

Design Statement

in support of a Planning and Listed Building Application for a change of use to the upper floors
to create six new single bed apartments at

3-7 Cheapside Reading



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April 2021

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INTRODUCTION

This design statement is provided as supplemental information to the drawings in support of the submission made on behalf of New Hill Ltd. to refurbish the existing upper floors of 3-7 Cheapside to provide 6 new one-bedroom apartments. The building is not suitable for modern office usage and its new residential usage will provide much need residential accommodation close to the city centre.

38 Oxford Road/3-5 Cheapside Reading is a Grade 2 Listed building under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest. The details of the entry are reproduced below.

CHEAPSIDE 1. 5128 Nos 3 to 7 (odd) SU 7173 SW 2/430 II 2. Including No 38 Oxford Road. Circa 1900. Architects, Joseph Morris and Son. 6 bays corner site. 3 1/2 storeys. Dutch stepped gables to attic dormers. English bond grey brick with red brick or terracotta dressings, transom and lintel level bands and moulded strings to crow steps; terracotta decoration and relieving arches to 2 larger gables. Parapet. Tiled roof. 4 off-ridge chimneys, one to right of corner gable is an external stack, corbelled and with an applied corbelled red brick diagonal shaft. Tall gable of 4 lights on corner, with 3 light gable to left and a group of 3 gables 2-3-2 lights to right, at far end is a wide 5-light gable with coped verge and sash ends. 1st and 2nd floor windows have decorative lintels, moulded transoms and fluted mullions. 4 lights to corner bay; Oxford Road bay has an angled bay flanked by single lights. Two 5-light oriels to Cheapside flanking a 5-light window on 2nd floor, pattern revised on 1st floor with bracketed hood over. Outer bay plainer. Heavy kidney shaped rainwater heads. Modern ground floor shop premises retaining former fascia.

Under this proposal all items described in the entry will be retained without alteration.

BACKGROUND

The building was built cc 1900s, architects - Joseph Morris and Son. Historically it has been used for a number of purposes such as residential and commercial use. The Office units on first, second and third floor and a flat on First Floor have not been occupied for more than 10 years and the building is falling into a state of disrepair.

SITE AND CONTEXT

The building is located within the inner Ring Road of Reading centre, 5-10 minutes away from the city High street on the West side of the zone. Oxford Road, a busy shopping street, borders the site to the South and Cheapside, a commercial/retail street, runs along the East side. The building is a substantial property with a hard standing yard to the rear accessed from Thorn Street.

The surrounding properties are a mixture of terraced and detached properties, ranging from commercial, residential and retail accommodation.

The property is serviced from Oxford Road and Cheapside to the front and Thorn Street to the rear.

- Reading Bus Station 1
- Reading Railway Station 2
- Forbury Gardens 3
- Abbey Baptist Church 4
- E P Collier School 5
- River Thames 6
- Reading centre, shopping High Street 7
- The Site 8



Image 1 Satellite image of location context (© Google Maps data)

THE BRIEF

This property benefitted from a Planning and Listed Building Consents granted in 2010, to change the use of the upper floors from office to residential. The permission was not enacted and has consequently expired. The current brief is to make new proposals, similar in nature to the earlier permission with the addition of the redundant, unviable shop unit in Cheapside to provide cycle and recycling storage. . A new frontage is proposed that reflects the new usage but remains in keeping with the proportions and materials of the building as a whole and retains references to the retail usage through the inclusions of stall risers.



TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
PLANNING AND COMPENSATION ACT 1991
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (GENERAL DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURE ORDER 1995)

APPLICATION FOR FULL PLANNING PERMISSION

To: Zapp Sales Ltd (c/o Urban Property Services Ltd)
C/O Mr Andrew Bourne
The Round Foundry
105 Water Lane
Leeds
West Yorkshire
LS11 5WD

Application No: 09/02207/FUL

Applicant: Zapp Sales Ltd (c/o Urban Property Services Ltd)

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL as local planning authority GRANT FULL planning permission for the following development in accordance with the plans and supporting information submitted in connection with this application.



The Cheapside Shop Unit – current condition



TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
LOCAL GOVERNMENT PLANNING AND LAND ACT 1980
THE PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS & CONSERVATION AREAS) REGULATIONS 1990
PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS & CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990

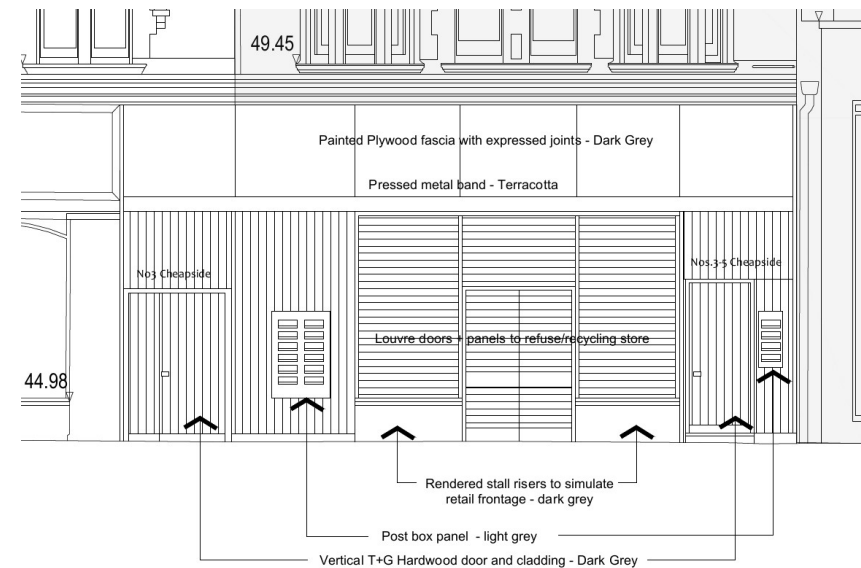
APPLICATION FOR LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

To: Zapp Sales Ltd (c/o Urban Property Services Ltd)
C/O Archial Architects Ltd
Mr Andrew Bourne
The Round Foundry
105 Water Lane
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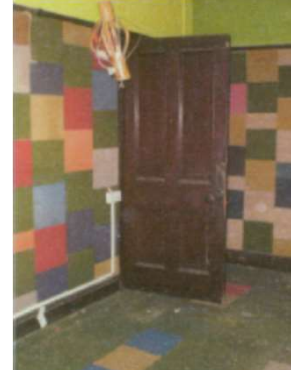
Application No: 09/02208/LBC

Applicant: Zapp Sales Ltd (c/o Urban Property Services Ltd)

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL as local planning authority GRANT Listed Building Consent for the following development:



The Cheapside Shop Unit – Proposed alterations



Selected Internal Photographs

DESIGN RESPONSE

In recognition of the contribution that the building makes to the scale and character of the city centre and the immediate streetscape, it is proposed that the external features will remain unaltered, except for part of the ground floor frontage on Cheapside where the continued usage of the small shop unit away from the prime retail frontages of Oxford Road is no longer viable. This is to be utilised as a Cycle Store and for the storage and collection of Refuse and Recycling materials. A new frontage is proposed that reflects the new usage but remains in keeping with the proportions and materials of the building as a whole. To the rear of the property a small extension within an existing light well, is proposed to improve access to the adjacent building where an additional 6 flats are to be provided under the existing permission granted under Application Ref. 200756 dated 3 August 2020. A new metal walkway and stair will provide an essential fire escape route to the rear yard. The new extension is visible only from a limited area within the service yard. Its design aims to provide a contemporary intervention that is complimentary to the original building through its choice of materials. A terracotta rainscreen façade has been selected to relate to the colour and tone of existing Brickwork.

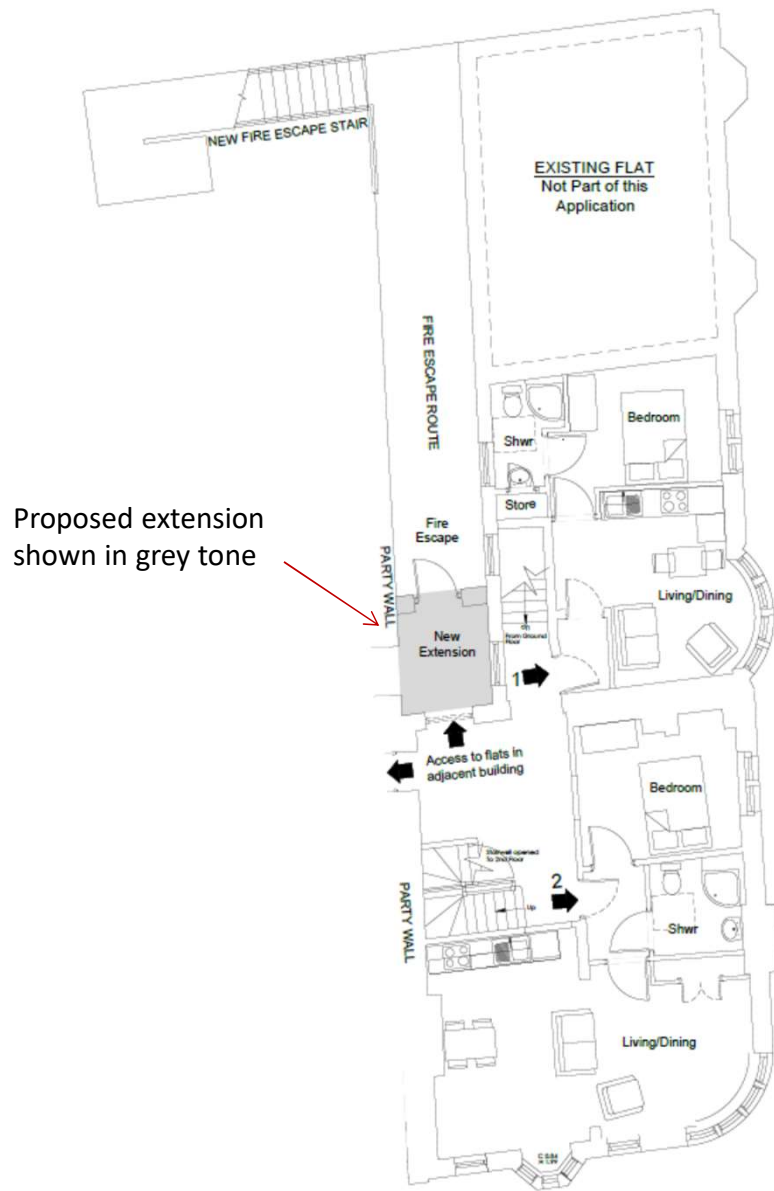
Internally, the alterations comprise primarily a refurbishment. The new plan arrangements render redundant the flight from 1st to 2nd Floor of the entrance stair and this will be removed to allow a more efficient use of space on the second floor. Consequently, the Entrance stair will link directly to the main central stair at 1st floor level, All period details of the stairs and balustrades will be retained, and the original balustrades removed from the demolished flight will be utilised in the new partial flights that adjust the floor level of this and the adjacent building to which access is to be provided.

The plans are arranged to reduce removals to a minimum whilst creating interesting and functional accommodation. The large chimney structures dictate to a significant degree and limit the achievable floor areas of the individual apartments.

Approach to Conservation of original features

(Subject to a schedule to be agreed on site with Local Authority Heritage Officers prior to commencement on site).

- All Window frames, cills and surrounds to be retained, restored and repainted.
- Existing Skirtings to be retained and repainted or replaced in similar style.
- Ceiling Covings to be carefully removed, repaired and reinstalled unless otherwise agreed with Heritage Officers.
- Existing picture rails to be retained and completed where missing, within newly formed rooms.
- Fire surrounds to be retained in new living and bedroom areas.
- New stair detailing will match retained detailing.
- All Existing exposed pipework and wiring to be removed any opening for redundant services made good.
- Retained doors with frames and architraves to be restored and repainted.
- Original door hardware to be retained where condition allows or replaced with new period style alternatives.



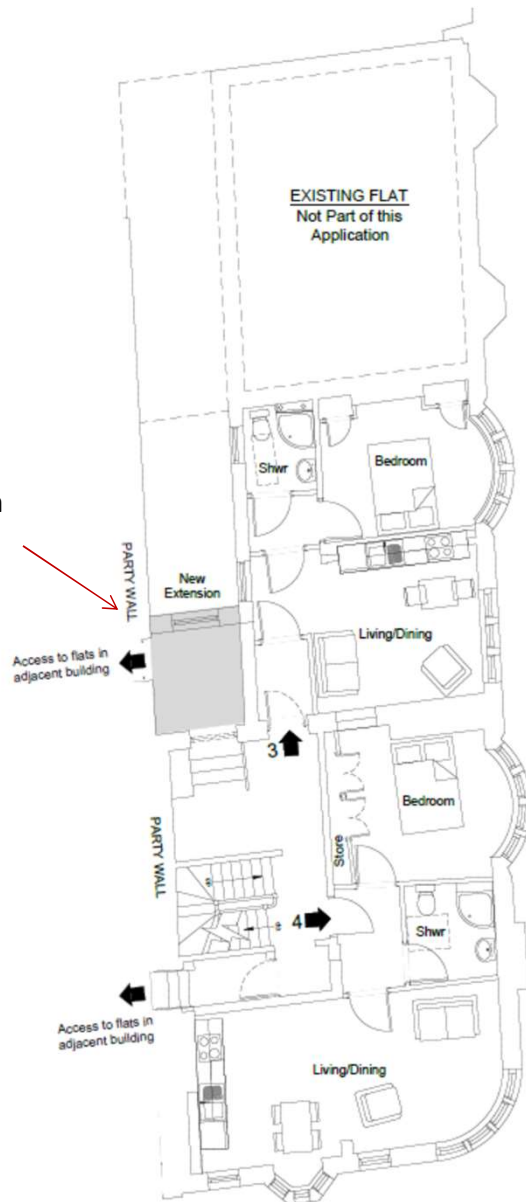
PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN



EXISTING FLOOR PLAN
with features to be removed shown in blue

1st Floor

Proposed extension
shown in grey tone



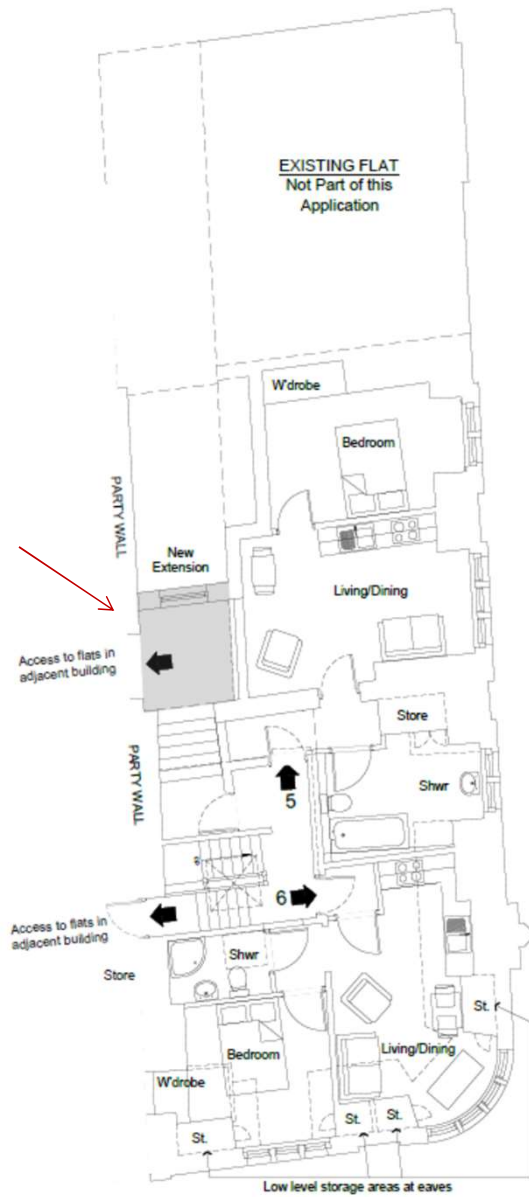
PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN



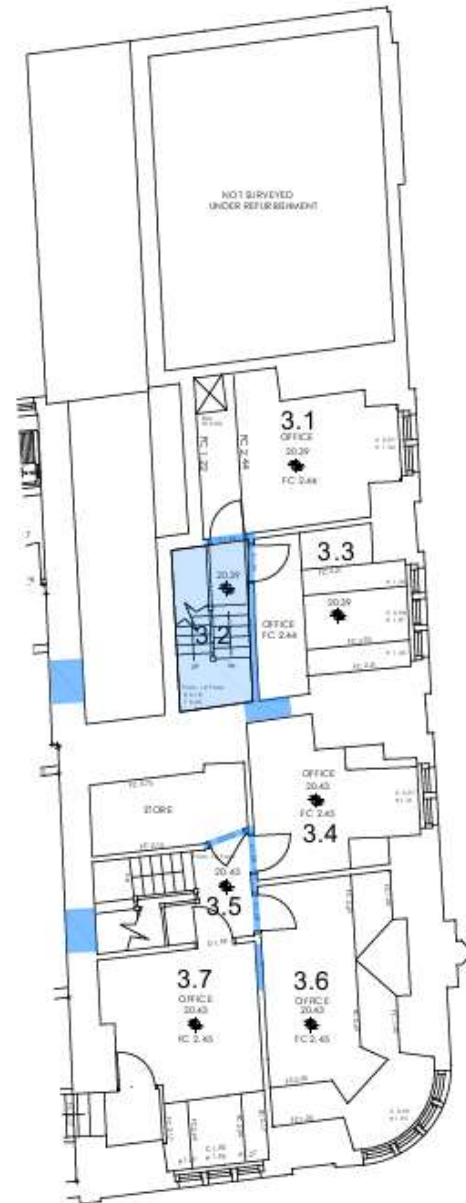
EXISTING FLOOR PLAN
with features to be removed shown in blue

2nd Floor

Proposed extension
shown in grey tone



PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN



EXISTING FLOOR PLAN
with features to be removed shown in blue

3rd Floor

CONCLUSION

This proposal returns the upper floors of this important building to their original use and secures its continued viable use for the foreseeable future. It offers a new life to existing redundant office space that has proved to be unviable over many years. It offers sought after residential accommodation in the city centre within walking distance of all of the commercial and cultural facilities on offer. It is served by extensive public transport services including high speed train routes to London and the rest of the country.

The design has been developed following Pre-Application advice and consultation with Local Authority officers. It respects the existing architecture, both internally and externally and retains and compliments its period features. We believe that it meets the needs of the community and complies with planning policies and commend it to the Authority for approval.



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Accessibility Statement

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The building is a Grade 2 Listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest. Its protected status and the nature of its construction renders it unsuitable for wheelchair users. However, The scheme sets out to anticipate, and overcome, restrictions that prevent disabled people making full use of the premises and their surroundings and aims to create, as far as possible within the constraints of the building, an accessible environment in which a disabled person can enter and make use of independently or with help from a partner or assistant.

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