

Heritage Statement

Jacksons Corner, 1-9
Kings Road, Reading

March 2019 | Project Ref 1099C



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1.0

1. Introduction

1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Heritage Collective on behalf of Ankor Properties. It relates to proposed works at Jacksons Corner, King's Road, Reading – an unlisted building situated on the corner of King's Road and High Street, and located within the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area. It accompanies an application for planning permission for alterations to the shopfront of the building.

1.2 The application site is Nos.1-9 King's Road, which is made up of three different buildings; No.1 King's Road (Jacksons Corner); No.3 King's Road, formally The Saracen's Head Public House and No.5-9 King's Road. All elements of the application site are three storey 19th century properties constructed in brick. This collection of buildings formed Jacksons, a former department store and recognisable landmark structure within Reading town centre.



Figure 1: Jacksons Corner, 1-9 Kings Road, Reading (the application site)

- 1.3** The applications site is located within the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area and within the setting of a number of listed buildings. However, due to the minor nature of the proposals, it is only the significance of Jackson's Corner itself and the conservation area which are capable of being affected.
- 1.4** In accordance with the requirements of Paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019) this statement describes the significance of the listed building as a designated heritage asset.

The Proposals & Relevant Background

- 1.5** Over the last several years there have been numerous consents relating to the redevelopment of Jackson's Corner. The full relevant planning history for the site is outlined in the Covering Letter (prepared by Rok Planning). Most recently consent was secured in March 2018¹ for:

"The application site is Nos.1-9 King's Road, which is made up of three different buildings; No.1 King's Road (Jacksons Corner); No.3 King's Road, formally The Saracen's Head Public House and No.5-9 King's Road. All elements of the application site are three storey 19th century properties constructed in brick. This collection of buildings formed Jacksons, a former department store and recognisable landmark structure within Reading town centre." (LPA ref: 171238)

- 1.6** In April 2018 various conditions related to this application were discharged. This included condition 15 relating to windows (LPA ref: 180597). However, this condition only related to upper floor windows rather than the shopfront.
- 1.7** As part of these applications consent was granted for the replacement of shopfronts with double glazing units. However, the proposals currently entail more detailed and substantial works to the shopfronts with additional elements including:

¹ Though there has been a non-material amendment to this application in relation to condition 19 (LPA ref: 181678).

- Inclusion of 2no escape doors within the shopfront following discussion with Building Control;
- Retention, where existing, of the profiles brass cappings to the shopfront frames;
- The alteration of top lights from “perforated spandrel panel”, as consented, to opaque glazing;
- The removal of existing awnings; and
- The location of a dry riser inlet in an insulated panel of the shopfront.

1.8 The aim of the proposals is to ensure that functional shopfronts are provided which adhere to the relevant Building Regulations while respecting, and where possible enhancing, the unique heritage values of the site. Full details of the proposed development are set out within the Design and Access Statement and drawn submission of the application.

Purpose and Scope of this Report

1.9 The purpose of this Heritage Statement is to assist with the determination of the applications by informing the decision takers on the effects of the proposed development on the historic built environment.

1.10 Value judgements on the significance of the heritage assets affected are presented and the effects of the proposals upon that significance are appraised. The heritage assets affected have been observed and assessed by the author following a number of site visits made from 2015 to 2018 typically in good weather.

1.11 Specifically, this report assesses the significance of the identified heritage assets and the effect of the proposed development on that significance. Particular regard is given to the provisions of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990. The report also sets out how the proposal complies with the guidance and policy of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 and local planning policy.



2.0

2. Relevant Legislative & Policy Context

Legislation

- 2.1** Legislation relating to conservation areas is contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Section 72 of the Act places a duty on the decision taker with respect to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

- 2.2** The NPPF constitutes the Government's current national guidance and policy regarding development in the historic environment. It is a material consideration and includes a succinct policy framework for local planning authorities and decision takers. It relates to planning law by stating that applications are to be determined in accordance with the local plans unless material considerations indicate otherwise. A revised NPPF was adopted in February 2019.
- 2.3** Paragraphs 189 to 192 of the NPPF deal with conserving and enhancing the historic environment with much emphasis on "significance", defined in Annex 2 as:
- "The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance."*
- 2.4** Paragraph 189 of the NPPF places a duty on the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, providing a proportionate level of detail. The effects of any development on a heritage asset therefore need to be assessed against the four components of

its heritage significance: its archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic interests.

- 2.5** Paragraph 190 of the NPPF notes that local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.
- 2.6** Paragraph 193 applies specifically to designated heritage assets. It states that great weight should be given to their conservation (requiring a proportionate approach) irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial or less than substantial harm.
- 2.7** Conservation (for heritage policy) is defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as:
- "The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance."*
- 2.8** The importance and relevance of this definition is that it does not suggest conservation to be the same as preservation. Indeed, what sets conservation apart is the emphasis on proactively maintaining and managing change and not on a reactive approach to resisting change. In its simplest interpretation conservation could amount to a change that at least sustains the significance of a heritage asset.
- 2.9** Paragraphs 194 to 196 describe two levels of potential harm that can be caused to the significance of designated heritage assets, namely substantial harm and less than substantial harm. These effects are to be weighed in the planning balance according to the guidance set out within these paragraphs, bearing in mind the statutory provisions above. Substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, including grade I and II* listed buildings should be wholly exceptional.

- 2.10** Paragraph 196 deals with cases of less than substantial harm and notes that any such harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Heritage protection and the conservation of heritage assets are recognised as of benefit to the public.
- 2.11** Harm is defined by Historic England as a change which erodes the significance of a heritage asset.

Local Planning Policy Framework

- 2.12** The Core Strategy (adopted January 2008) sets out the overarching strategy for development in the Borough until 2026. This is supplemented by the Sites and Detailed Policies Document (adopted October 2012, with alteration adopted January 2015) and the Reading Central Area Action Plan (adopted January 2009).
- 2.13** **Policy CS33 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment:** This policy addresses the management of the historic environment and notes:
- "Historic features and areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their settings, will be protected and where appropriate enhanced. This will include: -*
- Listed Buildings;*
- Conservation Areas;*
- Other features with local or national designation, such as sites and features of archaeological importance, and historic parks and gardens.*
- Planning permission will only be granted where development has no adverse impact on historic assets and their settings. All proposals will be expected to protect and where appropriate enhance the character and appearance of the area in which they are located."*
- 2.14** **Policy CS7 Design and the Public Realm:** This policy relates to the general design of development within the borough and notes 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. This can be achieved through the layout, landscape, density and mix, scale and architectural detailing and materials. The policy notes that development will also be assessed to ensure that they respond positively to their local context and create or reinforce local character and distinctiveness, including protecting and enhancing the historic environment of the Borough.

2.15 RC5 Design in the Centre: This policy notes that development within Reading central area should demonstrate the following attributes:

- Development should build on and respect the existing grid layout structure of the central area, providing continuity and enclosure through appropriate relationships between buildings and spaces, and frontages that engage with the street at lower levels;
- Development will provide appropriate, well designed public spaces and other public realm;
- The architectural details and materials used in the central area should be high quality and respect the form and quality of the detailing and materials in areas local to the development site; and
- Development and any associated public realm should contribute to the diversity of the central area, be capable of easy adaptation over time to meet changing circumstances, and be designed to enhance community safety.

2.16 RC10 Active Frontages: This policy notes that new developments (or alterations to existing buildings) that front onto any of the designated active frontages will provide an active building frontage with a display window or glazed frontage at ground floor level, in order to contribute to the vibrancy of the Town Centre, and provide visual interest. Frontages should be of a high visual quality.

2.17 The Reading Draft Local Plan is at an advanced stage and has been submitted to the Secretary of State. As such, it is relevant to also consider heritage policies contained within this document. These include:

2.18 EN1 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment: This policy notes that elements of the historic environment, including their settings, will be protected and where appropriate enhanced. It goes on to note that Planning permission will only be granted where the new development makes a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness and has no adverse impact on heritage assets and their settings. All proposals will be expected to protect and where appropriate enhance the historic character and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located. Proposals should seek to avoid harm in the first instance.

2.19 EN3 Enhancement of Conservation Areas: This policy notes that the special interest and character of conservation areas will be preserved and new development should make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness by, for example, restoring original building features and removing inappropriate additions or alterations to buildings.

Market Place/London Street Conservation Area Appraisal

2.20 The conservation area appraisal seeks to analyse the various features and characteristics which give the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area its special architectural and historic interest. The appraisal also provides details of areas of concern and opportunities for enhancement within the area. The main issues within the conservation area are highlighted as:

- The design of new development;
- Traffic and noise pollution;
- Loss of original architectural details (such as loss of windows and inappropriate roof covering replacements);
- Street clutter; and
- Vacant commercial and retail space.

2.21 The conservation area appraisal also notes that several aspects of Character Area 3 (in which the application site is situated) have a negative effect on the historic character and appearance of the area. These include:

- Inappropriate shop signage;
- Out of character and unsympathetic development in the setting of historic structures; and
- The historic architectural character being much diluted by a high proportion of modern development.



3.0

3. Historical Background

3.1 Jacksons once occupied Nos. 62 and 8 High Street, the Corner site (No.1 King's Road) and Nos. 3, 5, 7 and 9 King's Road. These buildings were acquired at different times by the store. They also have different histories before they were purchased by Jacksons. Of these, No. 6/7 and 8 High Street are no longer Jackson owned.

3.2 A summary of the history of the site is as follows:

- 1875 - No. 6/7 High Street was purchased³: This was where the department store which later became known as Jacksons Corner first started. Listed 1975;
- 1877 - No. 8 High Street was purchased⁴: This building was demolished and rebuilt by the Jacksons in 1902. Sold in the late 1940s. Listed 1975;
- 1885-1887 - the store on the corner of King's Road was purchased⁵;
- c.1936 - warehouse extension to the rear of the main store⁶;
- 1940 - Pneumatic tube system installed at Jacksons Corner;
- 1954 - King's Road extension;
- 1959/1960 - Jacksons Corner refurbished;
- Early 1961/1962 - Saracen's Head pub purchased, linking the 1954 extension with the corner building. This became the grand King's Road entrance to the store;
- 2010 - Jacksons Corner refurbished and re-painted; and

² Also known as No.7 High Street (listed grade II)

³ T Macey, Jacksons: the story of Reading's oldest family owned department store.

⁴ T Macey, Jacksons: the story of Reading's oldest family owned department store.

⁵ T Macey, Jacksons: the story of Reading's oldest family owned department store.

⁶ T Macey, Jacksons: the story of Reading's oldest family owned department store.

- The store has the only known fully operational Lamson pneumatic tube system in the UK⁷.

3.3

It is worth noting that there existed a group of stores in this area which became known as Jacksons Central Stores. These comprised the Corner site, with which this report is concerned, as well as a store on Duke Street corner and No.19 King's Road, which at one time served the main store as a small hardware department. Neither of these latter buildings are a part of Jacksons store today.

No.1 King's Road: The Corner Building

3.4

Purchased by the Jacksons between the years 1885-1887, this building was designed by Brown and Albury in 1880.⁸ Before it was purchased by the Jacksons it was occupied by Adnams and Son, retailers of glass and china.

3.5

The corner building was not purchased in one go, but gradually over a number of years and remodelled into one store. Upon completion in 1887, this building was renamed Jacksons Corner.

3.6

According to a description given by Thomas Macey, the exterior of the corner building "*features Victorian architecture, large windows, ornate cornicing*" and has "*changed little since it was built in 1880.*" Inside, is described as "*Victorian style with high ceilings and 1960s interior fittings.*"⁹

3.7

The signage has been altered on numerous occasions¹⁰. For example, new advertising was erected on the roof, shown in a photograph of 1890-1900. In 2010 the front of the shop was completely repainted and the Jacksons Corner sign was refurbished and repainted.

⁷ T Macey, Jacksons: the story of Reading's oldest family owned department store.

⁸ T Macey, Jacksons: the story of Reading's oldest family owned department store.

⁹ T Macey, Jacksons: the story of Reading's oldest family owned department store.

¹⁰ See colour drawing on the LiveDrive word document of internet images.

Nos. 5, 7 and 9 King's Road: 1954 Extension

3.8 Thomas Macey explains that in 1954 an existing building to the east of the corner building on King's Road was purchased by the Jacksons¹¹. This left the Saracen's Head Public House sandwiched between the corner building and the 1954 extension¹². This Public house is visible in an aerial photograph of 1922¹³ and in the photograph of 1953¹⁴. Nos. 5-9 were built between 1879-1884.

3.9 Prior to becoming part of Jacksons, this range of buildings underwent a considerable number of changes in use. These included a frame makers, tailors, boot and shoe manufacturers and the officers of the British Overseas Trading Company.

No.3 King's Road: The Saracen's Head Public House

3.10 This building dates from at least 1879 and is likely to be mid 19th century in date given that Directory entries for the Saracen's Head date back to 1827¹⁵. A licence dated 1938 was made for the alteration of the Saracen's Head public house. In this licence a description of the building as it was when first leased to the tenant in 1875 is provided. It reads:

"All that piece of ground situate on the north side of King's Road in Reading aforesaid having a frontage there of 25 feet".

¹¹ T Macey, Jacksons: the story of Reading's oldest family owned department store.

¹² T Macey, Jacksons: the story of Reading's oldest family owned department store.

¹³ Photo number 3775.

¹⁴ Photo number 3777.

¹⁵ <http://pubshistory.com/Berkshire/Reading/SaracensHead.shtml>

- 3.11** The licence goes on to explain that the alterations planned at the time of the licence in 1938 were to be made by the landlord's architect, Mr Frederick G Sainsbury¹⁶.
- 3.12** Between 1961 and 1962 the public house situated between the corner store and the 1954 extension was sold to Jacksons, becoming the store's grand entrance¹⁷. At this time the building was extended upwards to bring the parapet line to the same height as No.5-9 King's Road. Once made into an entrance for the store, a wall clock was mounted above this entrance¹⁸. The clock was removed in 1993 and is now in the Reading museum¹⁹.

¹⁶ D/EX 416/3/2/82.

¹⁷ T Macey, Jacksons: the story of Reading's oldest family owned department store. Note that it is not made clear whether the pub was converted into the entrance or demolished and the entrance built anew.

¹⁸ Visible in a drawing of c.1960. photo number 3787.

¹⁹ T Macey, Jacksons: the story of Reading's oldest family owned department store.



4.0

4. Assessment of Heritage Significance

- 4.1** It is recognised that not all parts of a heritage asset will necessarily be of equal significance. In some cases, certain aspects or elements could accommodate change without affecting the Government's objective, which includes the conservation of heritage assets and which seeks to ensure that decisions are based on the nature, extent and level of significance of heritage assets.
- 4.2** Change is only considered to be harmful if it erodes an asset's significance. Understanding the significance of any heritage asset affected (paragraph 189 of the NPPF) is therefore fundamental to understanding the scope for and acceptability of change.
- 4.3** An assessment of the significance of the Jacksons Corner and the Conservation Area are provided below. In accordance with paragraph 189 of the NPPF, the descriptions are proportionate to the assets' significance and are sufficient to understand the nature of any impact the proposals may have upon that significance.

Jackson's Corner, 1-9 King's Road

- 4.4** **Archaeological Interest:** The significance of Jacksons Corner is not derived from any archaeological interest.
- 4.5** **Artistic Interest:** The significance of Jacksons Corner is not derived from any artistic interest.
- 4.6** **Architectural Interest:** Jacksons Corner is a late 19th century structure identified as a Building of Townscape Merit with historic shop fronts worthy of preservation²⁰. The conservation area appraisal also identifies Jacksons Corner as a Landmark

²⁰ As identified by the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area Appraisal.

Building within the conservation area. The building forms part of the historical and architectural interest of the designated asset, contributing to its 19th century townscape and providing visual interest and architectural features in an otherwise quite fragmented streetscape that is sometimes dominated by later 20th century developments.

- 4.7** Architecturally the best building on the application site is the 1880 Jacksons Corner building (no.1 Kings Road). However, both no.3 and nos.5-9 have engaging 19th century front elevations that contribute to the interest of the street scene.
- 4.8** To the rear of the site the buildings have been heavily altered such that they hold very limited heritage interest as ancillary workshops dating from the late 19th century and early 20th century. They have no particular architectural interest due to their common form and design and the many alterations of the fabric over time. Much alteration has occurred over time, resulting in an ad hoc mix of cement repairs, new windows in old openings, lean-to extensions, cement render, tile and asbestos roofs and modern bulky roof lights. The rear of the buildings is currently being addressed as a result of the recently consented schemes on the site.
- 4.9** The transition building between the frontage and the rear is of no interest whatsoever. These rear buildings make no active contribution to the architectural interest of the conservation area but form part of the historical development of the area.
- 4.10** **Historic Interest:** The historical development of the application site is of historic interest and is well documented by Thomas Macey in his book on Jacksons. Of more historical interest is the association with a local family who built up a once multi-store business that has become a local landmark. The signage for Jacksons Corner, particularly the large white sign against the curved King's Road elevation represents this historic connection and has become a locally important feature.

Market Place/London Street Conservation Area

4.11 The Market Place/London Street Conservation Area Appraisal published by Reading Council references the application site as “*Jacksons Corner, a once busy crossroads and local landmark*”. The conservation area is urban in character and form and can be described as “*a tightly knit urban area composed of continuous frontages of two-, three- and four-storey buildings beside streets of varying length and width*”.

4.12 Character Areas are defined in the appraisal in reference to the area’s varying form and appearance. The application site forms part of area 3. The appraisal goes on to note:

“Character Area 3: Features that make a positive contribution to the historic character and appearance of the conservation area:

Jacksons Corner, a once busy crossroads and locally known landmark;

Barclays Bank, King Street by Henry and Nathaniel Briant, 1838-9, in an ornate Italian palazzo style;

The George Hotel, King Street, built around a courtyard with entrances from King Street and Minster Street, first mentioned in 1423 but built and re-built many times;

8 High Street, an ornate tiled and terracotta building in Art Nouveau style;

The former Ship Hotel, Duke Street, an early 20th century re-building of an earlier coaching inn;

River Kennet and riverside views from the two bridges;

Views up High Street of St Laurence’s church tower;

Holy Brook, glimpsed from King’s Walk;

Historic stone setted road surface in Thorn Lane;

Riverside trees.”

- 4.13** The conservation area has historical and architectural interest, comprised of the collection of buildings, green spaces and infrastructure within the area. The architectural coherence of the area has been affected by the Inner Distribution Road and the mid to late 20th century development in the area.
- 4.14** The conservation area also has archaeological interest, concentrated close to the Reading Abbey grounds (a scheduled monument, some of which is within the conservation area boundary). The area does not possess particularly significant artistic interest, however, some of the older architectural examples are likely to have formed the subject of artistic works.



5.0

5. Impact Assessment & Policy Compliance

5.1 As previously identified, in comparison to the latest consented scheme at Jacksons Corner, the proposed works to the shopfronts can be summarised as:

- Inclusion of 2no escape doors in the shopfront following discussion with Building Control;
- Retention, where existing, of the profiled brass caps to the shopfront frames;
- The alteration of top lights from 'perforated spandrel panel', as consented, to opaque glazing;
- The removal of existing awnings; and
- The location of a dry riser inlet in an insulated panel of the shopfront.

5.2 This section appraises the impact of the proposed works on the heritage significance of the identified assets. It seeks to support the Local Planning Authority in their decision making process.

Impact Assessment

5.3 As part of the earlier applications at Jacksons Corner the shopfronts for Units 1, 2 and 3, which are in a poor state of repair, were consented for replacement with 'double glazed units in line with the original configuration'. However, as part of these applications limited details were provided on how such works would be achieved. The current proposals have considered these matters and more detailed proposals are now submitted.



Figure 2: Existing shopfronts to Unit 1, external view



Figure 3: Existing shopfronts to Unit 1, external view



Figure 4: Existing shopfronts to Unit 1, internal view



Figure 5: Existing shopfronts to Unit 2, internal view

5.4 As confirmed elsewhere in the submission, the existing timber shopfront window frames to Units 1, 2 and 3 cannot be retained due to a variety of technical reasons. While reinstating the window frames in timber would be desirable, given the increased weight of double glazed units (previously consented and considered appropriate for use on the shopfronts at the site), the use of timber would unfortunately not be possible, specifically whilst also maintaining the narrow profile of the frames. As such, aluminium window frames are now proposed. While this is a departure from the existing shopfront materials, by using metal window frames the heavy double glazing can be adequately supported whilst replicating the existing narrow profiles of mullions and transoms. As such, the change in materials proposed for the shopfront will ensure the safety of users of the commercial units and pedestrians alike and will preserve the elegant traditional character of the shopfronts.

5.5 Externally, the existing timber shopfront window frames to Unit 1 are faced in a profiled bronze frame capping. These bronze features, while unlikely to be original to the building, are of some value as an interesting traditional shopfront element and part of the historic character of Jacksons Corner. Within Unit 1, after the new double glazed windows and metal frames have been installed, these existing profiled brass frame caps will be relocated and planted on to the aluminium frames so they remain visible externally. The reuse of this fabric will retain some of the historic fabric of the shopfronts and the existing traditional character of the windows and their bronze frames which is a feature of interest both to the application site and wider conservation area.

5.6 Shopfront windows to Units 2 and 3 are much later in date (approximately mid 20th century²¹) and do not feature the profiles bronze frame caps that are present at Unit 1. The main windows to Unit 3 also feature much wider spans of glazing while the top lights feature much more limited spans better glazing bars. As such, this shopfront is at odds with the arrangement present to Units 1 and 2. It is clear that the shopfronts to Units 2 and 3 are not of the same quality as that present to Unit 1 and as a result of the characteristics discussed above, there is a marked lack of

²¹ An earlier shopfront to no.3 Kings Road can be seen on an early to mid 20th century photograph, see Figure 7.

consistency across the shopfronts. While this does, to a degree, relate to the different buildings that form Jacksons Corner, given the prominence of the shopfronts, landmark status of Jacksons Corner and higher quality of the shopfront to Unit 1, an enhanced degree of consistency is considered beneficial.

5.7

As such, proposals entail the provision of vertical separators (mullions) within the shopfront windows and top lights of Unit 3 (of a matching span to those present at Units 1 and 2) and the external capping of the aluminium window frames in a similar manner to the historic bronze caps present at Unit 1. The metal caps to these shopfronts will be carefully detailed and colour matched so that they relate well to those present at Unit 1. Overall, these works will enhance the traditional character and aesthetic quality of the shopfronts and will improve the consistency across the building²². This will result in a slight enhancement to the architectural and historic interest of Jacksons Corner as an important landmark historic building and will result in a slight localised aesthetic improvement to the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area.

5.8

The consented schemes both include a series of three double doors in the shopfront of Nos.1-9 Kings Road, each serving one of the three commercial units (one double door on the west elevation and two on the south elevation). Proposals retain these doors in their consented locations, however, following discussions with Building Control it has become clear that Units 1 and 3 require further single escape doors into their respective shopfronts. These doors are simplistically and sympathetically located and detailed being predominantly glazing so that they blend well with the shopfronts. By virtue of this they do not attract undue attention away from the historic building or its features. The introduction of these doors will not affect the heritage significance of either the application site, Jacksons Corner, or the conservation area and will ensure compliance with the relevant Building Regulations.

²² To confirm, unlike previously submitted draft proposals these works do not alter the height shopfront stall risers and do not result in the removal of any window bars (transoms or mullions)

5.9 To the right hand side of Unit 2's shopfront a dry riser inlet is proposed within an insulated panel of the shopfront. This minor alteration will have no material effect on the appearance of the shopfront externally. As such, the significance of the conservation area and Jacksons Corner will be preserved.

5.10 Throughout the three units the top lights of the shopfronts are currently opaque glazing but were shown on the latest consented scheme as being 'perforated spandrel panels'. Proposals seek to reintroduce opaque glazing across all three units to better reflect the existing character of the existing shopfronts and ensure consistency. These works will not affect the significance of heritage assets and will instead retain the existing character of the shopfront to a higher degree.

5.11 At Units 1 and 3 the proposals also entail the removal of the existing awnings. These awnings appear to be a mid to late 20th century addition to the building. They are very different to those shown on a 1910s photograph (**Figure 6**) which start at the top of the fascia are not shown on a slightly later 20th century photograph (**Figure 7**).



Figure 6: 1910s photograph of Jacksons Corner showing early 20th century awnings



***Figure 7:** Early to mid 20th century photograph of Jacksons Corner. No awnings are present to the shopfronts and earlier shopfronts can be seen to no.3 Kings Road. Photograph © Thomas Macey*

5.12 As such, these awnings are not comprised of sensitive historic fabric and their removal will not affect any long standing element of the traditional shopfront (the earlier 19th century or early 20th century awnings long since being removed). In order to retain the aesthetic character of these features, boxes are proposed to be added to the signage panels to these units²³. Overall, these minor works will not result in any detrimental erosion of the character of the building and will preserve the significance of both Jacksons Corner and the contribution it makes to the wider conservation area.

²³ Alternatively, if preferred, new boxes on the fascia could be omitted from the proposals thus allowing the historic portions of the shopfront more prominence.

Summary and Policy Compliance

5.13 The proposed scheme of works build upon a variety of recently consented schemes for Jacksons Corner which protect the future longevity of and conservation of the building as an important landmark building alongside the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area. The works are based on a thorough understanding of the character of the application site, its historic development and significance and the character, appearance and significance of the conservation area and have been sensitively designed to provide support the long term use of Jacksons Corner while being sensitive to the unique heritage values of the building and its surroundings.

5.14 The previous section identified that, by virtue of the works, the significance of Jacksons Corner and the conservation area will see some localised enhancements due to:

- The retention of the historic bronze window frame caps to Unit 1 (a feature not retained as part of earlier schemes);
- An enhanced traditional character to the shopfronts of Units 2 and 3; and
- Increased consistency across all three shopfronts which better reveal and celebrate the rich heritage of Jacksons Corner as a landmark building in a prominent location.

5.15 The existing positive contribution Jacksons Corner makes to the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area will be enhanced by virtue of these works. Therefore, for the purposes of the NPPF the proposals fall outside of the remit of paragraphs 194 to 197 as no harm will occur to either designated or non-designated heritage assets.

5.16 As such, the proposed development is found to accord with the requirements of the 1990 Act and Section 16 of the NPPF. The proposed development is also considered to comply with relevant local planning policy, namely:

Policy CS33 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic

Environment: In accordance with the requirements of this policy the

proposed development protects and enhances both designated and non-designated heritage assets, retaining as much historic fabric of the Jacksons shopfronts as possible while providing functional shopfronts which meet relevant Building Regulations.

Policy CS7 Design and the Public Realm: The proposed development is considered to accord with the requirements of this policy insofar as the proposed development is of a high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the application site's context. The proposed development responds positively to both the host building and wider area reinforcing local character and distinctiveness through the protection of heritage assets and the retention of historic shopfront fabric where possible.

RC5 Design in the Centre: In accordance with the requirements of this policy the proposed development respects its context, retains an active frontage and uses architectural details and materials which are of relevance to the site.

RC10 Active Frontages: The proposed development retains an active frontage of high visual quality on the application site and therefore accords with the requirements of this policy.

Market Place/London Street Conservation Area Appraisal: In accordance with the guidance provided within this document the proposed development ensures that the architectural character of the area is not diluted by modern development and, in comparison to the recently consented scheme for the site, seeks to retain as much historic shopfront fabric as possible.

- 5.17** The proposed development is also considered to be compliant with relevant emerging policies of the Reading Draft Local Plan, namely EN1 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment and EN3 Enhancement of Conservation Areas.



6.0

6. Summary & Conclusions

- 6.1** This report presents an assessment of the significance of Jacksons Corner and the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area (focusing on Character Area 3). This is followed by an appraisal of the effect of the proposed development upon the significance of these heritage assets with consideration given to local and national planning policy and guidance.
- 6.2** Jacksons Corner is a late 19th century structure of considerable townscape merit. Architecturally the best building on the application site is the 1880 Jacksons Corner building but no.3 and nos.5-9 have engaging 19th century front elevations that contribute to the interest of the street scene. The historic interest of the site is derived from the association with a local family who built up a once multi-store business that has become a local landmark.
- 6.3** The Market Place/London Street Conservation Area is a tightly knit urban area composed of continuous frontages of two to four storey buildings. The architectural coherence of the area has been affected by the Inner Distribution Road and the mid to late 20th century development in the area. It is separated into three character areas; the application site is located within Character Area 3.
- 6.4** The proposed development builds upon recently consented schemes for Jacksons Corner which seek to protect the future longevity and conservation of the building by providing for a residential use within the upper floors of the building. Current proposals relate solely to minor changes to the building's shopfronts which were previously consented for replacement with double glazed units. Proposals include the introduction of single escape doors, retention of historic bronze facings of Unit 1's shopfront frame, the alteration of top lights, removal of existing awnings and the location of a dry riser inlet in an insulated panel of the shopfront.
- 6.5** The preceding section identifies that the proposed development will not result in any harm to or erosion of the heritage significance of the identified heritage assets. Rather, by virtue of the retention of the historic bronze window frame caps to Unit 1 (not retained as part of earlier schemes), an enhanced traditional character to the

shopfronts of Units 2 and 3 and increased consistency across all three shopfronts these proposals will result in a slight enhancement to the significance of Jacksons Corner and the conservation area in comparison to the consented shopfront arrangement. Overall, while relatively minor in nature these works will better reveal and celebrate the rich heritage of Jacksons Corner as a landmark building in a prominent location. The existing positive contribution the building and traditional elements of its shopfront makes to the conservation area will be enhanced.

6.6

In summary, the proposed works are considered to be proportionate and in accordance with the requirements of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, NPPF and relevant local planning policies and guidance.