

Planning and Heritage Statement

Façade and Fenestration Application,
Reading Central, Duke Street, Reading

October 2019

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Client
Lipman Properties Ltd

Our reference
VOC-18-26

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning and Heritage Statement forms part of a suite of documents submitted to Reading Borough Council for consideration in support of the applicants' (Lipman Properties Ltd) proposals for minor alterations to elevational treatments at Reading Central (formerly Dukesbridge House, Duke Street, Reading).
- 1.2 This statement has been prepared by Vocalism on behalf of the applicant sets out detail for façade and fenestration changes to Reading Central pursuant to Prior Approval for the change of use of part lower ground floor, part ground floor, first, second, third and loft floors from Class B1(a)(offices) to Class C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 77 dwellings (26 x studio, 49 x 1 bed, 2 x 2 bed).
- 1.3 The relevant Prior Notification, which was made under Class O, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) is ref: 190602, which was approved on 6th June 2019.

Supporting Documentation

- 1.4 The Planning Statement is submitted as part of the planning application documentation, as set out below, for the proposed development. In addition to this Statement, the planning application documentation comprises:
- Completed Full Planning Application Forms, with Certificates of Ownership;
 - Completed CIL Forms;
 - Planning Application Drawings, including Site Location Plan, Site Plans, Floor Plans, Elevation Drawings, Section Drawings and Accommodation Schedule (references are provided in full within the application forms and the DAS Part 2);
 - Design and Access Statement – Part 1, Approach to Scheme; Part 2 – Application Drawings and Drawing Schedules

Structure of the Report

- 1.5 The purpose of the Statement is to provide further detail of the proposed scheme, and to assess its merits against the development plan and other relevant material considerations. The Planning Statement is structured as follows:
- Section 2 provides the context for the development through a description of the application site, the surrounding area and its planning history;
 - Section 3 provides details of the proposed development for which planning permission is sought;

- Section 4 sets out the relevant planning policies against which the proposals will be assessed, including consideration of the development plan and relevant material considerations;
- Section 5 assesses the current development proposals in the context of the development plan and relevant material considerations;
- Section 6 provides an overall summary and conclusion to the report.



2. Site Context

Site Location & Description

- 2.1 The Site is located at the former Dukesbridge House, situated on the east side of Duke Street with the River Kennet immediately to the south.
- 2.2 The site is bounded by office and retail units to the west on Duke Street, offices to the south and a mixture of offices, retail and residential to the north and east.
- 2.3 The application site is located within an Area for Architectural Potential, on an identified cycle route, within the Reading Central Area, but outside of the tall buildings, central and office cores and within the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area as defined by the Local Plan proposals map, October 2012. The whole of the Reading Central Area is designated as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).

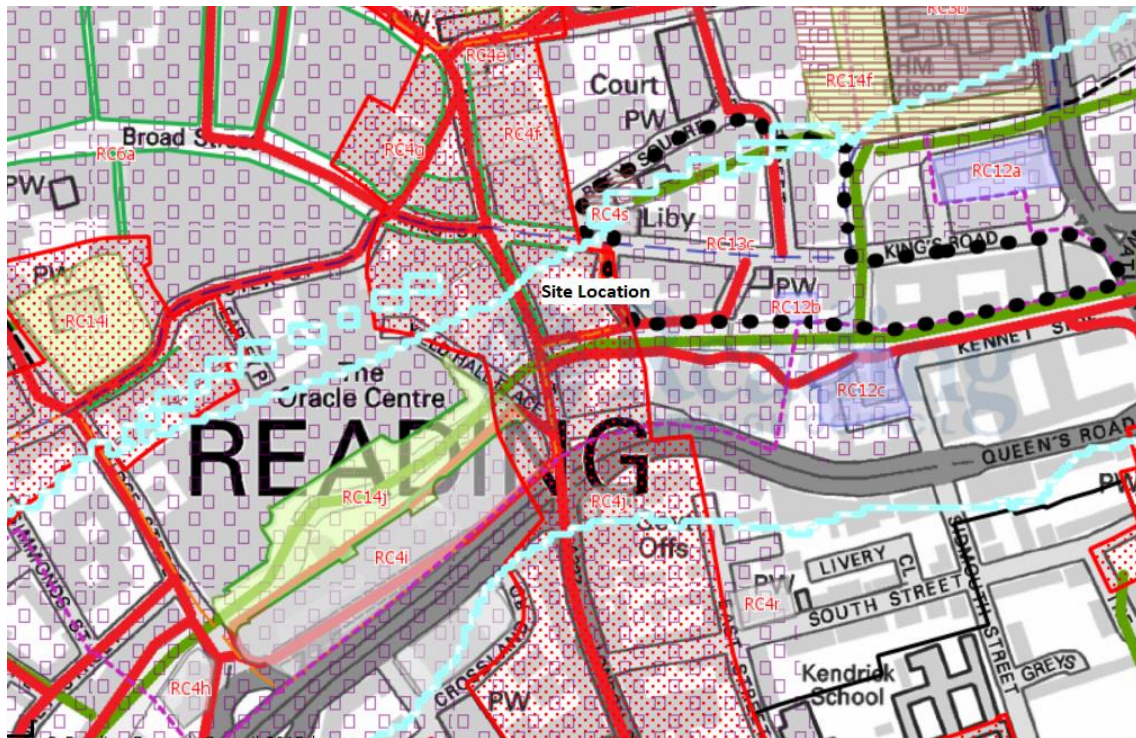
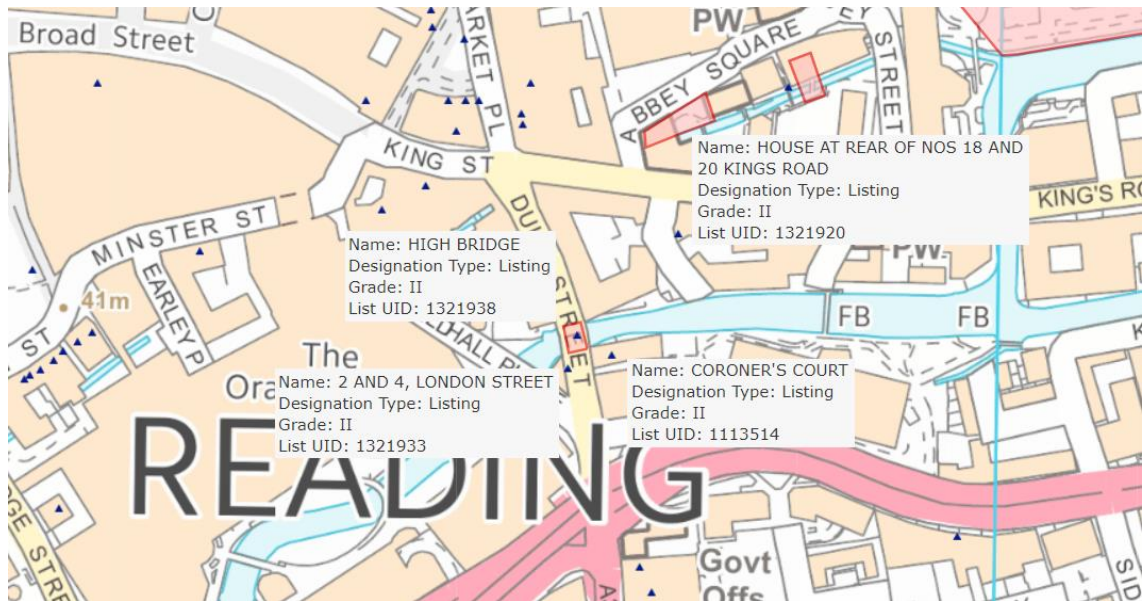


Figure 1 – Local Plan Proposals Map, October 2012 extract

- 2.4 Vehicular access to the site is via Highbridge Wharf which runs along the east of the site. The application site can be directly accessed by pedestrians from Duke Street, Highbridge Wharf or Kennet Side.
- 2.5 The application site is ideally located adjoining Reading Central Core and is therefore highly sustainable in terms of access to shops, leisure, community services and public transport. It is 50m from the primary shopping core and immediately abuts the office core.

- 2.6 The site is approximately 600m from Reading Station which provides direct rail links to London, the South West, Wales and the Midlands. Also, many of Reading's main bus routes, including direct links to Heathrow Airport, go via the station. Within the local area, various bus routes are also accessible on Duke Street and Kings Road, both of which are in immediate proximity to the site, providing significant public transport connectivity.
- 2.7 In addition to its location within a Conservation Area, the site is proximate to a number of heritage assets, including listed buildings and structures, as set out below:



3. Planning History

- 3.1 Other than the recent Prior Approval scheme, which was approved in June 2019 ref: 190602, there is no planning history of note from review of Reading's online system, meaning that all planning application work in relation to built form and associated uses relevant to the application at Reading Central was undertaken pre-1988.



4. Proposed Development

Description of Development

- 4.1 The description of the proposed development at Reading Central is:

‘Proposed façade and fenestration changes to Reading Central pursuant to Prior Approval for the change of use of part lower ground floor, part ground floor, first, second, third and loft floors from Class B1(a)(offices) to Class C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 77 dwellings (26 x studio, 49 x 1 bed, 2 x 2 bed), ref: 190602’

Approach to façade and fenestration changes

- 4.2 The scheme proposes a number of minor alterations to the existing facades of Reading Central in order to reflect internal adaptations being made under the Prior Approval scheme.
- 4.3 The purpose of the changes is to enable the building to better reflect its use as a residential building and to enable bedroom spaces to have the necessary apertures required for provision of successful living spaces.
- 4.4 The exact nature of the proposals is set out in more detail within the DAS and Application Drawings, but to summarise proposed changes:

Elevation 1

- New velux windows inserted into existing roof space
- Existing grilles removed and replaced with new windows in colour and style to match existing fenestration

Elevations 2 and 3

- Existing grilles removed and replaced with new windows in colour and style to match existing fenestration

Elevation 4

- Canopy removed
- Existing doors removed and replaced with new windows to match existing building
- Existing grille removed

Elevation 5

- New velux windows inserted into existing roof space

- Existing garage door removed and replaced with new windows in colour and style to match existing fenestration
- 4.5 Page 13 of the DAS provides more detail on the typical windows, already in place at Reading Central, that are proposed to be installed as part of this application. Pages 17 to 20 of the DAS provide more detail to confirm the exact extent and nature of proposed changes.
- 4.6 The approach to cycle storage is set out on page 21 of the DAS Part 1. A number of BDS Cycle Shelters, which can accommodate 6 or 8 bikes depending on the model, will be located around the courtyard area as demonstrated on drawing no. 5016 27 H – Site Plan.



5. Planning Policy

Introduction

- 5.1 In accordance with Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, development control decisions must be made in accordance with the adopted development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This section sets out the relevant planning policies of the development plan and supplementary planning policy documents to be considered in the determination of this application.

Key Policy Documents

- 5.2 The current, relevant adopted Development Plan consists of the Reading Borough Core Strategy (2008 amended in 2015), the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012 amended in 2015) and the Reading Centre Area Action Plan (RCAAP) (2009).
- 5.3 At a national level, the National Planning Policy Framework as first adopted in March 2012 and subsequently amended in 2018 and 2019, is a material consideration in the determination of the application.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.4 National planning policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the most recent version of this document being updated on 19 February 2019. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11), with three overarching objectives: economic, social and environmental. These are to be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies within the Framework.
- 5.5 This means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay and where the development plan is absent, silent or out of date, granting planning permission unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of development, or specific policies in the NPPF indicate otherwise.
- 5.6 The National Planning Policy Guidance was published in March 2014 and updated in July 2018 and sits alongside the NPPF. The NPPG adds further context to the NPPF and should both be read together.
- 5.7 The NPPF sets out key policies on delivering sustainable development, which include:
- Chapter 5 (Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes) notes the Government's objective to significantly boost the supply of homes. It goes on to emphasise the importance of a sufficient amount and variety of land that can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay.



- Chapter 6 (Building a Strong, Competitive Economy) notes that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, in many occasions this being related to ensuring that there is an adequate and appropriate supply of homes for workers within the economic catchment area.
- Chapter 8 (Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities) sets out the importance of access to high quality open spaces and ensuring spaces are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion.
- Chapter 9 (Promoting Sustainable Transport) requires transport policies to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes with the appropriate Transport Assessment or Transport Statement provided. Decisions must take account of whether the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up, depending on the nature and location of development and whether improvements can cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development.
- Chapter 11 (Making Effective Use of Land) notes that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
- Chapter 12 (Achieving Well Designed Places) states that the creation of high quality buildings and place is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps makes development acceptable to communities.
- Chapter 15 (Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment) places great emphasis on enhancing and protecting the natural environment; minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible and preventing new development from contributing or being put at unacceptable risk from soil, air, water and noise pollution by remediating and mitigating where appropriate. This policy encourages the effective reuse of brownfield land provided that it is not of high environmental value.

5.8 Following on from Prime Minister Theresa May's wide ranging and lengthy speech to support the launch of the consultation phase in March 2018, this underlining the importance the Government places on seeking to resolve the housing crisis, weight should be given to the thrust of national policy when determining this application.

5.9 As the Prime Minister said: *'The picture we see today is the result of many failures by many people over many years. Fixing it won't happen overnight. But the size of the challenge is matched only by the strength of my ambition to tackle it.'*



- 5.10 To meet the challenge set to improve housing delivery to reach the 300,000 homes per year target, unsurprisingly the draft NPPF has a strong focus on housing. Chapter 5, and in particular paragraphs 60-81, deal with the goal of *'delivering a sufficient supply of homes'*, of which paragraph 69 is most pertinent. To summarise:

'69. Small sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should:

- a) ensure that at least 20% of the sites identified for housing in their plans are of half a hectare or less;*
- b) use tools such as area-wide design assessments and Local Development Orders to help bring small sites forward;*
- c) support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes;...*

- 5.11 In a similar manner, paragraphs 122 and 123 seek to support development that makes efficient use of land and where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, to ensure that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities, and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site.

- 5.12 Further, paragraph 126 encourages the efficient use of land and buildings within a context of ensuring that good placemaking principles are upheld.

Core Strategy (2008 amended in Jan 2015)

- 5.13 The Core Strategy sets out the Council's adopted planning strategy for the Borough. It sets out how planning and development will achieve the Reading 2020 Vision for the town. It provides a framework for how Reading can grow in a sustainable way in the future. The Core Strategy is clear that the Council will continue to support the development of Central Reading as the leading regional centre in the Thames Valley. The following Core Strategy policies are considered relevant to this proposal and are referred to later within this statement:

- **Policy CS1 (Sustainable Construction and Design)** - indicates that proposals for new development, including the construction of new buildings and the redevelopment and refurbishment of existing building stock, will be acceptable where the design of buildings and site layouts use energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change.
- **Policy CS2 (Waste Minimisation)** - notes that development should demonstrate measures to minimise the generation of waste in the construction, use and life of buildings and promote more sustainable approaches to waste management,



including the reuse and recycling of construction waste and the promotion of layouts and designs that provide adequate space to facilitate waste storage, reuse, recycling and composting.

- **Policy CS6 (Settlement Boundary)** - states that development will be permitted inside the settlement boundary as defined on the Proposals Map.
- **Policy CS7 (Design and the Public Realm)** - indicates that all development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located.
- **Policy CS20 (Implementation of the Reading Transport Strategy)** - denotes that proposed developments shall further the provision of a balanced transport network, as outlined in the Reading Transport Strategy.
- **Policy CS22 (Transport Assessments)** - indicates that development proposals shall ensure an adequate level of accessibility and safety by all modes of transport, particularly by public transport, walking and cycling.
- **Policy CS23 (Sustainable Travel and Travel Plans)** – identifies a commitment to implement measures to promote and improve sustainable transport facilities, such as through provision to encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport.
- **Policy CS24 (Car / Cycle Parking)** - states that maximum car parking standards and cycle parking requirements will be applied in relation to the accessibility of locations within the Borough to sustainable transport facilities, particularly public transport.
- **Policy CS33 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment)** states that historic features and areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their settings, will be protected and where appropriate enhanced.

Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP) (adopted Jan 2009)

- 5.14 The Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP) is made up of a number of different elements, which together form a comprehensive basis for managing change in the Central Area up to 2026. The RCAAP policies: which are considered relevant to the proposal and are referred to later within this statement include:

- **Policy RC5 (Design in the Centre)** – provides guidance to identify the need to integrate built form and layout with the surrounding urban grain and identify means to engage and enhance the public realm.

Sites & Detailed Policies Document (2012 amended in Jan 2015)

- 5.15 The Sites and Detailed Policies Document (SADPD) (2012 amended in 2015) includes further Borough-wide policies as well as identifying sites for development outside of the

Reading Central Area. The Policies which are considered relevant to the proposal and are referred to later within this statement include:

- **Policy SD1 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)** - states that a positive approach to considering development proposals in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as required by the NPPF.
- **Policy DM4 (Safeguarding Amenity)** - confirms that development shall not cause significant detrimental impacts to the living environment of existing or new residential properties.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)

5.16 The following SPD are also relevant in the assessment of the application:

5.17 **Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2011)** - Provides practical advice on the forms of sustainable design and construction, as well as waste minimisation.

The Emerging Local Plan

5.18 The Council is currently working on producing a new Local Plan which will replace the current Development Plan (the Core Strategy, Reading Central Area Action Plan and Sites and Detailed Policies Document) with a new plan setting out how Reading will develop up to 2036.

5.19 The Submission Draft Local Plan was submitted to the Secretary of State in March 2018 and was subject to Examination in Public in October of the same year. The Council is due to approve the Inspector's Proposed Main Modifications at Cabinet in November 2019, following which the Local Plan will be adopted and replace existing policies as set out in the Core Strategy, RCAAP and SADPD.

5.20 In light of the maturity of the emerging Local Plan and its anticipated adoption prior to determination of this application, it is considered that the policies set out below should be given full weight in decision-making.

5.21 The emerging Local Plan has been considered in the development of proposals and it is considered that the following policies are relevant to the determination of this application:

- **Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)**
- **Policy CR2 (Design in Central Reading)**
- **Policy TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging)**
- **Policy EN1: (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment)**
- **Policy EN3: (Enhancement of Conservation Areas)**

- **Policy EN6: (New Development in a Historic Context)**



PLANNING - ENGAGEMENT - DEVELOPMENT

6. Planning Assessment

Introduction

6.1 This section of the Planning Statement sets out an assessment of the application proposals against the main planning policy and any other material considerations which are relevant to the determination of this planning application. The relevant Development Plan Documents for the District currently comprise of:

- Core Strategy (2008 amended in 2015);
- Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012 amended in 2015); and
- Reading Centre Area Action Plan (RCAAP) (2009).

6.2 Further documents which are relevant to this site and proposed development include:

- The Emerging Local Plan, Main Modifications Version, September 2019

Weight to be given to Planning Policy Documents and Guidance

6.3 Whilst the NPPF does not form a statutory part of the Development Plan, this document sets out the Government's planning policies and future direction for England, as well as how these are expected to be applied. It is therefore expected that both documents should be afforded weight as a material consideration in the determination of this application.

6.4 The preceding review of the planning policy context also confirms the timing of the Adopted Core Strategy as a pre-NPPF Local Plan. Accordingly, the policies of this document can only be afforded weight to the extent to which they comply with over-arching Governmental guidance.

6.5 The other substantive Development Plan Document comprises the Sites and Detailed Policies Document. Adopted in 2012 (and prepared in the context of the NPPF), this part of the Plan carries relatively more weight. A number of other SPD's form part of the local policy framework and are considered to carry varying degrees of weight.

6.6 In addition, the aforementioned assessment of the planning policy context serves to identify a number of dimensions to be considered as part of the overall planning balance. In terms of principle, the redevelopment of previously development sites (in sustainable locations) is promoted at both national and local levels. Similarly, the provision of new homes that meet identified local needs is a clearly stated policy ambition.

6.7 In respect of other considerations, both national and local planning policies require that developments shall achieve a high standard of design, which responds to the character of the local area.

Achieving Sustainable Development

- 6.8 The NPPF (at Paragraph 8) sets out three dimensions to sustainable development; an economic role, a social role and an environmental role. It confirms that these roles should not be undertaken in isolation, as they are mutually dependent. Therefore, to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system.
- 6.9 The attributes of the proposed development are set out below in the context of the three dimensions of sustainable development;

Environmental Benefits

- 6.10 The application proposals will enable an existing Prior Approval for the change of use of a redundant building to be realised.
- 6.11 The application site is situated within the settlement boundary and is in a highly sustainable location. A wide range of retail and other facilities are located in the vicinity of the site and a bus stop, serving a strategic bus route, is located in the immediate locale.
- 6.12 The accessibility of the site ensures the rail network, as well as services, employment and leisure opportunities found in Reading Town Centre are easily reachable via excellent public transport, footpath and cycleway links.
- 6.13 The introduction of new windows and removal of the grilles and garage door, which are predominantly located at ground and lower ground floor level, will enable the building to appear more inviting and residential in appearance, with this improved outlook also enabling social benefits, as set out below.

Economic Benefits

- 6.14 During the construction phase a number of FTE construction jobs will be sustained directly¹, with additional jobs being sustained or created through expenditure in the supply chain. It is also relevant that the predominance of jobs sustained during the construction phase will be filled by people living in Reading area and wider region². Best endeavours to directly employ a localised labour force, as well as a number of local sub-contractors will ensure that a greater proportion of salaries and expenditure arising from the construction phase is retained in the local economy in line with the Council's Economic policy.
- 6.15 Economic benefits also continue during the post-construction phase. The proposed development will result in the refurbishment of a redundant office building to provide new dwellings. The future occupiers of the completed homes will patronise local shops and facilities, and in so doing contribute to the viability and vitality of businesses in London Street and the Town Centre.

¹ Based on research presented on the report 'The Labour Needs of Extra Housing Output: Can the House building Industry Cope?' (HBF, 2005).

² Based on a relatively high degree of self-containment in the local construction labour market (see ONS (2011) Census 2011 – 'Location of usual residence and place of work')

Social Benefits

- 6.16 The DAS for the Prior Approval scheme, plus the external detailing provided in support of this application identifies a commitment to high quality living in terms of layout and materiality and it is considered that the scheme will provide a visual uplift that will improve the outlook of nearest residential neighbours, whilst providing a missing portion of the urban grain along the River Kennet, which will allow for improved natural surveillance of an area that has historically seen anti-social behaviour.

The Application Site

- 6.17 The site is located within the settlement boundary and is in a highly sustainable location, which benefits from excellent access to services, amenities and public transport. In the immediate locale are a number of local shops and convenience retailers.
- 6.18 Employment opportunities and additional services are available within Reading Town Centre, and are easily accessible, as are other employment areas that are commutable by rail and bus. Indeed, a two-way strategic bus route runs on London Street, with this thoroughfare also providing pedestrian and cycle links to a number of key locations in the town centre and suburbs. The proposals are therefore consistent with Core Strategy Policy CS6 and CS4.
- 6.19 The site is previously developed and Core Strategy Policy CS14 envisages that the redevelopment of such land will facilitate the delivery of residential developments and contribute to the supply of new dwellings.

Design, Scale and Massing

- 6.20 The Central Area of Reading is in a period of transformation, typified by the emergence of high-quality commercial signature buildings such as The Blade, Forbury Place, Chatham Place, Clarendon House and Kings Point changing the skyline and creating a more urban character within the Reading Central Area. The proposals seek to continue this step-change in design approach, whilst respecting heritage assets and neighbouring buildings.
- 6.21 The approach to design reflects that in-situ and therefore represents a modest improvement to the existing façade; one importantly that opens up the building in terms of views and surveillance which brings wider improvements in terms of passive control of anti-social behaviour.
- 6.22 Overall, the proposed changes to façade and fenestration are consistent with the existing pattern of development on Duke Street and its environs.
- 6.23 Sections 3 and 4 of the DAS evidence the rationale to the morphology of the scheme proposals in this regard, reflecting the Project Team's strong desire to:
- Complete the urban block by opening up and embracing the River Kennet and Highbridge Wharf to a greater extent

- Enable a high-quality approach to materiality, taking influences from the existing building
- Provide a design and layout that enables residential development to come forward in an acceptable manner
- Ensuring minimal overall change to the existing building, this in turn respecting neighbouring amenity in terms of heritage, privacy and outlook.

6.24 The proposed development therefore enables effective use of a redundant office building and accordingly it is considered that the application proposals meet the requirements of Policy RC5 of the RCAAP, Policy CS15 of the Core Strategy and Policies CC7 and CR2 of the Emerging Local Plan and achieve a high quality of design as required by the NPPF.

Historic Impact

6.25 As set out above, the proposals at Reading Central take place in the context of location within the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area and proximity to a number of Grade II listed buildings and structures, therefore requiring consideration in terms of impact upon significance and setting in line with Policy CS33 of the Core Strategy and Policies EN1, EN3 and EN6 of the emerging Local Plan.

6.26 Given the relatively minor nature of proposals, it is considered that the proposed scheme will help to reinstate an element of activity to built form and the surrounding urban grain through re-use of a redundant office building, the inactivity of which has further compounded anti-social behaviour within the area and a consequent reduction in safety and security within the wider locality. Whilst essentially only replicating that in-situ, the proposals are nevertheless a well-designed and sensitive response to the site which will make efficient use of the site to ensure its optimum viable use, while acknowledging and respecting the heritage significance of its surroundings.

6.27 Further, the proposals will provide significant public and heritage benefits by considerably enhancing the existing site, opening up views from lower levels and removing the unsightly security grilles currently evident on the majority of elevations. In particular, the appearance of the site from the River Kennet, where the majority of listed assets have interaction, will be significantly visually enhanced, in turn improving the setting of High Bridge, 2-4 London Street and the Coronor's Court.

6.28 In terms of elevations internal to the courtyard, the consideration is similar; through loss of the garage door and grilles and provision of cycle storage and new windows, the location will become less 'back of house' and more part of an integrated area, featuring more natural apertures and therefore surveillance, less industrial-style shuttering and increased activity as a consequence of users to the building..

6.29 Taking into consideration the minor nature of proposed development, it is concluded that the proposed scheme will preserve the setting of listed structures and buildings and preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Market Place/London Street



Conservation Area. The proposed development thus complies with S.66(1) and S.72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. It is contended that the proposed scheme is consistent with the urban design and heritage policies of the National Planning Policy Framework and Reading's current development plan policies, as well as the emerging Local Plan.

- 6.30 Taking the above into consideration, it is affirmed that the proposals comply with the requirements of Policy CS33 of the Core Strategy and Policies EN1, EN3 and EN6 of the emerging Local Plan.

Residential Amenity

- 6.31 Policy DM4 of the SADPD states that development will not cause a significant detrimental impact to the living environment of existing or new residential properties. This next section sets out how the amenity of both new and existing residents will be maintained and protected as a result of the development proposals.

Privacy and Overlooking

- 6.32 The proposed development has been designed to avoid significant detrimental harm to the living environment of both existing residents in the locality and the occupants of the new apartments in line with Policy DM4 of the SADPD.
- 6.33 As set out in Section 3 of the DAS, which considers the existing and proposed elevations and how these will appear and interact with surrounding buildings, it is considered that new windows will be located in similar form to that existing, so not to give rise to unacceptable, additional impact in terms of overlooking and loss of privacy.
- 6.34 It is notable that the majority of adjacent uses are not residential in nature, save for properties within the courtyard area formed by Duke Street, Kings Road and Highbridge Wharf. Against this, and as set out above, there is no additional impact on amenity arising from the proposals, whilst, as set out earlier in this statement, the visual improvement of facades and associated enhancement of passive surveillance will enable a significant improvement in local amenity to the benefit of local residents and businesses. Accordingly, it is considered that the approach to design and layout undertaken enables development to come forward in a manner considered to be consistent with Policy DM4.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 This planning statement has been prepared by Vocalism on behalf of Lipman Properties Ltd in support of a planning application for:

'Proposed façade and fenestration changes to Reading Central pursuant to Prior Approval for the change of use of part lower ground floor, part ground floor, first, second, third and loft floors from Class B1(a)(offices) to Class C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 77 dwellings (26 x studio, 49 x 1 bed, 2 x 2 bed), ref: 190602'.

- 7.2 This Planning Statement sets out the site context and assesses the development proposals against government guidance, and regional and local planning policies.
- 7.3 As a result, for the reasons set out in this statement, it is considered that the development fully accords with local, regional and national planning policy and it is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.



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