

DP4003

23 May 2018

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Dear Mr Eatough,

UNITS 37A AND 55-56, BROAD STREET MALL, OXFORD ROAD, READING, RG1 7QE

APPLICATION FOR FULL PLANNING PERMISSION FOR AMALGAMATION OF RETAIL UNITS AND ASSOCIATED SHOPFRONT REPLACEMENT WORKS

On behalf of our client, Inception (Reading) Sarl (c/o Moorgarth Group Limited), we are pleased to enclose a full planning application at the above site for:

“Amalgamation of Units 37A and 55-56 to form a single Retail Unit (Class A1) arranged over Ground and Basement Floors; Installation of Shopfronts to Oxford Road Elevation and Return Mall Elevation.”

Application Submission

The application has been submitted via the Planning Portal (ref. PP-06999757) and comprises the following documents:

- Planning Application Form and Ownership Certificates;
- Cover Letter (this letter); and
- Location Plan, Site Plan and Existing & Proposed Drawings prepared by Corstorphine + Wright Architects.

A Community Infrastructure Levy Form is also enclosed, and the requisite planning application fee has been paid electronically.

The Site and Context

The application site comprises Units 37A (former Cash Solutions) and 55-56 (former Poundworld) which are located on the northside of Broad Street Mall fronting Oxford Road. The existing Unit 37A (88sq.m GIA) is arranged over ground floor only with a frontage to Oxford Road and a return elevation to the Mall entrance. Unit 55-56 (818sq.m GIA) is



arranged over basement and ground floors with a frontage to Oxford Road only. Both units are now vacant having been formerly occupied by Cash Solutions and Poundworld (both Class A1 Retail Use).

From a planning policy perspective, the site is located within the Reading Central Area, Central Core, Primary Shopping Area and Office Core, as well as the West Side Major Opportunity Area. The Oxford Road elevation is designated Primary Frontage. The site is not within a Conservation Area, nor in the setting of a Conservation Area. The only listed building in the vicinity is the Grade II listed 3-5 Cheapside located to the north on the opposite side of Oxford Road. The site is located within Flood Zone 1 (low risk).

The Proposed Development

The planning application proposes the amalgamation of Units 37A and 55-56 to form a larger footprint retail unit at ground floor, whilst retaining the existing basement for retail storage, staff amenity and back of house purposes. Replacement shopfronts are also proposed to the Oxford Road elevation where the main entrance will be positioned, together with the return elevation into the Mall to suit a single tenant occupier. The newly amalgamated unit is intended to be occupied by Poundland who will relocate from their existing unit in Broad Street Mall.

The newly extended retail unit will comprise 652sq.m (GIA) floorspace at ground floor and 267sq.m (GIA) at basement. The proposal results in a small 13sq.m GIA uplift in retail floorspace as a result of the efficiencies achieved through amalgamation.

The replacement shopfronts, as shown on the submitted drawings, will be constructed using aluminium frames and glazing to maximise active frontages, together with fascia signage zones for the new tenant (subject to separate advertisement consent, as may be required).

Waste and servicing will be centralised in accordance with existing procedures at Broad Street Mall, accessed via the basement.

Planning Assessment

Land Use & Unit Amalgamation

It is clear that the proposed Class A1 use is inherently appropriate for this established town centre location and will contribute towards maintaining and enhancing its vitality, viability and competitiveness. The previous lawful use of the former Cash Solutions and Poundworld units was Class A1, hence there is no change in land use arising from this application.

The amalgamation of the units at ground floor is considered acceptable given:

1. Both of the existing retail units are vacant and therefore measures to re-occupy them should be supported;
2. Internal works, such as removing partition walls would ordinarily not require planning permission;



3. The newly amalgamated unit results in an uplift in useable retail floorspace within a town centre location; and
4. The newly amalgamated unit has been designed to meet the specific needs of a retailer.

Overall, the principle of development and land use is clearly acceptable to enable the repurposing and reutilisation of these two vacant retail units located within the town centre. Planning policy and decisions should foster and support town centre vitality and viability, which in this case means amalgamation to suit identified retailer requirements. The proposals clearly comply with national policy and guidance in respect of town centre and retail planning, whilst also complying with relevant policies in Reading's adopted development plan and the well advanced draft Local Plan (specifically RL1 and RL2).

Design & Appearance

The proposed design and appearance of the new shopfronts are considered wholly appropriate for this town centre location. The proposals will maintain and enhance an outward facing appearance to this part of Broad Street Mall, complementing recent internal refurbishment within the Mall itself. The shopfronts have been designed carefully to suit internal unit layout and provide a consistent external appearance. The new unit entrance will achieve level access.

The proposals will activate the maximum extent of the Oxford Road frontage, together with maintaining activity on the return elevation. The aluminium shopfront frames are considered appropriate for this context, the large glazing extents will achieve activated frontages and surveillance, whilst the tenant fascia signage zones are of suitable size and proportion.

Transport, Servicing and Waste

The site is located in a sustainable location, accessible by a range public transport modes, and benefits from existing car park provision at Broad Street Mall to suit all customer preferences. Servicing of the unit will be consistent with previous arrangements for Poundworld insofar as all servicing will take place from the basement, with the centralised basement refuse management area utilised by the new tenant. Vehicular servicing movements will therefore be via the basement access (as per the existing situation) and have no impact on the public highway.

Concluding Remarks

We look forward to receiving confirmation that this application has been registered, and can be determined within the statutory timescales. Please contact Alan Hughes or Chris Beard of this office should you have any queries or require further information.

Yours faithfully,

DP9 Ltd.