

Project

Residential Conversion

Address

78 London Street

Reading

RG1 4SJ

Client

Turner Property Ltd

Document

**Design, Access & Heritage
Statement**

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Document

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1.0 INTRODUCTION



Fig 1. View of the existing London Street facade.

This Design and Access Statement is written as a supporting document for a Full Planning Application with Reading Borough Council at 78 London Street, Reading, RG1 4SJ.

The proposed development involves the change of use from Class B1(a) (offices) to Sui Generis (Large HMO), along with the refurbishment of the existing building. The refurbishment involves proposed internal layout alterations to provide 7no. ensuite bedrooms as part of a Large House in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

The intention of the application is to create high quality living accommodation for professionals, whilst contributing to the enhancement and maintenance of the building and wider Conservation Area.

This statement is to be read in conjunction with the following Weston & Co Architects drawings:

19017-PL-01 Location and Block Plan
19017-PL-02 Existing Site Plan
19017-PL-03 Existing B + G Floors
19017-PL-04 Existing 1st + 2nd Floors
19017-PL-05 Existing 3rd + Roof Plan
19017-PL-06 Existing W + E Elevations
19017-PL-07 Existing Sections AA & BB

19017-PL-10 Proposed Site Plan
19017-PL-11 Proposed Basement
19017-PL-12 Proposed Ground Floor
19017-PL-13 Proposed First Floor
19017-PL-14 Proposed Second Floor
19017-PL-15 Proposed Third Plan
19017-PL-16 Proposed Roof Plan
19017-PL-17 Proposed Elevations
19017-PL-18 Proposed Sections

2.0 SITE LOCATION & CONTEXT



Fig.2 Aerial view

London Street is located just to the south of Reading town centre. The site is approximately a 6 minute walk from one of the towns main streets, Broad Street.

The site location is very sustainable for residential development, due to it's proximity to a wide range of amenity options, transport options and places of employment.

2.0 SITE LOCATION & CONTEXT



Fig 3. (top) Aerial view from the east.

Fig.4 (bottom) Aerial view from the west

Key

- 1. Application Site
- 2. London Street
- 3. Church Street

- 4. South Street
- 5. Undercroft entrance at 74 London Street
- 6. Car parking courtyard
- 7. Modern Flats (flat nos. 9-11)

78 London Street is located approximately halfway along the western side of the street, between the junctions of South Street and Church Street. The application site is a 5 storey townhouse, including a basement and loft conversion. It forms part of a terrace of buildings, which vary in height and style but form a good quality amalgamation of Georgian-period town-housing.

There remains a small courtyard to the rear of the property. A modern, part 2 and part 3 storey, housing block has been constructed beyond the courtyard to the west (7 in Fig 3 & 4 above) in what would have historically been the garden of the application site.

There is a parking courtyard to the rear of the site, which can be accessed from London street via an undercroft at no. 74. Access from the application site itself can be gained to the car park through a neighbouring courtyard, used to store bins for flats no. 9-11.

2.0 SITE LOCATION & CONTEXT



Fig.5 London Street Streetscene



Fig.6 View from the rear parking courtyard behind no. 76 London Street



Fig.7 View of the rear facade

3.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

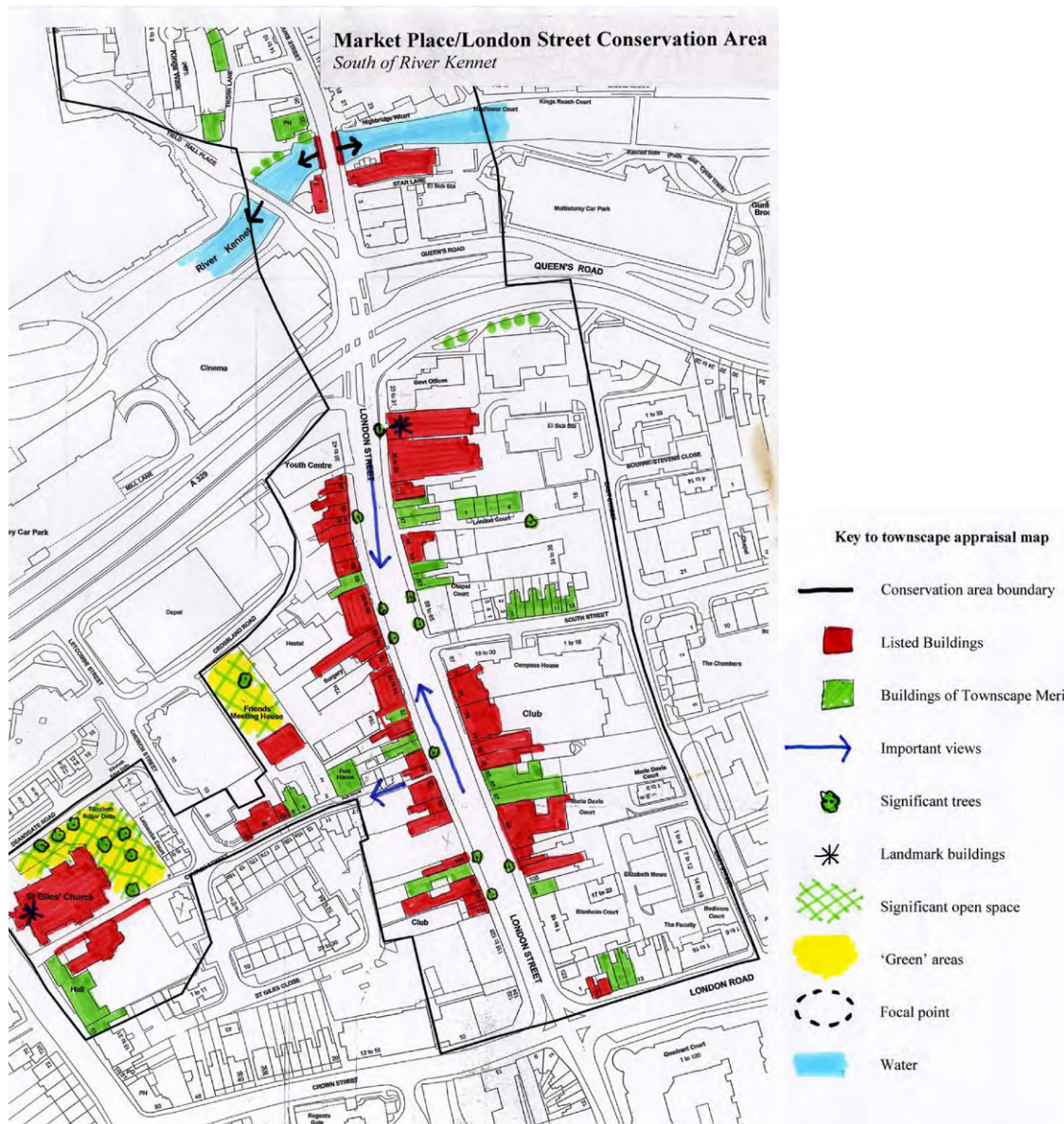


Fig.8 Character Area Map extract from RBC Conservation Area Appraisal

The application site is located within Reading Borough Council's 'Market Place/London Street Conservation Area' and within that, Character Area 1- 'London Street, south of the IDR'.

The street has a high concentration of historic buildings on both sides of the road, the majority of which are Listed (coloured red in Fig. 3) or 'Buildings of Townscape Merit' (coloured green in Fig.3).

The application site, 78 London Street, is noted as a Building of Townscape Merit. It is adjoined by nos. 74 & 76 to the north, and no. 80 to the south, which are both Listed Grade 2 buildings.

3.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

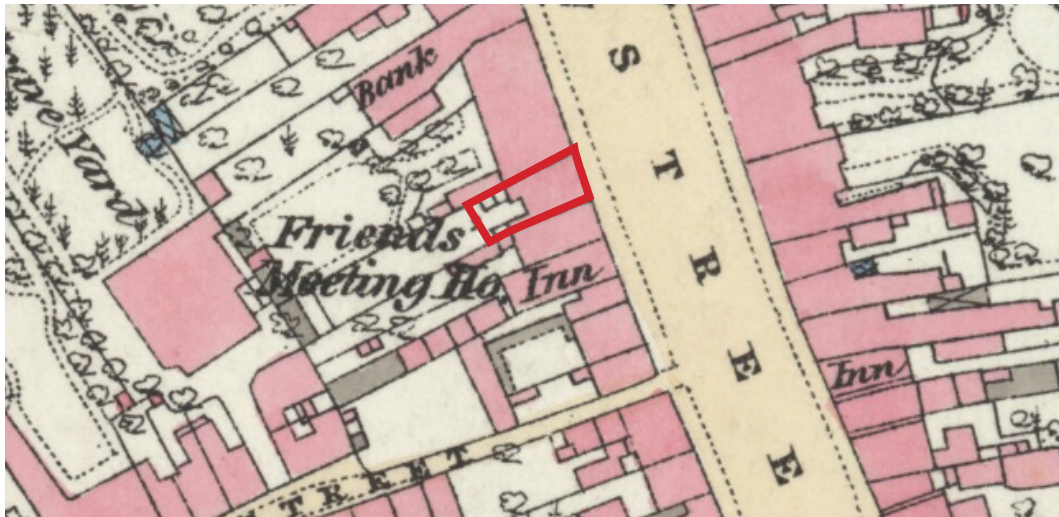


Fig. 9: Historic Ordnance Survey Map 1875-77, published 1879

London street is one of the oldest streets in Reading, appearing on the earliest known map of Reading, John Speed's 1611 map.

Most of the building frontages now appear of Georgian character, built from late 18th century, or later. However a number of the buildings along the street still contain elements, such as original basements, that are far older.

The age of the current building at 78 London Street is unknown, but the above map from 1872 appears to show the building in it's current layout, so it can be reasonably assumed that it was built prior to this date.

The adjacent southern building, 80 London Street, is grade 2 listed and was constructed in 1753, dated via a stone tablet set in it's rear wall.

The adjacent northern building, 74 & 76 London Street, is also grade 2 listed and is also thought to be constructed around the middle of the 18th century.

Impact on the Character Area

The building at no.78 positively contributes to:

- The strong vertical rhythm created by regular bays of aligned windows and doors;
- Prevalence of white-painted vertical sliding sash windows along the road;
- The variety of historic architectural detail, in this case a pedimented doorcase;
- The predominance of brick with occasional use of stone and stucco;
- High quality townscape and well-proportioned relationship between tall building and wide street;

The building currently detracts from the area due to:

- Vacant building needs to be put to more sustainable long term use. Squatters have been removed from the building since its vacancy.
- Security door and boarded windows fitted due to vacant building.
- Probable loss of original street front railings
- Loss of original garden
- Poor quality windows and dormer to rear facade

4.0 USE

Existing Use

The existing use of the site is as Class B1(a) offices. We have undertaken a planning history search of the application site, and show the three most recent applications below.

The two latest applications in 2017 and 2018 related to change of use from Office to C3 residential and were both permitted at the time. These applications do not appear to have been implemented, as such, the use remains as Class B1(a).

Application Number:	02/01195/FUL
Application Type:	PLANNING TYPE
Description of Development:	CHANGE OF USE OF SECOND AND THIRD FLOOR FROM OFFICES TO TWO RESIDENTIAL FLATS.
Decision:	CONDITIONAL CONSENT on 08 November, 2002

Application Number:	170714
Application Type:	PLANNING TYPE
Description of Development:	Change of use of basement, ground, first, second and third floors from Class B1(a) (offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 2 no. 1 bed (maisonette at basement and ground floor flat at first floor) and 1 no. 2 bed (maisonette at second and third floor) flats. Prior Notification under Class O, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended).
Decision:	(PAA) Prior Approval Notification - Approval on 28 June, 2017

Application Number:	171873
Application Type:	PLANNING TYPE
Description of Development:	Proposed insertion of a double height window to serve ground floor and basement on the rear elevation, insertion of 2 no. roof lights on the front elevation and replacement of all windows to timber framed double glazed windows.
Decision:	(PER) Application Permitted on 12 January, 2018

Fig. 10: Recent Planning History of 78 London Street

Proposed Use

The proposed development involves the change of use from Class B1(a) (offices) to Sui Generis (Large HMO), along with the refurbishment of the existing building. The refurbishment involves proposed internal layout alterations to provide a 7no. en-suite bedrooms as part of a large House in Multiple Occupation (HMO).

5.0 AMOUNT

The application site has a total area of 94.4 square metres. The existing gross internal floor area is approximately 293 square metres. This will reduce slightly to 288.5sqm, this is due to conversion of an existing ground floor store into external amenity space.

The proposed layout allows for 7no. en-suite bedrooms and associated communal and ancillary space.

The proposals intend to make use of original room layouts where possible. This produces bedrooms that are generous in size and far exceed the minimum area standards, as set in both National Minimum Standards and locally adopted guidance.

The proposals also provide high quality communal accommodation, amounting to a significant increase on the minimum standard of a 7sqm kitchen as set out in Reading Borough Council's 'Residential Conversions SPD' (RC SPD). A small communal kitchenette is also provided as part of the plant and utility room on the first floor. The provision of two communal rooms, one living and one kitchen & dining, also aligns with RC SPD Checklist 25. The proposals also exceed HMO licensing standards

The accommodation benefits from a rear courtyard of 13.4sqm. This is able to provide modest external seating, clothes drying opportunity and bin storage. The courtyard faces west, so it will also benefit from direct afternoon sunlight. It is considered that this provision is in accordance with Paragraph 2.16 of the RC SPD. Additional outdoor amenity space is also provided through proposed alterations made to the existing rear store, removing part of the external wall to provide a covered external seating area of 4.5sqm.

Cycle Storage

It is proposed that the courtyard is used for amenity, as opposed to providing cycle storage. The courtyard size is limited due to the location within a tight-knit urban scenario. Provision of cycle storage would take up all useable courtyard space and it is considered that the courtyard provides greater value to residents as external amenity space, rather than as storage.

Car Parking

The site is located within the primary core area zone 2. The proposal is a car-free development, with no car parking spaces provided for residents. It is also understood that new residents will not be entitled to on-street car parking permits.

Waste

The courtyard provides storage for 4no. 360 litre bins. 2no. for recycling and 2no. general waste. A management system will be put in place to relocate the bins to the street front on bin collection days.

Schedule of Accommodation

(all areas are inclusive of en-suites)

Basement	BEDROOM 01	22.7 sqm
	BEDROOM 02	18.1 Sqm
First Floor	BEDROOM 03	30.2sqm
	BEDROOM 04	21.2sqm
Second Floor	BEDROOM 05	28.9sqm
	BEDROOM 06	23.5sqm
Third Floor	BEDROOM 07	25.8sqm

6.0 LAYOUT

The proposals seek to refurbish and modernise the property to offer an improved, rational layout. Unsympathetic modern divisions will be removed, returning rooms to their original layout where possible.

The following alterations are proposed:

Basement Floor

- The basement is to be refurbished to provide 2no. en-suite bedrooms.
- A communal store / meter room will be provided.
- The existing lightwell at the rear of the property will be retained to provide light into Bedroom 02.
- The existing high level window to Bedroom 01 will be retained.

Ground Floor

- This floor is proposed entirely as communal space.
- The two main rooms operate as shared living, kitchen and dining rooms.
- The front room is 22.7sqm.
- The rear room is 16sqm.
- Together, the proposed Kitchen / Dining / Living area provide high quality, semi open-plan spaces that will benefit from favourable east - west dual aspect light by making use of the existing large ground floor windows in both rooms.
- A communal, visitable WC is provided at the rear.
- Access is provided to the courtyard through the existing rear door.
- The rear courtyard will provide storage for refuse facilities,
- There is also a rear gate that can be used as an emergency escape route to the adjacent parking courtyard.
- An external covered seating area will be created in the existing rear store.

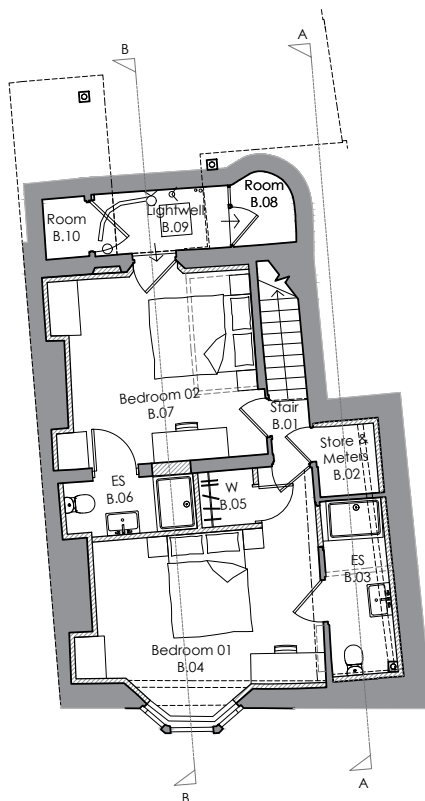


Fig 11. Proposed Basement Plan

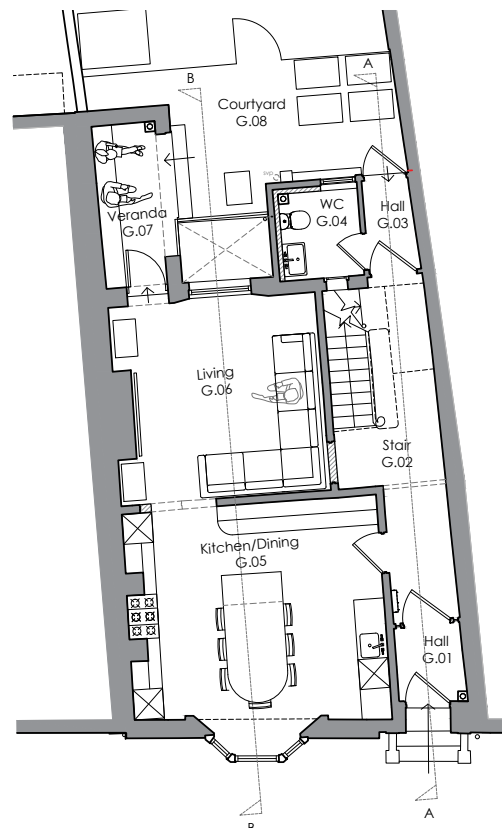


Fig 12. Proposed Ground Floor Plan

6.0 LAYOUT

First Floor

- 2no. en-suite bedrooms are proposed at this level.
- The rear projection from the stairwell is proposed as a communal utility, laundry, kitchenette and plant room.
- This will incorporate washing machines and tumble dryers for residents use, which will relieve space pressure on the other communal areas.
- The southern rear projection will be an en-suite for Bedroom 04.

Second Floor

- 2no. en-suite bedrooms are proposed at this level.
- Bedroom 05 in the front part of the house will have an en-suite incorporated into it's room layout.
- Bedroom 06 in the rear will access a private bathroom through a newly installed stair to the rear stair projection. Access to this room from the stair will be blocked up.

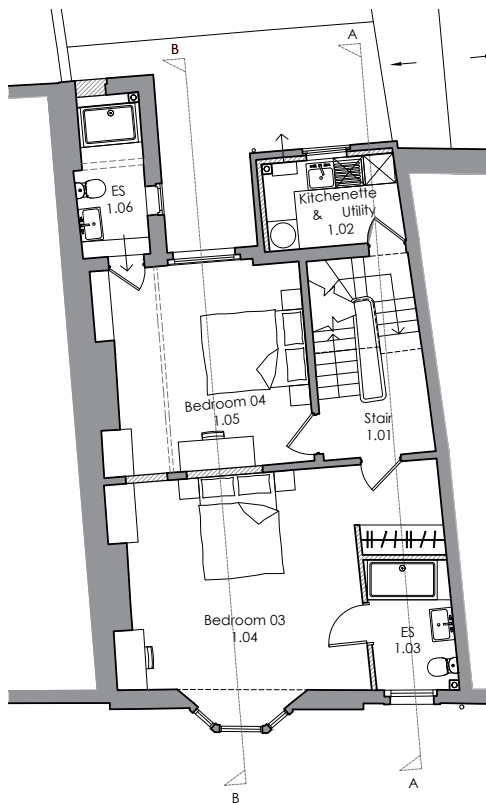


Fig 13. Proposed First Floor Plan

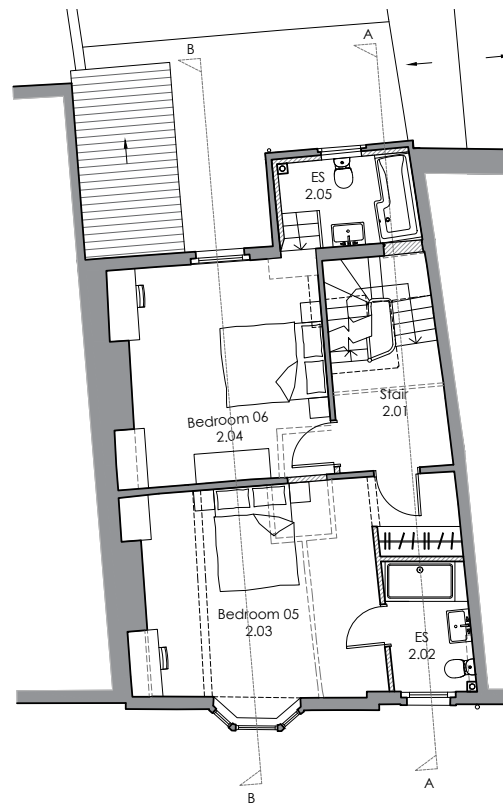


Fig 14. Proposed Second Floor Plan

6.0 LAYOUT

Third Floor

- This floor will provide 1 no. en-suite bedroom.
- The rear dormer will be refurbished, with more appropriate windows and finishes installed. Refer to the Proposed Elevation drawings.
- A new, larger rooflight is proposed above the stairwell to replace the existing rooflight. This will help increase the available head-height in this location, as well as continue to flood natural light down the stairwell.

Roof Plan

- The roof will be refurbished to match the existing materials.
- Two new conservation style rooflights will be installed on the front pitch. 2no. rooflights were previously permitted as part of a permitted development application in 2018, positioned in similar locations to this proposal.
- A new, larger rooflight is proposed above the stairwell to replace the existing rooflight on the rear roof pitch.

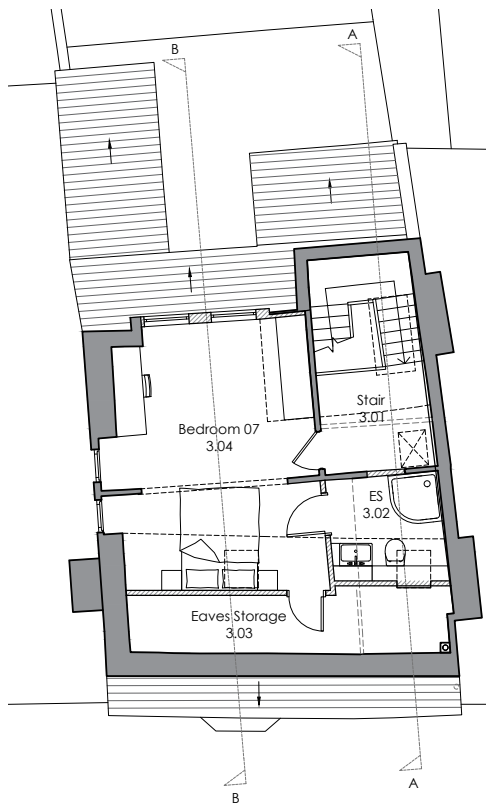


Fig 15. Proposed Second Floor Plan

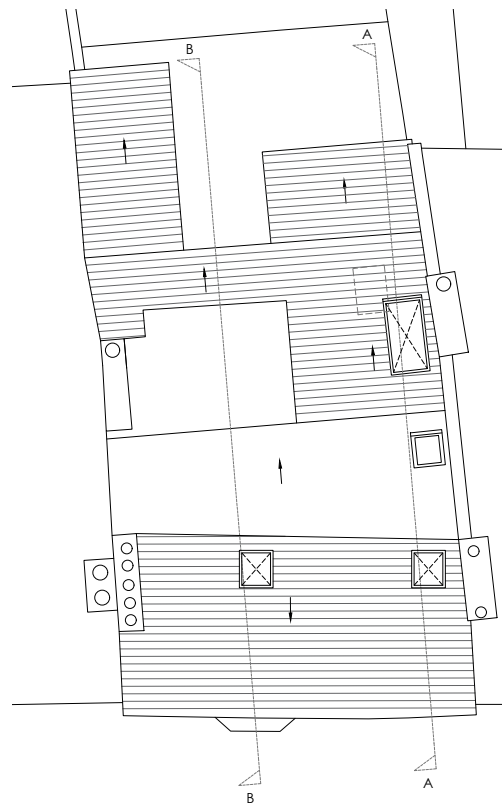


Fig 16. Proposed Roof Plan

7.1 SCALE

There are no alterations proposed that will materially impact the scale of the existing building.

7.2 APPEARANCE

Windows

The existing dilapidated, single glazed windows are proposed to be replaced with double glazed, painted timber sash windows to match. This proposed upgrade will provide better internal comfort for residents as well as securing these key architectural features of the building for the long term.

Entrance Door

The existing timber door 6 panelled will have unfortunately been damaged due to vandalism. It will be replaced with a timber door to match.

The existing fan light above the entrance door will also be retained and repaired as necessary.

Rooflights

Conservation style rooflights are proposed to the front and rear roof pitches.

Front Facade

Brick and Render finishes to be retained and repaired to match where required.

Rear Facade

There are a number of proposed improvements and alterations to the rear facade:

- Dormer to be re-clad with natural slate.
- Replacement of uPVC windows with sympathetic timber sash windows.
- New lightwell railings as protection from falling.
- New glazed canopy installed above lightwell.
- Replacement rooflight in conservation style.



Fig 17. Proposed Front Elevation

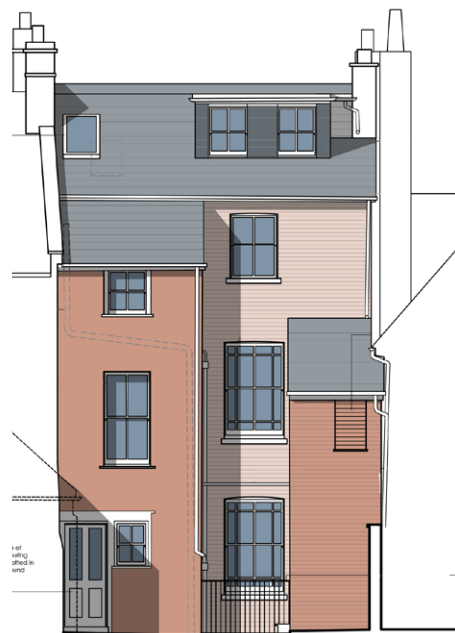


Fig 18. Proposed Rear Elevation

8.0 ACCESS

There are no material alterations proposed to the pedestrian or vehicular access to the application site.

The existing principle entrance from London Street includes 4no. steps. It is considered that on balance, preserving the historic environment within a conservation area and the London Street streetscene outweighs any potential need for step-free access into the building.



Fig 19. View of the existing London Street facade.

9.0 CONCLUSION

The proposed change of use and alterations will enable the provision of 7no. high quality en-suite bedrooms with generous communal areas in a centrally located, highly sustainable, area of Reading.

Along with the necessary upgrades to conservation features such as the timber sash windows, the proposal will help safeguard the building and secure its continuing positive impact on it's locality for the foreseeable future.



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