof structure are also exposed here, along with braces between the roof and floor.



Figure 4.35: The rafters and purlins of the roof structure are exposed at third floor

4.54 Overall, Nos.27 and 28 Market Place retains a great deal of original or historic fabric in its structure, though the loss of the rear room to The Coopers public house has compromised significantly the understanding of its original form and function as a mixed commercial and residential building. Some interior features and decoration remain to reflect past phases of occupation in the building, though modern refurbishments have diminished the historic character and appearance of the interior.

Historic Interest

4.55 The listed building is of historic interest as an example of an early-17th century townhouse, the timber-framed construction of which is representative of an important vernacular building tradition in England. It represents an early phase in the development of the Market Place, and the vernacular style of architecture which once prevailed in the town. Nos.27 and 28 also constitutes one of the oldest surviving buildings in Reading, having survived the wide-spread phase of replacement in the 19th and 20th centuries. Its original mixed commercial and residential use reflects the role of the Market Place as the historic core of Reading, where the key commercial and business activities were concentrated.

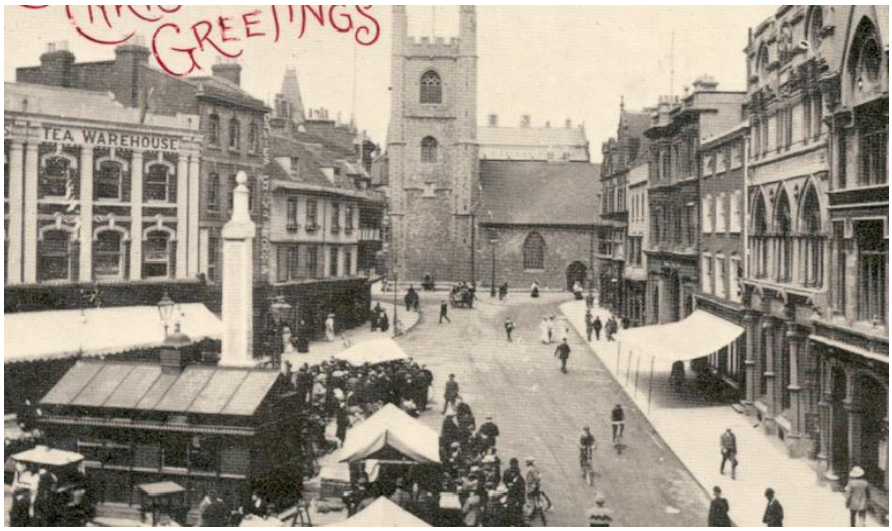


Figure 4.36: No.27-28 form part of the commercial building stock on the Market Place, where the key commercial activity in Reading was concentrated historically

4.56 Externally, the principal elevation appears to have survived relatively intact; however, internally the plan form of the house has been heavily compromised by the loss of the rear room to the neighbouring building. Interior décor and features also date from later periods of refurbishment, probably from the Edwardian period and certainly from the late-20th century use of the building as a martial arts centre. That said, the hierarchy of floor levels through the building does remain legible, to illustrate the traditional layout of domestic properties of this age.

Group Value

4.57 There is a key associative relationship between Nos.27 and 28 and the historic buildings around the Market Place, including Nos.23-26 Market Place, The Coopers public house, No.32 Market Place, the Corn Exchange Arcade Entrance, and other historic and listed buildings on the south and east sides of the open space. Together, these buildings create a varied and interesting frontage to the Market Place, and enhance the appreciation of the area as an historically important place for commerce in the town. The listed building also forms part of the appropriate historic backdrop to the key landmark buildings of the Town Hall and St Laurence's Church.

Summary of Significance

4.58 Nos.27-28 Market Place is representative of a strong tradition of timber-framed vernacular architecture in England, which has survived later phases of urban redevelopment in Reading, and changes in architectural fashion more widely. Though the footprint of the building has been truncated, there remains some legibility of the historic hierarchy of floor levels which is traditional to this type of domestic architecture. Whilst much of the older interior decorative scheme has been lost, the grid moulding to the ceiling at first floor level is considered to be original, or an early part of the décor. Surviving elements of an Edwardian scheme of decoration also make a valid contribution to the building's special interest. Conversely, more recent refurbishments are poor quality, and detract from its historic character and special interest. Nos.27-28 also derive special interest as part of the group of historic buildings around the Market Place.

4.59 The other listed buildings within the Site make a positive contribution to the significance of this building through shared group value and as part of the historical and architectural interest of this part of the town centre.

Listed Building: The former Coopers Public House (Nos.29-31 Market Place)

Architectural Interest

4.60 Like Nos.27 and 28 Market Place, The Coopers public house was also built in the 17th century, and may retain fabric from an earlier building on the site. As found today, the principal elevation of The Coopers public house has a stuccoed, rusticated street frontage with a central entrance and shop-like windows to either side. The central entrance is set within an elaborate, Georgian-style doorcase. Above, the first and second floors are clad in false exposed timber framing, whilst at attic level two hipped dormer windows sit above a modillion cornice.



Figure 4.37: The former Coopers public house

4.61 Photographs of the building from the 19th century show that originally it was plainly rendered. The render was intended to hide the structural timber framing, which had begun to go out of fashion from the late-17th century. The amalgam of traditional timber construction with Classically-influenced architectural details is of interest, where it shows the diminishing quality and popularity of timber framed construction from the 17th century, and the growing fashion for Classical motifs such as the windows, rusticated street frontage and modillion cornice. In this way, the Coopers public house represents the interface between established construction methods of the 17th century and older, and the changing tastes in architectural fashions over the late-17th and early-18th centuries.



Figure 4.38: Photographs of 1845 and 1860, showing The Coopers public house with plain render to the street elevation

4.62 These photographs also show that the ground floor street frontage has previously been divided into two or more different premises. Street directories for several decades also identify that The Coopers public house was occupied by multiple different businesses and residents, including Cooper's wine and spirit merchants. Street directories from several different decades also identify these multiple different uses at ground floor, whilst the upper levels were probably in use as accommodation for multiple people or families.

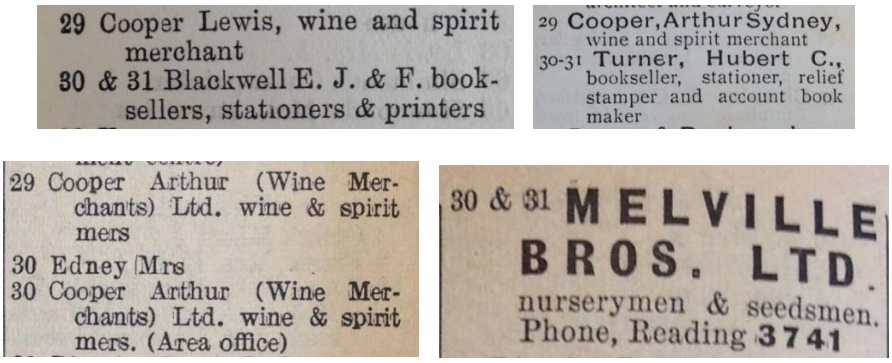


Figure 4.39: Clockwise from top-left: street directories of 1884, 1900, 1928, and 1954

4.63 Further photographs from the early-20th century show that The Coopers public house was re-fronted with the artificial timbering between 1915 and 1939, at which date the sash-and case windows were also replaced with casements. These photographs also show that the building was altered at this time to create hipped roofs to the two dormers on the front pitch, and it is thought likely that the whole roof would have been recovered at this date. This reversion back to a timber-framed appearance is interesting where again, the changing architectural tastes and fashions at the time are reflected.



Figure 4.40: Photographs of 1915 (L) and 1939 (R) showing false timbering added to the front elevation, and the sash windows replaced with casements

4.64 A further phase of alteration occurred in the post-war period, to the ground floor elevation. In 1955, a photograph shows that the street frontage was divided into two premises; one with rusticated stucco, and the other with a substantial timber fascia and framing. By 1969, a photograph shows the building largely as it is found today: a unified ground floor frontage, fully-covered in rusticated stucco, with new southern window and a central, neo-Georgian doorcase around the internalised passageway. These later changes seen in 1969 probably took place as part of the building's conversion into single use as a public house, and a street directory confirms that this new use had been established by 1976.



Figure 4.41: Photographs of 1955 (L) and 1969 (R) showing the building frontage altered a second time, and the Georgian-style doorcase added

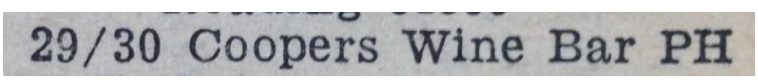


Figure 4.42: Street directories of 1954 and 1976, showing the building converted to use as a public house

4.65 This series of historic photographs shows that much of the principal elevation is now a product of 20th century alterations to add false timbering, replace or alter the upper storey windows, and remodel the ground floor frontage. Whilst the false timbering of the upper storeys is clearly a later addition of little historical or architectural value, the doorcase and windows do appear deceptively old. The photographs above confirm that despite appearances, the central doorcase and southern-most ground floor window are products of the late-20th century, and are therefore of lesser importance as part of the building's special interest.



Figure 4.43: The central doorcase windows are products of the late-20th century

4.66 Behind the street elevation, the form and footprint of The Coopers public house is a complex amalgam of different elements. Overall, the rear portions and roof form of the building comprise the timber-framed 17th century core fronting the street and projecting into the rear of the plot; together with 19th century phases of alteration to internalise the passageway and yard space, at which time the weatherboarding was probably added; and 20th century rear extensions to the ground and first floor, possibly as part of the conversion to a public house.

4.67 The historic box timber framing is visible to the back of the range fronting the street, where there is also a single brick chimney stack. A long wing projects back into the plot, and the structural timber-framing is also visible here, variously infilled with plaster and brick nogging. The southern (flank) elevation of this large rear wing is completely concealed behind a brick retaining wall, which was built when the original third bay of The Coopers public house was demolished to make way for the construction of No.32 Market Place between 1842 and 1860. This retaining wall incorporates a chimney stack, which likely replaced a previous stack in this location.

4.68 The red tiled roof covering to these two elements is well-weathered but is not considered to be of any great age. As previously noted, comparison of the photographs from 1915 and 1939 shows that the building was altered to create hipped roofs to the two dormers on the front pitch, and it is thought likely that the whole roof was recovered at this date.



Figure 4.44: Rear elevation and roof form of The Coopers public house



Figure 4.45: The long rear range has exposed timber-framing, and a brick retaining wall where the original third bay was demolished c.1842 and 1860

4.69 Some external elevations to the rear of the building are covered in weatherboarding, with a further few areas of cement render. The fine, 'Y'-shaped Gothic-style tracery of two arched windows to the corridor at first floor level is suggestive of an early-19th century phase of alteration to the building, whilst elsewhere the rear of the building incorporates a range of window ages, from historic sash and case windows, to modern, poor quality casement frames.



Figure 4.46: Areas of exposed timber-framing, weatherboarding and cement render

4.70 To the immediate north of the timber-framed rear wing, what was originally and open passageway leading to an open yard is now internalised as part of the building. This former yard area is now covered with a modern pitched lantern, of limited quality and diminishing condition.

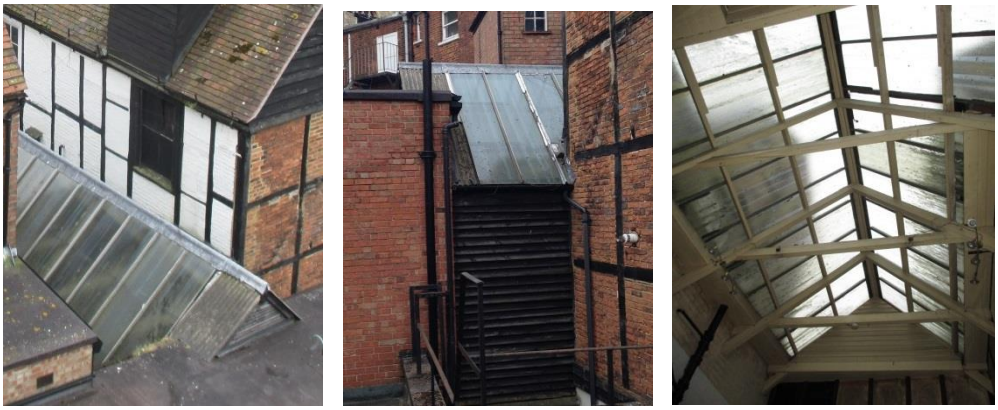


Figure 4.47: Modern, poor quality roof lantern over the historic rear yard

4.71 Adjacent and to the rear of the modern lantern, there is a group of more recent additions to the historic portions of The Coopers public house. This comprises two flat-roofed ground floor elements, and a box-like first floor element with a pitched roof. The external brickwork of these elements, combined with the appearance of the

internal décor (to be discussed further on) is suggestive of a mid- or late-20th century construction date; possibly between 1962 and 1976 when the building was converted to use as a public house.



Figure 4.48: Modern additions / replacements to the historic building

4.72 Finally, there is another pitched roof form over the small room behind Nos.27 and 28 Market Place (originally part of that listed building).This is thought to be of the 17th century in structure (contemporary with the listed building), though the clay tiles are 20th century replacements and the rear elevation has been rendered with cement.



Figure 4.49: Pitched roof form over the northern-most room in the building

4.73 Internally, the roof structure of the 17th century core of The Coopers public house is completely exposed at attic level. A great many of the joists appear to be original, though there are several areas where timbers have been replaced or supplemented with new.



Figure 4.50: The roof structure of the 17th century core is exposed at attic level, and appears to be relatively intact

4.74 Internally, the basement level is accessed via a straight flight of stairs in the centre of the ground floor plan form. Though the stair flight has been altered with a modern tread surface, it is considered that its main structure and location is original.



Figure 4.51: Staircase to basement level

4.75 Prior to the internalisation of the central passageway at street level, the basement stair would probably have been accessed internally from No.29, and from across the passageway by Nos.30 and 31 via a door opening in the internal flank wall. Though the access was shared, it is considered likely that the basement itself was also divided between the two premises above, and the plan form allows for this arrangement. At the bottom of the stairs one can turn either left or right, and there are two rooms to either side, connected at the front of the building by an arched passage. In the 20th century, a further room at basement level was added to the rear of the northern two rooms to create the plan form and phasing found today.

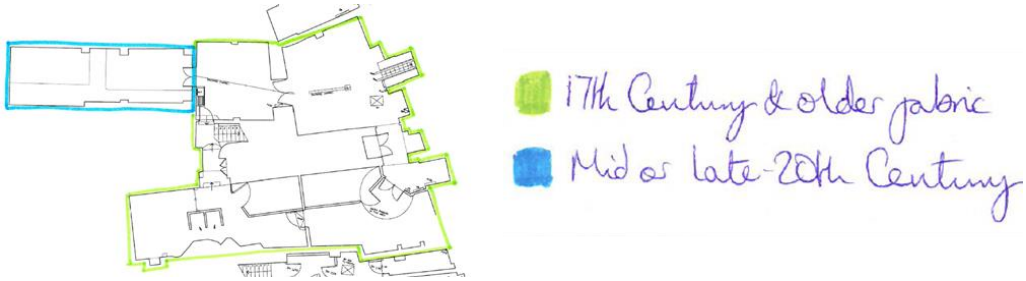


Figure 4.52: Phases of construction at basement level



Figure 4.53: Four rooms under the historic portion of the building are connected by passageways at the front and back of the house

4.76 The site of The Coopers arms has likely been occupied by multiple different buildings over time. Though the majority of the building dates from the 17th century (with later alterations and additions), at basement level fragments of plan form and construction materials indicate that elements of an older building have been incorporated into the existing structure. For example, to the front of the building there are numerous alcoves which project a small way under the street, and this is considered to be typical of medieval and Jacobean commercial buildings, where basements, or undercrofts, were used for the storage of stock and other possessions. There is a section of rubble and flint walling to the rear wall of the south-west room at this level which is suggestive of a pre-existing earlier structure on the site, whilst areas of 16th and 17th century brickwork repairs also indicate a pre-existing phase of construction. Thick layers of modern paint obstruct further investigation of the construction of other walls at this level, but it is considered likely that at basement level, this building has incorporated elements of an older structure in its form and fabric.



Figure 4.54: Street alcoves and some wall fabric indicate the incorporation of an older building at basement level

4.77 There is a substantial timber beam at this level which is very likely to be original to the 17th century, whilst some exposed timber ceiling joists are sawn, with steel supporting beams, and therefore are likely to be more recent replacements of the floor structure above.



Figure 4.55: Historic and more recent timbers at ceiling level

4.78 Above, the ground floor of this building would originally have been used as two commercial premises (No.29, and No.30 and 31), divided by the external passageway leading to an open yard. Its role as the principal place of business and commerce would have made this an important and high-status floor level within the building, and this status would likely have been accompanied by appropriate decoration. The historic division into two shops survived until the post-war period, but between 1955 and 1962 the ground floor frontage was remodelled into a single premises, and the internal space was converted to single use as a public house. As part of this the layout and décor at this level was substantially remodelled.

4.79 As previously described, the rear room of the neighbouring Nos.27 and 28 Market Place was incorporated as part of this building at an unknown date, but prior to 1877 when the OS map shows the footprint of the public house incorporating this space. The passageway and yard were internalised in the 19th century, whilst extensions to the rear were constructed in the mid- or late-20th century.

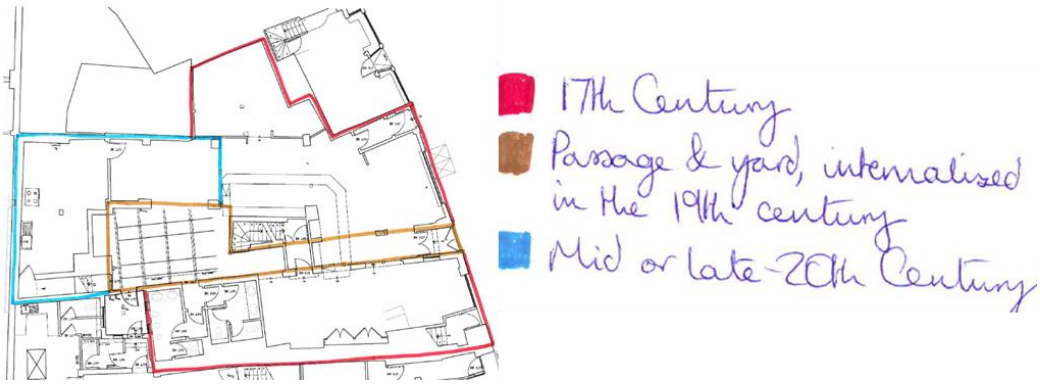


Figure 4.56: Phases of construction and alteration at ground floor level

4.80 Archival research has not revealed any material to inform an understanding of the original plan form of the building; however, The Coopers public house was built on an already-established street, which was laid out in typically narrow, thin medieval burgage plots. The form of the southern premises at this level remains correspondingly long and narrow, though the location of any historic lateral partitioning to create separate rooms in this part of the building is unknown. Today, heavy modern partitioning towards the rear of the plot to create WCs has compromised this legibility on site.

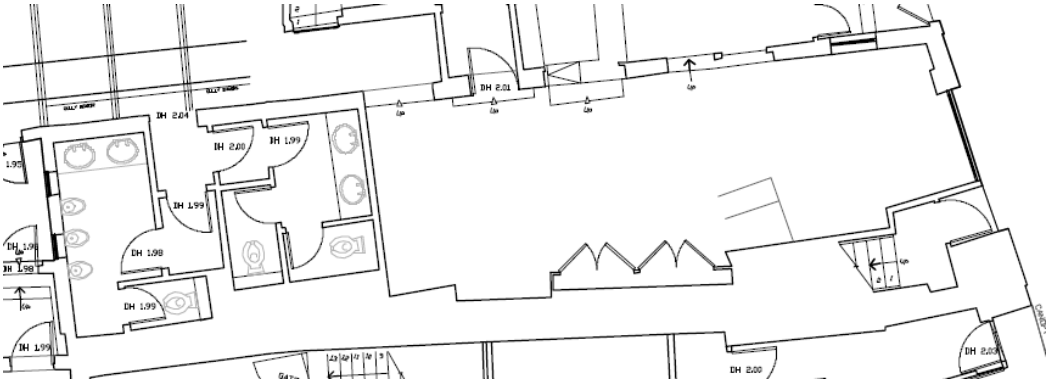


Figure 4.57: The characteristically medieval proportions of the southern premises are discernible in plan drawings, but modern partitioning has compromised legibility on site



Figure 4.58: The southern portion of the building retains its historic long, thin proportions to the front of the building

4.81 This southern room contains several elements of timber décor including half-height panelling and a moulded cornice with a grape motif. None of this is considered to be historic, but simply a modern decorative scheme installed as part of the conversion to single use as a public house, and intended to look antique to fit in with the historic character of the building as a whole. The one element which does appear to be of some age is a carved timber door which provides access to the basement. The List Entry identifies that this is probably reused from another 16th or 17th century house[23], whilst an archaeological report submitted as part of a previous application for Listed Building Consent in 2008[24] speculates that it might have been taken from one of the many historic buildings which were demolished in Market Place during the post-war period, and inserted as part of the pub conversion, to enhance the historic character of the décor.



Figure 4.59: Much of the decorative detail in this room is modern, although a door to the cellar appears to be reused from a 16th or 17th century house

4.82 The spine walls dividing the north and south premises, and the central passageway, have been opened up to create lateral access through the building, and this has compromised the legibility of the form of the previously-external passageway, and the understanding of the ground floor as two formerly-separate spaces. As found today, the historic plan form of the northern premises, the route of the passageway, and its connection to the covered yard have also been compromised and obstructed by the large central bar, which was installed between 1962 and 1976, when the building was converted to a public house.

4.83 A timber beam runs across the front of the property, a short way back from the early-19th century window. It is thought that this may represent the original location of the ground floor frontage, indicating that originally, the upper storeys of the building were jettied. This would be in keeping with the timber-framed construction and is a common feature of 17th century buildings, as displayed by the neighbouring Nos.27 and 28. As part of the changing tastes and fashions in architecture during the late-17th and 18th centuries, it may be that the street frontage was pushed forwards to remove the

[23] Historic England. The National Heritage List for England (website)

[24] Application Number 080843. Buildings Archaeology Report for Brook Henderson Estates Ltd, August 2007.

unfashionable jetty, leaving behind this fragmentary timber. Further behind the front window there is a second beam at ceiling level, with some carving along its edge. This simple decorative detail is indicative of the status of this floor level in the building, which would have been the principal space for everyday business and trade.



Figure 4.60: Lateral openings in the spine walls have compromised the legibility of the two separate premises with a central passageway at ground floor

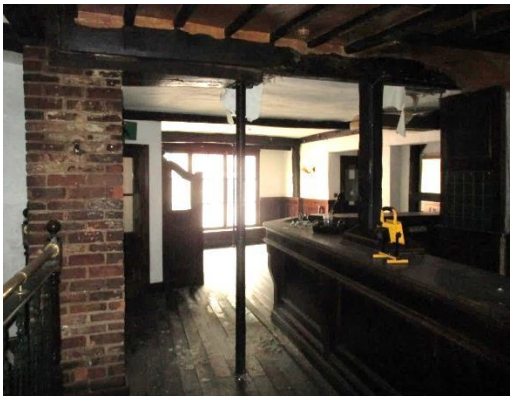




Figure 4.61: The modern bar in the centre of the floor plan compromises the plan form of the northern premises (L) and central passageway (R)



Figure 4.62: Ceiling timbers towards the front of the building are suggestive of its original form and appearance, and reflect the past status of this floor

4.84 The bar at ground floor level itself is a modern installation, again built of dark timber in order to blend with the antique-style effect of the pub décor. Above this central feature, the historic timber ceiling beams are exposed, though the spaces between appear to have undergone some alteration to fit down-lighters.



Figure 4.63: The central bar and ceiling over at ground floor level

4.85 Opposite the bar, there is a small lounge space on the north side of the building which formerly would have belonged to Nos.27 and 28 Market Place, but which was incorporated into this building at some point prior to 1877, and probably in the early-19th century. The walls of this area are almost completely panelled, and there is a large strapwork overmantel on the far wall.

4.86 The List Entry identifies the overmantel but provides no further insight into its origins. Again, an archaeological report submitted as part of a previous application for Listed Building Consent in 2008[25] speculates that both the panelling and overmantel were taken from an historic building elsewhere, and inserted in this location as part of the pub conversion to create a traditional, historic ambience and character. This report contains a further assessment of the overmantel by Victor Chinnery Early Furniture and Decoration Advisory and Consultancy Services, which states:

"The overmantel area is the most notable feature, being a 19th century assembly

[25] Application Number 080843. Buildings Archaeology Report for Brook Henderson Estates Ltd, August 2007.

incorporating a mixture of early 17th century fragments from disparate and unidentified sources …

As such, the overmantel is a typical product of Victorian antiquarian interest, though it was clearly not composed for the present context as it is significantly too large to function as an overmantel in such a small space. The area beneath is covered by a modern panel painted with a false fireplace, and (without removing the panel) it is not clear whether a real fireplace exists in this area …

The rest of the 17th century plan panelling now covering these three walls is of equally disparate origins, being composed of sheets of plain panels, each held within a range of moulded frameworks of differing patterns and proportions …

The whole scheme appears to have been brought together fairly recently."[26]



Figure 4.64: Lounge space opposite the bar

4.87 To the rear of the ground floor level beyond the bar, it appears that some demolition of the historic building has taken place to open up the space and connect the historic building into the mid- to late-20th century extensions. Timber and modern brick pillars now support the rear wall of the historic building. The modern space has very high ceilings, with dark timber moulded cornices intended to be in keeping the antique-style décor at the rest of this level. High on the inner wall windows look onto the central covered yard area, whilst there is a large opening into this space at ground level.

[26] Victor Chinnery Early Furniture and Decoration Advisory and Consultancy Services. Report on The Coopers Arms. November 2006.



Figure 4.65: Some demolition of the historic rear elevation has occurred to open up the space to the modern rear extensions

4.88 The 20th century extensions wrap around two sides of the former yard area, whilst the timber frame of the 17th century rear range forms the southern wall of this space. This timber framed wall has been extended westwards using brick and weather boarding in order to support the roof structure above, and a door inserted at ground level. A 20th century sash window has been inserted into the timber framing, along with two other door openings. That at the ground floor may be of some age, but the frame of the door opening at first floor indicates that it is a more recent alteration. The glazed roof lantern assists in the appreciation of this space as a formerly-external yard, however, its relationship with the former passageway connecting to it from the street has been compromised by the insertion of a partition which now completely blocks this route through the building.





Figure 4.66: The covered yard area, enclosed on two sides by the historic building, and on two sides by modern additions

4.89 At the very rear of the building at this level, the modern extension contains the kitchen which served the building when in use as a public house. There is nothing in this area which is of any architectural or historic interest.



Figure 4.67: Former kitchen area in the modern rear extension at ground floor

4.90 In summary, at ground floor level the plan form and interior décor has been heavily altered in the 20th century, as part of the building's conversion to single use as a public house, and the historic layout is now very difficult to discern. Much of the interior décor is modern, whilst more historic elements are considered to be disparate accumulations from other locations, reused in this building either as part of the 19th century penchant for antique features, or the 20th century attempt to create a traditional, nostalgic interior design scheme. Whilst these features contribute in a small way to the historic and architectural interest of the building through their age and aesthetic value, this contribution is diminished by their unknown providence.

4.91 Now moving upwards through the building. The first floor level would historically have comprised residential accommodation, either as a single or multiple dwellings. If in use as a single dwelling, the first floor would have had high-status within the hierarchy of floor levels through the building, and would have been used as the main living space, with bedrooms above. As found today, the building has undergone significant phases of alteration and addition in the early-19th and 20th centuries, which have added to its plan form. The 17th century core remains, fronting the street and with a large range

projecting back into the plot, whilst an early-19th century corridor has been added to provide access to the northern 17th century room; an acquisition from the neighbouring Nos.27 and 28 Market Place. To the rear, the modern extensions create further space at this level.

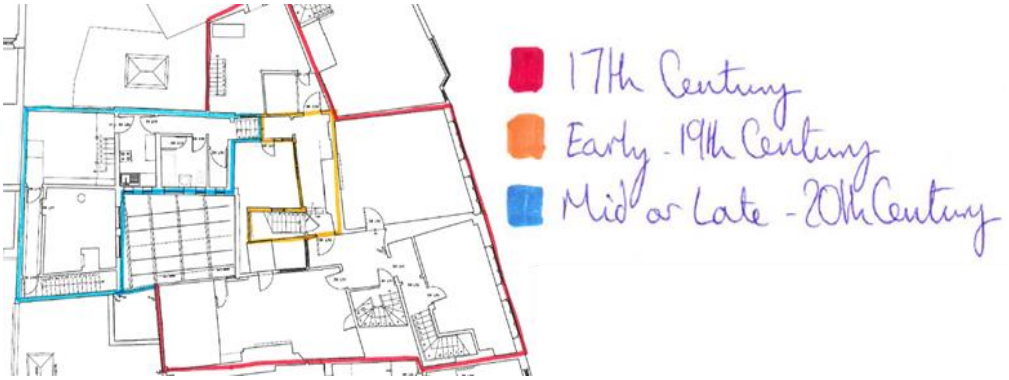


Figure 4.68: Phases of construction and alteration at first floor level

4.92 A staircase at the front of the house, entered from the street, provides access to the first floor. With no archival material to indicate the original layout of the building and the locations of stair access, it is difficult to establish whether the location of this staircase is original. It may be that the original stair access to the first floor was demolished along with the third bay of the building in the mid-19th century, to make way for No.32 Market Place. The current stair at the front of the building may have been installed as a replacement; however, access from the street to a staircase located against the party wall is not an unusual layout for urban, mixed commercial and residential buildings.



Figure 4.69: Staircase at the front of the building, accessed via a separate entrance

4.93 There are two rooms to the front of the house, and a third large room to the rear, all within the original 17th century building. The rooms to the front of the house occupy a single bay each, with two windows in each room overlooking the street. As previously described, these windows are replacements of the early-20th century. The proportions of these two rooms are considered to be fairly intact, where they occupy the full width of each bay, and also the depth of the 17th century building range fronting the street. The original central timber beams are visible in the ceilings of both rooms at the front of the building, whilst the crude panelling in the southern room, and the corbelled fireplace in the northern room are both suggestive of an early-19th century phase of

refurbishment. Both rooms retain thick historic floor boards, though their straight, sawn appearance indicates that they are not original, though their thickness does give the impression of some age. The doors and doorcases in these rooms, and elsewhere at this level, are also historic and can likely be attributed to the early-19th century.



Figure 4.70: Two rooms to the front of the building at first floor level retain their original proportions

4.94 The large room in the rear 17th century range is also considered to be intact in its proportions, and has also received alterations, probably of the early-19th century, to insert a sash window in the northern wall, create built-in shelving to the right of the fireplace, and insert a modest fire surround. Again, the floor boards are of some age, though their sawn appearance indicates that they are not original.



Figure 4.71: Large room in the 17th century rear range, with early-19th century décor

4.95 There is a space beyond this rear room which is not accessible at this level, but only via a step ladder from the second floor. It is considered that this space would originally have been accessed from the first floor, but was sealed off at a later date; possibly as part of arrangements of the multiple occupancy of the upper floors of the building. The door opening into the void under the glazed lantern is puzzling, as there is no evidence, in the fabric or in archival records, that the former yard space was ever ceiled between ground and first floors.



Figure 4.72: A space to the back of the rear range is sealed off at first floor level, and only accessible via a step ladder from the second floor

4.96 A second staircase, located behind the bar and above the staircase to the basement, provides access to the first floor. This is a later insertion, which has simple square balusters with a spiral newel post that date stylistically to the early-19th century, indicating that it is part of a phase of alteration contemporary with the interior décor features seen in the 17th century rooms at this level. Externally, the sloped roof over the staircase is visible within a central external space. The central staircase gains access to a corridor at first floor level. Like the staircase, the arched Gothic-style windows in this corridor date it to the early-19th century. This corridor provides access to the room at the rear of Nos.27 and 28, suggesting that it transferred ownership from that building to The Coopers public house in the early-19th century.







Figure 4.73: Staircase in the centre of the building



Figure 4.74: A corridor was added in the early-19th century to the back of the 17th century range fronting the street, to provide access to the newly-acquired room at first floor level

4.97 A section of the floor has been removed in the 17th century northern-most room, creating an opening into the bar / lounge area below. Given the appearance of the balustrade in front of the void, this fabric removal was likely executed as part of the late-20th century conversion to a public house. Two other sides of the void are partitioned using broad timber planks.

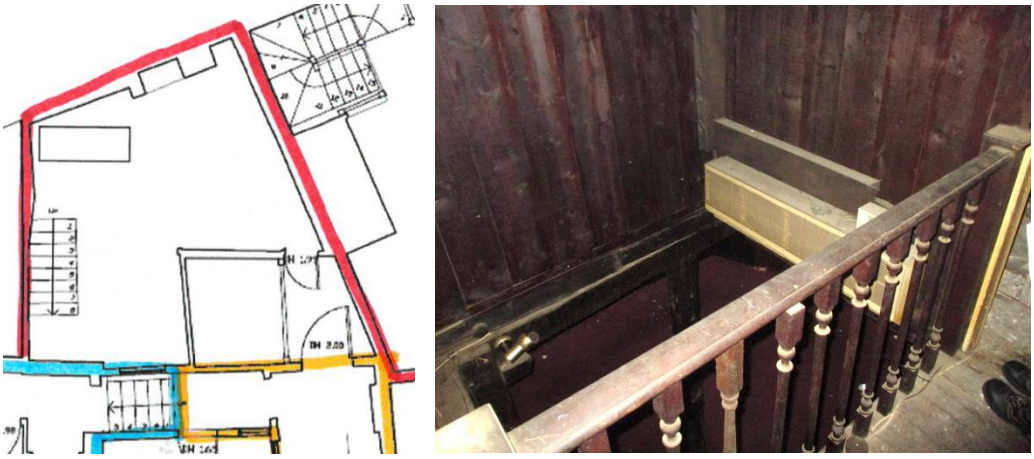


Figure 4.75: A section of the floor was removed in the late-20th century

4.98 Within the room itself, a great deal of the structural fabric is exposed. Historic floor boards have survived, along with original floor and ceiling joists, and laths to the walls. The thickness and irregularity of the laths is indicative of great age, and it is considered likely that large parts of the structure in this room are original.



Figure 4.76: Large parts of the structure in this 17th century room are likely original

4.99 Against the outer wall there is a modest fireplace. This is a later insertion, made once the room was incorporated as part of The Coopers public house in the early-19th century. When part of Nos.27 and 28 Market Place, the fireplace would likely have been located within the substantial chimney breast between the front and rear rooms. A staircase was also installed in this room following its amalgamation into the building, to provide access to the second floor. Again, this may have been carried out as part of

alterations to the building to accommodate multiple residential occupation on the upper floors.



Figure 4.77: The 17th century northern room incorporates a fireplace and stair

4.100 Turning the corner of the early-19th century corridor, a short flight of modern steps lead up into the mid- or late-20th century rear additions to the building. These extensions wrap around the side and rear of the building, and contain ancillary storage, bathroom and utility functions, as well as a straight flight of stairs to the covered yard area at ground floor level. There is nothing in these rooms which is of architectural or historic interest, and the 20th century extensions make no contribution to the significance of the listed building.



Figure 4.78: The ancillary rooms within the 20th century extensions

4.101 From the first floor level, access to the second and third floor levels is gained via a framed newel stair. The narrow proportions of this feature, as well as the closed string form and the style of the newel posts, pendants and turned balusters, are all typical of a 17th century staircase. This feature is therefore considered to be original. It is currently concealed by a 20th century partition at first floor, but would originally have

been open to the hallway. There is no evidence that the staircase would have descended to the ground floor, as the first newel post shows no scarring, or other sign of having been curtailed. An attractive, subtle detail is that the diamond shape of the newel posts is echoed in the shape of the stairwell.



Figure 4.79: The framed newel stair is typical of 17th century style, and extends between the first and third floors of the building

4.102 At second floor level, the building comprises the 17th century core of the front range to the street, and the rear range projecting back from the building line. As at first floor, an early-19th century corridor connects this portion to the 17th century room incorporated from the neighbouring Nos.27 and 28 Market Place, whilst a further addition of the mid- or late-20th century extends to the rear, accessed by a short flight of steps.



Figure 4.80: Phases of construction and alteration at second floor level

4.103 To the front of the house, the southern-most bay is divided into two rooms, accessed via a short hallway. The hall and room partitions are constructed of brick, and probably date from a later phase of plan form rearrangement at this level of the building. A single room occupies the northern bay, and whilst the early-19th century corridor may have curtailed some of its original depth, it is considered that the proportions of this space remain relatively intact. The fireplace in the southern room has a plain surround with corner roundels; a design typical of the early-19th century and appropriate for the more modest upper floor level. The floor boards in these rooms are fairly wide, but are straight sawn indicating that they are later replacements of the original timber. In the southern most room, the ceiling structure is exposed close to the window, showing that modern timbers have been inserted fairly recently to replace failed beams.



Figure 4.81: Three rooms at the front of the house (second floor)



Figure 4.82: Exposed ceiling joists in the southern room show that some of this structure has been replaced with modern timbers

4.104 The rooms in the 17th century range are considered to be intact in proportion, with a single partition dividing the space into a large and small room. The exposed timber ceiling beams join in the middle of the ceiling of the larger room, whilst areas of the lath and plaster sub structure are also visible. The partition wall is also constructed of timber framing and lath and plaster, the thickness and irregularity of which indicates that it is of considerable age. The far wall of the smaller, end room is constructed of brick between the timber wall posts, and this structure is very probably original.



Figure 4.83: Two rooms in the rear 17th century range at second floor level

4.105 As at first floor level, a corridor added in the early 19th century leads to the 17th century room which formerly belonged to Nos.27 and 28 Market Place. The peculiar kinked shape of the hallway is considered to be a later alteration to its form, possibly done to enlarge slightly the front room. The minimal thickness of the hall partition and the appearance of the tongue and groove panelling give the appearance of a 20th century

addition. The treatment of this partition continues around the hall corner to where the 20th century rear extension begins.



Figure 4.84: 20th century alterations to the early-19th century corridor at second floor

4.106 In the 17th century northern room, the timber-framed structure of the building is completely exposed, revealing that the southern wall to the corridor has been completely rebuilt with sawn timbers. This may have occurred as part of a 19th century phase of alteration in the building, but equally could also be attributed to the substantial changes which occurred in the 20th century. Archival investigation and research of the planning history has not revealed any further information to establish the providence of these works. Several ceiling joists have also been replaced, and the appearance of these beams and joints is more certainly modern. Elsewhere, the 17th century timber structure remains, along with posts that currently support the ceiling beams, indicating that some repair and strengthening may be needed here.



Figure 4.85: Views of the 17th century northern room at second floor level

4.107 As in the same room at first floor level, a small fireplace has been installed against the outer wall, and this is considered to date from the early-19th century when the room was incorporated as part of The Coopers public house. A step ladder provides access to the third floor.

4.108 As at first floor level, a short flight of modern steps again lead up into the mid or late-20th century rear addition to the building. At this level, the extension contains bath and utility rooms. Unusually, an exposed area of the ceiling structure shows that lath and plaster was used in the construction of this extension. By the 20th century this building technique was not in common use, and it may be that it was used in this case in an attempt to make the new addition sympathetic to the old building. Despite this small peculiarity, there is nothing here which is of architectural or historic interest, and the 20th century extension make no contribution to the significance of the listed building.

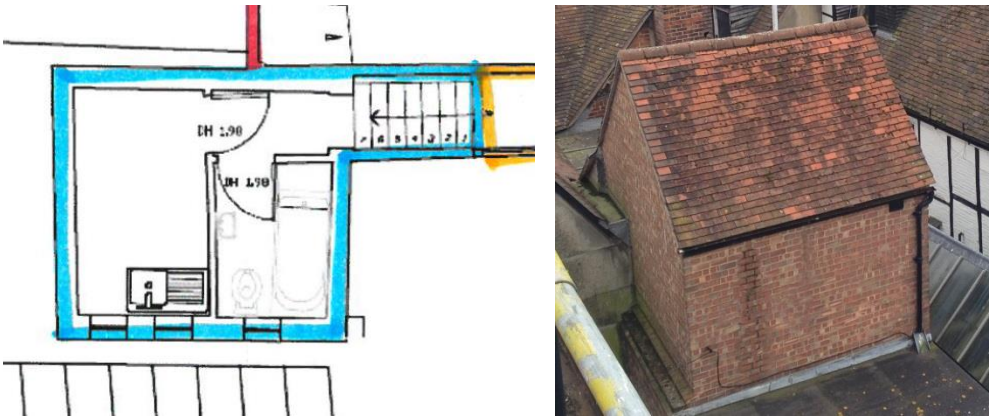


Figure 4.86: Later 20th century addition at second floor level





Figure 4.87: Bath and utility rooms in the modern rear extension

4.109 The third floor or attic of The Coopers public house comprises the original 17th century fabric of the range fronting the street, and the wing which projects into the rear of the building plot. The very modest proportions of the spaces at this level are testament to its relatively low status in the hierarchy of floors within the building.

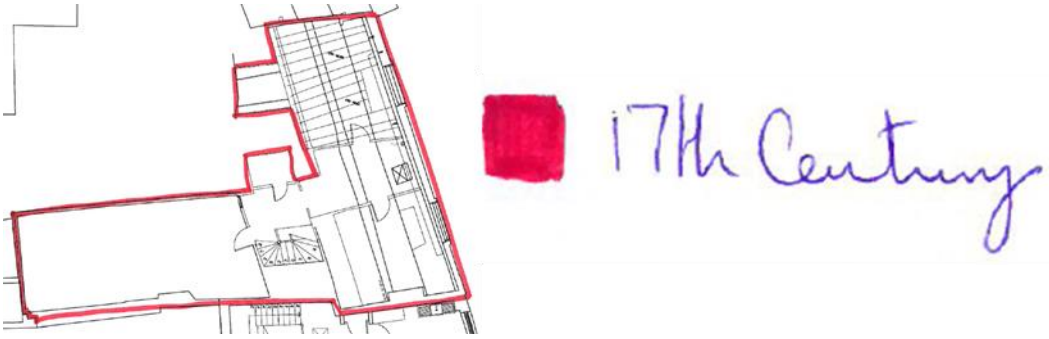


Figure 4.88: Phases of construction and alteration at third floor level

4.110 At this level the wall surfaces and lath substructure have been very largely removed, so that only the structural timbers remain along with some fragmentary plaster wall finishes, and an area of modern tiling in one of the rooms. The majority of the timbers are original, though there are some substantial areas of replacement. Wall posts have been inserted to divide the space into three rooms, and there are two rooms at the front of the house to each side of a central landing space, and also two spaces occupying the whole of the rear range. These later divisions may have replaced original partitions in the same location, but appear to be of fairly poor quality, and rapidly executed. Archival research has not revealed any information regarding the original or historic plan form at this level; however, the layout of two rooms at the front of the house, and also two spaces occupying the whole of the rear range, is very similar to that seen on the lower two floors, and so is likely to be historic, if not original.



Figure 4.89: At third floor level the structural timbers are completely exposed, and comprise original 17th century beams as well as areas of replacement



Figure 4.90: There are two rooms to the front of the house, and two in the rear range

Historic Interest

4.111 The Coopers public house is of historic interest as an example of a 17th century mixed commercial and residential building, the timber-framed construction of which is representative of an important vernacular building tradition in England. It represents an early phase in the development of the Market Place, and the vernacular style of architecture which once prevailed in the town. At the same time, the amalgam of traditional timber construction with Classically-influenced architectural detailing on the front elevation is of historic interest where it reflects the changing fashions in architectural style during the 17th century, and the interface of old construction methods with new aesthetic tastes during the period. In a similar vein, the reversion back to a timber-framed appearance in the early-20th century is also of historic interest where it again represents changing preferences in building design at the time.

4.112 The building is also important for having survived the widespread phases of redevelopment and replacement that occurred in the Market Place and across Reading during the 19th and 20th centuries, making it one of the oldest buildings in the town. Its original mixed commercial and residential use reflects the role of the Market Place as the historic core of Reading, where the key commercial and business activities were concentrated.

Group Value

4.113 There is a key associative relationship between The Coopers public house and the historic buildings around the Market Place, including Nos.23-26, Nos.27 and 28, and No.32 Market Place, the Corn Exchange Arcade Entrance, and other historic and listed buildings on the south and east sides of the open space. Together, these buildings create a varied and interesting frontage to the Market Place, and enhance the appreciation of the area as an historically important place for commerce in the town. The listed building also forms part of the appropriate historic backdrop to the key landmark buildings of the Town Hall and St Laurence's Church.

Summary of Significance

4.114 The Coopers public house is representative of a strong tradition of timber-framed vernacular architecture in England, which has survived later phases of urban redevelopment in Reading, and changes in architectural fashion more widely. Though a great deal of internal and external alteration has occurred, particularly in the mid- to late-20th century, the building retains a great deal of its original and historic structural fabric, along with key internal features such as the 17th century staircase. As a public house and former coaching inn this building also represents an important part of the historical development and past commercial uses of this important town within Berkshire.

4.115 Phases of change have altered the building incrementally over time, in particular during the early- and mid-19th century and the mid to late-20th century. Some alterations of the early-19th century, including the additional staircase and upper level corridor, have however added to the building's interest to some degree. The demolition of one of the original three bays of the building in the mid-19th century, and also part amalgamation with the former rear of No.27 Market Place and the enclosure of the historic passageway and open yard at the heart of the plan, has compromised somewhat the legibility of its original form and internal layout. Several quite radical 20th century alterations and additions to the building, both external and internal, have resulted in the loss of substantial historic fabric and features, and serve to confuse our understanding and appreciation of the earlier form.

4.116 The other listed buildings within the Site make a positive contribution to the significance of this building through shared group value and as part of the historical and architectural interest of this part of the town centre.

Listed Building: No.32 Market Place

Group Value

4.117 No.32 Market Place was constructed between 1842 and 1860. It is a four storey (with basement), fully stuccoed building, and designed in a familiar Classically-influenced style for mixed commercial and residential use. Prior to its construction in the mid-19th this plot formed part of the earlier Coppers Arms public house and once coaching inn.

4.118 The List Entry states that it was included on the statutory list of buildings of architectural and historic interest for "group value only"[27]. There is a key associative relationship between No.32 Market Place and the historic buildings around the Market Place, including Nos.23-26 and Nos.27 and 28 Market Place, The Coopers public house, the Corn Exchange Arcade Entrance, and other historic and listed buildings around the open space. Together, these buildings create a varied and interesting frontage to the Market Place, and enhance the appreciation of the area as an important place for commerce in the town. The building also forms part of the appropriate historic backdrop to the key landmark buildings of the Town Hall and St Laurence's Church.



Figure 4.91: No.32 is listed for group value, and it forms a part of the historic building group around the Market Place

Architectural Interest

4.119 The listed building is an example of the familiar Classically-influenced, mixed commercial and residential architecture which developed in Reading over the 19th century. The front façade of the building remains broadly intact, though the keystone detail over the upper storey windows, which is present in early photographs and appears until the mid-1960s, is no longer extant. The photographs also show that the window frames have been replaced, altering the former four-pane sashes to a six-over-six design. The ground floor shopfront is an installation of the 20th century, though the moulded fascia and cornice appear to be historic, and are depicted in the relevant figure.

[27] Historic England: The National Heritage List for England



Figure 4.92: View of No.32 Market Place, as found today



Figure 4.93: The front elevation as photographed in 1860 and also post-war

4.120 The rear elevation is very modest in its design and use of materials, relative to the principal street frontage. This reflects the traditional hierarchy between the higher status public frontage, and the less important backs of this sort of commercial / residential building. The rear elevation is three bays in width, with a single storey ground floor portion extending further into the rear of the plot. The window openings have more recent single-pane sashes which detract from the historic character of the building elevation. An accumulation of alterations, including modern rainwater goods, new and blocked openings, and the addition of a brick flue, have cluttered the elevation and also diminished the quality of its appearance.



Figure 4.94: Rear elevation of No.32 Market Place

4.121 The butterfly roof form of the tall portion of the building has survived, along with three chimney stacks and their chimney pots. The rear projection at ground floor level is original to the building, but the existing flat roof covering is original, and unsightly air conditioning units have also been installed in this location, diminishing further the historic character and appearance.



Figure 4.95: Roof forms at No.32 Market Place

4.122 Internally, the basement of No.32 is accessed via a straight flight of stairs set against the northern party wall, towards the centre of the building. Though this is a modern stair, it is considered likely that the location is original as it is typical of buildings of this age and type. Also at basement level, the original 19th century brickwork remains, with a modern painted finish, and modern strip lighting and other electrical fittings. Given the thickness of the partition walls it is considered that the existing layout is original to the building, comprising a stair hall, two rooms (one large, one narrow) at the front, and two further large rooms at the centre and rear. This floor level is very functional and plain, with little else in terms of architectural detail to contribute to the special interest of the building.

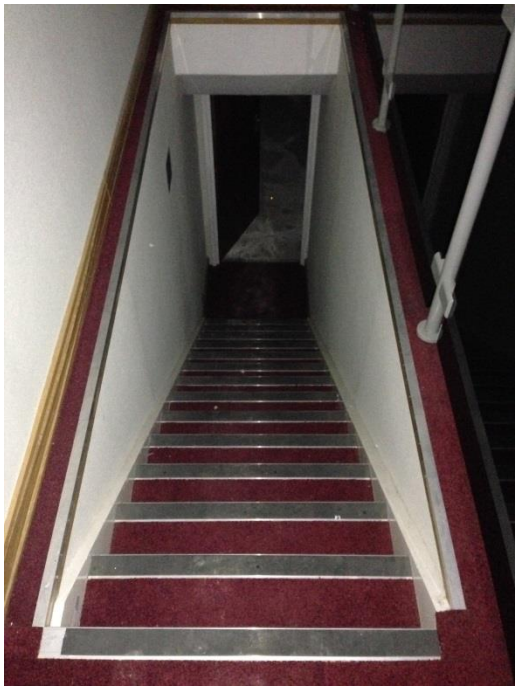
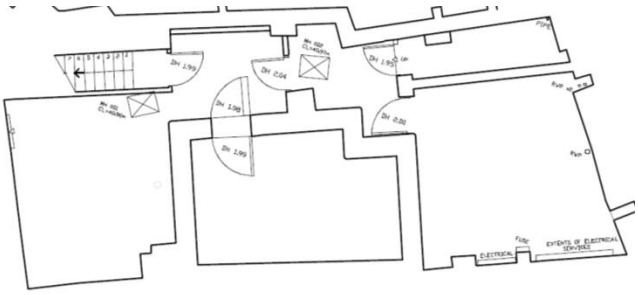


Figure 4.96: Stair between the ground floor and basement







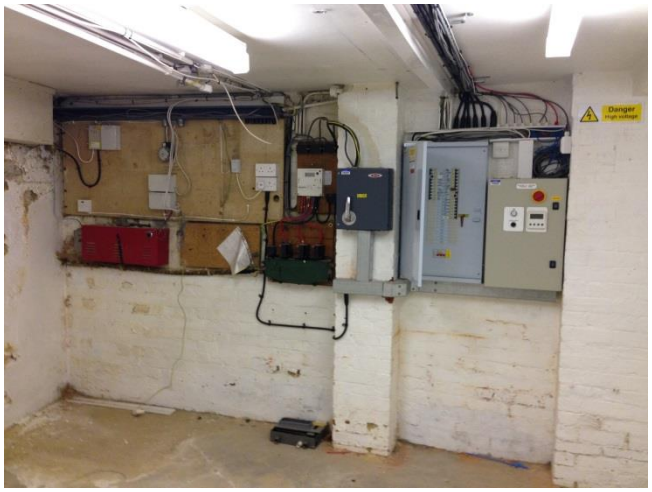


Figure 4.97: Rooms at basement level are very plain, unadorned with any detail of architectural or historic

4.123 Above, the ground floor of the building has most recently been in use as a bank / building society; a use established since the mid-1950s, as evidenced by the street directories included above. In relation to the use as a bank / building society and the associated need for enhanced security, the staircase between the ground and upper floors of the building has been completely removed at this level, so that there is now no internal access to the first floor and above. This removal of a key feature of the building has damaged the legibility of its original and historic layout, and its past circulation patterns. The basement and ground floors are completely cut off from the rest of the building, so that the traditional relationship and hierarchy between floor levels is compromised. The original plan form at ground floor level is no longer legible as all historic partitions have been removed, and new light-weight divisions inserted as part of the modern bank premises. The historic interior has also been entirely removed, and replaced with modern fittings which make no contribution to the special interest of the listed building.



Figure 4.98: No historic interior fabric remains at ground floor level

4.124 The upper floors of No.32 Market place are now accessed via a doorway in the rear elevation at first floor level. Here, the traditional two-room layout is still broadly legible; however modern partitions to create a landing cupboard have encroached upon the proportions of the rear room, whilst glazed partitioning in the front room has also compromised the form of this space. A second doorway between the front room and landing has also been opened up through the lateral wall. Despite these modern interventions, some original decorative fabric and features survive at this level, including moulded skirting and cornicing, and fireplaces in each room.



Figure 4.99: Modern partitioning has compromised the traditional two-room floor plan at first floor level



Figure 4.100: Some original decorative fabric and features survive, including the fireplaces in each room

4.125 The location of the first flight of steps between the ground and first floor has been ceiled over and the area blocked by a landing cupboard. Though the cupboard must be non-original, the doors do appear to be of some age and may have been relocated here from elsewhere in the building; possibly the ground floor. The style of the remaining flights of stairs is in keeping with the age and style of this building, and is considered to be original.



Figure 4.101: The main staircase between first and third floor level is original

4.126 Beyond the ground and first floor in buildings such as this, the plan form is typically more heavily partitioned; into three or four rooms. It is considered that the existing layout of two principal rooms to the front and rear, with additional smaller rooms at the front of the house, is original. As at ground floor, some historic decorative fabric also survives at this level including dado rails, skirting and fireplaces.



Figure 4.102: The historic layout of two principal rooms, with two additional smaller spaces survives at second floor level



Figure 4.103: Some original decorative fabric and features also survive

4.127 The plan form at third floor level is almost identical to that on the floor below, with a large room at the front and rear, with a further small lobby and kitchen area at the front. Whilst the surface decorative treatment at this level is modern, the skirting, doors, door surrounds and fireplaces are considered to survive from the mid-19th century construction of the building.



Figure 4.104: The historic layout of two principal rooms, with two additional smaller spaces survives at third floor level



Figure 4.105: Some original decorative fabric and features also survive

Historic Interest

4.128 This listed building helps to illustrate the role of the Market Place as the focal point for commercial activity in the town over several centuries. It also helps to illustrate the early- to mid-19th century phase in the commercial development of Reading, as the town increased rapidly in population.



Figure 4.106: No.32 as part of the Market Place in 1904

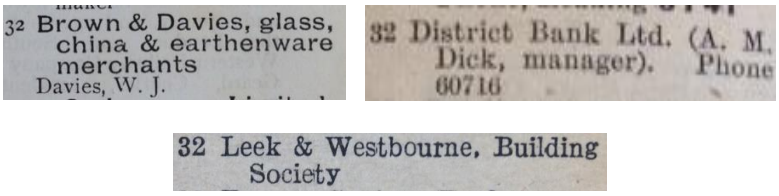


Figure 4.107: Street directories of 1900, 1954 and 1976 showing No.32 Market Place in different commercial uses

Summary of Significance

4.129 No.32 Market Place is significant as an example of mid-19th century commercial and residential architecture, which illustrates the growth in commerce and wealth in Reading during the early to mid-19th century period. The Classically-influenced decorative architecture of the building also illustrates the social and business aspirations of its owners, as well as the broader ambitions of 19th century Reading in creating a prosperous commercial town. Importantly, the List Entry for this building identifies that it was included on the statutory list for "group value only". This indicates that the special interest is primarily invested in the external street frontage to Market Square, rather than any internal elements, and as part of the wider street scene.

4.130 The other listed buildings within the Site make a positive contribution to the significance of this building through shared group value and as part of the historical and architectural interest of this part of the town centre.

Listed Building (Grade I): St Laurence's Church

Architectural Interest

4.131 St Laurence's Church was founded in the 12th century, and originally the outer gate of Reading Abbey was attached to the southern flank wall. It is constructed of flint with stone quoins and other detailing, and a red tile roof. Parts of its structure, including the quoins and a small window in the nave, are 12th century fabric, whilst much of the building dates from a phase of rebuilding in 1522. Interior features such as the pulpit and organ case date from the mid-18th century, whilst the List Entry makes reference to *"excessive restorations of 1867".*[28]



Figure 4.108: John Speed's map of Reading, 1611, showing St Laurence's Church on the edge of the abbey precinct



Figure 4.109: St Laurence's Church, as found today

[28] Historic England: The National Heritage List for England (website)

4.132 Though the church underwent *"excessive restorations of 1867",* elements of fabric from the 12th-18th centuries remain. The remnants of building fabric from different phases of the church's development reflect its long history as part of Reading, and at the centre of social, cultural and religious life in the town over several centuries.

Historic Interest

4.133 St Laurence's Church is of historic interest as one of the longest-standing buildings in Reading, and has been a prominent visual landmark in views along Friar Street, Market Place and Duke Street for all of its history. The building displays multiple phases of change and development in its physical fabric from the 12th century onwards, and is an important physical record and expression of the long use of this site as a Christian place of worship. The List Entry states:

"The principal interest of this church is that it was built at the Abbey gate. The circa 1200 work may possibly be in connection with the foundation of St John's Hospice."[29]

4.134 The church therefore also derives historic interest from its possible relationship to the 12th century foundation of this institution. It also represents the last intact building related to Reading Abbey and its precinct immediately to the east of the building.

Summary of Significance

4.135 St Laurence's Church is of significance as a long-standing feature of Reading, and an important element of the town's historic core. It is of architectural interest as a place of worship which multiple phases of construction and rebuilding, as well as high-quality interior features such as the benches and pulpit. These multiple phases record the past and continuing importance of its use as a place of Christian worship. The wider historic urban townscape emphasises its role at the centre of social, cultural and religious life in Reading over several centuries.

Setting

4.136 The Setting of St Laurence's Church comprises the townscape area of the surrounding Market Place / London Street Conservation Area; the character and appearance of which is described in this report. The church overlooks the open spaces of Town Hall Square and Market Place, as part of an urban townscape diverse in terms of the ages, types, and architectural styles of its buildings. Whilst the individual buildings around the church have been altered and added to over time, the overall layout of the street pattern on Friar Street and Market Place has not altered significantly.

4.137 The tower of St Laurence's is visible over fairly long distances in the surrounding area, with the longest views gained from Friar Street, Duke Street, Market Place and the Forbury. This visibility is an expression of its historically important role within the community as a place of worship, and has made it a local landmark in the area. The church is located in the midst of a varied townscape of historic and more recent residential and commercial buildings, some of which are now listed. The church forms a key part of the historic townscape in one of the oldest parts of Reading, and there is a key associative relationship between it and the nearby historic buildings, where the church would have been the primary place of worship for past residents of the area, as well as passing merchants and worshippers in the town. There is also a key visual

[29] Historic England. The National Heritage List for England (website)

relationship between the Market Place and the church, where it stands sentinel over a key area of civic open space. Again this visual prominence emphasises the building's importance at the centre of social, cultural and religious life in Reading over several centuries. Mid-20th century buildings on Friar Street and the east side of the Market Place have encroached upon the historic character of the Town Hall Square and Market Place.



Figure 4.110: The church is a local landmark and which can be seen in long views from the surround area

Contribution of the Site

4.138 As part of the wider historic townscape of this part of the town centre, the listed buildings within the Site contribute positively to an understanding of the role and significance of St Laurence's Church as the primary place of worship for past residents of the area.

Listed Building (Grade II*): Town Hall Chamber and Offices and Clock Tower

Architectural Interest

4.140 The Town Hall Chamber, Offices and Clock Tower were designed in the French Gothic style by Sir Alfred Waterhouse, and built between 1872 and 1875. The building is constructed of red and grey brick with terracotta ornaments, and is arranged over three storeys, with a curved frontage to Town Hall Square. The Town Hall is a good example of ambitious late-Victorian civic design which is richly detailed and ornamented, and draws upon French and Gothic architectural influences. The building is of an imposing civic scale, with a striking roofscape that culminates in the landmark clock tower.



Figure 4.111: View of Town Hall Chamber, Offices and Clock Tower





Figure 4.112: The Town Hall has an imposing civic scale and a striking roof form, and is particularly visible from Friar Street and Market Place

Historic Interest

4.141 The Town Hall derives historic interest as a physical reminder of the civic pride associated with the 19th century success and expansion of Reading. The continued civic

use of the property as a concert hall and museum enhances this historic value. The Town Hall also illustrates the broader national trend in the growth of local government and civic pride in late 19th century Britain. Finally, the building is associated with the renowned architect, Sir Alfred Waterhouse.



Figure 4.113: Illustration of the Town Hall and neighbouring church from the Supplement to the Illustrated London News, July 8th 1882. This scene is consistently replicated in photographs and illustrations of Reading

Summary of Significance

4.142 The Town Hall is of significance as a high-quality example of ambitious late-Victorian municipal architecture, which acts as a tangible reminder of the pride and ambition of Reading's population and local government in the 19th century.

Setting

4.143 The setting of the Town Hall again comprises the surrounding Market Place / London Street Conservation Area. The Town Hall, and its tower in particular, were located in order to terminate the views from Friar Street and Market Place. The resultant visibility is an expression of its historically important role within the community as the focus of municipal government, and has made it a local landmark in the area. The location of the Town Hall, standing over a key area of civic open space, emphasises its importance at the centre of local governance in the town. Together, the Town Hall and neighbouring St Laurence's Church constitute the defining architectural image of Reading. The Town Hall Square, in front of the building, is an area of open space with a civic character which reflects that of the listed building, and contributes positively to its significance. Similarly, the adjacent Market Place with its surviving historic buildings, reinforces the importance of this location as a long-established focal point of civic activity and commerce in Reading.

Contribution of the Site

4.144 The listed buildings on the Market Place, including those within the Site, illustrate the connection between the town's commerce and its civic pride, and this enhances the significance of the listed building as part of the wider historic townscape of Reading.

Listed Building: Nos.23-26 Market Place

Architectural Interest

4.145 The List Entry for Nos.23-26 Market Place dates this short terrace to the early-19th century, and attributes it to either Henry or Nathaniel Briant. Whilst early-19th century maps depict a curved building line to the corner of Friar Street and Market Place, such as that Nos.23-26, the building footprint is first shown in detail in the 1877 OS map. Nos.23-26 Market Place is arranged over four storeys and three bays, and is fully stuccoed. Above the ground floor commercial premises, paired Doric pilasters divide each bay, and a single pilaster brackets each side of the elevation. The two sash-and-case windows to each bay diminish in size at each level, whilst those at first floor have square hood moulds. There is a moulded cornice at parapet level.



Figure 4.114: Extract of 1877 OS map



Figure 4.115: View of Nos.23-26 Market Place

4.146 Nos.23-26 Market Place is of special interest as an example of the familiar Classically-influenced, mixed commercial and residential architecture which developed in the early to mid-19th century.

Historic Interest

4.147 These listed buildings help to illustrate the early to mid-19th century phase in the commercial development of Reading, as the town increased in population and urbanised.

Summary of Significance

4.148 The listed buildings are significant as examples of early-19th century commercial and residential architecture, which illustrates the growth in commerce and wealth in Reading during the early- to mid-19th century period. The Classically-influenced decorative architecture of these essentially-functional buildings also illustrates the social and business aspirations of their owners, as well as the broader ambitions of 19th century Reading.

Setting

4.149 The setting of Nos.23-26 Market Place comprises the surrounding Market Place / London Street Conservation Area. The terrace is located on the curved corner of Friar Street and Market Place, and addresses the Town Hall Square. On the opposite side of the square, the imposing Town Hall and St Laurence's Church mark this as an important civic and social space within the town. To the south, the building line on the west and south sides of the Market Square comprises a mixture of listed buildings, and together these create a stimulating variety of historic architectural style. Their mixed commercial and former-residential uses contribute to an understanding of the Market Place as a focal point for commercial and social activity over time, and the role of Nos.23-26 as part of this. Along Friar Street, the more recent adjoining buildings are of little historic value or architectural interest, and make only a neutral contribution to the significance of the listed building as a part of its setting.



Figure 4.116: Nos.23-26 are located on the curved corner of Friar Street and the Market Place, as part of an varied historic building frontage to the civic open space

Contribution of the Site

4.150 As described above, the building groups along the west and south sides of the Market Place contain a number of surviving historic / listed buildings, including those within the Site, which create variation in architectural style and features, but a general consistency in scale, historic character and materiality. These are key contributors to the significance of this listed building, where it is appreciable as part of the historic townscape in a key commercial hub of the town.

Listed Building: former Trustee Savings Bank (Nos.33-34 Market Place)

Architectural Interest

4.152 The former Trustee Savings Bank at Nos.33 and 34 Market Place is a mid-19th century building arranged over three storeys, with a stone-clad shopfront at ground floor of the early-20th century, and brick above with stucco dressings. Pilasters divide each bay, below a deep stucco frieze and cornice at parapet level. The Trustee Savings Bank is of architectural significance as a mid-19th century commercial building, which uses high quality materials and detailing that echoes continental, predominantly Classical and Italianate, architectural styles.

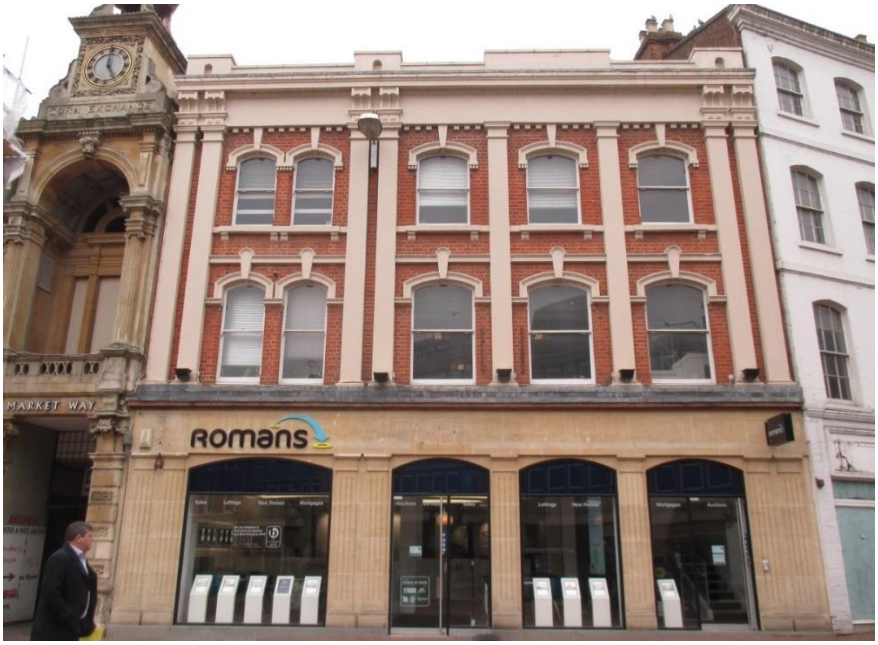


Figure 4.117: View of the former Trustee Savings Bank

Historic Interest

4.153 The principal element of historic interest is derived from its illustrative value as a tangible remnant of the rapid 19th century development of Reading, and the enormous growth in Britain's domestic and foreign business.

Group Value

4.154 The List Entry for the building states that it was included on the statutory list of for "group value only". The Trustee Savings Bank contributes to the stimulating variety of historic architectural styles on the west and south sides of the Market Square, and also forms an appropriate part of the architectural backdrop to the two landmark historic buildings of the Town Hall and St Laurence's Church.

Summary of Significance

4.155 The Trustee Savings Bank is of architectural significance as a mid-19th century commercial building, which, though altered, uses high-quality materials, and Classically-influenced detailing to express the social and business aspirations of its early occupiers, as well as the broader ambitions of 19th century Reading. It is the contribution of its principal street frontage that makes the primary contribution to its significance and key group value.

Setting

4.156 The setting of Nos.23-26 Market Place comprises the surrounding Market Place / London Street Conservation Area. The former bank overlooks the Market Square, which is an historic focal point for the town's business and commerce, close to the main shopping route of Broad Street. To the north, the Town Hall and St Laurence's Church at the top of the Market Place dominate the open space and reinforce this location as an important historic focal point in the town. The former bank forms part of a building group composed of historic, listed buildings in a mixture of commercial uses, whose individual architectural treatments together create a varied and interesting frontage to the open space, and enhance the appreciation of the Market Square as a historically important place for commerce in the town. By contrast, the mid- to late-20th century commercial and office developments on the opposite side of Market Place are of alien form, materiality and character, and these buildings do not contribute positively to the significance of the listed building.



Figure 4.118: The former bank forms part of a building group composed of historic, listed buildings in a mixture of commercial uses

Contribution of the Site

4.157 Built form along the west and south sides of the Market Place contain a number of surviving historic buildings, including those within the Site. These are key contributors to the significance of the listed building and former bank, where it is appreciable as part of the historic townscape in a key commercial hub of the town.

Listed Building: Corn Exchange Arcade Entrance, Market Place / Market Way

Architectural Interest

4.158 The Corn Exchange Arcade Entrance was constructed in 1854 to designs by J.B Clancy and F. Hawker.[30] Built in ashlar stone, it occupies a single bay of the building line and rises in three stages to a bell turret with a weather vane. At ground floor, the stone is rusticated, with leafy capitals. The level above has an arched recess with a tripartite window, flanked by ionic pilasters, and a balcony. Above, a clock face is topped by a bell tower.



Figure 4.119: View of the former Corn Exchange Arcade Entrance

4.159 The arcade entrance is of architectural significance as a high-quality, highly-detailed feature which forms part of the historic building group on the west side of the Market Place. Its sculptural flamboyance expresses the status attached to the (now demolished) Corn Exchange as an important building for trade and commerce in the town and wider area. It uses high-status materials and elaborate detailing which echoes continental, Italianate architectural styles. Overall, the structure integrates well with the varied and visually interesting building line.

Historic Interest

4.160 Though the Corn Exchange building itself has been lost, the arcade entrance remains to represent the role of the Market Place and the immediate area as the historic heart of commercial and business functions in Reading. More widely, it reflects the importance of Reading as the county town of Berkshire, where the Corn Exchange would have been

[30] Historic England. The National Heritage List for England (website)

visited by a wide range of merchants from around the county. The elaborate architectural design of the arcade entrance reflects the status and pride attached to business and commerce in the 19th century, in Reading and across the country.

Summary of Significance

4.161 The Corn Exchange Arcade Entrance is of significance as a mid-19th century structure which formed part of an important commercial building within Reading and the wider county. Its historic interest is derived from its illustrative value as a tangible remnant of the rapid 19th century development of Reading, and the growth in the town's commercial industries during this period.

Setting

4.162 The setting of Nos.23-26 Market Place comprises the surrounding Market Place / London Street Conservation Area. The structure stands over the Market Square, which is an historic focal point for the town's business and commerce, and this reinforces the significance of the former arcade entrance as part of an important commercial building within Reading. To the north, the Town Hall and St Laurence's Church at the top of the Market Place dominate the open space and reinforce this location as an important historic focal point in the town. The arcade entrance forms part of a building group composed of historic, listed buildings in a mixture of commercial uses, whose individual architectural treatments together create a varied and interesting frontage to the open space, and enhance the appreciation of the Market Square as an historically important place for commerce in the town. By contrast, the mid- to late-20th century commercial and office developments on the Market Place and on Friar Street are of alien form, materiality and character, and these buildings do not contribute positively to the significance of the listed building.



Figure 4.120: View of the historic buildings on the west side of the Market Place

Contribution of the Site

4.163 The historic and listed buildings within the wider townscape setting of this listed building are key contributors to the significance of the former arcade entrance, where it is appreciable as part of the key commercial hub of the town. This includes the other listed buildings within the Sit itself.

Listed Building: Queen Victoria Jubilee Statue

Architectural Interest

4.164 This statue of Queen Victoria was erected in 1857 to mark the Jubilee of this monarch. It is large in scale and appropriately occupies a prominent position within this public square and the immediate setting of the civic complex of the Town Hall and also St Laurence's Church. The sculptor is recorded as the local George Simmonds, and high quality Carrara marble has been used for the statue of the "Queen as Empress". This stands on a high stone plinth with moulded cornice and base on wide steps, surrounded by red granite bollards to each corner. It is of architectural interest as an example of Victorian public sculpture of considerable sculptural merit and use of materials, which also relates well to this townscape space and civic focus of the town.



Figure 4.121: Queen Victoria Jubilee Statue

Historic Interest

4.165 The historic interest of this statue derives from its record of this part of the reign of Queen Victoria in England and the reverence and respect accorded to her in this period across the country. The erection of this monument in this square is also an expression of civic pride; like the ambitious and striking nearby Town Hall (albeit completed later) associated with the 19th century success and expansion of Reading. More generally, public statuary enjoyed a Golden Age during Victoria's reign – both in quantity and quality, which was a period fascinated with history and the cult of fame, combined with the desire to aggrandise and beautify the new cities.

Summary of Significance

4.166 The Queen Victoria Jubilee Statue is of significance as a high quality example of early to mid-Victorian sculpture that occupies a prominent location at the civic heart of the town. It not only celebrates the deference to / respect of the monarch but also records the pride and ambition of Reading in this period.

Setting

4.167 The setting of this statue comprises the surrounding Market Place / London Street Conservation Area. It was deliberately sited within this public square and meeting of more ancient streets within this part of the town centre. The proximity to the civic complex of the Town Hall (listed building) also reinforces historic value and effect of this monument as a local landmark. The Queen was orientated to face down Blagrave Street, and its inscription tablet also looks this way, which emphasises the importance of the view this local view looking south. Its local historic townscape setting contributes positively to the understanding and appreciation of its significance.

Contribution of the Site

4.168 The listed buildings on the Market Place, including those within the Site, illustrate the connection between the town's commerce and its civic pride, and this enhances the significance of the listed statue to some degree as part of the wider historic townscape of Reading – although immediate views are not shared.

5. Application Proposals and Heritage Impact Assessment

Introduction

5.1 The designated heritage assets which would likely be affected by the application proposals and this new scheme for the Site have been identified and their significance (and also any contribution of setting) described proportionately as part of this report, in **Sections 2-4** (and also supporting appendices). This is our updated baseline appraisal with regard to built heritage matters. In summary, this includes consideration of the following heritage asset impacts:

- Conservation Area: London Road / Market Place – the Site included in this designated area;
- Listed Building Group: Nos.27-28, 29-31 (former The Coopers public house) and 32 Market Place (all Grade II) – the Site includes this complex group of listed buildings; and
- Listed Buildings: other – the Site falls within the shared townscape setting of a number of other listed buildings, which include:
  - Church of St Laurence (Grade I);
  - Town Hall Chamber and Offices and Clocktower (Grade II*);
  - Nos. 23-26 Market Place (Grade II);
  - Former Trustee Savings Bank, 34-36 Market Place (Grade II);
  - Corn Exchange Arcade Entrance, Market Place / Market Way (Grade II); and
  - Queen Victoria Jubilee Statue (Grade II).

5.2 The current relevant heritage legislation, planning policy and guidance for development affecting designated heritage assets is also set out in full at ***Appendix 3*** of this report. This includes the statutory duties of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, national policy set out in the NPPF 2021 and supported by NPPG, and other relevant local Development Plan policy and guidance (RBC local authority area).

5.3 Together, these sections and appendices of this report provide appropriate and proportionate information for the full consideration of the heritage impacts of the new scheme for the reuse and development / works on the Site of Nos.27-32 Market Place by the local planning authority at application stage.

Planning History and Pre-Application Engagement

5.4 Both Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent have been approved by Reading Borough Council (RBC) for the part reuse and part redevelopment of a larger site area for a mix of uses including hotel, which included not only this application Site but also the adjoining vacant former Bristol & West Arcade (Nos.173-175 Friar Street). This approval dates from 21 July 2021 (LPA reference numbers 210163FUL and 210164LBC).

5.5 Also material to this new application is the previous approval again of both Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent by RBC for the redevelopment of that larger site in a mix of uses, albeit residential-led. This approval dates from 9 January 2019 (LPA reference numbers 180358FUL and 180359LBC).

5.6 Importantly, both approved applications have established the acceptability of the principal of significant change on Site and across this larger site, and in this way RBC have also recognised the public benefits that could be offered by the reuse and revitalisation of the currently vacant historic buildings, as well as those associated with a new mix of uses, built development, high quality architecture and landscape across the larger site area.

5.7 These previously approved schemes have been subject to extensive pre-application discussions with RBC, Historic England (HE) and other stakeholders through consultation. This new application scheme – now focussed on the Site of Nos.27-32 Market Place – has also been subject pre-application engagement with RBC prior to this latest submission.

Application Proposals

5.8 The application proposals for the future use and development / works at the Site of Nos.27-32 Market Place are fully illustrated in the drawings / images prepared by the newly appointed scheme architect JDW Architects Limited. This is also supported by their application Design and Access Statement (DAS).

5.9 In summary, this scheme includes the demolition of the later 20th century additions to rear of the listed buildings, change of use of the retained units at Nos.27-32 Market Place at first, second and third floors to provide 8no residential units, retention of flexible Class E uses at ground and basement floors at Nos.27-28 and 32, retention of a public house (Sui Generis use) at part basement and ground floor at Nos.29-31, and associated internal and external works, including landscaping, plant and cycle store to the rear area.

Impact Assessment

Overall Approach

5.10 We have identified that the application proposals would again have a direct and or an indirect (i.e. setting and views) impact on the significance of the statutory listed buildings within the Site, the surrounding conservation area, and a number of other listed buildings nearby.

5.11 Accordingly, this new scheme is reviewed further in this Section with respect to its likely impact on the significance of these designated heritage assets. The effect of the proposed development on heritage significance and setting will be similar in several ways, given the way in which the designations overlap or share similarities in terms of their setting and / or architectural and historic interests. Accordingly, efforts have been made to avoid repetition when describing the impacts of proposed change on the existing buildings on Site and their local townscape context. In this way we also recognise that historic, functional and or visual inter-relationships exist between these heritage assets, in particular where the conservation area provides the shared townscape setting of each of the listed buildings that contributes to their significance.

5.12 The change that would be brought about by these proposals are then considered in overall terms at the end of this Section, in light of relevant heritage legislation, planning policy and guidance with regard to heritage assets. This context includes the relevant statutory duties of the Planning Act 1990, national policy within the NPPF 2021 and supporting NPPG, and the local Development Plan for RBC.

Proposed Development / Works

Mixed Use

5.13 The proposed scheme for the Site and reuse of the listed buildings at Nos.27-32 Market Place will deliver a new mix of both commercial and residential uses, which will reverse the long period of inactivity and run-down appearance of this key town centre site. This is an important opportunity to revitalise these historic buildings and Site, and so contribute positively to the vitality and vibrancy of the Market Place / London Road Conservation Area, which itself is normally characterised by animation and a diversity of uses. Securing the active reuse of this Site is significant "heritage (and public) benefit", as defined by the NPPF / NPPG.

5.14 Active street frontages will be reintroduced across the on Site listed buildings as they address the historic Market Place. This will include three commercial units at the basement and ground floor levels (generally following the historic divisions), with new residential use to the upper floors. This is important as the method by which the viable future use, repair and ongoing maintenance of these historic premises can be secured. This is a further "heritage benefit" for these listed buildings, and in turn will also sustain and enhance their positive contribution to the character and appearance of the surrounding conservation area, and that as part of the settings of other nearby listed buildings.

5.15 It has also been identified as part of previous pre-application and application processes that the proposed reuse and revitalisation of historic buildings addressing the Market Place would support the objective recent government-funded "High Streets Heritage Action Zone" programme for Reading town centre. This initiative is being delivered by Historic England, and which is intended unlock the potential of high streets across England, fuelling economic, social and cultural recovery.

Building Alterations, Extensions and Repairs

5.16 A comprehensive series of works of external and internal demolition, alteration and extension are proposed to each of the listed buildings within the Site (comprising Nos.27-28, the former The Coopers public house (Nos.29-31), and No.32 Market Place).

Importantly, the proposed alterations have been closely informed by a thorough understanding and appreciation of the heritage significance of these listed buildings; and the contribution of setting to that significance. In developing the proposals, close attention has been paid to minimising the loss or alteration of historic fabric and features, and to seeking opportunities to deliver heritage benefits through appropriate repair and or reinstatement, and also new interventions that fully consider, and are sympathetic to, this historic context.

5.17 Overall, the approach and design for the proposed adaptations of these listed buildings in their new uses remains as that previously consented as part of the now approved 2019 and subsequent 2021 schemes for the larger site area. These again seek to preserve and repair elements that contribute to heritage significance (such as the remaining part of the historic plan form, fabric and features); take opportunities to reinstate lost historic elements and so enhance an understanding of the buildings' significance; and also focus the greatest degree of change within areas already comprised by unsympathetic later alteration, which therefore have a low sensitivity in heritage terms. Works proposed to the listed buildings on Site are again described in detail in this Section below, albeit principally for ease of reference and completeness.

5.18 It is important to note that the existing condition of the properties on Site reflect a schedule of stabilisation / consolidation and essential repair works that have been undertaken by the previous owners of the listed buildings on Site. These works were commenced in 2021 in liaison with officers / members at RBC. Accordingly, and as material to this new application, ***Appendix 4*** is a copy of the Review Report prepared by ROC Associates on 18 January 2022 following a return inspection of the listed buildings Nos.27-32 Market Place. This report has reviewed the works that have been completed as part of the condition survey and report of recommendations previously prepared on behalf of Sonic Star Properties Ltd on 30 April 2020 (revised 5 November 2020).

Nos.27-28 Market Place

External Alterations - Front Elevation

5.19 Externally, the Site's principal street frontage to the Market Place would be relatively little altered for all listed buildings in this group, however there are opportunities to improve the commercial frontage to the street once specific occupiers are secured. At Nos.27-28, the existing right-hand entrance door would be re-opened and used for access to the residential accommodation at the upper floor levels.

Rear Elevation

5.20 Proposals include the insertion of two new window openings in the flank elevation of the listed building, at both the first and second floor levels. Meanwhile, the existing door opening from the former Coopers Arms into the rear room of Nos.27-28 would be re-used / built up to form a window opening. This would require the removal of localised areas of historic fabric; however, the new windows have been carefully-considered, and are the minimum necessary to achieve an appropriate balance with the light levels that are required within the residential apartments. The new windows will be framed with two-over-two timber sashes; a design that has sought to complement the historic character of the listed building.

Internal Alterations - Basement

5.21 The basement areas for all the listed buildings would be reused as ancillary storage and other facilities, associated with the new commercial and residential uses on the floors above. This would be in keeping with the historical role of the basement levels as lower-status ancillary and service floors. Alterations are confined within the existing footprints, and comprise some removal / adaptation of modern interventions only.

5.22 Within Nos.27-28, permission is sought to remove the existing bathroom facilities at basement level, to create space for plant and storage. This would remove the existing, poor quality and unsympathetic uses, and reinstate the street vault to its original proportions, which is an enhancement to significance and heritage benefit. In addition, the proposals include the installation of some moderate partitioning, to create separate storage and plant areas. The new divisions have been positioned in order to preserve the legibility of the timber beam that spans the ceiling at basement level. The new partitions would be fully reversible, and would not affect the particular heritage significance of the listed building.

Ground Floor

5.23 The ground floor of Nos.27-28 is to become a viable commercial unit, whilst the upper levels of the building will be converted to residential use. The rear room of the listed building at ground first and second floors, has been re-distributed at some point in the past to become part of the former Coopers Arms. A significant heritage benefit, to be delivered as part of these proposals, will be to return the rear room at each level to its original ownership / functioning. At ground floor, this would be achieved by inserting a new partition to divide the room from the public house; and by making a small door opening from the front to the rear within the listed building, adjacent to the central chimney stack. As a result, the historic, two-room plan form of this 17th century building would be reinstated, and this represents an enhancement to the understanding of the building's original form and function.

5.24 Other alterations at ground floor level include the installation of very modest partitioning in the rear room, to create cycle storage; and the insertion of a new stud partition at the front of the building, to separate the retail unit from the residential entrance. These alterations would not adversely affect any historic fabric, and would also be reversible. This aspect of the proposals would not affect the listed building's particular significance.

First Floor

5.25 The first floor of the listed building will be converted for use as a residential apartment. As part of this, the modern created void in the floor of the rear room would be filled and made good, as part of its return to the past division of ownership of Nos.27-28. Again, this repair to the listed building would enhance an understanding of its original form, which is a "heritage benefit". New partitions will be inserted within the front room, to create an entrance lobby to the apartment; whilst in the rear room, a new partition will be inserted to create an ensuite bathroom. These new insertions would be reversible, and would also be designed so that they are clearly legible as modern insertions into the overall plan form. As a result, they would preserve the particular significance of the listed building.

5.26 Finally at first floor, an existing stair in the rear room, leading to the second floor, would be removed, and the void in the ceiling filled. This will mean the loss of a moderate amount of existing fabric, however it is unlikely in our view that this stair is original but instead a later insertion from the time when the rear room was acquired by the former Coopers Arms. It is also a relatively modest, commonplace stair design with little design merit; whilst its removal would facilitate the re-use of the building as self-contained apartment. On balance, then, it is considered that these proposed alterations will preserve the significance of the listed building, whilst ensuring its active reuse.

Second & Third Floors

5.27 The second and third floors of Nos.27-28 would be converted for use as a single residential apartment. At both floors, new partitions will be inserted within the existing front room; to create an entrance lobby at second floor; and a small bathroom at the third floor. New partitions will also be inserted within the rear room at second floor, to create an ensuite bathroom; whilst at the third floor, the rear wall would be boxed-out to create a vertical wall. All of these new insertions would be reversible, and would also be designed so that they are clearly legible as modern insertions into the overall plan form. As a result, they would preserve the particular significance of this listed building.

The Former Coopers Arms (Nos.29-31 Market Place)

External Alterations - Front Elevation

5.28 At the former Coopers Arms, permission is sought to remove the existing architrave, pediment and fanlight to the main entrance, and to install a simpler fascia and door, designed in a traditional manner that is sympathetic to the character of the listed building. Much of the existing frontage and entrance decoration is modern, and of a Classically-inspired style that is not authentic to the building. The proposed alterations would reinstate the front elevation closer to its historic appearance shown in early photographs and images of the Market Place; and this represents an enhancement and "heritage benefit" that will better-reveal its significance.

Rear Elevation

5.29 To the rear permission is sought to carry out selective demolition to the rear of the listed buildings. This is specifically targeted at the mid and late-20th century additions at the rear of the former Coopers Arms and No.32 Market Place, which are of no special interest, and do not contribute to the overall significance of the buildings. The creation of an external yard would allow the repaired historic buildings to be more appreciable to view from this rear area, so that their historic construction and phasing can be better understood and appreciated. The rear elevation of both the former Coopers Arms and No.32 would be made good with matching brickwork. A "heritage benefit" would be delivered by providing greater legibility to the historic rear elements through removal of modern additions of no value. It should also be noted that as part of this scheme the existing 19th century staircase and passageway extension to the rear of the former Coopers Arms PH will be retained.

5.30 Following the demolition of the modern rear extensions, new doors will be created in the rear of the former Coopers Arms, to facilitate the instalment of a commercial use in the buildings, with access to the rear yard. Permission is also sought for new window

openings at first and second floor level in the rear elevation. The northernmost doors to the retail unit would not require the removal of any fabric, beyond the removal of the 20th century rear extensions. The doors at the southern side of the building, and the new windows above, would require some removal of some brick nogging at each floor level; however, this would be minor in extent, and would be confined within the constraints of the existing timber structure to minimise fabric loss. The doors themselves would be simple in design, with full-height glazing and metal frames; in order to appear clearly legible as modern insertions. Similarly, the windows would also be simple, two-light casements.

5.31 Finally, it is again proposed to construct a brick flue at the rear elevation, between the second floor and roof level, to accommodate ventilation and services for the residential apartments. The rear elevation of the former Coopers Arms has been heavily altered over time, and lacks uniformity or consistency in its design or character. The flue would form another part of this already much-changed context; whilst enabling the internal conversion of the building for residential use. It is also modest in size, and will be clad in brick in an effort to blend with the traditional materiality of the listed buildings on the Market Place. Overall, given these considerations, the brick flue is considered to preserve the special interest of this listed building, and its contribution to the surrounding conservation area.

Internal Alterations - Basement

5.32 The basement level of the former Coopers Arms will be used as a kitchen, storage and bathroom for the public house; and also as storage and plant for the residential units on the upper floors of this building. In order to achieve separation of the two uses, the arched passageway at the front of the building would be blocked; though this would be done carefully to preserve legibility of the arched form, and also reversibility in the future. The existing door opening between the front and rear rooms on the south side of the building would also be blocked; and again, this is a reversible alteration.

5.33 Proposals include the installation of a new stair to access the portion of the basement associated with the residential accommodation. This will require the removal of a localised section of the building's floor structure, which is likely to comprise some amount of historic fabric. However, this element of the works will facilitate the conversion of the wider building for residential accommodation, and thereby help secure its long-term use and conservation.

5.34 The pub's storage area would be accommodated within the large space at the front of the building; and the kitchen in the 20th century rear extension. These elements would require no amendments to the plan form at this level. A new partition would be installed at the bottom of the access stairs, to create a separate space for bikes and storage. In the southern side of the basement, an existing modern timber and wire mesh enclosure would be removed, and new partitions installed to provide bathroom facilities. Within the portion of the basement associated with the residential accommodation, an existing, modern partition will be removed; and two new sections of wall inserted to create a stair lobby and two storage / plant areas.

5.35 In summary, the proposed plan form at basement level within the former Coopers Arms would largely seek the removal of modern fabric, and would overall retain the

existing plan form, whilst new partitions would be entirely reversible. The historic role of this level of the building as a functional, ancillary space would not be altered, and the particular significance of the building overall would be preserved overall. The proposals would also preserve the identified areas of rubblestone walling at basement level.

Ground Floor

5.36 The ground floor of the former Coopers Arms would be reinstated as a public house, and this will sustain and enhance the historical function and character of the listed building, which is a "heritage benefit". Remaining elements of the historic plan form will be retained; whilst the existing, modern bar will be removed to create a generous space at the northern side of the building. In the southern portion of the pub, new partitions will be inserted around the residential staircases, to separate the public and private premises of the building; an alteration which the local planning authority has previously confirmed is necessary for the conversion / reuse of the building. At the rear, only the modern bathroom partitions will be removed. Overall, the alterations at the ground floor are limited to modern fabric that is of no special interest, and as such this will not affect the significance of the listed building.

First Floor

5.37 The proposed new residential apartments at the upper levels of the former Coopers Arms will be accessed via the existing private staircase at the southern side of the building; and subsequently by the existing, 17th century stair. Each floor level will comprise a single apartment; and this is intended to ensure that the physical alterations to the building are kept to a minimum.

5.38 At first floor level one apartment will be accessed via a new entrance door and partition, to be located opposite the 17th century staircase. The rooms at the front of the property will comprise the living room (accessed via a slightly-relocated door opening), leading through a new opening in the partition wall to a bedroom with ensuite. A small section of wall will be removed from between the existing landing and the rear of the building, together with an existing wall within the rear wing. A series of new partitions will be inserted here, to create a kitchen, bathroom and bedroom. Meanwhile, the 19th century passageway at the rear of the building will be reused as a small storage space, with the Gothic-style windows retained; and the doorway into the rear of Nos.27-28 fixed shut.

5.39 Overall these alterations will mean the loss of a small amount of historic fabric; whilst the new partitions will alter the appreciation of the existing plan form of the building. However, these alterations are considered to be minimal (and, in the case of the new partitions, reversible); and are the minimum required in order to deliver a single functional apartment at this level.

Second Floor

5.40 The second floor apartment will be accessed via the 17th century stair core within the building. Here, the front rooms will be re-partitioned to create three bedrooms, an ensuite, and a shared bathroom; together with a landing and hallway. The hallway will lead around the retained stair core, to the kitchen and living room in the rear wing.

Here, the existing wall will be removed, but with nibs and a downstand retained to clearly preserve legibility of the historic plan form.

5.41 As at first floor level, these alterations will mean the alteration / subdivision of historic plan form; and the removal of a small amount of historic fabric. However, such change would occur within an already-compromised plan form; whilst the newly introduced fabric will be a reversible alteration. Meanwhile, these works of conversion to a residential apartment will also enable the long-term sustainable use of this historic building. As such, when considered as a whole and also in the context of the wider beneficial scheme for reuse, these proposals would preserve the significance of the listed building.

Third Floor

5.42 It is necessary to create a landing and entrance door to the self-contained apartment at this level, which requires the insertion of new partitioning at the top of the historic stair. This, in turn, requires the construction of a small, hipped dormer to the roof form, in order to provide the necessary head-room for access to the rear of the floor plan. At the front of this attic level there will be two double bedrooms with a small bathroom; whilst the rear wing will accommodate the kitchen and living room. As on the lower floors, the alterations at attic level have been carefully-considered in light of an understanding of the historical development of the building, and have sought to implement the minimum changes necessary to enable conversion to a self-contained apartment. Again, when considered as part of the overall beneficial scheme of repair and reuse, these proposals will therefore conserve the significance of this listed building.

No.32 Market Place

External Alterations - Front Elevation

5.43 No alterations are proposed to the front elevation of No.32 Market Place as part of this scheme; and works are confined to its sensitive repair and refurbishment.

Rear Elevation

5.44 The selective demolition works that are proposed to the rear of No.32 have been described previously in relation to the neighbouring former Coopers Arms. This is not repeated here. New doors will be included in the rear elevation at ground floor, to provide the retail unit with access to the created rear yard. These would form part of the new brick construction to repair the rear of the building, following the removal of the 20th century rear extensions. The doors themselves would be simple in design, with full-height glazing and metal frames; in order to appear clearly legible as modern interventions.

5.45 The proposed alterations also take the opportunity to replace the existing, unsympathetic uPVC window frames at the rear elevation of No.32 with new, white-painted timber sash frames; and to re-open other infilled windows. This will reinstate the original appearance of the rear elevation, with appropriate materials and detailing. This represents a “heritage benefit” for the listed building and wider conservation area.

Internal Alterations - Basement

5.46 The basement of No.32 will be used as ancillary storage and bathroom facilities for one of the retail units on Site; and as storage and plant for the residential apartments on the upper floors. The existing doorway into the central room will be infilled at this level, to enable the separation of the two demises; and new partitions will be inserted within the rear room to create bathroom facilities for the retail unit. At the front of the building, a small section of non-original wall will be removed, and new partitioning installed to create storage and plant space for the residential units. No.32 was listed primarily for group value, and the interior is heavily compromised and now makes only a very limited contribution to the particular significance of the building. In this context, these alterations at basement level are considered not to affect its special architectural or historic interest.

Ground Floor

5.47 An important enhancement to the building will be to reinstate a staircase between the ground and upper floors, as there would have been historically. At the same time, existing, modern partitions at this level will be removed, and new inserted to separate the residential entrance and staircase from the main retail unit and basement access. The original plan form at this level is now illegible, and no historic features remain. In this context, and in light of the building's designation for group value, these alterations will not detract from its heritage interest. Instead, they will enable the sensitive reuse and conservation of the listed building for the long term.

First, Second & Third Floors

5.48 The modern, unsympathetic partition at the front of the building at first floor will be removed, and this space reinstated to its original proportions. This is an enhancement and "heritage benefit". Meanwhile, one of the two existing doorways into the front of the building will be closed, to create a more coherent and simplified circulation pattern. At the rear, the existing plan form will be retained, with a slightly amended circulation pattern, to create a bedroom and ensuite bathroom. All of these alterations affect modern fabric only, which is of no heritage interest.

5.49 At second and third floors, the two rooms at the front of the building would be amalgamated, to create a single, spacious living room; whilst the rear room would be partitioned in a similar manner to the plan form below; to create a double bedroom and bathroom. It is to be noted again that No.32 was listed for group value, and for its townscape merit as part of the group of historic buildings around the Market Place. In light of this understanding of its special interest, the proposed internal alterations at second and third floor would have no impact on its particular significance.

Review of Heritage Legislation and Planning Policy

Statutory Duties - The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

5.50 It is our assessment that the proposed development / works on Site would accord with the key requirements of the relevant statutory duties of the Act. In overall terms, the proposals to secure a viable future for the existing historic buildings through sympathetic adaptation, and also a new mix of uses. This would preserve the special interest and setting of the listed buildings on Site and surrounding, and would also

preserve and in some ways enhance the character and appearance of the surrounding conservation area.

National Policy - NPPF 2021 and NPPG

5.51 In accordance with the requirements of paragraphs 194-195 of the NPPF, the significance (and also any contribution of the setting) of the identified designated heritage assets within the Site and its local area have been described in this report in a manner proportionate to each of the assets' importance and also sufficient to understand the potential impact of the new application proposals on that significance. This is set out in **Sections 2-4** of this report.

5.52 The supporting material to this new application submission demonstrates how due account has been taken in proposing the reuse and revitalisation of the existing Site of the key principles set out in paragraph 197 of the NPPF. This paragraph encourages development proposals to consider the desirability of sustaining and also enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation, which is reflected in the beneficial new uses proposed to safeguard the future of the listed buildings on Site; supporting the positive contribution that the conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality, again reflected in the contribution the reuse of the listed buildings would make to the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre; and, also where relevant the desirability of new development making its own positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

5.53 With regard to the likely affected designated heritage assets, paragraph 199 sets out that great weight should be given to their conservation. Helpfully, Annex 2 of the NPPF defines the term "conservation" as the process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance. It is our assessment of the new scheme that in overall terms the identified designated heritage assets would each be conserved, and their significance either unaffected, sustained or to indeed enhanced. Accordingly, these proposals include the offer of a substantial number of "heritage (and public) benefits", as defined by the NPPF / NPPG.

5.54 The NPPF further sets out at paragraph 200 that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset or assets should require clear and convincing justification. It is our own assessment however that harm to heritage significance would be avoided by these proposals (both in terms of the conservation area and listed buildings). The further paragraphs of the NPPF in relation to heritage harm (i.e. paragraphs 201-202 and 207) would therefore not apply to this new scheme.

5.55 Paragraph 206 of the NPPF that encourages local planning authorities to look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas, and also within the setting of other heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. These opportunities may be consider to be "heritage benefits" for the purposes of national policy. NPPG further defines that "public benefits" can also include heritage benefits, which are changes that would enhance or better reveal the significance of heritage assets[31]. In this Section of the report we have previously identified a substantial

[31] NPPG, Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 18a-020-20140306

number of such heritage benefits that would not only better reveal the significance of the listed buildings on Site through delivering / safeguarding their active reuse and repair, but also enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area and the shared setting of other nearby listed buildings. In summary, these benefits would include:

- Securing the viable reuse of the listed buildings on Site (which are currently vacant and their conditions deteriorating) in the interests of their future conservation;

- Introducing a new mix of uses on Site to provided animation, vitality and visual interest for the street scene and wider townscape;

- Works of required repair, refurbishment and ongoing maintenance of the historic buildings, funded by their conversion and reuse;

- Reinstatement of a private residential entrance to the front elevation of Nos.27-28 Market Place;

- Reinstatement of the front elevation of the former Coopers Arms closer to its original appearance;

- Removal of unsympathetic modern extensions to the rear elevations of the former Coopers Arms and No.32 Market Place, to better reveal the historic form and appearance of the listed buildings;

- Reinstatement of traditional timber sash window frames to No.32 Market Place;

- Reinstatement of the rear room of Nos.27-28 Market Place to its original ownership / function;

- Reinstatement of the original proportions of the street vault at basement level to Nos.27-28 Market Place; and

- Reinstatement of a staircase between the ground and upper floors of No.32 Market Place, as there would have been historically.

Local Development Plan - Local Plan 2019

5.56 It is our assessment (as previously described in this Section of the report) this new application scheme would be in accordance with the requirements of local Policy EN1, which expect such proposals to protect, and where possible enhance, the significance of designated heritage assets and their settings, and also to seek to avoid harm. In order to comply with the requirements of this policy, this Heritage Statement report has also been newly prepared to describe in detail the built heritage impacts relevant to this application.

5.57 Overall these proposals would also accord with the requirements of Policy EN3, which states that the character and architecture of conservation areas should be conserved and enhanced. The retention, reuse and repair of the historic buildings on Site would make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. As required by this

policy, the published Conservation Area Appraisal and its associated guidance has also been reviewed as part of our assessment of heritage significance and likely development impacts.

5.58 With regard to Policy EN6, this report, the architects' DAS and also other supporting material for this new application submission all demonstrate how study of the historic environment has informed and shaped the proposed development for this Site. The new uses and proposed design of building alterations / repairs would make a positive contribution to the historic character and architectural and visual qualities of the local area. In accordance with criterion b of this policy, this scheme and its design is sensitive to its historic context. With regard to criterion (d), the proposed active reuse of probably the oldest secular buildings in Reading town centre would in addition promote the appreciation of, and improve access to, previously neglected heritage assets.

5.59 With regard to the specific allocation of this Site for future redevelopment within the Local Plan, the relevant development principles have been duly considered through the design process for this scheme (Policy CR14d). The proposed new and optimised uses and street frontages of the existing historic buildings would contribute positively to the characteristic diversity of uses, vibrancy and vitality of the town centre. This scheme would therefore avoid any detrimental effects on the significance or setting of the listed buildings and the conservation area, and instead offer "heritage benefits".

6. Summary and Conclusions

6.1 In summary, this Heritage Statement report has been prepared by Turley Heritage on behalf of our Client and the Applicant, to provide relevant and proportionate information to the local planning authority (RBC) with regard to likely built heritage impacts, and in support of applications for both Listed Building Consent and Planning Permission for the proposed development / works of the reuse, revitalisation and associated adaptations of the existing historic buildings on Site (Nos.27-32 Market Place).

6.2 As a starting point, it has been established that this Site includes a group of statutory listed buildings, is located within the designated Market Place / London Street Conservation Area, and also falls within the setting of a number of other listed buildings in this townscape area.

6.3 The requirement for this report therefore stems from Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which places a duty upon the local planning authority in determining applications for development affecting listed buildings to pay special regard to the desirability of preserving these building or their settings. Under Section 72, the Act also requires that special attention be given to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area with regard to development within that area.

6.4 In order to comply with these statutory duties, and also national planning policy as set out in the NPPF 2021 (paragraphs 194-195), the designated heritage assets that have the potential to be affected (either directly or indirectly) by these proposals have had their significance described proportionately as part of this report (**Sections 2-4**). This is our updated built heritage baseline appraisal upon which the impacts of proposed further changes on Site have been assessed in this report.

6.5 **Section 5** provides a review of the new scheme and its likely impacts on the significance (and or setting) of the identified designated heritage assets. This assessment has also been undertaken in overall terms in light of the relevant statutory duties, national and local planning policy and guidance for change within the historic environment.

6.6 It is our assessment of these proposals that each of the designated heritage assets identified within the Site and its study area would each be conserved, and their significance either enhanced, sustained or otherwise unaffected. We have accordingly identified that these proposals have the potential to deliver a substantial number of "heritage benefits" (as defined by the NPPF / NPPG) that would enhance or better reveal the significance of not only each of the listed buildings on Site but also the surrounding conservation area and setting of other nearby listed buildings. Our identified heritage benefits can be listed again for ease of reference as:

- Securing the viable reuse of the listed buildings on Site (which are currently vacant and their conditions deteriorating) in the interests of their future conservation;

- Introducing a new mix of uses on Site to provided animation, vitality and visual interest for the street scene and wider townscape;

- Works of required repair, refurbishment and ongoing maintenance of the historic buildings, funded by their conversion and reuse;

- Reinstatement of a private residential entrance to the front elevation of Nos.27-28 Market Place;

- Reinstatement of the front elevation of the former Coopers Arms closer to its original appearance;

- Removal of unsympathetic modern extensions to the rear elevations of the former Coopers Arms and No.32 Market Place, to better reveal the historic form and appearance of the listed buildings;

- Reinstatement of traditional timber sash window frames to No.32 Market Place;

- Reinstatement of the rear room of Nos.27-28 Market Place to its original ownership / function;

- Reinstatement of the original proportions of the street vault at basement level to Nos.27-28 Market Place; and

- Reinstatement of a staircase between the ground and upper floors of No.32 Market Place, as there would have been historically.

6.7 It should also be recognised that these proposals for the reuse and revitalisation of historic buildings addressing the Market Place would align with and support the objective recent government-funded “High Streets Heritage Action Zone” programme for Reading town centre, which is now being delivered by Historic England.

6.8 In conclusion, these new application proposals would be in accordance with the key principles of the relevant statutory duties of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 with regard to listed buildings and conservation areas, national planning policy set out in the NPPF 2021 (paragraphs 194-195, 197, 199 and 206) and supported by NPPG, and local Development Plan, including the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and other SPD / SPG.

Appendix 1: Conservation Area Boundary Map

Market Place / London Street Conservation Area

Including, conservation area townscape appraisal map for character area 1



CHARACTER AREAS

1: London Street, south of the IDR;

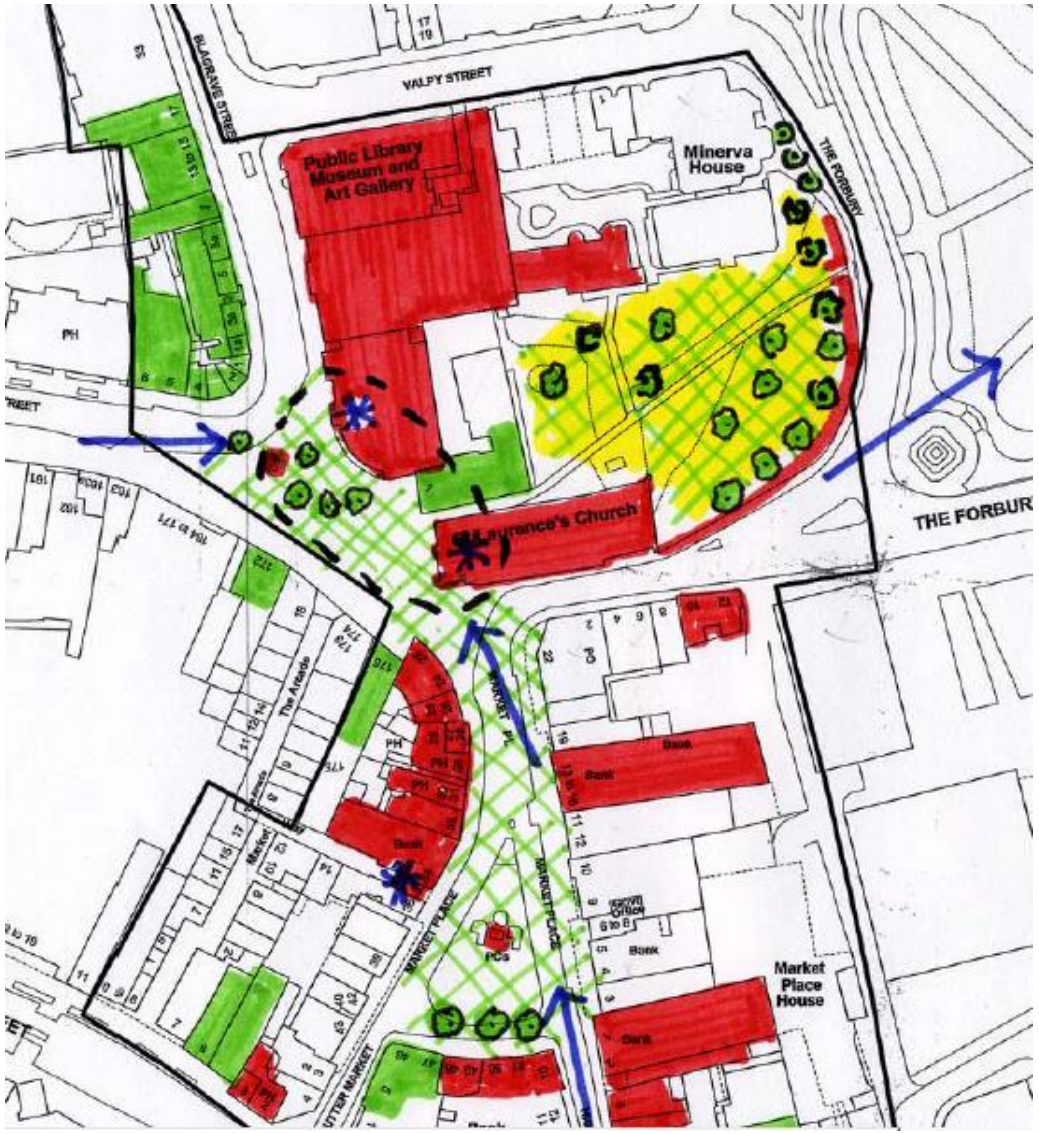
2: Church Street and environs of St Giles' Church;

3: Jackson's Corner including King Street, Duke Street and the Kennet;

4: Market Place and environs of St Laurence's Church and Town Hall;

Key to townscape appraisal map

- Conservation area boundary
- Listed Buildings
- Buildings of Townscape Merit
- Important views
- Significant trees
- Landmark buildings
- Significant open space
- 'Green' areas
- Focal point
- Water



Appendix 2: List Entries

Nos.27-28 Market Place

The Coopers Public House (Nos.29-31 Market Place)

No.32 Market Place

27 AND 28, MARKET PLACE

List Entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.
Name: 27 AND 28, MARKET PLACE

List entry Number: 1302967

Location

27 AND 28, MARKET PLACE

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County:

District: Reading

District Type: Unitary Authority

Parish:

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed: 22-Mar-1957

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Legacy System Information

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System: LBS

UID: 39074

Asset Groupings

This list entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

List entry Description

Summary of Building

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Reasons for Designation

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

History

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Details

MARKET PLACE 1. 5128 [West Side] Nos 27 and 28 SU 7173 NE 1/206 22.3.57. II GV 2. Early C17 possibly older. 3 storeys and attic. Double jettied timber-frame with stucco infilling, pebbledashed. Tiled roof with crested ridge and ornamental cast iron gutter to eaves. Moulded 2nd floor jetty. 2 dormers. 2 original bay windows with mullion windows on each floor. Decorative lead work in upper part of windows. C18 shop front retained to ground floor with coved fascia and engaged columns. Outer doors, 5 panel (raised and fielded) with plain overlight to right, modern door to left (to No 29). Interior: 1st floor ceilings divided into panels by moulded strips.

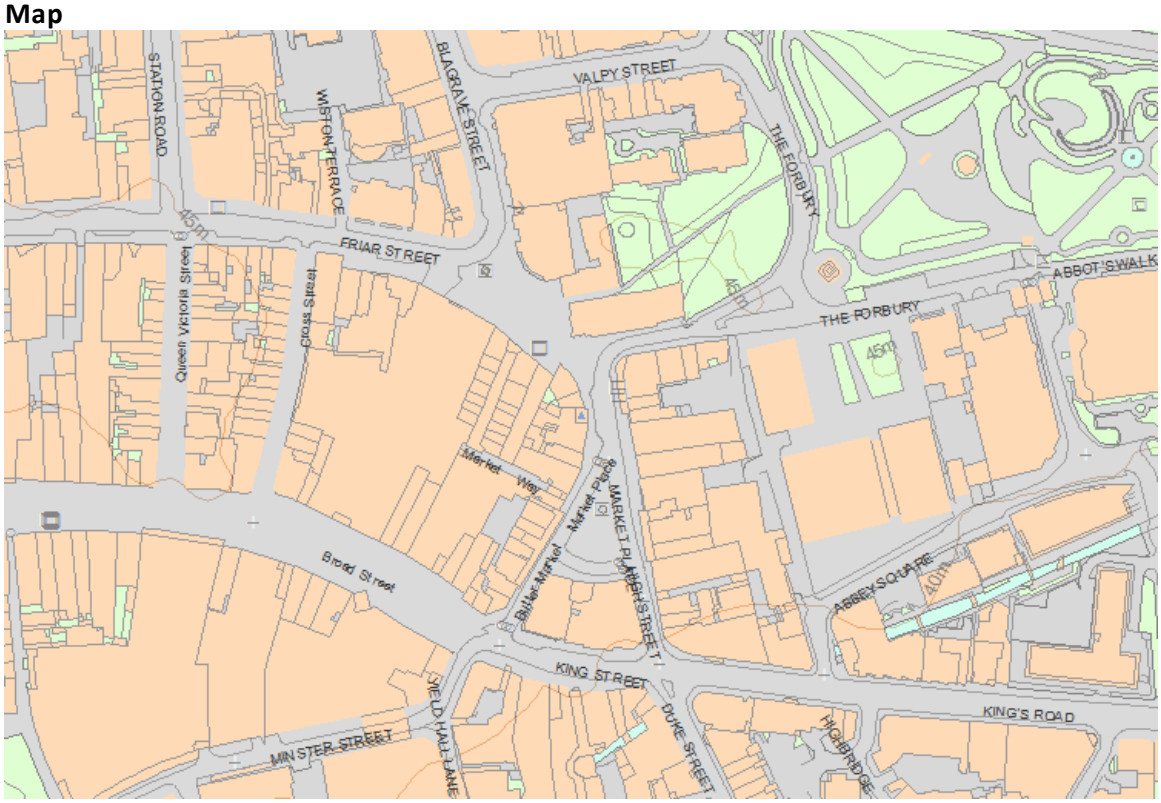
Listing NGR: SU7169073501

Selected Sources

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details

National Grid Reference: SU 71688 73504

Map



THE COOPERS PUBLIC HOUSE

List Entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.
Name: THE COOPERS PUBLIC HOUSE

List entry Number: 1113537

Location

THE COOPERS PUBLIC HOUSE, 29-31, MARKET PLACE

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County:

District: Reading

District Type: Unitary Authority

Parish:

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed: 26-Jul-1973

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Legacy System Information

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System: LBS

UID: 39075

Asset Groupings

This list entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

List entry Description

Summary of Building

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Reasons for Designation

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

History

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Details

MARKET PLACE 1. 5128 (West Side) Nos 29 to 31 (consec) (The Coopers Public House) SU 7173 SE 1/311 SU 7173 NE 3/311 26.7.73. II GV 2. C17 altered. False exposed timbering to front with 4 bays of 3 light casements in stucco infill. Wooden modillion cornice to parapet. Tiled roof. 2 C20 dormers. Rusticated stucco on ground floor with glazing bar shopfronts (modern to left, early C19 to right) and central entrance, pilastered doorpiece with fluted caps and scroll brackets to open pediment. 2 panel door with high arched radiating fanlight. Timber framing in gables to rear. Interior contains re-used fittings probably from C16 or C17 house. The Lounge Bar has oak panelled portion with good C16 or early C17 strapwork overmantel. 4 fluted Doric columns flanked by 2 enriched Doric columns and with 'wild men' herm-pilasters. Modillion cornice. The exit to No 29 has a fine door with circa 1600 decoration of recessed niche panels: to outside Ionic female herms, to interior fluted Ionic pilasters.

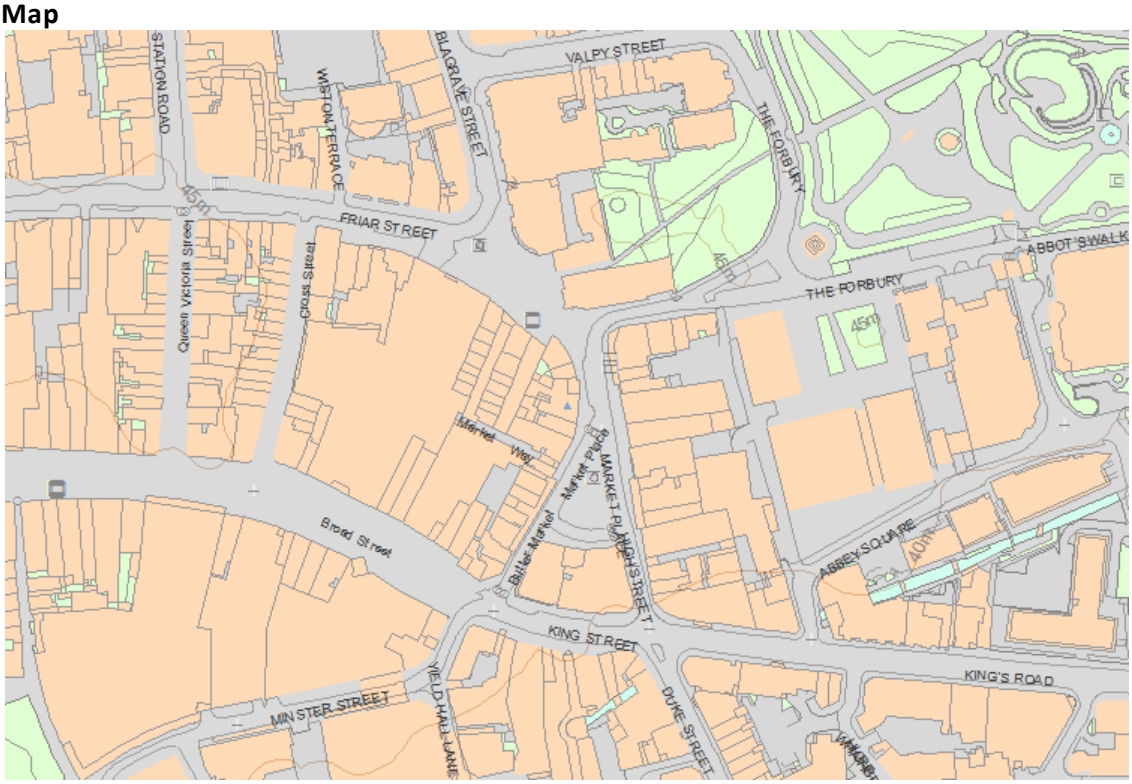
Listing NGR: SU7168073499

Selected Sources

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details

National Grid Reference: SU 71686 73495

Map



32, MARKET PLACE

List Entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.
Name: 32, MARKET PLACE

List entry Number: 1156271

Location

32, MARKET PLACE

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County:

District: Reading

District Type: Unitary Authority

Parish:

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed: 14-Dec-1978

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Legacy System Information

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System: LBS

UID: 39076

Asset Groupings

This list entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

List entry Description

Summary of Building

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Reasons for Designation

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

History

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Details

MARKET PLACE 1. 5128 (West side) No 32 SU 7173 SE 3/532 II GV 2. Mid C19 . 4 storeys with bands between floors. Painted brick. 3 bays, glazing bar sash windows with segmental heads and keys. Moulded cornice to blocking course. Concealed roof. Modern ground floor premises with retrains of moulded fascia cornice over. Included for group value.

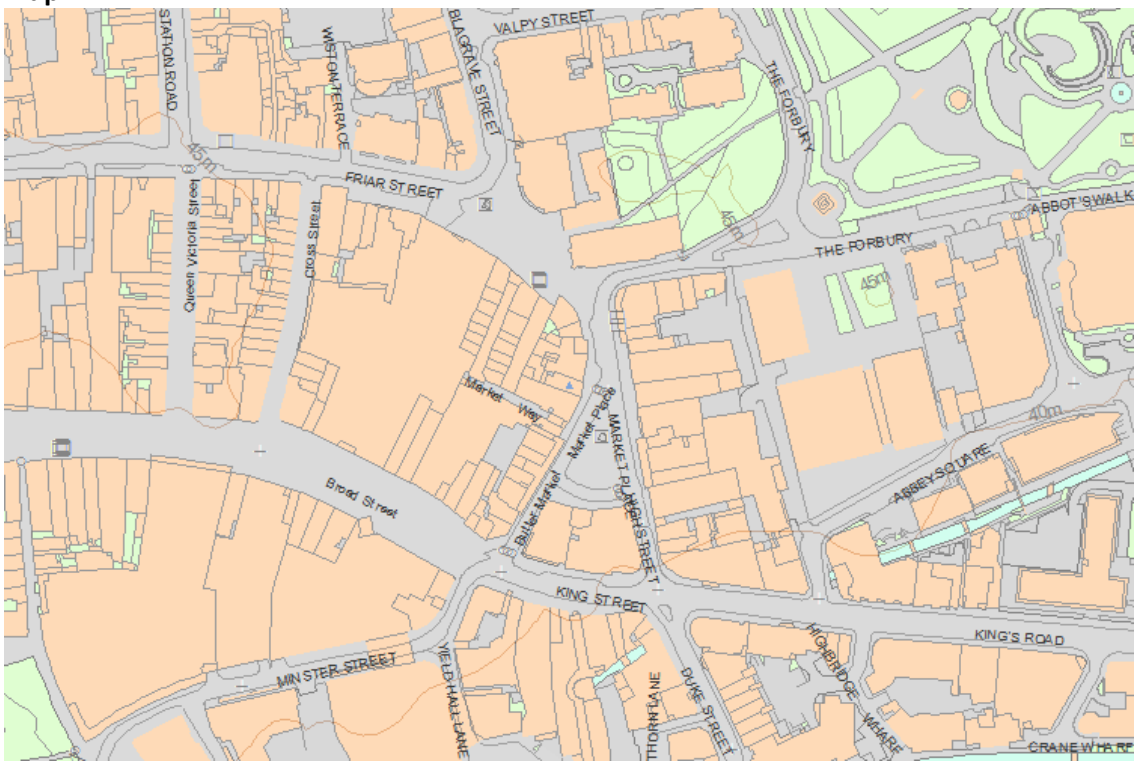
Listing NGR: SU7167873488

Selected Sources

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details

National Grid Reference: SU 71683 73486

Map



Appendix 3: Heritage Legislation, Planning Policy and Guidance

Statutory Duties

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides that listed building consent is required for:

> *"(s.7) … any works for the demolition of a listed building or for its alteration or extension in any manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest …"*

In determining such applications the following duty is placed upon the decision maker:

> *"s.16(2) In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority, or as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses."*

Section 66 imposes a general duty as respects listed buildings in the exercise of planning functions. Subsection (1) provides:

> *"In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.'*

With regard to applications for planning permission within conservation areas, it is set out in Section 72(1) that:

> *'In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any powers under any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.'*

Recent case law[32] has confirmed that Parliament's intention in enacting section 66(1) of the 1990 Act was that decision-makers should give 'considerable importance and weight' to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings, where 'preserve' means to 'to do no harm'. This duty must be borne in mind when considering any harm that may accrue and the balancing of such harm against public benefits as required by national planning policy. Case law has confirmed that this weight can also be applied to the statutory tests in respect of conservation areas.[33] The Secretary of State has confirmed[34] that 'considerable importance and weight' is not synonymous with 'overriding importance and weight'.

Importantly, the meaning of preservation in this context, and for both listed buildings and conservation areas, as informed by case law, is taken to be the avoidance of harm.

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[32] Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Limited and (1) East Northamptonshire District Council (2) English Heritage (3) National Trust (4) The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Governments, Case No: C1/2013/0843, 18th February 2014.

[33] The Forge Field Society v Sevenoaks District Council [2014] EWHC 1895 (Admin); North Norfolk District Council v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government [2014] EWHC 279 (Admin).

[34] Appeal by Crudance Strategic Ltd: Land at Razor's Farm, Chineham, Basingtstoke (ref. APP/H1705/A/13/2205929), 2014.

It has been demonstrated that section 72 requires attention to be directed to the effect on the conservation area as a whole rather than on particular parts of it.[35]

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was introduced in March 2012 as the full statement of Government planning policies covering all aspects of the planning process. This document was revised and re-published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government most recently in 2021.

The glossary of the NPPF (Annex 2) defines conservation as the process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance. Chapter 16 of the NPPF outlines the Government's guidance regarding conserving and enhancing the historic environment in more detail.

Paragraph 194 requires the significance of the heritage assets, which may be affected by the proposals to be described as part of any submission, ideally as part of a Heritage Statement report. The level of detail should be proportionate to the importance of the assets and sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposals on their significance.

Paragraph 195 sets out that local planning authorities should also identify and assess the particular significance of heritage assets that may be affected by proposals. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of proposals in order to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

Paragraph 197 states that local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of all heritage assets and putting them into viable uses consistent with their conservation, the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality, and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Paragraph 199 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, such as a conservation area or listed building, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Under paragraph 200 it is also set out that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.

Paragraph 201 outlines that local planning authorities should refuse consent where a proposal will lead to substantial harm or total loss of significance, unless it can be demonstrated that this is necessary to deliver substantial public benefits that outweigh such harm or loss, or a number of other tests can be satisfied.

Paragraph 202 concerns proposals which will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset. Here harm should be weighed against the public

[35] South Oxfordshire DC v SSE & J Donaldson [1991] CO/1440/89.

benefits, including securing the optimum viable use, where appropriate.

Paragraph 203 sets out that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should also be taken into account in determining that application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Paragraph 206 encourages local planning authorities to look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas and within the setting of heritage assets, such as listed buildings, to enhance or better reveal their significance. It also states that proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of a heritage asset should be treated favourably.

Paragraph 207 establishes that not all elements of a conservation area will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the conservation area should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 201 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 202, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the area as a whole.

Local Development Plan

Reading Borough Council Local Plan 2019
The Local Plan for Reading is the document that contains the policies for how Reading will develop up to 2036, which is the end date of the plan. It identifies the amount of development that will take place, the areas and sites where development is expected to be accommodated, and where it will be restricted, and sets out policies for how planning applications will be decided. The Local Plan was adopted in November 2019.

The Local Plan replaces all existing development plans in Reading, including the Core Strategy (adopted 2008, amended 2015), Reading Central Area Action Plan (adopted 2009) and Sites and Detailed Policies Document (adopted 2012, amended 2015).

Policy EN1 (Protection and enhancement of the historic environment) sets out that:

> *"Historic features, areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their settings will be protected and where possible enhanced. This will include:*
>
> *Listed Buildings;*
>
> *Conservation Areas;*
>
> *Scheduled Monuments;*
>
> *Historic parks and gardens; and*
>
> *Other features with local or national significance, such as sites and features of archaeological importance, and assets on the Local List.*

All proposals will be expected to protect and where possible enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings, the historic character and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located. Proposals should seek to avoid harm in the first instance. Any harm to or loss of a heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification, usually in the form of public benefits.

Applications which affect Listed Buildings will not have an adverse impact on those elements which contribute to their special architectural or historic interest including, where appropriate, their settings.

Applications which affect Historic Parks and Gardens will safeguard features which form an integral part of the special character or appearance of the park or garden. Development will not detract from the enjoyment, layout, design, character, appearance, features or setting of the park or garden, key views out from the park, or prejudice its future restoration.

Applications which affect, or have the potential to affect, the significant features of heritage assets should be justified by a Heritage Statement.

The Council will monitor buildings and other heritage assets at risk through neglect, decay or other threats, proactively seeking solutions for assets at risk including consideration of appropriate development schemes that will ensure the repair and maintenance of the asset, and, as a last resort, using its statutory powers.

Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect or of damage to a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision."

Policy EN3 (enhancement of conservation areas) states that:

"The special interest, character and architecture of Conservation Areas will be conserved and enhanced. Development proposals within Conservation Areas must make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Positive consideration will be given to proposals which take opportunities to enhance the character of conservation areas. These may include:

Reducing visual clutter caused by negative factors, such as poles and overhead wires, satellite dishes or unnecessary street furniture;

Restoring original building features;

Removing inappropriate additions or alterations to buildings;

Protecting and encouraging the maintenance of green spaces and important trees, particularly where they are intrinsic to the history and character of the area;

Improving signage and street furniture;

Restoring or re-establishing appropriate paving, railings or walls;

Sympathetic landscaping and planting;

Improving or restoring green spaces, including front gardens, that are appropriate to the historic interest of a Conservation Area;

Signage that reveals and promotes the Conservation Area and its boundaries;

Interpretation panels to inform the public of the area's historical significance.

Where a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan has been adopted for a particular Conservation Area, this will be a material consideration in determining applications for development."

Policy EN4 (locally important heritage assets) states that:

"Development proposals that affect locally important heritage assets will demonstrate that development conserves architectural, archaeological or historical significance which may include the appearance, character and setting of the asset.

Planning permission may be granted in cases where a proposal could result in harm to or loss of a locally important heritage asset only where it can be demonstrated that the benefits of the development significantly outweigh the asset's significance. Where it is accepted by the Local Planning Authority that retention is not important, recording of the heritage asset should be undertaken and submitted alongside development proposals. Replacement buildings should draw upon heritage elements of the previous design, incorporating historical qualities that made the previous building significant. This may include appearance, scale and architectural quality."

Policy EN6 (new development in an historic context) sets out that:

"In areas characterised by heritage assets, the historic environment will inform and shape new development. New development will make a contribution to the historic character of the area by respecting and enhancing its architectural and visual qualities and considering how heritage considerations can influence the design of new development. When determining planning applications for new development, the following factors will be taken into consideration:

a. The positive contribution of the development to the existing historic townscape (scale, height, mass, proportion, plot size, street form, materials, significant vistas and views, and open space);

b. Sensitivity to historic context;

c. Reflection of borough-wide major heritage themes that contribute to local distinctiveness (e.g. patterned brickwork or former worker terraced housing);

d. Whether development promotes and/or improves access to previously undiscovered or neglected historic significance."

With regard to Central Reading and its area-specific policies, the historic environment is identified as part of the context to its planned future growth. Area Policy CR2 (Design in Central Reading) sets out more broadly that:

"Applications for development within Central Reading should demonstrate the following attributes:

a. Development will build on and respect the existing grid layout structure of the central area, providing continuity and enclosure through appropriate relationships between buildings and spaces, and frontages that engage with the street at lower levels, and contributing towards enhanced ease of movement through and around the central area;

b. Development will provide appropriate, well designed public spaces and other public realm, including squares, open spaces, streetscape, utilising high quality and well-maintained hard and soft landscaped areas, and public art, that provide suitable functions and interest, sense of place and safe and convenient linkages to adjoining areas;

c. Development should consider and, where possible, include ways of providing green infrastructure designed into the development, for instance through roof gardens, green walls and green roofs, to enhance the otherwise very urban environment;

d. The architectural details and materials used in the central area should be high quality and respect the form and quality of the detailing and materials in areas local to the development site;

e. Development and any associated public realm should contribute to the diversity of the central area, be capable of easy adaptation over time to meet changing circumstances, and be designed to enhance community safety; and

f. Development should be designed with consideration of adjacent development sites, and should not prevent or cause unreasonable burdens on the future development of those sites."

In addition, Policy CR3 (Public Realm in Central Reading) also sets out that:

"Proposals for new development will need to make a positive contribution towards the quality of the public realm of the central area and will be assessed against the following criteria: …"

The application Site falls within the category of "Other Sites for Development in Central Reading" (Policy CR14). Development principles for this specific site are set out as:

"CR14d 173-175 FRIAR STREET AND 27-32 MARKET PLACE

Change of use of listed buildings and development of remainder for residential and/or offices with retail and related uses on the ground floor, retaining the arcade form.

Development should:

- Avoid detrimental effects on the significance of the listed building and the Conservation Area and their settings;

- Take account of potential archaeological significance;

- Address noise impacts on residential use; and

- Address air quality impacts on residential use.

Site size: 0.18 ha 36-54 dwellings plus ground floor town centre uses."

Supplementary Planning Documents / Guidance
The following supplementary planning documents or guidance to the Local Plan are also relevant to the consideration of this scheme and its impacts on heritage significance:

Reading Borough Council: Market Place / London Street Conservation Area Appraisal 2007

Reading Borough Council: City Centre Framework 2008

Other Guidance and Material Considerations

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
National Planning Practice Guidance was first issued by the Government in 2014 as a living web resource, including a category on conserving and enhancing the historic environment. This is intended to provide more detailed guidance and information with regard to the implementation of national policy set out in the NPPF, and has been updated most recently in 2021 to reflect policy and case law changes.

Department of Culture, Media and Sport Circular: Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings 2018
The Principles of Selection for listing buildings sets out the general criteria for assessing the special interest of a building in paragraph 16, as below:

"Architectural Interest. To be of special architectural interest a building must be of importance in its architectural design, decoration or craftsmanship; special interest may also apply to nationally important examples of particular building types and techniques (e.g. buildings displaying technological innovation or virtuosity) and significant plan forms;

Historic Interest. To be of special historic interest a building must illustrate important aspects of the nation's social, economic, cultural, or military history and/or have close historical associations with nationally important people. There should normally be some quality of interest in the physical fabric of the building itself to justify the statutory protection afforded by listing."

When making a listing decision, paragraph 17 sets out that the Secretary of State may also take into account:

"Group value: The extent to which the exterior of the building contributes to the architectural or historic interest of any group of buildings of which it forms part, generally known as group value. The Secretary of State will take this into account particularly where buildings comprise an important architectural or historic unity or a fine example of planning (e.g. squares, terraces or model villages) or where there is a historical functional relationship between the buildings. Sometimes group value will be

achieved through a co-location of diverse buildings of different types and dates.

Fixtures and features of a building and curtilage buildings: The desirability of preserving, on the grounds of its architectural or historic interest, any feature of the building consisting of a man-made object or structure fixed to the building or forming part of the land and comprised within the curtilage of the building.

The character or appearance of conservation areas: In accordance with the terms of section 72 of the 1990 Act, when making listing decisions in respect of a building in a conservation area, the Secretary of State will pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area."

General principles for selection are also set out in this advice, in paragraphs 18-23. These include: Age and rarity; Buildings less than 30 years old; Aesthetic merits; Selectivity; and National interest, although State of repair will not usually be a relevant consideration.

In addition to the criteria and general principles set out in the guidance, a number of Selection Guides for different building types have been published by Historic England, first in 2011 and then later updated. These Selection Guides provide further information regarding each building type, and demonstrate what features are considered significant and likely to make a building of special architectural or historic interest when assessing each building type.

Historic England, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment 2015

This document provides advice on the implementation of historic environment policy in the Framework and the related guidance given in the PPG. For the purposes of this report, the advice includes: assessing the significance of heritage assets; using appropriate expertise; and also historic environment records.

It provides a suggested staged approach to decision-making where there may be a potential impact on the historic environment:

> *"1. Understand the significance of the affected assets;*
> *2. Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;*
> *3. Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the Framework;*
> *4. Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;*
> *5. Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance and the need for change;*
> *6. Offset negative impacts on aspects of significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected."*

With particular regard to design and local distinctiveness, advice sets out that both the With regard to design and local distinctiveness, advice sets out that both the NPPF (section 7) and NPPG (section ID26) contain detail on why good design is important and how it can be achieved. In terms of the historic environment, some or all of the following factors may influence what will make the scale, height, massing, alignment, materials and proposed use of new development successful in its context:

- *The history of the place*
- *The relationship of the proposal to its specific site*
- *The significance of nearby assets and the contribution of their setting, recognising that this is a dynamic concept*
- *The general character and distinctiveness of the area in its widest sense, including the general character of local buildings, spaces, public realm and the landscape, the grain of the surroundings, which includes, for example the street pattern and plot size*
- *The size and density of the proposal related to that of the existing and neighbouring uses*
- *Landmarks and other built or landscape features which are key to a sense of place*
- *The diversity or uniformity in style, construction, materials, colour, detailing, decoration and period of existing buildings and spaces*
- *The topography*
- *Views into, through and from the site and its surroundings*
- *Landscape design*
- *The current and historic uses in the area and the urban grain*
- *The quality of the materials*

Historic England: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets 2017 (2nd Edition)

GPA Note 3 provides information to assist in implementing historic environment policy with regard to the managing change within the setting of heritage assets, and also now views analysis. This also provides a toolkit for assessing the implications of development proposals affecting setting and views. A series of stages are recommended for assessment, these are:

- *Step 1: identifying the heritage assets affected and their settings*
- *Step 2: assessing whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s)*
- *Step 3: assessing the effect of the proposed development*
- *Step 4: maximising enhancement and minimising harm*
- *Step 5: making and documenting the decision and monitoring outcomes.*

Historic England: Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management 2019 (2nd Edition)

This Historic England Advice Note supports the NPPF and NPPG, and is intended to set out ways to manage change in a way that conserves and enhances historic areas through conservation area designation, appraisal and management. It seeks to offer advice to all those involved in managing conservation areas so that the potential of historic areas worthy of protection is fully realised, the need for community and owner consultation examined, and the benefits of management plans to manage change, and achieve regeneration and enhancement, fully exploited. Advice on appraisal of conservation areas is also given, as assistance in demonstrating special interest and articulating character, guiding investment, and in developing a management plan.

This guidance also outline that it will be helpful to identify those key unlisted buildings that make an important contribution to the character of the conservation area, and its significance / special interest as a whole, as well as those which clearly detract from it and could be

replaced. A checklist of questions to help with this process is provided, where a positive response to one or more of the following may indicate that a particular element within a conservation area makes a positive contribution provided that its historic form and values have not been eroded:

- *Is it the work of a particular architect or designer of regional or local note?*
- *Does it have landmark quality?*
- *Does it reflect a substantial number of other elements in the conservation area in age, style, materials, form or other characteristics?*
- *Does it relate to adjacent designated heritage assets in age, materials or in any other historically significant way?*
- *Does it contribute positively to the setting of adjacent designated heritage assets?*
- *Does it contribute to the quality of recognisable spaces including exteriors or open spaces with a complex of public buildings?*
- *Is it associated with a designed landscape eg a significant wall, terracing or a garden building?*
- *Does it individually, or as part of a group, illustrate the development of the settlement in which it stands?*
- *Does it have significant historic association with features such as the historic road layout, burgage plots, a town park or a landscape feature?*
- *Does it have historic associations with local people or past events?*
- *Does it reflect the traditional functional character or former uses in the area?*
- *Does its use contribute to the character or appearance of the area?*

Historic England: Advice Note 2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets 2016
This advice note provides general advice according to different categories of intervention in heritage assets, including repair, restoration, addition and alteration, as well as on works for research alone. This covers different types of heritage assets, including buildings and other structures; standing remains including earthworks; buried remains and marine sites; as well as larger heritage assets including conservation areas, registered landscapes, and World Heritage Sites.

Historic England: Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance 2019
This Historic England Advice Note provides general advice with regard to preparing statements of heritage significance and also the analysing of significance for the full range of heritage assets. This is designed primarily for applicants proposing changes to heritage assets, and accords with the Framework as revised.

English Heritage (now Historic England): Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance 2008
This guidance document sets out Historic England's approach to making decisions and offering guidance about all aspects of England's historic environment. The contribution of elements of a heritage asset or within its setting to its significance may be assessed in terms of its "heritage values":

> *"Evidential Value: the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.*
> *Historical Value: the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.*
> *Aesthetic Value: the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.*

Communal Value: the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.' (Paras. 30-60)"

A draft has been released for public consultation and subsequent revision of this document in 2018.

Appendix 4: Review Report – Condition Survey: Nos.27-32 Market Place (18 January 2022) ROC Associates

CONDITION REPORT

REVIEW

FOR

27 – 32 Market Street

Reading

ON BEHALF OF

Sonic Star Properties Limited

Prepared By

Roc Associates Building Consultancy Limited
Feldon House
3 Banbury Street
Kineton
Warwickshire
CV35 0JS

Review Inspection 18th January 2022

ROC ASSOCIATES
BUILDING CONSULTANCY LIMITED

CONTENTS

1. Introduction

2. Observations

Appendix A Photographs

Appendix B Reference Plans and Elevations

ROC ASSOCIATES
BUILDING CONSULTANCY LIMITED

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Instructions

Instructions were received to undertake a review inspection of the condition survey previously prepared on behalf of Sonic Star Properties Ltd of the subject properties No. 27- 32 Market Street Reading.

The context of this Survey is to establish what works have been completed that formed part the Condition Report.

1.2 Limitations

We have not carried out a full Building Survey and this is not a full Building Survey Report.

1.3 Survey Date

Thursday 18th January 2022.

1.4 Weather Conditions

Cool and overcast.

2. OBSERVATIONS

2.1 Survey Findings

Further to the inspection of the property we are satisfied that all of the works detailed in the following schedule have now been completed

2.2 Please note that the numbering used within the table below, reflects the agreed schedule and numbering of the *"Condition Report – Market Street Reading – Final Rev A small"* PDF published on 5th November 2020.

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ITEM	DEFECT	REMEDY
	31&29 MARKET STREET – COOPERS ARMS	
	EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS AND ROOF AREAS	
	Roof - Front Elevation	
1.	Evidence of extensive water penetration occurring to concealed parapet to front roof and to internal gutter which is blocked.	Clean out front parapet, ensure internal rainwater concealed gutter and downpipes are clean and free flowing and undertake all necessary lead repairs to leave gutter in good condition.
	Roof – Rear Elevation	
2.	Pitched tiled roof slopes generally - Numerous tiles noted to be slipped, damaged, missing or dislodged to all slopes.	Undertake thorough overhaul of all roof slopes, renew all damaged, missing, cracked frost damaged tiles throughout.
3.	Guttering throughout is heavily soiled and full of debris including valley gutters.	Thoroughly clean out all gutters inspect leadwork and as necessary execute lead repairs.
4.	Rainwater guttering generally in poor condition with end caps missing to gutters and plastic guttering deformed.	Take off plastic guttering and reinstate, repair and leave in repair.
6.	Central well area heavily soiled with gutters blocked together with debris and redundant air conditioning units present.	Carefully clean out central gutter, remove all air conditioning units and other associated detritus. Clean over area and repair any damage noted to leadwork flat roofs and all areas exposed following clean up works.
7.	Central glazed lobby. Extensive damage noted to glazing with extensive water penetration occurring as a consequence of blocked valley gutters and broken glass albeit partially alleviated with temporary tarpaulin repair.	Remove broken glass and repair using polycarbonate sheets, clean out gutters and leave watertight.
	Windows	
8.	Generally timber windows to the rear elevation are in a poor state of repair. The higher up the building you go, the condition deteriorates, with sills missing, damaged and broken glazing at third floor level with extensive rot noted generally to windows at second floor level with glazing missing.	Overboard rear windows to leave site secure and weathertight

ITEM	DEFECT	REMEDY
	External Decorations	
9.	Decorations generally to entire Front elevation are failing resulting in accelerated deterioration of the building fabric.	Repair and redecorate external elevation with breathable paint.
	INTERIOR 31 & 29 Market Street – Coopers Arms	
10.	Numerous areas of water ingress noted to timber frame back addition resulting in friable damp plaster in various locations to external walls.	Carefully hack off all damp affected plaster to walls to leave brickwork exposed and remove all damp affected lath and plaster to leave timbers exposed.
11.	Various incidences of dry and wet rot are noted in particular below the internal lead lined internal rainwater gutter causing damage to internal window sills, window frames, joists, floor boards and plaster generally.	Carefully remove damp affected window boards, plasterboard, floor joists and treat all affected timber for dry/wet rot. Allow for removing and overboarding excessively damaged timber and floor boards to leave building in secure condition.
12.	To room to the rear of the 27 & 28 Market Place at second floor level, extensive mold growth and wet rot noted to be occurring to joists above fire place (original) with underside of lead valley gutter visible below boarding to external valley gutter.	Execute repairs to valley gutter to stop water penetration. Re-line and re-form as necessary. Internally, allow for cutting out and removing all rot affected timber. It should be noted that this has already been undertaken once. Allow for piecing in/jointing damaged rafters and re-form. Allow for hacking off and clearing away all damp affected plaster and lath and plaster as necessary to leave timber exposed.
13.	First Floor Level to Timber Framed Rear Back Addition - Plaster to wall overlooking flat roof to the rear of 32 Market Place, heavily damp affected. It was noted externally that the rainwater gutter is discharging down this wall and it is suspected the wall itself is saturated.	Allow for hacking off plaster including skirtings and exposing joists. Allow for removing lath and plaster ceilings where affected and leave timber exposed following completion of external remedial works.
14.	First floor front elevation rooms - walls noted to be heavily damaged through water penetration occurring from defective internal guttering and external valley gutter at third floor level.	Following rectification of defective guttering, allow for removing all damp affected plaster and ceilings, leave brickwork and joints exposed.

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ITEM	DEFECT	REMEDY
15.	Extensive water damaged noted to front room rear wall below open window at second floor level, together with extensive render damage to gable end adjacent fire place causing extensive water penetration adjacent to the fire place and the internal elevation to corridor.	Infill window/replace window, reform valley gutter and roof, clean out valley gutter to prevent flooding.
16.	First Floor Room to Rear of 27/28 Market Street Unit. Wet rot noted to floor joists below water leak from valley gutter above.	Remove all water damaged plaster, timber and affected finishes. . Following execution of repairs to valley gutter, allow for removing all rot affected timber.
	Ground Floor Areas	
17.	Extensive damage caused by water penetration to central courtyard area due to blocked gutters and hoppers overflowing. Area was originally external and has been enclosed leaving gutters and hoppers located internally.	Allow for rodding though and cleaning out all hoppers and RWP's, ensuring all rainwater discharges correctly and allow for removing all damp affected timber and plasterboard and plaster to leave exposed brickwork to allow area to dry out including removing all carpet and other damp elements.
18.	Area below extensive first floor water penetration damage has resulted in floor boarding becoming buckled and wet rot noted to main structural beam where Akro prop is positioned.	Area to be cleaned back and treated. Allow for removing all buckled floorboards,
19.	Area of timber back addition where plasterwork noted to be saturated at first floor level is noted to have numerous areas of saturated plasterwork noted throughout.	Carefully hack off all damp affected plaster and leave brickwork exposed.
	27&28 MARKET PLACE – KIK SPORTS	
	EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS	
	Front Elevation	
22.	Generally, decorations to the entire front elevation are failing, leaving timber exposed to accelerated deterioration.	Allow for redecorating all previously or usually painted surfaces following completion of the remedial works.

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ITEM	DEFECT	REMEDY
	32 MARKET PLACE	
	EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS	
	Front Elevation	
23.	Generally, decorations to the painted surfaces of the front elevation are failing, resulting in accelerated deterioration of the fabric.	Carefully rub down, prepare and redecorate surfaces with breathable paint to all previously or usually decorated finishes to front elevation.

Signed ……

Dated ……21/01/2022..

Lawrence Littell BSc (Hons) MRICS

For and on behalf of ROC Associates Limited

APPENDIX A


03 11 2021


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APPENDIX B



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0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

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Client
Sonic Star Properties Limited

Project
Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1

Scale
1:50 @ A1 / 1:100 @ A3

Drawn by
ER

Drawing Title
Existing 27 - 32 Market Place Basement Floor Plan

Project No.
RD_0899

Date
FEBRUARY 2018

Checked by
ID

Drawing No.
EX.201

Rev

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Drawing Title
Existing 27 - 32 Market Place Ground Floor Plan

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Drawing Title
Existing 27 - 32 Market Place First Floor Plan

Project No.
RD_0899

Date
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Drawing Title
Existing 27 - 32 Market Place Second Floor Plan

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Drawing Title
Existing 27 - 32 Market Place Third Floor Plan

Project No.
RD_0899

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Drawing Title
Existing Section GG
(Rear Elevation of Market Place)

Project No.
RD_0899

Date
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Project
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Scale
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Drawing Title
Existing Section HH
(Market Place Elevation)

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KEY NOTES:

Floors and intermediate structure to be demolished

Walls and structure to be demolished

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Drawing Title
Demolition Basement Floor Plan

Project No.
RD_0899

Date
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Checked by
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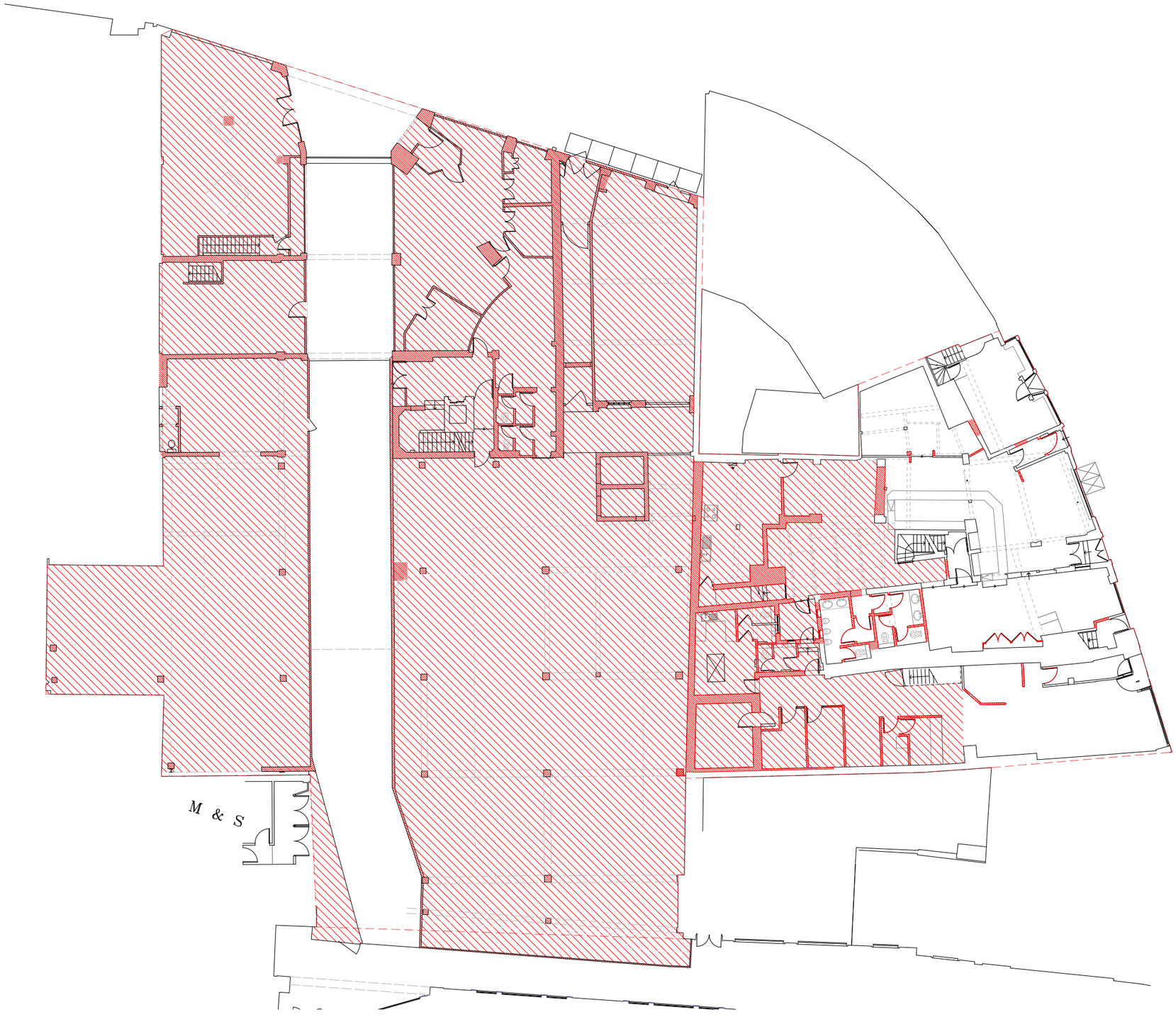
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KEY NOTES:

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Walls and structure to be demolished

REVISIONS:

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Client: Sonic Star Properties Limited

Project: Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1

Scale: 1:125 @ A1 / 1:250 @ A3

Drawn by: ER

Drawing Title: Demolition Ground Floor Plan

Project No.: RD_0899

Date: FEBRUARY 2018

Checked by: ID

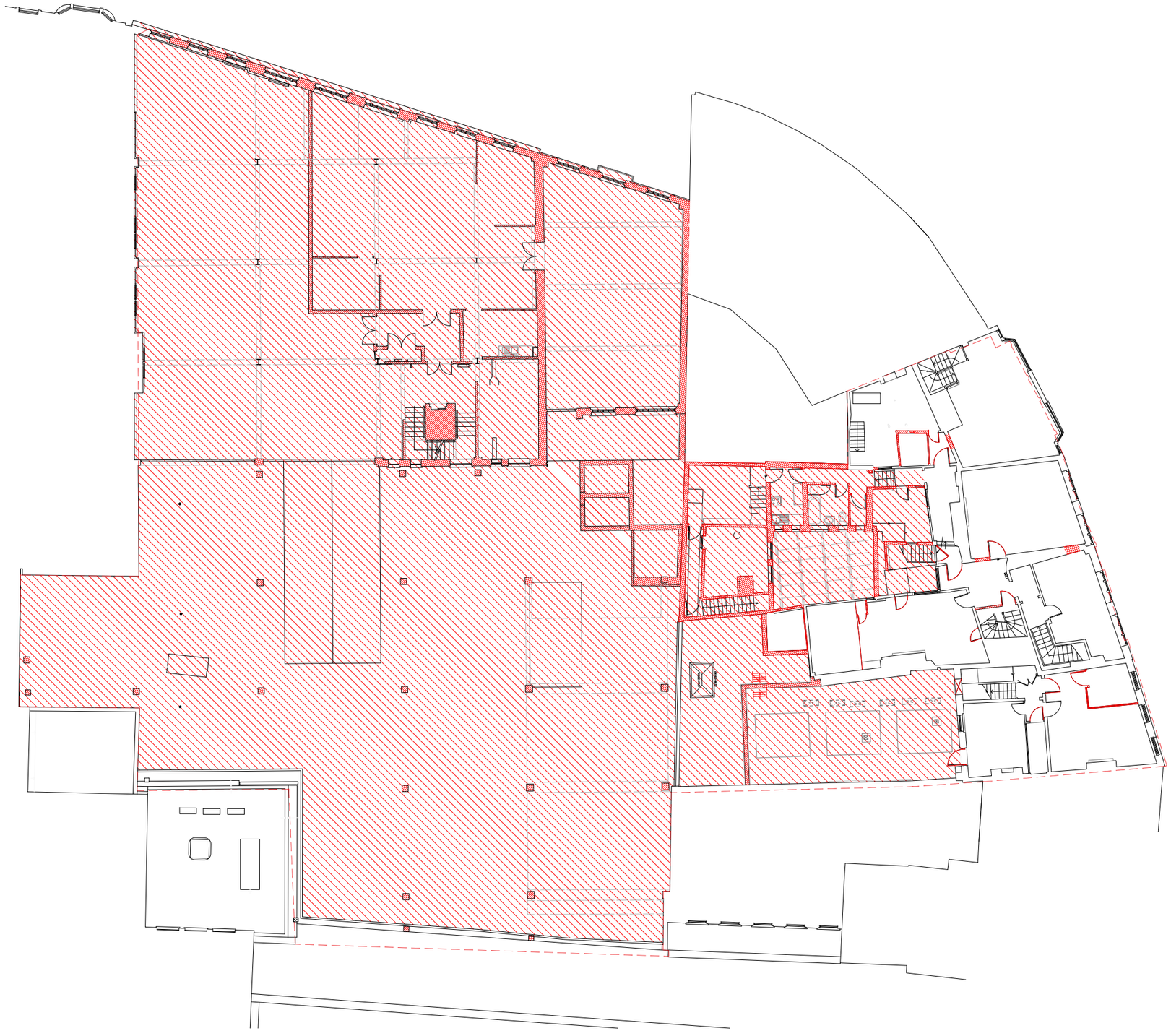
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KEY NOTES:

Floors and intermediate structure to be demolished

Walls and structure to be demolished

REVISIONS:

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Client
Sonic Star Properties Limited

Project
Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1

Scale
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Drawn by
ER

Drawing Title
Demolition First Floor Plan

Project No.
RD_0899

Date
FEBRUARY 2018

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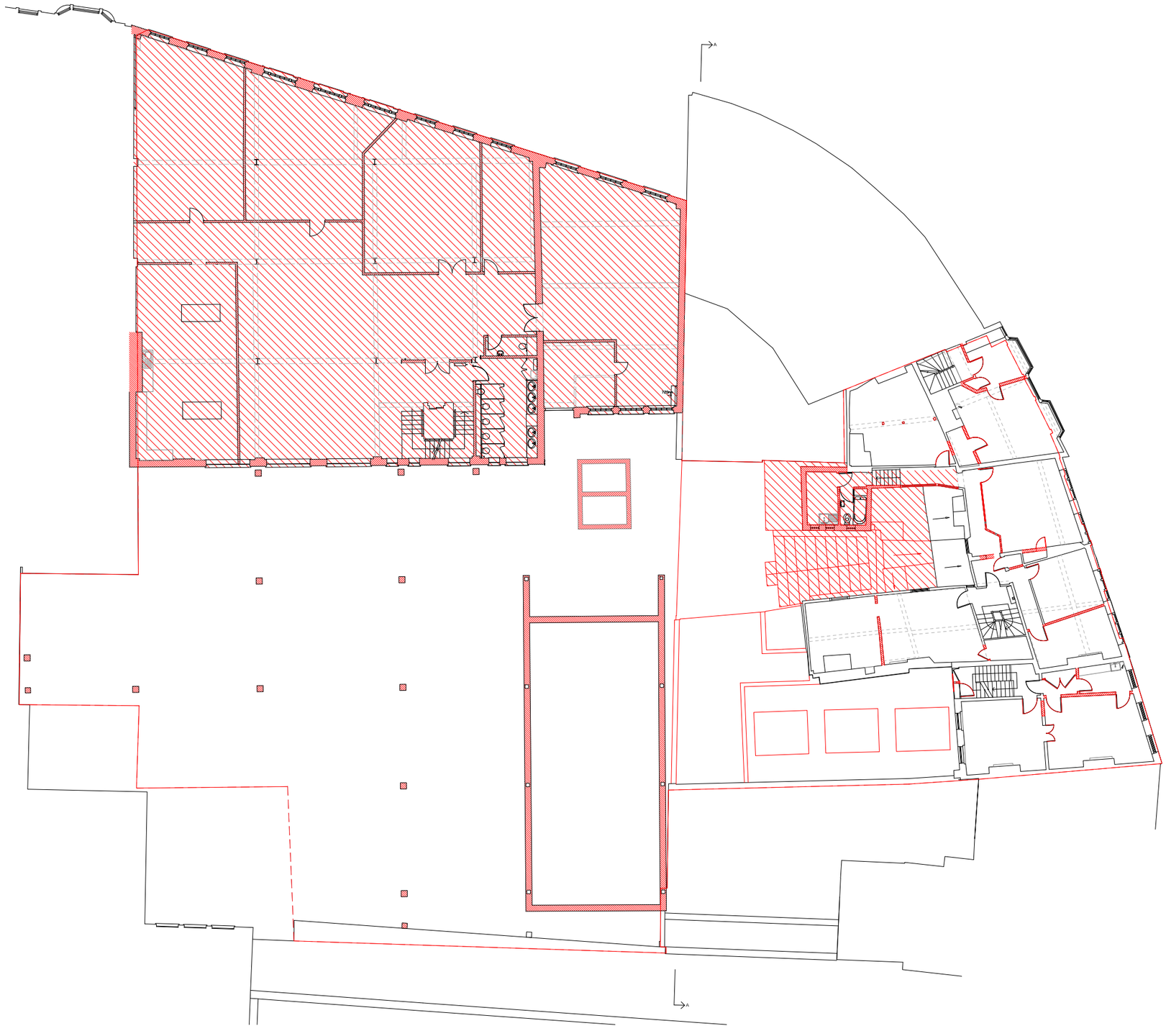
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KEY NOTES:

Floors and intermediate structure to be demolished

Walls and structure to be demolished

REVISIONS:

RODIĆ DAVIDSON ARCHITECTS is the trading name of bdAr ltd

Client
Sonic Star Properties Limited

Project
Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1

Scale
1:125 @ A1 / 1:250 @ A3

Drawn by
ER

Drawing Title
Demolition Second Floor Plan

Project No.
RD_0899

Date
FEBRUARY 2018

Checked by
ID

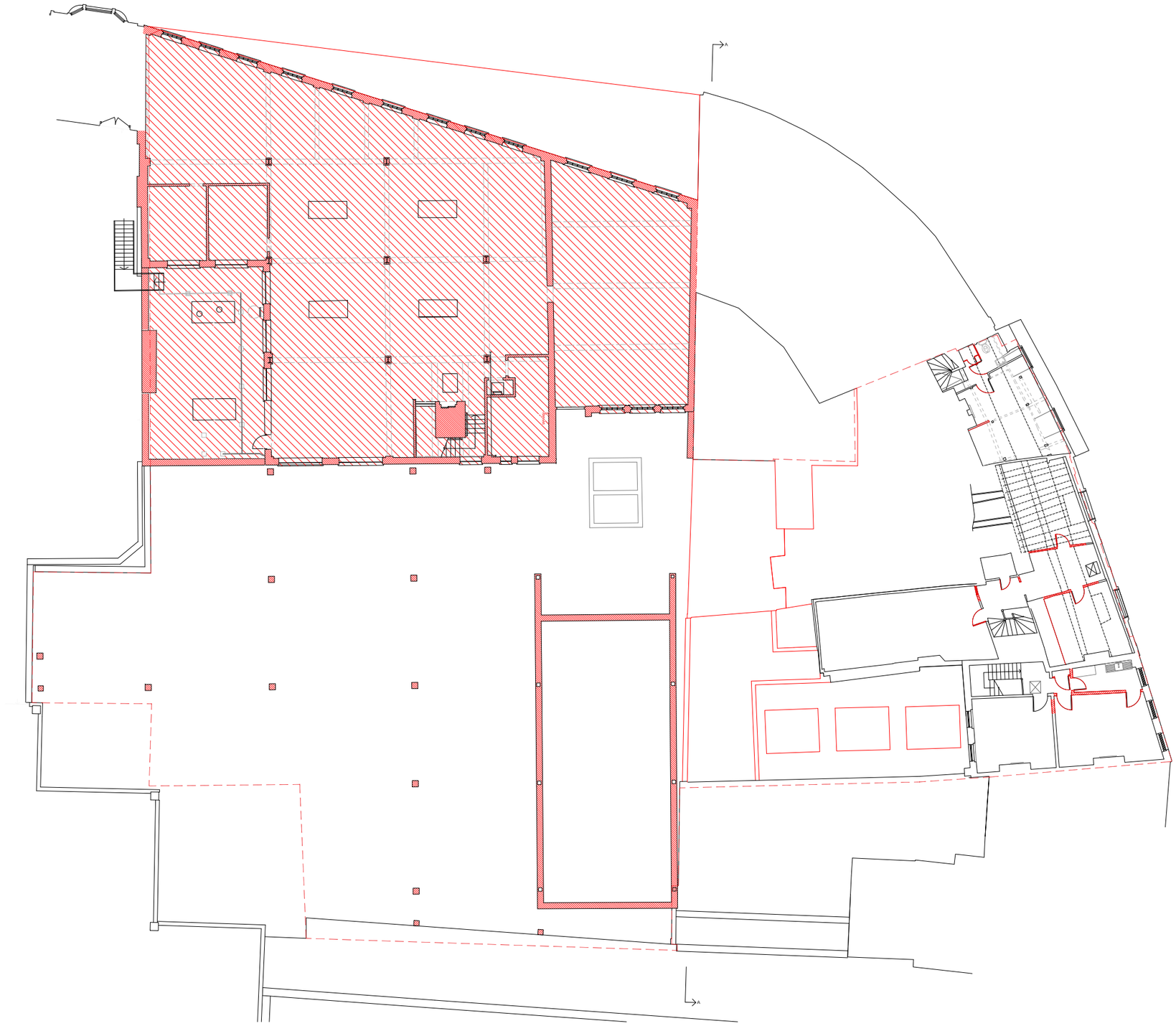
Drawing No.
DE.104

Rev

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DO NOT SCALE - ALL DIMENSIONS TO BE CHECKED ON SITE

Scale 1:125 @ A1, 1:250 @ A3

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20

KEY NOTES:

Floors and intermediate structure to be demolished

Walls and structure to be demolished

REVISIONS:

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Client
Sonic Star Properties Limited

Project
Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1

Scale
1:125 @ A1 / 1:250 @ A3

Drawn by
ER

Drawing Title
Demolition Third Floor Plan

Project No.
RD_0899

Date
FEBRUARY 2018

Checked by
ID

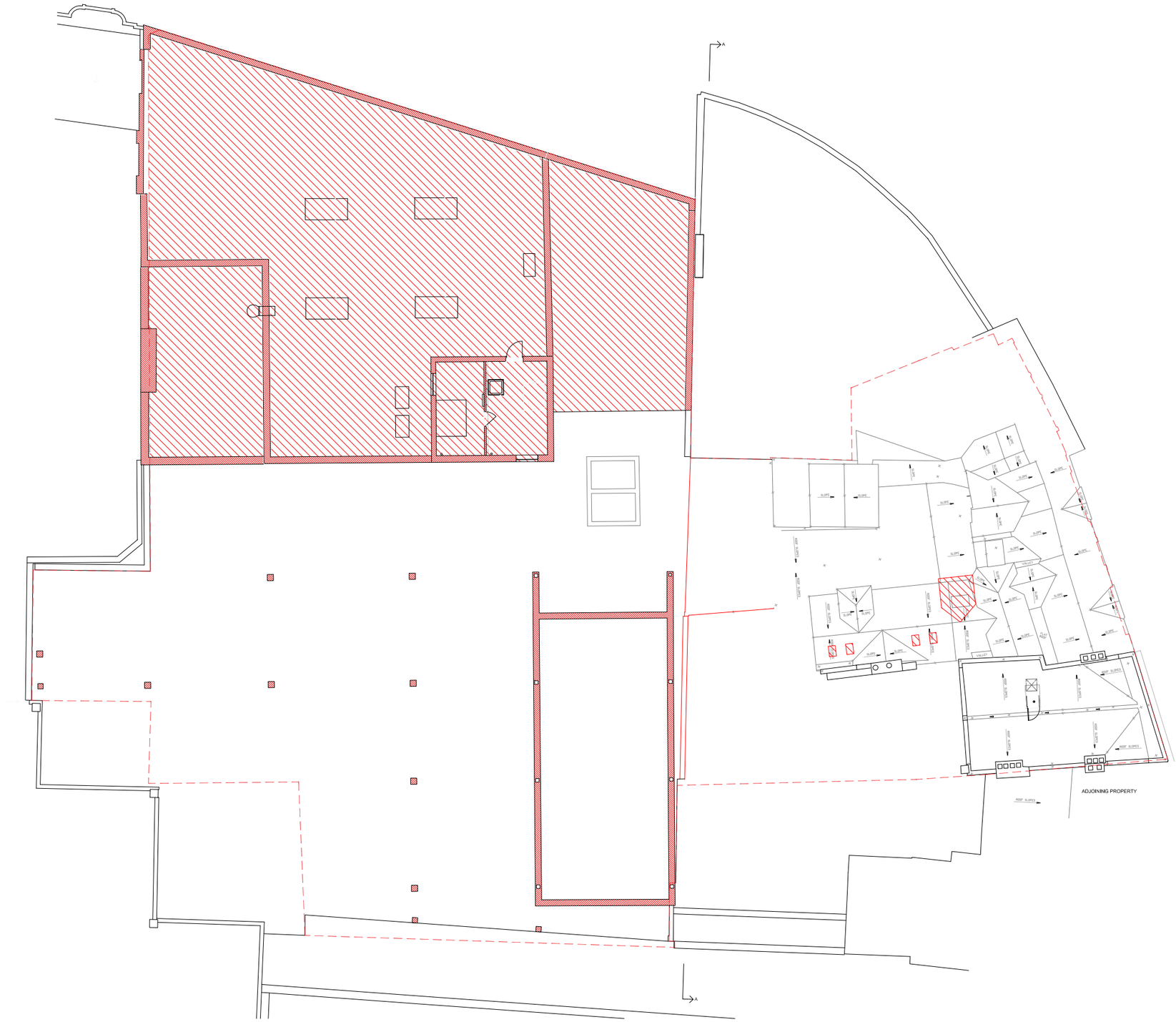
Drawing No.
DE.105

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Scale 1:125 @ A1, 1:250 @ A3

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20

KEY NOTES:

Floors and intermediate structure to be demolished

Walls and structure to be demolished

REVISIONS:

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Client
Sonic Star Properties Limited

Project
Bristol and West Arcade, 173-175 Friar Street, Reading, RG1

Scale
1:125 @ A1 / 1:250 @ A3

Drawn by
ER

Drawing Title
Demolition Roof Plan

Project No.
RD_0899

Date
FEBRUARY 2018

Checked by
ID

Drawing No.
DE.106

Rev

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