

Planning Statement in support of the replacement of the external facade & timber decking to balconies at Chatham Place (Building 1) Reading RG1 7AN.

1. Description of the building

- 1.1. Building 1 is part of the larger Chatham Place development which was completed in 2009.
- 1.2. Building 1 is a private residential block of flats, formed in 4no blocks. Block A is 10 storeys 31.2m high; Block B is 10 storeys 31.5m high; Blocks C & D are 8 storeys & 25.7m high. Building 1 consists of 211 flats with 4no vertical circulation cores (one in each Block).
- 1.3. Building 1 abuts a commercial multi storey car park to the west, Chatham Street to the north & Chatham Place to the east. Car parking for residents of Building 1 is situated on the lower ground floor & part of the ground floor. There is also some commercial A1/A3 use on part of the ground floor of Building 1.
- 1.4. On three & a half sides Building 1 surrounds a raised central courtyard with the residents' car parking & commercial units beneath.
- 1.5. The make-up of the external facades is as follows;

Type 1 - Proteus type HR Honeycomb Metal Rainscreen (either direct fix or hook fix) on a Proteus Aluminium Mullion fixed to a Proteus Mullion support bracket in turn fixed to concrete elements of the structure. This cladding needs to be provided with a minimum 38mm ventilation cavity for a baffle jointed system.

Currently there are varying cavity widths cavity to the face of the K15 insulation. Proteus state that the panels meet a Class 0 classification and not A2:s1-d0 or A2:s2-d0 subject to metal finish as these panels were supplied before their fire safety classification testing was carried out in 2018.

The insulation is 60mm Kingspan K15 insulation classified as C-s1,d0 when tested in accordance with BS EN 13501-1 2007. The insulation is stated as being suitability secured to what appears to be a cement board. An inspection does not appear to have been undertaken to check the presence of the vapour barrier. Cavity barriers have been poorly installed where viewed.

From the typical details reviewed for Building 1 design drawings, the cement board is then secured to a Metsec type metal framing system with an internal lining of possibly, 2no layers of plasterboard. The cement board is currently being tested by the BRE to assess its suitability for retention. It must be at least A2 fire resistant to remain in place.

Type 2 - Proteus planks in place of the large HR panels, presumably on a similar fixing system with ventilated cavity & yellow panels.

Type 3 - Timber larch cladding on timber framing with the K15 Kingspan insulation behind. From the typical details reviewed for Building 1 design drawings, the larch boarding is supported on 75 x 50 vertical support timber battens secured to a cold rolled metal framework. This type of cladding is only situated within the central courtyard elevations & to the fins of the balconies.

- 1.6. The flats overlooking the central courtyard incorporate balconies formed in concrete but clad with timber decking.

2. Recent history

- 2.1. Due to the Grenfell Disaster, in 2020 the Ministry for Housing Communities & Local Government issued a guidance note “Advice for Building Owners of Multi-Storey, Multi-occupied Residential Buildings”. It contains the recommendation that building owners carry out investigations to ensure they are aware of the fire risks presented by the materials & construction of the external walls of the building. If the investigation reveals an unacceptable fire risk, the owners should consider what measures are required to mitigate that risk.
- 2.2. Fire Consultants were instructed to review the fire safety risk presented by the external wall & attachments of Building 1.
- 2.3. Several intrusive investigations have been undertaken which revealed that due to the materials incorporated within the facade & missing/ defective fire barriers the building was classified as a high risk in the case of fire.
- 2.4. Due to the above findings, the building is subject to a “Waking Watching” regime, the basement car park was temporarily closed prior to completion of certain remediation measures and further fire risk assessments and urgent professional work has been undertaken to produce a remediation scheme specification to replace the unsafe elements of the facade and balconies. A tendering process has been undertaken for the remediation scheme with a view to commencing the remedial works in March 2021.
- 2.5. An application has been made for funding for the remediation scheme under the UK Government’s Ministry of Housing, , Communities and Local Government (“MHCLG”) £1 billion Building Safety Fund.

3. The remediation scheme proposal

- 3.1. The remediation scheme proposal is to remove:
 - The (Type 1) Proteus Type HR Metal rainscreen cladding which only meets Class 0 fire classification & replace this with the equivalent cladding to match the existing, but with the required A2:s1-d0 fire classification satisfying the requirements of the MHCLG.
 - The (Type 2) Proteus Planks rainscreen cladding which only meets Class 0 fire classification & replace this with the equivalent cladding to match the existing, but with the required A2:s1-d0 fire classification satisfying the requirements of the MHCLG.
 - The (Type 3) Timber Larch cladding which is a highly combustible material & replace with Rockpanel Woods Durable 9mm A2 Caramel Oak with the required A2:s1-d0 fire

classification satisfying the requirements of the MHCLG, fixed horizontally in 300mm widths, including the balcony fins.

- The timber decking laid on the projecting balconies & replace with aluminium decking.

3.2. At the same time:

- the flammable K15 Kingspan insulation is to be removed together with the fire stops & barriers which appear to have not been fitted correctly.
- The vapour barrier fixed to the front of the cement board is to be removed.

3.3. The existing cement board is currently under test by the BRE & we will be informed shortly whether this is fit for purpose or will also require replacement with a 12mm A1 rated board to satisfy the requirements of the MHCLG.

3.4. The vapour barrier will be replaced & new fire barriers installed to all compartment wall/floor & door/window reveals such as the SP Firestop OSCB.

3.5. The K15 Kingspan insulation is to be replaced with a Rockwool Rainscreen Duo Slab with a Euroclass A1 fire risk rating when assessed to EN 13501-1 satisfying the requirements of the MHCLG, to obtain the required U value of 0.3 the thickness will need to be 100mm which is 40mm thicker than the K15.

3.6. Due to this, the cladding must be moved forward by 30-40mm (apart from where the larch cladding is located) to maintain a minimum of 38mm ventilation gap. This extension of the façade will hardly be noticeable when complete, including the replacement of the window/door reveals, but will increase the volume of Building 1 slightly.

3.7. Please refer to pages 4-5-6 for existing & proposed details.

4. The Planning Application

4.1. This planning application seeks to gain consent for;

- The slight increase in volume particularly on the northern elevation where the building is located on the boundary where we believe an over sailing agreement maybe required (although the bays already over sail).
- The replacement of the flammable larch cladding with the Rockpanel Woods Durable 9mm A2 Caramel Oak cladding to the elevations facing the inner courtyard areas above the podium.
- The replacement of the timber decking to the projecting balconies..

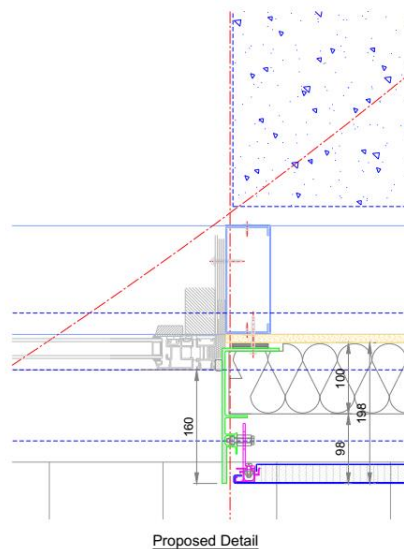
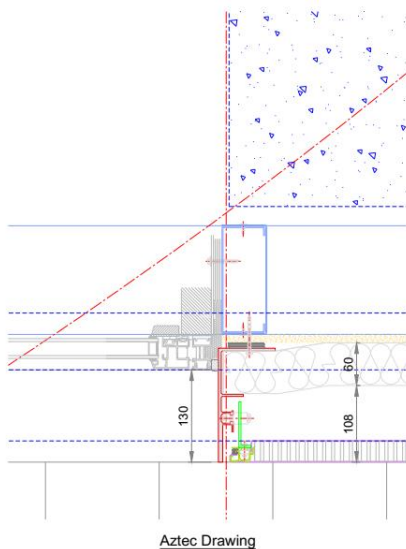
4.2. This planning application requires urgent consideration as this is a serious situation where occupiers of Building 1 are affected by the fire safety risk issues associated with the cladding and therefore the remediation scheme needs to be undertaken as soon as possible, subject to funding constraints.

4.3. There are also potentially very large costs involved for the owners of the residential properties within Building 1 in funding and undertaking the proposed remediation scheme. There are strict time limits that need to be met for funding to be made available under the Building Safety Fund. It is therefore essential that the application for funding is successful and the time limits are met as otherwise these costs will have to be met by the owners themselves.

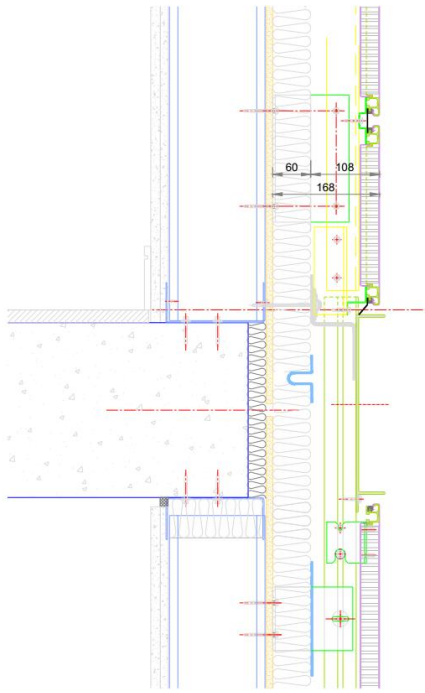
4.4. Confirmation from Reading Borough Council that all is well with this application is therefore required as a matter of urgency.

4.5. The proposed remediation scheme is subject to Building Control approval. Reading Borough Council will be instructed in this matter.

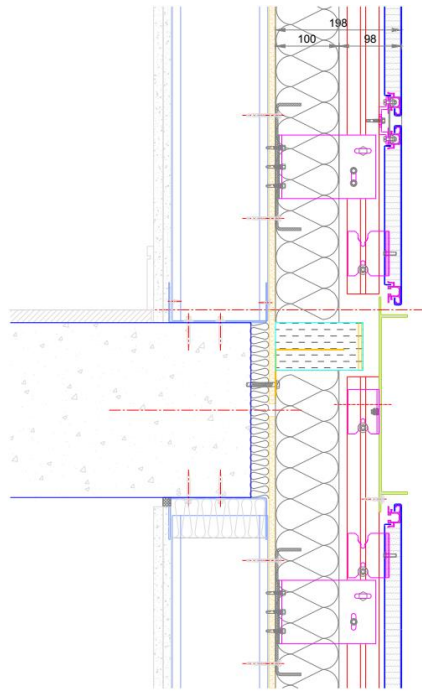
Chris Keen MRICS MCABE



Sections showing existing insulation & proposed insulation with the HR panels.

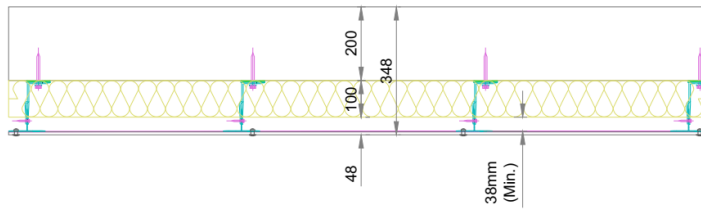


Aztec Drawing



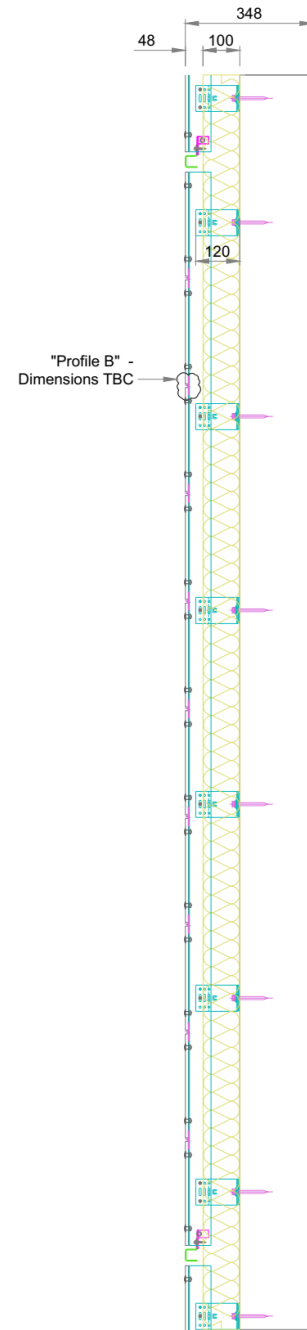
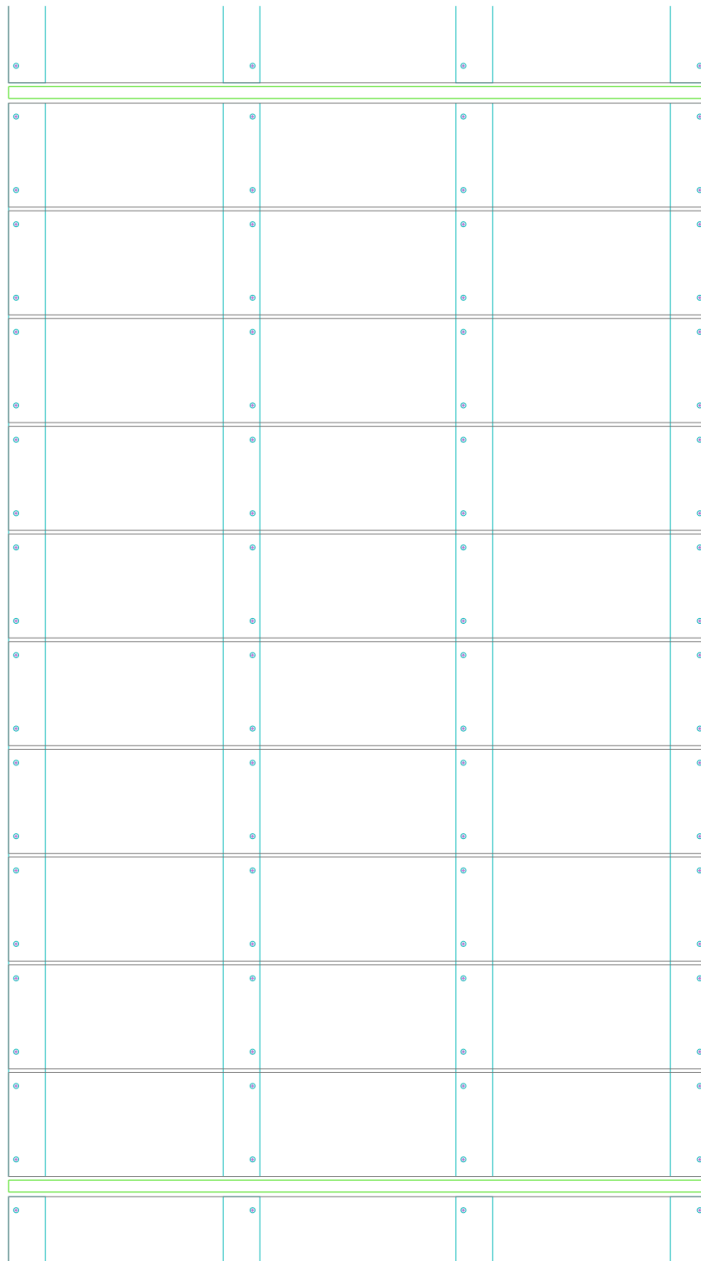
Proposed Detail





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Section & elevation of the Rockpanel cladding proposed

