

rdjwarchitects

Heritage Statement

Proposed installation of new glazing and entrance doors to 3A and 5 Cheapside
3A and 5 Cheapside,
Reading
RG1 7AG.

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Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by RDjW Architects Limited to accompany our Planning Application for the proposed new façade to the property at 5 Cheapside, Reading, RG1 7AG. The statement is to be read in conjunction with the accompanying Design & Access Statement.

The Heritage Statement discusses the design response to the relevant guidance and planning controls outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as well as the Reading Core Strategy and Reading Central Area Action Plan (PCAAP).



Site context.

1.0 Character Appraisal

This brief character appraisal draws from the information in the RCAAP document.

The application site is situated within a commercial area, where both listed and unlisted buildings contribute significantly to the character and history of the area. The application building is a listed building and has been since 1978.

Surrounding buildings in this area feature a mix of external materials, including brickwork and rendering. Roofs are mostly finished in terracotta tiles or flat roofs, while windows are timber framed casement and sash.

The subject building is constructed mainly of grey brick, with terracotta dressings, transom and lintel bands around the building and other decoration across the building. *View 1 below.*

The ground floor of the building is currently occupied by two retail outlets. The unit at number 3 Cheapside is occupied by 'All About Cash' while the unit at number 5 Cheapside has been unoccupied for a number of years. Between these units there is access to flats above at 3A Cheapside, with another access door to flats above at 5 Cheapside. Both the access doors to the upper floors and the retail unit at 5 Cheapside are heavily dilapidated and are not in keeping with, or enhancing, the rest of the building. *View 2 below.*

Existing fenestration at the upper levels of the front (Oxford Road and Cheapside) façade are sash windows, in a regular arrangement for each bay. At lower levels there is a large fascia board with an almost fully glazed façade below.



View 1: The View of the south and east façade (Front) of the property from Oxford Road



View 3: The View of the East façade of 5 Cheapside, from Cheapside.

1.1 Impact of proposal

The proposal draws on guidance from section 12 of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment, taking note of the following criteria and responding as appropriate, as shown in the drawings:

- *Enhance or better reveal the significance of the building.*
- *Preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset*
- *The Historic interest of the building.*
- *The Architectural interest of the building.*
- *The Townscape value of the building.*
- *The Communal value of the building and its surroundings.*
- *Proposals seeking the demolition or partial demolition of a Locally Listed Building may be acceptable in exceptional circumstances if the development proposals:*
 - *a) reflect or retain the key features of the original building; and*
 - *b) significantly outweigh the merit of retaining of the original building with regard to social, economic and environmental benefit to the wider area; and*
 - *c) records the building up to Historic England Level 4, unless previously agreed with the Local Planning Authority, and submits that record to the Historic*

Conclusion

The proposed development involves the reconfiguration of the existing shop front at number 5 Cheapside, and reconfiguring the entrances to the flats above at 38/40 Oxford Road, 3A and 5 Cheapside. The site is situated within the Central retail area of Reading and the property is a listed building bearing architectural significance within its commercial setting.

With this in mind, the scheme has been carefully developed to prevent any adverse impact on the character of the area and built context. The form and features of the existing building are being retained, including style and proportion of windows. Materials have also been carefully selected to either match or enhance the existing, whilst maintaining harmony with the surrounding.

It is therefore our considered view that with the proposed reconfiguration of 3A and 5 Cheapside will not only rejuvenate the existing building, but will significantly enhance Reading's centre.