

17-27 Queen Victoria Street, Reading

Full Planning Application

Design and Access Statement



Scenario Architecture

10a Branch Place, N1 5PH, London

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1. Introduction

Scenario Architecture has been instructed by **IDREAM Reading LTD** to prepare and submit a full planning application to Reading Council for the change of use and refurbishment of No17-27 Queen Victoria Street, Reading

The proposal incorporates the following:

- Retention of the ground floor retail units in situ
- Conversion of the first to third floors from office to serviced apartments (C1)

This report should be read in conjunction with the drawings listed under section 2, Issue for Planning – 06.07.2018 and the accompanying preliminary reports in the appendices which support this full application for planning permission and listed building consent.

PR-A1.06_Proposed Site/Roof Plan
PR-A2.01_Proposed Front Elevation
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PR-A3.01_Proposed Section A
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Demolition and upgrades

DE-A1 to DE-A13

Proposed Construction Details

DETAILS01 to DETAILS05

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PR-A1.07.1 to PR-A1.07.4

2. Drawing List

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EX-A1.01_Existing Basement Floor Plan
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EX-A1.03_Existing First Floor Plan
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EX-A2.01_Existing Front Elevation
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EX-A4.01_Existing 3D Perspectives
EX-A5.01 to EX-A5.05_Existing stairs 1-5
EX-A5.06_Existing Windows

Proposed Alterations

PR-A1.01_Proposed Basement Floor Plan
PR-A1.02_Proposed Ground Floor Plan
PR-A1.03_Proposed First Floor Plan
PR-A1.04_Proposed Second Floor Plan
PR-A1.05_Proposed Third Floor Plan

3. New Proposal

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

17-27 Queen Victoria Street, Reading



Figure 1 existing buildings

1.0 SITE, CONTEXT AND SURROUNDINGS

This design and access statement accompanies the full planning application and listed building consent submission for the change of use from B1 office space to C1 service apartments for the storey 1st to 3rd, and conversion to 19 self-contained apart-hotel units.

The site (see figure 1) rests in the town centre marked as Zone 1 (see accompanying Transportation report), a 5-minute walk from the Reading train station. Queen Victoria Street is a pedestrian passage.

The property comprises part of the row of terraced buildings along Queen Victoria Street set across ground to 3rd floors (with lower ground floor associated with the retail use of the ground floor). The two opposing rows of buildings form the Grade II Listing for the whole street and as such this has been a key consideration in developing the proposals (see accompanying reports)



Figure 2

2.0 PROPOSED DESIGN – GENERAL APPROACH

The proposal is for a change of use, to the existing office building above Ground floor, serviced apartments, that will offer temporary accommodation to the Borough, which in turn will conserve and enhance the character of the listed buildings. It is proposed to convert the office spaces into 19 Units; 15X1Bed and 4X2Bed Units (see schedule of accommodation for more information).

Alterations:

The proposal incorporates minor amendments to the front façade which are focused solely on the replacement and upgrade of the existing non-heritage entrance doors and general entrance areas on the ground floor level and upgrade the thermal envelope of the building in general.

Behind the front façade which is the most prominent feature of the listed building, secondary glazing is proposed to upgrade the envelope both thermally and acoustically (see accompanying reports)

Towards the rear all the windows will be made good and upgraded to double glazed to match the existing. Any new fenestration will be identical to the existing in terms of framing, and colour, to ensure that the external appearance of the building is conserved and continues to make a contribution to the local character and distinctiveness of the area.

On the Ground floor, the scheme will provide new and updated entrance services (mail, security locks and systems – video entrance etc) The entrance for Units 01-07 will have access to the rear open area as well and to a small service/lobby area for storage. The basement areas for buildings 19 (currently vacant) and 23 will be used to allow for incoming services and connection to the mains.

In more detail:

Basement

The basement at No 23 will be used for all incoming services. It will further accommodate all meters and equipment, properly protected. There will be a small wet area for maintenance reasons (used by cleaners and management company) The staircase leading there from the GF is of low quality later addition and will be made good. On the retail unit at No 25, which will be used as a site storage during the works, the existing staircase (newer addition) will be relocated towards the rear of the area to better suit the works and the future users of the retail unit.

Ground Floor

The ground floor will remain unaltered with regards to the existing retail units, except for the two entrances as mentioned above. For Entrance 1– see para 8.0 - , the unused space towards the rear of the building adjacent to the two mirroring staircases, stairs 01 & 02, with access from the corridor, will be used for maintenance and bicycle storage. The same corridor leads to the exterior rear open space where the bins for refuse and recycling will be located. The whole area will be cleaned and repaved and secured for further protection and cleanliness against rodents.

The staircase of the retail unit at No 25 will be redesigned and relocated to allow for a better commercial unit. The existing staircase is not a historic item.

First floor

On the first floor the existing stud wall partitions will be removed. These are very recent additions and out of character. New stud wall partitions will be constructed, with the appropriate acoustic insulation between the units will form the new areas, extra care has been put in making the new partitions easily removable. Main structural intervention will be the removal of Staircase 05 (see further information on the Heritage report accompanying this application and supplementary diagrams in the appendix) as per the planning application ref 11/0568 granted in 2011. Four (4) new openings are being proposed on the central spine walls of the 3 buildings to match the already existing 2 openings. To allow for access from No 21-25 to No 17-19 a new opening on the party wall is proposed. See demolition drawings

From the previously granted application for the conversion to C3 the major difference is creation of a raised floor level (by two steps – while keeping the existing first floor level intact) to allow the services to be distributed to all the necessary spaces without harming the fabric of the existing building (historic joists etc) The existing head-height allows for this action, which also helps with not disturbing the retail units throughout the construction works.

In order to achieve this part of the spine wall between No 25 and 23 will be removed, and a steel riser will fill the space (with some associated structural work) to allow for the services to reach from the basement to the 3rd floor without any other further penetrations (See DETAILS05 drawing)

All services will pass through the new raised floor level and through the service risers

Second Floor

On the second floor we have the same level alterations. As required existing stud partition wall will be demolished with new stud walls as per drawing PR-A1.04. The stair-05 will be removed and an opening at the party wall will ensure proper access for the proposed Units. 4 new door openings on the spine walls will be made

to match the already existing openings. No external alterations are proposed. See appendix __ drawing A1.03 Proposed Over Demolition Second Floor Plan.

All services will pass under the first-floor ceiling and through the service risers

Third Floor

On the third floor there are a minimal number of alterations; parts of the spine walls that have been previously opened will be blocked and two new openings will be made to match the existing spine walls openings. No exterior alterations proposed. See appendix __ drawing A1.04 Proposed Over Demolition Third Floor Plan.

All services will pass under the second-floor ceiling and through the service risers

Above the two staircases the skylights will be replaced with AOV for fire safety purposes (Automatic Opening Vent) – Velux – conservation profile (this skylights rest towards the front of the property however due to the double pitch change of the roof they are not visible from the street or the first storeys of the neighbouring buildings

In addition to the above

There will be:

- Protection of all decorative fireplace features
- Protection of mouldings and ceiling decorations where they exist (on the front facing rooms) within the lowered ceiling.
- Lowered ceiling to allow for the services for the new building services arrangements. New decorative mouldings to match the existing (while protecting the hidden ones) will be introduced to keep the heritage element in the interior.
- Heritage Stairs will be restored where necessary with replacement spindles.

Services and Building alterations

- The basement at No 23 will be used for all the incoming services. All meters and inputs (gas/electricity/water) have been fitted in the area. The floor will be covered by a self-levelling polymer floor and insulated against damp.
- All cables and pipework will be directed towards the spine wall between no 23 and 25. No 25 will be empty during construction works to facilitate the process (both LGF and GF levels)
- Half of the spine wall between 23 and 25 – towards No23 – will be demolished (to the dimensions shown on the demolition plans) from high level LGF (as the services will start from the LGF ceiling level) till floor level at First floor.
- At the first-floor level, part of the services will traverse to the other side of the spine wall towards No 25 and the other part will traverse through the raised new floor level, to the other riser at No 19
- From first floor till the third floor – roof level – the spine wall between No 23 and No 25 will be halved on the No 25 side

The floors at second floor and third floor level will receive openings for the services at the locations of risers 1-5

On the first-floor level, due to the raised floor the lintels of the existing openings on the spine walls will be raised by the same amount.

The risers 1,3,5 hold the soil vent pipes and will reach the roof level penetrating the pitch towards the rear of the building locally (not visible from anywhere)

The above actions are deemed necessary to allow for proper factional MnE services throughout the building, ensuring the futureproofing and the longevity of its usage.

See accompanying demolition and construction detail drawings

3.0 USE AND AMOUNT

The Development proposes the conversion from B1 office space to C1 serviced apartments. The total GIA (habitable including circulation and ancillary spaces is approx. **1,113.55 m²** (major development)

See schedule of accommodation at 4.2

4.0 LAYOUT

Please refer to the proposed GA plans for the overall sizes and layouts of the units.

Overlooking

Proper measures will be put in place to avoid overlooking between windows of different units. As demonstrated on the proposed First Floor plan, frosted windows with restricted opening height (1.8m from the floor level) will prevent overlooking, along with the installation of vertical wooden panels Connected to window frame. (to match the material and colour of the existing rear openings) will block the acute viewing angles from the neighbouring windows.

Daylight Sunlight

The common areas of the units on the first floor rear wings all benefit from two or more openings. As demonstrated in the images in the appendix they receive adequate direct and reflected sunlight throughout the year considering the restrictions on exterior alterations on a listed building. See light analysis in the supplementary section of this report

5.0 LANDSCAPING & OPEN SPACE

The proposal aims to clear open ground floor area at the rear of the property and use it to accommodate loose refuse bins and bicycle parking spaces. There is no alteration on the existing surface drainage areas and the surface water will follow the existing drainage routes. The site rests on a prominent pedestrian street. Its two entrances are directly connected to public open space with seating and services (cafes, restaurants) in close proximities. In general, the pedestrian street is considered an attractive space and mitigates the lack of private open space for the units. The development benefits from this open space which is impossible to achieve in any other way in a city centre within a listed building. On the Ground floor towards the rear of the site the communal open space acts as a fire escape for the commercial areas of the ground floor as well.

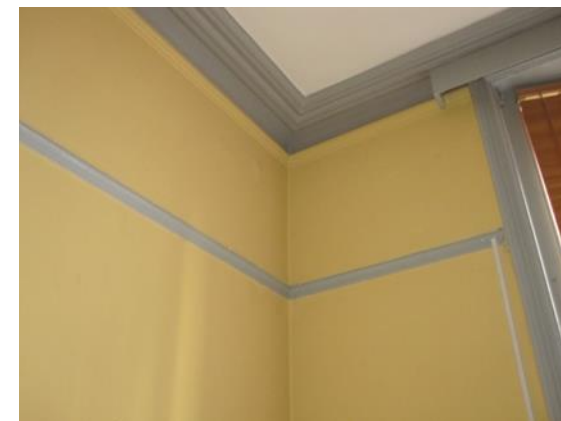
6.0 APPEARANCE, HERITAGE & MATERIALS

6.1 The front Façade is proposed to be retained as is. No alterations in terms of design above the ground floor. The two entrances will be altered to match, with simple modern part wood part glazed secure

- panels. Above the ground floor, the secondary glazing will be placed in the interior – replacing the previous where applicable, and making sure there is no impact on the views from the street
- 6.2 The front windows will be made good where necessary (due to rot or other existing conditions), materials and colours to match the existing (detailed drawings of the proposed window fittings will be provided for the Councils approval)
- 6.3 To the Rear, the existing single glazed widows will be upgraded to double glazed. Some of the side windows will be frosted as per the drawings. Where necessary the fully replaced windows will match the existing in terms of design, proportions, material and colour. See rear window treatment in the supplementary section of this report.
- 6.4 All interior wall alterations follow a pattern of already existing interior alterations that do not harm the fabric of the building. All staircases except one are being retained and will be made good. All fireplace features where existing will be retained. All decorative features in the rooms towards the front will be retained – the suspended ceiling, that will cover the services, will protect them and new decorations to reference the historic will be installed



Rot on front sash windows



Original mouldings and rails to be retained and replicated as required



Existing rear access to be retained and neatened



Fireplace surrounds to be retained

Any architectural features will be protected and if required will be carefully repositioned to fit the new layout

7.0 SUSTAINABILITY

A full detailed assessment of the building has been commissioned, involving the design of: Drainage, incoming electrical services, hot and cold water, ventilation strategy, energy efficiency and sustainability. Initial schemes have been drafted for the above taking into consideration the listed building status and making sure that the impact on the building's fabric remains in acceptable levels and future proofs the structure.

For the additional gains and improvements please refer to the supplementary sustainability report included with this submission.

8.0 ACCESS

The site is located within the Reading Town Centre with excellent access to local facilities and wider transport links via train or bus. With regard to access into the building there are currently 2 main existing points for access from Queen Victoria Street which are as follows.

- Entrance 1 that allows access via Stair 01 to Units 01-03 on the first floor. Then via Stair 03 to Units 04-07 on the second and third floors.
- Entrance 2 that allows access via an additional non heritage stair to Units 08-11 on the first floor. Then via Stair 04 access to units 12-19 on the second and third floors.

Entrance 1 will be rearranged. A new door is going to be introduced to allow for protection for the covered corridor between No 23 and 25 which is currently exposed and is left littered and unattended creating a bad image for the street, the building users and the retailers at no 23 (starbucks)

See PR-A4.02

Following the pre-application consultation and the principles set as granted in previous planning applications, it has been agreed that the development shall be car-free with a provision for bicycle parking. Bicycle space is provided (0.5 spaces/unit) a total of 10+ bicycle parking spaces are allowed on site on the Ground floor area where secure space is provided as demonstrated on the GF plan

For more information see accompanying transport statement

It is proposed to keep the existing refuse collection arrangements. Due to the location of the site in a pedestrian zone, and as mentioned in the previous granted applications, the refuse will be collected at pre-arranged times with the Street Care Office for the Reading Council – There is no kerbside wheeled bin collection currently arranged for Queen Victoria Street. A Site maintenance scheme should be put in place prior to occupation.

See accompanying waste management plans and strategy

4. Supplementary Diagrams

4.1 Daylight Sunlight

Main concern for the apart-hotel towards the rear, is the quality of ambient and direct daylight/sunlight. All areas situated in the rear wings and especially the common areas receive direct sunlight throughout the year mainly between March and September, with the month of December receiving the lowest amount. Most of the areas receive at least two hours of direct sunlight in the areas close to the windows. Calculated through our models using accurate orientation and coordinates location of 51° 27' 22.4316"N , 0° 58' 19.8000"W We reached the following:

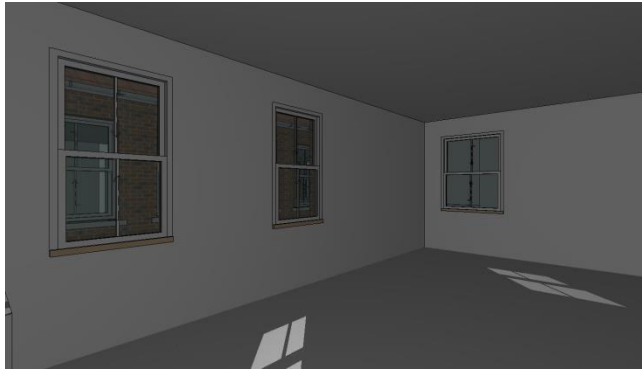
Unit 10

20th March Direct Sunlight from 11:15 to 14:45

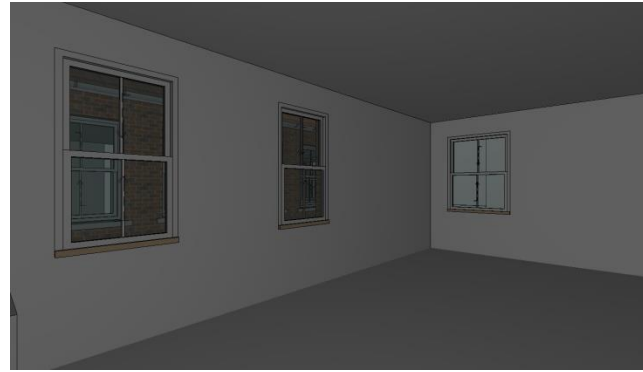
20th June Direct Sunlight from 10:45 to 15:30

20th September Direct Sunlight from 11:15 to 14:45

20th December Limited exposure but with extensive reflected sunlight from the neighbouring walls and the metal façade of WHSmith.



Direct sunlight



Reflected sunlight, brick and metal facades



Direct sunlight and reflected sunlight, brick and metal facades. Reflected light in close proximities allows for access to direct sunlight

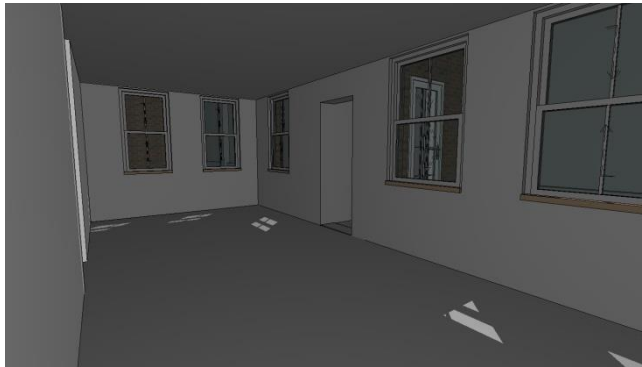
Unit 11

20th March Direct Sunlight from 10:15 to 14:30

20th June Direct Sunlight from 9:30 to 14:30

20th September Direct Sunlight from 10:00 to 14:30

20th December Direct Sunlight from 11:45 to 13:30



Direct sunlight



Reflected sunlight, brick and metal facades

Unit 3

20th March Direct Sunlight from 12:30 to 14:30

20th June Direct Sunlight from 12:30 to 15:30

20th September Direct Sunlight from 12:30 to 14:30

20th December Limited exposure but with extensive reflected sunlight from the neighbouring walls and the metal façade of WHSmith.

Unit 2

20th March Direct Sunlight from 12:30 to 14:30

20th June Direct Sunlight from 12:30 to 15:30

20th September Direct Sunlight from 12:30 to 14:30

20th December Limited exposure but with extensive reflected sunlight from the neighbouring walls and the metal façade of WHSmith.

Due to the close proximities of external walls and the large metal semi-reflective façade of WHSmith's ambient light fills the spaces listed above through-out the day and direct sunlight is visible at any time.

4.2 Schedule of Accommodation

Unit GIA Schedule		
	Room	Area (m2)
First Floor		
	Unit 01	44.19
	Unit 02	66.56
	Unit 03	42.13
	Unit 08	80.24
	Unit 09	44.23
	Unit 10	78.52
	Unit 11	65.24
		421.11 m ²
Second Floor		
	Unit 04	45.64
	Unit 05	43.91
	Unit 12	45
	Unit 13	48.32
	Unit 14	47.29
	Unit 15	43.8
		273.96 m ²
Third Floor		
	Unit 06	43.03
	Unit 07	40.44
	Unit 16	42.67
	Unit 17	45.98
	Unit 18	44.43
	Unit 19	40.28
		256.83 m ²
		951.90 m ²

Total GIA Schedule		
	Room	Area (m2)
Basement		
	Basement 1	31.82
	Basement 2	6.69
	Basement 3	5.77
	Cleaner	5.07
		49.35 m ²
Ground Floor		
	Bicycle storage	20.14
	Hallway	3.23
	Hallway	5.74
	Hallway	8.18
		37.29 m ²
First Floor		
	Communal Circulation	17.85
	Communal Circulation	19.03
	Unit 01	44.19
	Unit 02	66.56
	Unit 03	42.13
	Unit 08	80.24
	Unit 09	44.23
	Unit 10	78.52
	Unit 11	65.24
		457.99 m ²
Second Floor		
	Communal Circulation	8.3
	Communal Circulation	10.87
	Unit 04	45.64
	Unit 05	43.91
	Unit 12	45
	Unit 13	48.32
	Unit 14	47.29
	Unit 15	43.8
		293.13 m ²
Third Floor		
	Communal Circulation	8.36
	Communal Circulation	10.6

	Unit 06	43.03
	Unit 07	40.44
	Unit 16	42.67
	Unit 17	45.98
	Unit 18	44.43
	Unit 19	40.28
		275.79 <i>m²</i>
		1,113.55 m²