

Public Engagement Review 1

SITE

- 1-15 Queen Victoria Street and 147 & 148 Friar Street, Reading.

APPLICATIONS

- 210223 & 210224
- Part demolition of rear of site. Repair and refurbishment of listed building. Change of use of upper floors from office (Use Class E(g)) to apart hotel (Use Class C1). Erection of a three - storey rear extension with mansard. Erection of a part-single, part-two storey rear addition (Use Class E(a) or (b)). Alterations to ground floor principle façade. Creation of public square, and associated works.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT REVIEW

- This is the first review of the public engagement and forms an Appendix to the Statement of Community Involvement ("SCI") ref: URB-482b-SC1, which was submitted with the above-mentioned planning and listed building consent applications.
- This review presents the comments we have received directly from the Applicant's website, a public consultation event organised by Reading Civic Society / Reading CAAC and the letters of comment received during the consultation process.
- The Council's 21 day consultation period expired on 22nd March 2021.

WEBSITE CONSULTATION

- Website Comments (<https://queenvictoriastreet.co.uk/>) received are set out in the table below.
- We have received ten comments in total, nine have been positive that fully support the scheme and one neutral.
- The feedback so far is that the scheme is supported by those consulted – the comments below taken from the responses.

Comments
Seen the proposal and think it looks very good
I'm hugely impressed with this plan. I shared some of the details on my Reading-On-Thames blog and social media accounts, attracting over 1500 views and many favourable comments. The only thing people don't seem to like is the Eat, Shop, Sleep wall mural, which I'm sure is only indicative. Something more locally applicable perhaps?

My only remark really, that same visual seems to show an isolated unit on that terrace level. Drawing potential customers into this square is one thing, but up some stairs as well feels like this might be isolated somewhat. You wouldn't want this unit vacant risking the whole place feeling half closed. Why not have one of the ground floor units as a cafe/bar with small ground floor footprint including internal stairs/lift and have the terrace as part indoor part outdoor seating dedicated to that unit. Is a paying customer not far more likely to climb the stairs for a seat?
Anyway, hope to see this scheme progress quickly and come to fruition very soon.
Love the concept. Essential to retain distinctive Victorian architectural features to differentiate from other town centre arcades. Needs to be characterful please!
Very impressive and positive addition to town centre. Hopefully this can be approved and delivered
Rents for true independent occupiers need to be affordable though - hope this will be the case and Business case doesn't rely on unaffordable income.
Will be great to see improvements to listed buildings.
This looks great and would be very welcome in the town.
Fantastic use of space. 100% Approve!
I am all for what you are planning to do with these buildings, it's about time someone started caring about our old architecture in the town centre. I would love to be able to use the facilities you are proposing. Sadly people tend to see the store fronts but don't look up to see the wonderful buildings that house them so hopefully this will start a trend in town and others will follow in your footsteps.
The only concern I have is the apartments above, I know people love city centre living these days, I myself would happily do it but sadly lack the funds for such an adventure, but my concern relates to the noise from all the bars and clubs on Friar Street. Residents would want to have bedroom windows open during the night but the noise from the revellers would be horrendous.
But that said I wish you well and hope you manage to get the planning approved.
CAN'T WAIT FOR THIS SPACE TO COME TO LIFE!!!!!!!!!!
Overall message is that I think that this is a well considered, exciting scheme for Reading.
I was disappointed that certain elements of the facade in Queen Victoria Street were going to be lost. I am pleased that most of the Victorian facade is going to be preserved.
I was disappointed with the style of the presentation

3RD ROUND CONSULTATION

- Reading Civic Society / Reading CAAC kindly organised an online consultation event that was attended by circa 60 people on Friday 12th March 2021.
- The Design Team presented the proposal and then were available to answer questions from the attendees.
- The overwhelming feedback when asked for their opinions at the end was positive and the scheme is welcomed.

- The feedback and provided to Officers in a Private & Confidential manner.
- The video is available to view their Facebook account = @readingcivicsociety

APPLICATION CONSULTATION

- At the time of writing, there have been two letters of support for the applications, which are available to view on the Council's portal system.

SUMMARY

- As advised in the SCI, as the application progresses through the planning system, we will continue to engage with stakeholders and provide regular updates.
- The feedback to date continues to be overwhelming positive and the level of support has been beyond the Applicant's expectations.
- The feedback encourages the speedy delivery of the scheme.
- In summary, the engagement continues to find that the scheme presented will be a positive benefit, is supported by the local community and key stakeholders.