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**WALSINGHAM PLANNING**

SPECIALIST PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS

## Planning and Heritage Statement

108 Southampton Street  
Reading  
RG1 2QX

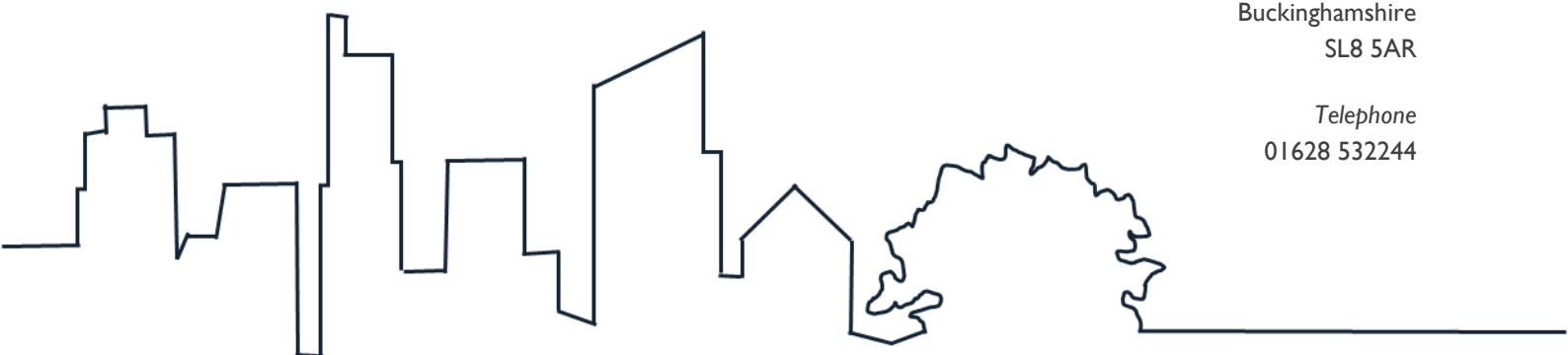
On behalf of MG Properties

DECEMBER 2020

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# I INTRODUCTION

- I.1 Walsingham Planning has been instructed by MG Properties to resubmit a planning application for the following development at 108 Southampton Street, Reading, RG1 2QX.

*“Rear extensions to ground and first floor, dormer added on second floor to allow for four residential flats, existing shop space retained.”*

- I.2 The application follows a successful prior approval application (ref: 200274) for three flats in May 2020 and the withdrawal of a planning application (ref: 200717) for development of the same description as above in September 2020 at the site.

- I.3 This statement will describe the site and surroundings and assess the proposals against relevant planning policy and the National Planning Policy Framework. When taking into account all material planning considerations, the proposed development is considered to represent sustainable development, comply with Development Plan policies and the NPPF.

## 2 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

- 2.1 108 Southampton Street comprises a two-storey terraced property with basement and attic rooms. More modern and piecemeal single storey additions are to the rear, beyond which is a garden. The property is currently vacant. It was last and lawfully used as an adult entertainment shop (previously Use Class A1, now Use Class E) at basement and ground floor levels with accommodation on the upper floors.



*Front (east) elevation of 108 Southampton Street*

- 2.2 The building is not listed or within a conservation area. It is also not in an area at risk of flooding.
- 2.3 The property is located on the western side of Southampton Street (A327) and a short walk from Reading town centre. The site can only be accessed at street level from the pavement along Southampton Street.
- 2.4 Opposite the site, and on the other (east) side of Southampton Street, are three and four-storey buildings in commercial and residential use. To the rear is a parking court, the owner

of which has recently gained planning permission for its redevelopment to provide three new dwellings. This development has now commenced.

- 2.5 To the south of the site, and set back from 108 Southampton Street, are two-storey residential dwellings which continue the terrace. These dwellings extend further back within their sites than 108 Southampton Street and at two storeys.
- 2.6 To the north of the site is 106 Southampton Street, a three-storey Grade 2 listed building. The listed building benefits from a flat roof dormer extension between its two roof pitches and a large and modern single storey rear extension close to the border of 108 Southampton Street. Beyond the extension and accessed through an alley under 104 Southampton Street is Thompsons Yard; a walled tarmac car parking court.
- 2.7 Thompsons Yard includes a detached garage building along the southern boundary of 106 Southampton Street (the boundary it shares with the application site). The end/western section of Thompsons Yard has now been developed to provide two dwellings within Sherman Place and a private amenity space.



*Aerial view northeast looking to the rear of 102-110 Southampton Street, including Thompsons Yard and Sherman Place (Google Imagery)*



*Rear (west elevation) of 106 (to the right) and 108 (to the left) Southampton Street*

### **Relevant Planning History**

- 2.8 On 11 May 2020, prior approval (application ref: 200274) was granted for the following development at 108 Southampton Street:

*“Internal changes to allow for three residential flats C3 (dwellinghouses) as well as plans to retain existing shop space Class A1. Prior Notification under Class M, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended).”*

- 2.9 The development retained the shop at basement and ground floor levels. At first floor level, two one-bedroom flats both with internal floorspaces of 16sqm were approved. At second floor level a single one-bedroom flat measuring 13sqm was approved. Access to the flats is via the existing main front door entrance and a communal corridor.
- 2.10 Reading Borough Council’s Transport and Environmental Health Officer’s raised no objections to the application. The described works were considered by the Planning Officer to be compliant with the prior approval conditions set out in Class M Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended). An informative was added to the Decision Notice reminding the applicant to use materials which

match those already existing. This development has not commenced but has until 11 May 2023 to be completed.

2.11 On 20 May 2020, a full planning application (ref: 200717) was submitted for the following proposal at 108 Southampton Street:

*“Rear extensions to ground and first floor, dormer added on second floor to allow for four residential flats, existing shop space retained.”*

2.12 As with the prior approval application, the proposed development retained the shop at basement and ground floor levels. However, the planning application also proposed rear ground floor, first floor and second floor (dormer roof) extensions allowing for four new flats to be provided with the following floorspaces:

- Flat 1 at ground floor level – 50sqm
- Flat 2 at first floor level – 34sqm
- Flat 3 at first floor level – 16sqm
- Flat 4 at second floor level – 25sqm

2.13 The extensions would replace the existing piecemeal rear extensions. They were contemporary in their design to offer a visual distinction between the existing older properties and heritage assets in the area.



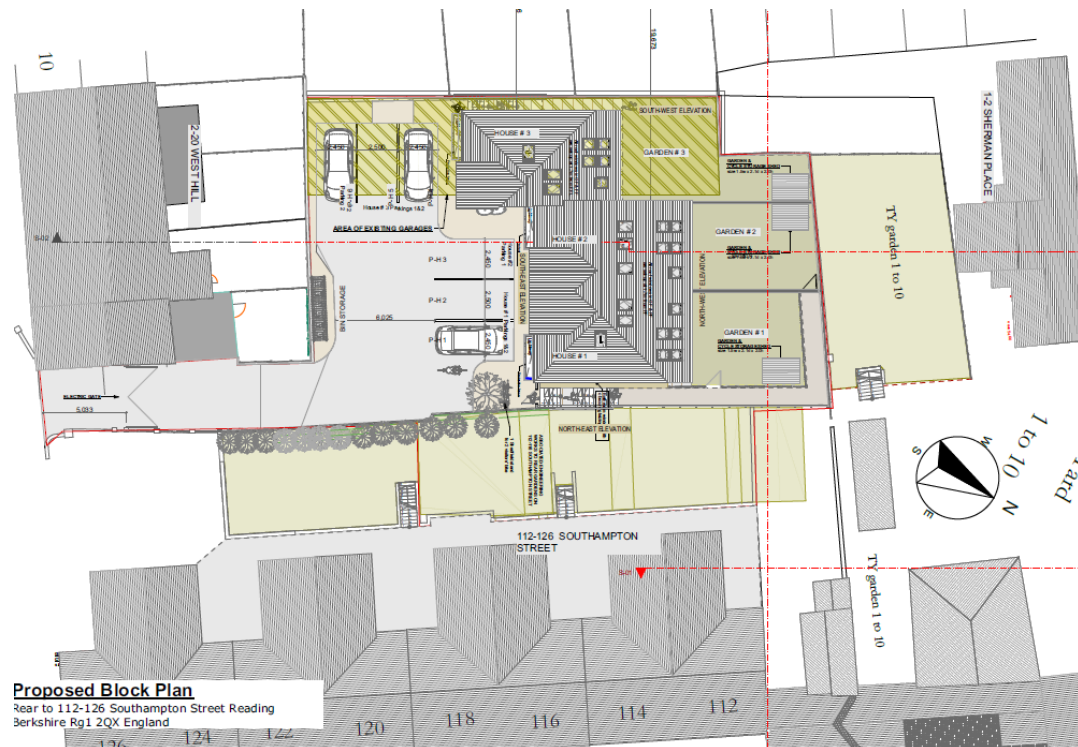
*Proposed 3D model view looking from the northwest*

2.14 On 17 September 2020, the application was withdrawn following feedback from the Planning Officer that the application would be refused for the following reasons:

1. The proposed extensions, due to the detailed design and scale would not integrate well with the original building and would introduce an alien feature out of character with the remainder of this part of Southampton Street. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
2. Not all units would meet the minimum size requirements as set out in Policy H5 either in terms of overall unit size or size of the individual bedrooms. Not all bedrooms would achieve sufficient light/outlook. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies H5 and CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
3. The proposals, due to their size and proximity, would result in overbearing effects on No's 106 and 112 Southampton Street. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2020.

2.15 By default (given the application was to be refused for the reasons listed above) the application would also have been refused for being in the absence of a Section 106 legal agreement to secure an appropriate contribution towards affordable housing.

2.16 Also relevant to this application is an approved application at Land to the Rear of 112-126 Southampton Street (ref: 150517). This provides three new three-bedroom dwellings within the parking court to the rear of the application site (see below Proposed Block Plan). This development has recently commenced.



Application 150517 Proposed Block Plan

### 3 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

3.1 As already stated, the application site is located next to and attached to 106 Southampton Street, a Grade 2 listed building. The significance of the listed building is assessed and described, in accordance with paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019), the guidance issued by ClfA (2014) and ‘Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2’ (Historic England 2014). Determination of its significance has been undertaken according to the industry-standard guidance on assessing heritage value provided within ‘Conservation Principles’ (Historic England 2008). This approach considers attempts to define significance by breaking it down into four separate heritage values:

- Evidential Value
- Historical Value
- Aesthetic Value
- Communal Value

3.2 The building was grade 2 listed in 1978. Its listing description is as follows:

*“SOUTHAMPTON STREET I. 5128 (West Side) No 106 SU 7172 NE 4/576 II 2. Mid C19. 3 storeys rendered with cornice and blocking course. Slate roof. 4 bays, glazing bar sashes. 1870s door and shop front (pilasters and corniced fascia) to right. Rainwater head to north is aluminium Task.”*

3.3 As the proposals do not impact the inside of the listed building, only the building’s external significance is assessed.

3.4 The significance of the building lies chiefly in its external aesthetic value. The short listing describes the front of the building and it is this part of the building which is of most aesthetic value, with public views of its imposing three-storey façade prominent along Southampton Street. The front façade includes 11 sash windows and a former shopfront with decorative detail. Also visible from Southampton Street, are two attractive brick chimneys stacks.

3.5 The listed building forms part of a forward sitting terrace along Southampton Street with 104 and 108 Southampton Street either side, continuing the terrace and contributing to the setting with their attractive rendered façades and bay windows. The terrace provides contrast to the predominant brick streetscene.



*Front (east) façade of 106 Southampton Street*

- 3.6 The aesthetic value of the rear of the listed building is not that of the front. Only two storeys at the rear, the building includes the attractive bay windows seen on the front façade and the slate roof and chimneys are also visible. However, there are no public views of the rear of the building and the building now includes a large modern rear extension which spans almost the entire width at ground floor level and hides much of this elevation.
- 3.7 Furthermore, the building is set within Thompsons Yard, a tarmacked parking court which now includes a garage outbuilding and the two dwellings within Sherman Place. These modern additions and the reduction in size of the Yard have reduced the adversely impacted on the building's setting. The implementation of application 150517 will only add to this.
- 3.8 Although mostly out of view owing to a tall boundary wall, the nature of 108 Southampton Street's piecemeal rear extensions is considered to detract from the setting of the listed building.
- 3.9 Grade 2 listed building's, 'Rose Cottage' and '92-96 Southampton Street' are located further north along Southampton Street but are not considered relevant to this application.
- 3.10 The site is not located within a conservation area.



*Rear (west elevation) of 106 (to the right) and 108 (to the left) Southampton Street*



*Aerial view showing the site (outlined in red) and 106 Southampton Street and Rose Cottage*

## 4 THE PROPOSALS

4.1 As with withdrawn application ref: 200717, it is proposed to retain the shop at basement and ground floor levels and to provide four new flats across the ground, first and second floor levels.

4.2 Following the Planning Officer's feedback however, the applicant has made a number of amendments to the scheme in order to address the reasons for refusal listed in her email dated 3 September 2020. These amendments are as follows:

- the previous flat roof contemporary and visually distinctive design has been replaced with traditional pitched roofs, a pitched roof dormer and traditionally proportioned elevations;
- modern style windows have been replaced with traditional sash windows, matching the neighbouring listed building;
- the ground floor rear extension has been reduced in length by approximately 1m so it is level with the building line of the dwellings to the south; and
- the internal layout of the flats has been altered to provide a more open plan layout allowing for more natural light.



*Proposed 3D model view looking from the northwest*

- 4.3 The extensions would be made of brick with tiled roofs to be in-keeping with the surrounding buildings. Exact specifications are to be agreed via condition.
- 4.4 The four new flats would have the following floorspaces:
- Flat 1 at ground floor level – 46sqm
  - Flat 2 at first floor level – 35sqm
  - Flat 3 at first floor level – 16sqm
  - Flat 4 at second floor level – 25sqm
- 4.5 There are no alterations proposed to the front elevation of the building.

### **Access**

- 4.6 Access to the shop and flats is via the existing shared main front door off Southampton Street and a communal corridor internally.
- 4.7 Further details on design and access are provided in the submitted Design and Access Statement and on the drawings.

## 5 PLANNING POLICY

- 5.1 This section of the Statement sets out the relevant policy at national level, Development Plan level and also a review of emerging planning policy and other documents which are material planning considerations.
- 5.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that applications for planning permission to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The duty is therefore for the LPA to exercise its judgement and consider many (sometimes) conflicting issues to decide whether planning permission should be granted. This will mean examining the Development Plan as a whole and taking material considerations which apply to the proposal into account. These things must be properly considered otherwise the decision of whether or not to grant permission may be unlawful. This process is often termed the “Planning Balance”.
- 5.3 In this case the Development Plan comprises of the Reading Borough Local Plan (2019). The site is located on the edge of Reading’s ‘Central Area’. Relevant policies from the Development Plan are summarised and assessed in relation to the proposals below.

### **National Planning Policy Framework**

- 5.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out Government Policy Guidance and is therefore a highly relevant material consideration.
- 5.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was first published in March 2012 with the aim of making the planning system less complex and more accessible. A revised version of the NPPF (NPPF 2) was published in July 2018 and minor amendments were incorporated in February 2019. NPPF 2 is supplemented by the (ever evolving) Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), first published in March 2014. These replace the much more detailed policy and guidance contained in the suite of Planning Policy Statement documents and elsewhere.
- 5.6 Section 2 of the NPPF puts emphasis on the importance of sustainable development. Paragraph 11 states the presumption in favour of sustainable development which means that Councils should:
- Approve development that accords with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

- Grant permission where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the Framework as a whole or specific policies in the Framework indicate that development should be restricted.
- 5.7 The NPPF recognises that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Paragraph 38 of the NPPF sets out that local planning authorities should approach all decisions in a 'positive and creative way'. Where possible decisions at all levels should 'seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible'.
- 5.8 Paragraphs 54-56 promote the use of necessary, directly related and reasonable planning obligations to make development acceptable.
- 5.9 Paragraph 118 promotes and supports the development of under-utilised land and buildings.
- 5.10 Section 12 of the NPPF states that the creation of high quality buildings and places is a key aspect of sustainable development. Paragraph 127 lists a series of requirements for new developments to achieve this, including:
- Good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
  - Being sympathetic to local character;
  - Establishing a strong sense of place;
  - Optimising the potential of sites;
  - Supporting local facilities;
  - Creating safe, inclusive and accessible places which promote health and well-being; and
  - Offer a high standard of amenity.
- 5.11 Paragraph 130 states where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development.
- 5.12 Section 16 of the NPPF relates to conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraph 192 states that, in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; and the positive

contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic viability.

- 5.13 Paragraph 195 of the Framework states that local planning authorities should refuse consent when development would lead to substantial harm, unless it can be demonstrated that this is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm. Paragraph 196 states that where there is less than substantial harm, this harm should also be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including securing its optimum viable use.

### **The Development Plan**

- 5.14 Policy CC1 provides a general presumption in favour of sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF.
- 5.15 Policy CC7 requires development to maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located.
- 5.16 Policy CC8 states that development should not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties.
- 5.17 Policy EN1 requires the protection and enhancement of the historic environment.
- 5.18 Policy H3 requires all residential development to make an appropriate contribution towards affordable housing. On sites of between 1 to 4 dwellings, a financial contribution will be made that will enable the equivalent of 10% of the housing to be provided as affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough.
- 5.19 Policy H5 states that new build housing outside the Central Area of Reading must comply with the nationally-described space standard. For a one-bedroom flat to accommodate one person and with a shower room instead of a bathroom, the required internal floor area is 37sqm. In the supporting text, it is recognised that in the Central Area and elsewhere, there is a distinction between what counts as adequate internal space. The expectations of those choosing to live in the centre of Reading, in terms of both internal and external space, as well as issues such as noise, tend to be different to those in other parts of the Borough.
- 5.20 Policy H8 states that residential conversions into self-contained flats will be assessed against the impact on the amenity and character of the surrounding area.

- 5.21 Policy TR5 requires development to provide car parking and cycle parking that is appropriate to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport.

## 6 ASSESSMENT

### Principle of Development

- 6.1 The site is in a highly sustainable location, on the edge of Reading's 'Central Area' and located close to bus routes and within walking distance of the town centre services and Reading Train Station. It is a previously developed site within the settlement boundary and therefore, in principle, is a suitable location for the retention of the retail unit and the increase in residential units in accordance with Policy CC1. The successful prior approval application already allows for the conversion of the upper floors of the building to provide three flats.

### Design

- 6.2 In the assessment of withdrawn application 200717, two of the Planning Officer's likely reasons for refusal (1 and 3) were associated with the design of the proposed alterations and extensions. As detailed in Section 4 of this Statement and in the Design and Access Statement, the applicant has amended the proposals to address these concerns.
- 6.3 The design of the proposals has changed from being contemporary and distinctive to being traditional in character. The additions are in-keeping and would no longer appear as 'alien features'. The design of the extended building would integrate well with the original building and with the rear elements of the surrounding buildings.
- 6.4 The scale of the extended building has been brought in line with the adjoining houses to the south. The ground floor extension would extend no further than the two storey element of 110 Southampton Street. On the opposite side, the ground floor extension would extend further than 106 Southampton Street's ground floor extension, but it would be set down into the ground and screened by the high boundary wall and garage outbuilding. It would not therefore appear overbearing.
- 6.5 The first-floor extension would be stepped, as the existing first floor extensions is. It would be significantly shorter in length than 110 Southampton Street and would not therefore appear overly dominant in terms of its proximity and relationship to 106 Southampton Street.
- 6.6 The second-floor infill roof extension would be discrete, out of sight and match that which is present on the neighbouring listed building. The previously proposed second floor Juliet balcony has been changed to a smaller dormer window extension with pitched roof.

- 6.7 The proposals are a marked improvement over the existing piecemeal extensions which detract from the building. They are now in-keeping with this part of Southampton Street in terms of their design and scale. The extent of the extensions mirrors the built form of neighbouring buildings and will provide a more unified appearance. As such, the proposals overcome prospective reasons for refusal 1 and 3 and are in accordance with policies CC7 and CC8.

### **Transport and Highways**

- 6.8 Located within Accessibility Zone 2 and on the edge of Zone 1, the site is within walking distance to the town centre, bus stops and Reading Train Station (all in 15 minutes or under). It is in a highly sustainable location which encourages sustainable transport and is suitable as a car-free development in accordance with Policy TR5.
- 6.9 The existing unit does not benefit from any designated car parking and this would not change as a result of the proposed development. There is however on-street parking along Southampton Street and the surrounding streets. It is understood that the site is located in an area designated as a Residents Parking Permit Area and that future occupants of the flats will not automatically be issued with a resident parking permit.
- 6.10 The Council's Transport Officer had no objections to the prior approval application in terms of transport and highways impacts of the development. There were also no transport and highways issues raised as part of the withdrawn application.

### **Neighbouring Amenity**

- 6.11 The proposed extensions would not include any windows in their side elevations or facing neighbouring buildings. There would be no overlooking or loss of privacy to existing residents or privacy issues for prospective tenants in accordance with Policy H8. Privacy was not raised as a reason for refusal by the Planning Officer in the withdrawn application.
- 6.12 In the second likely reason for refusal, the Planning Officer did raise objections to the size (floorspace) of some of the proposed flats, as some will not meet the minimum size requirements set out in Policy H5. She also raised objections in terms of light/outlook of the units.

- 6.13 To attempt to overcome the light/outlook concerns, the internal layout of the flats has been altered to provide a more open plan living arrangement which will allow for more natural light.
- 6.14 However, it is accepted by the applicant that the size of some of the units remains below the nationally-described space standard of 37sqm for a one-bedroom flat quoted in Policy H5. There are however important material planning considerations which would be beneficial to Reading's housing supply and to prospective tenants in permitting the proposed development with the proposed floorspaces and internal layout.

#### 1. Fall-back Option

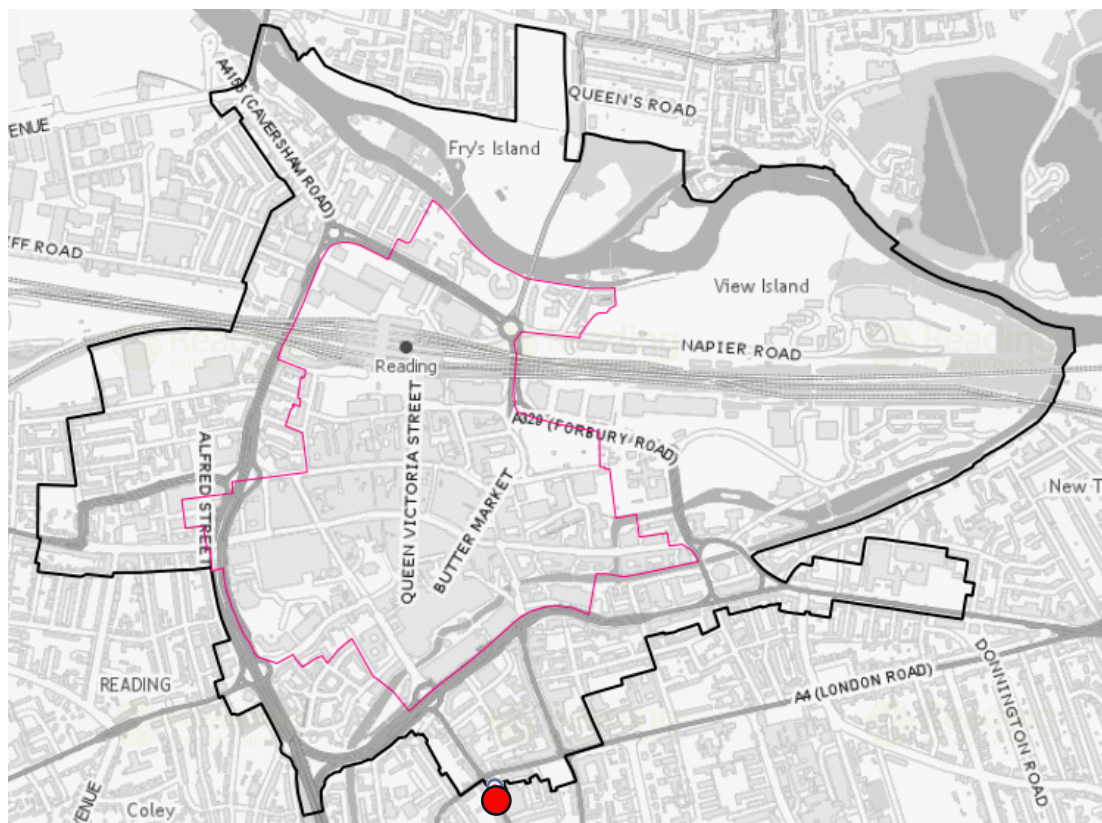
- 6.15 It is recognised that the proposed development would be inappropriate if compared to the starting point of the existing retail unit. However, prior approval application 200274 provides a realistic fall-back option for the residential element which should be afforded greater weight in the decision-making process. The applicant has until 11 May 2023 to implement the prior approval scheme. The fall-back position of the prior approval proposals is the less desirable option in terms of both internal floorspace and light/outlook.
- 6.16 In terms of internal floorspace, the difference between the two schemes is shown clearly in the below table. Two of the three flats (flats 2 and 4) approved as part of the prior approval would benefit from a substantial (almost 100%) increase in floorspace as part of the proposed scheme. Flat 3 would remain the same. The additional ground floor flat provided as part of the proposed scheme (not part of the prior approval scheme) would be comfortably (13sqm) over the 37sqm requirement.

|                       | <b>Prior Approval Scheme (sqm)</b>            | <b>Proposed Scheme (sqm)</b> | <b>Difference (sqm)</b> |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Flat 1 – Ground Floor | Not proposed as part of prior approval scheme | 46                           | N/A                     |
| Flat 2 – First Floor  | 16                                            | 35                           | +14                     |
| Flat 3 – First Floor  | 16                                            | 16                           | 0                       |
| Flat 4 – Second Floor | 13                                            | 25                           | +12                     |

- 6.17 In terms of light/outlook, the internal layout of the proposed scheme is also far superior to that of the prior approval scheme and will allow for better access to sunlight and daylight. The increase in floorspace allowing for additional windows is the main contributor to this improvement but the alterations to the internal layout to provide a more open plan living arrangement also provide amenity benefits.
- 6.18 The applicant will either implement the proposals for three new flats confirmed as lawful under application 200274 or, should this application be approved, build the proposed extensions to provide four new flats. Given the prior approval proposals can and would be completed, it is reasonable and realistic to compare the proposed development against the completed prior approval scheme. It would not be reasonable to expect the applicant to carry out the prior approval works, just to have them considered part of the existing building for the determination of this application.
- 6.19 The proposals accord with the tests set out at the beginning of the Encyclopaedia of Planning Law in the General Statement on the Structure of the Planning System at paragraph 1.002.29:
- “Sometimes an applicant can demonstrate that the grant of permission will be less harmful than a use or development which have previously been permitted; this is known, unsurprisingly, as fall-back. It is established that the correct test to be applied in considering such an argument is whether there is a reasonable possibility that if planning permission were to be refused, a use or a development of the land which has previously been permitted would take place, and such use or development would be less desirable than that for which planning permission is currently sought. If this argument is not to prevail, reasons for rejecting it should be given: Coln Park LLP v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government [2011] EWHC 2281 (Admin).”*
- 6.20 Paragraph 1.002.29 recognises that a fall-back position (such as the prior approval scheme) which is less desirable than a proposal for which planning permission is sought should be afforded sufficient weight, providing there is a reasonable possibility it could be built. Because there is a strong likelihood of the fall-back position being implemented and the proposed scheme having various design and amenity advantages over the prior approval scheme, the proposed development clearly outweighs the harm of not being wholly compliant with policies H5 and CC8.
- 6.21 There are many appeal decisions which are consistent with paragraph 1.002.29 and give substantial weight to a proposed development’s fall-back position.

## 2. Site Location

- 6.22 The second important material consideration is the site's location on the edge of Reading's Central Area. Policy H5 recognises that in the Central Area and elsewhere, there is a distinction between what counts as adequate internal space. This is because of expectations from those choosing to live in the centre of Reading, in terms of both internal and external space, as well as issues such as noise, tend to be different to those in other parts of the Borough. In the Central Area, the space standards do not apply for these reasons.
- 6.23 The site's location on the edge of the Central Area is shown by the red dot on the Proposals Map overleaf. It is closer to the Core Area, the Train Station, main shopping area and other services than many areas included within the Central Area. The site is central in proximity and nature, and prospective tenants' expectations for internal space would be no different if the site were located on the other side of the Central Area boundary. The size and quality of the proposed flats would be entirely appropriate for the site's location.



*Proposals Map showing Reading's Central Area in black, Core Area in pink and the site in red*

- 6.24 The NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities should approach decision taking in a positive way and approve all individual proposals wherever possible, unless the adverse impacts of the

proposals would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. Solutions should be found rather than problems by working proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic conditions of an area.

### **Affordable Housing**

- 6.25 The applicant will be in a position to negotiate the off-site affordable housing contribution in accordance with Policy H3 once the internal layout has been agreed if the LPA are minded to approve the application or, during the appeal process if the application is to be refused.

### **Heritage Impact Assessment**

- 6.26 The proposed works do not alter the front elevation of the building and therefore have no impact upon the part of 106 Southampton Street / the listed building which is publicly visible and of most significance. Equally, proposed internal alterations will have no impact on any heritage assets and the proposals, as a whole, would have no direct impacts to the historic fabric of the listed building.
- 6.27 The rear extensions would replace existing piecemeal extensions in a poor state of repair and which detract from the setting of the listed building. In contrast, although of greater mass, the replacement extensions would be smart, of high quality and complement the listed building. With a stepped design which provides an appropriate transition from the larger two-storey elements associated with the dwellings to the south of the site, the extensions would retain a sensitive distance to the listed building and not appear overbearing.
- 6.28 The tall brick boundary wall between the site and listed building and the garage outbuilding within Thompsons Yard would screen the majority of the bulk of the extensions at ground floor level. There would be no harm to any important views.
- 6.29 The proposals only impact the rear of the listed building which is not publicly visible and is of limited significance. Overall, at worst, the impact upon the interest of the building is considered to be neutral and therefore less than substantial. The proposals will not impact upon the listed building's interest, nor will they be to its detriment. The proposed extensions would not result in any meaningful change within the setting of the listed building.
- 6.30 Any less than substantial harm is comfortably outweighed by the benefits of the proposal, including securing the building's optimum viable use. The proposed development is therefore considered acceptable on heritage grounds and in accordance with Policy EN1.

## **7 CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 Planning permission is sought for the extension and alteration of 108 Southampton Street to retain the existing Class E unit and provide four new flats.
- 7.2 The proposed development would provide clear amenity benefits over the fall-back option.
- 7.3 In response to Planning Officer feedback, a revised design has reduced the massing and is more in-keeping with the character of surrounding buildings
- 7.4 The proposed development would cause less than substantial harm to heritage assets which would be comfortable outweighed by the benefits of the proposal.
- 7.5 There would be no harm to the living conditions of any neighbours or the street scene.
- 7.6 The proposal represents sustainable development. When material considerations are afforded appropriate weight, it complies with the provisions of the Development Plan and the NPPF. A recommendation for approval is therefore appropriate.