

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

ITEM NO. 8

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 14 October 2015

Ward: Abbey

Application No's.: 151221/FUL & 151241/ADV

Address: 116-117 Broad Street, Reading

Proposals: 15/1221/FUL - Erection of second floor extension, roof level plant, various alterations to Broad Street and Minster Street facades and associated works.

151241/ADV - Display of 4 fascia signs & 2 projecting signs to Broad Street elevation and 4 fascia signs & 1 projecting sign to Minster Street elevation (all internally illuminated) (amended description)

Applicant: Primark Stores Ltd

Date Valid: 22/07/2015

Application target decision date: 151221/FUL - 20/10/2015; 151241/ADV - 16/09/2015

26 week date: 20/01/2016

RECOMMENDATIONS

151221/FUL - Delegate to Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services to (i) GRANT full planning permission subject to completion of a S106 legal agreement or (ii) to REFUSE permission should the legal agreement not be completed by the 20 October 2015 (unless the Head of Planning, Development and Regulatory Services agrees to a later date for completion of the legal agreement). The legal agreement to secure the following:

- An Employment Skills and Training Plan (construction phase and end use phase)

And the following conditions to include:

1. Time Limit - 3 years
2. Approved plans
3. Details and samples of all external materials
4. The upper level glazing on the Broad Street elevation to remain clear glazed.
5. Construction Management Statement (also including noise and dust measures)
6. Construction Hours
7. Further pre-commencement noise assessment
8. Time clocks added to plant to prevent use between 2100 hours and 0700 hours
9. Submission of final design stage BREEAM assessment, and final BREEAM certificate (pre-occupation), both confirming the development will achieve at least a 'Very Good' rating.
10. Development to be carried out in accordance with the measures in the approved energy strategy

Informatives:

1. Positive and Proactive Statement
2. Damage to the highway
3. Works affecting highways
4. Construction and demolition nuisance law
5. Section 106 Legal Agreement

151241/ADV - **GRANT Advertisement Consent**

Subject to conditions to include:

1. The standard conditions (i – v)
2. Approved plans
3. Maximum luminance (fascia and projecting signs) not to exceed 1000 cd/m²

Informatives:

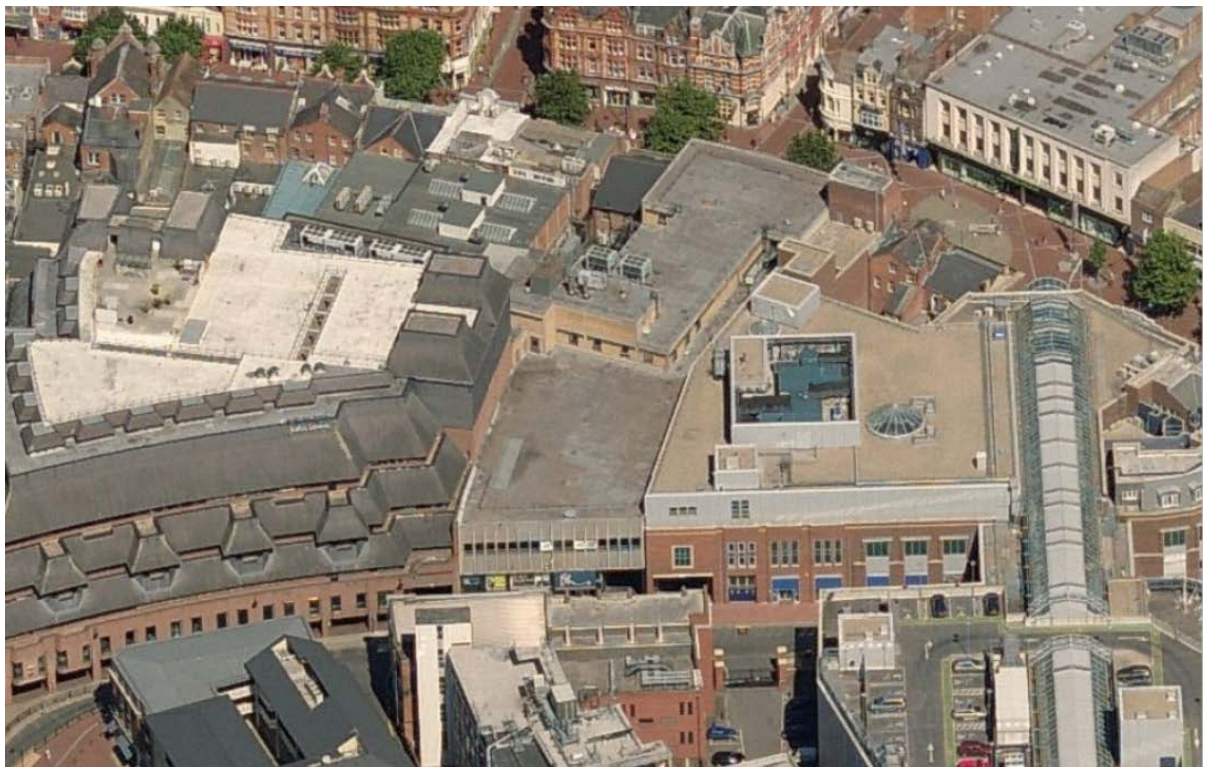
1. Positive and Proactive Statement

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site comprises a largely three-storey and basement building fronting onto the south side of Broad Street, opposite to the pedestrianised junction with Cross Street (to the north). The building has a secondary frontage on Minster Street, where vehicular access to basement level servicing is provided. The building represents one of the largest (in terms of floorspace) retail units within the town centre and is presently vacant, having most recently been occupied by BHS (who vacated the site early in 2015). The application site also includes the ground floor retail unit referred to as 119 Broad Street (most recently occupied by Crepe Affaire, but currently also vacant). The application site excludes the small ground floor kiosk style unit at 118 Broad Street (occupied by Rollover Hot Dogs) between the former Crepe Affaire and BHS shopfronts, although there is a flying freehold in place which means that the upper floors of this part of the site are within the demise of the application proposals. Internal refurbishment works have been taking place at the building for a number of months (which in themselves do not require planning permission).
- 1.2 It is understood that the building was previously redeveloped in the late 1960's, into the general form and appearance which is seen today. The largely concrete facades with projecting fins on both street frontages are considered to align with the design approach seen elsewhere in the town centre from this time, such as at Butter Market / Market Place. However, they are not considered to be of any particular architectural merit at the present time, close to half a century on from when they were first introduced.
- 1.3 The site is located within a designated Active Frontage (Broad Street elevation only), the Primary Shopping Area, the Office Core and the Central Core. It is also within an area of Archaeological Importance and Air Quality Management Area. The site is outside of a designated conservation area, but is in close proximity to two. First, St Mary's Butts / Castle Street Conservation Area extends as far as Minster Court, which is to the south-west of the application site. Secondly, Market Place / London Street Conservation Area is within 50m of the Broad Street frontage. As such, the application site is located within the setting of both conservation areas. Furthermore, the site is also located in close proximity to a number of listed buildings located outside of these conservation areas. First, opposite the site to the south is the Grade II listed Telephone Exchange building (41 – 45 Minster Street). This is 3 storeys of red brick with stone dressings in an attenuated Georgian style. Meanwhile to the north, there is a Grade II group listing for 1-31 & 2-32 Queen Victoria Street, 148,149 & 150 Friar Street, 24-28 & 35-38 Broad Street. No. 24 Broad Street is opposite the application site to the north and is an early 20th century red brick Bank with large shaped pediment doorway on the corner to Cross Street (occupied by Lloyds Bank).
- 1.4 The character of the surrounding area is largely retail in nature, with a variety of retail and other town centre uses on both Broad Street and Minster Street.



Aerial view looking south (Broad Street elevation in the foreground)



Aerial view looking north (Southern Minster Street elevation in the foreground)

2. PROPOSALS

- 2.1 Full planning permission is sought for the erection of second floor level extensions, which would effectively infill the remaining areas of the second floor footprint with floorspace (predominantly in the area at the southern - Minster Street - end of the

site). Also proposed is roof level plant, set within an enclosure in the mid to southern ends of the site (but set in from the Minster Street façade). Furthermore, various alterations are proposed to both the Broad Street and Minster Street facades, including replacement shopfronts and the remodelling of the upper floor façade designs (which involves the removal – Broad Street - / overcladding – Minster Street - of the pre-cast concrete elements at upper floor levels).

- 2.2 During the course of the application revised plans were submitted to alter the detailed design of both the Broad Street and Minster Street facades, following officer feedback. Additional information in respect of the noise assessment and construction method statement was also submitted following specialist officer input. Furthermore, clarifications regarding the floorspace increases were also provided.
- 2.3 Separate advertisement consent is sought for the display of 4 fascia signs and 2 projecting signs to the Broad Street elevation. All adverts are proposed at ground floor level. Advertisement consent is also sought for 4 fascia signs and 1 projecting sign to the Minster Street elevation (at lower ground / upper ground floor level). All signs on both elevations are to be internally illuminated.
- 2.4 Revisions were also sought and received in respect of the advertisement consent application. It was originally proposed to display 5 fascia signs and 3 projecting signs on the Broad Street elevation. However, following officer feedback, a high level fascia sign (between first and second floor levels), and a high level projecting sign (first to second floor level) were both omitted from the proposals.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 There have been a variety of planning / advertisement applications at the site in the past. However, only the applications below are considered to be material in the consideration of these applications.
- 3.2 071222 - Modifications to existing facade and new automatic sliding doors. Granted Planning Permission 26/09/2007.
- 3.3 110107 - Refurbishment of existing retail unit to include external alterations to Broad Street and Minster Street elevations. Granted Planning Permission 11/07/2011.
- 3.4 110119 - 2 x ground floor fascia signs; 2 x signs on Broad Street monolith; 3 x projecting signs; white lettering on basement level vinyl; 4 x red canvas signs at first floor level. Split decision – Advertisement consent part granted / part refused 12/07/2011. The four internally illuminated flexi-face canvas signs at first floor level (two on Broad Street, two on Minster Street) were not approved for the following reason:

The proposed signs by virtue their upper floor position, colour and luminance, would propagate and increase the visual clutter of signs along Broad Street and Minster Street. The signs would be harmful to the character and visual amenities of the town centre.

- 3.5 150332 & 150883 – Pre-application enquiries in advance of these applications. Observations sent.

4. CONSULTATIONS

i) RBC Transport

- 4.1 Transport Development Control section advises that there is no transport objection to the proposed extension to the retail unit, providing an acceptable Construction Method Statement (CMS) is secured by way of condition. In this regard it is acknowledged that a CMS has been submitted as part of the consideration of this application, with view to frontloading this and agreeing it prior to the determination of the application. However, the CMS submitted (and revised document submitted after initial comments were fed into the applicant) is not considered at present to be acceptable in all respects of the CMS. In such circumstances it is therefore considered necessary to secure a final agreed CMS via condition, with the documents/discussions undertaken at application stage a helpful basis for the subsequent separate submission.
- 4.2 More generally, the majority of trips to the store will be linked trips to other retail uses within the town centre. Furthermore, the level of trips to and from the site will be similar to the previous Class A1 unit. Servicing will be as for the existing uses and this is considered appropriate. In terms of cycle parking, given the existing nature of the building, it is not considered necessary to secure provision/details via condition, especially when sufficient cycle parking is provided elsewhere in close vicinity to the site. The applicant was advised at pre-application stage that neither a Transport Statement nor a Travel Plan was necessary in this instance, so it is not considered appropriate to secure details via condition or S106 Legal Agreement in this instance.
- 4.3 In terms of the advertisement application, there is no transport objection to the proposed signage subject to a condition restricting the maximum luminance. This is in order to avoid glare (which could lead to danger to highway users) and in the interests of amenity.

ii) RBC Environmental Health - Environmental Protection

- 4.4 Noise arising from the development - An updated noise assessment was submitted on 21/09/15, following various concerns raised with the methodology and conclusions of the originally submitted assessment. In short, the revised assessment has been updated to provide noise limits based on the Council criteria of -10dB. In addition, barrier calculations have been included and the previously incorrect measurement periods have been amended.
- 4.5 The background noise measurement location on Minster Street has been clarified as being correct, meaning the applicant no longer needs to repeat the background noise assessment (as was previously advised based on previous information submitted). The applicants show that -10dB would not be met at the Minster Court (nearest residential façade) with the proposed acoustic screen alone, so additional attenuation measures are required to ensure the -10dB standard can be met. The condition previously recommended by Environmental Protection was:

A noise assessment shall be carried out for the proposed roof plant in accordance with BS4141:2014 methodology for approval prior to commencement of the development. The predicted rating level, $L_{Ar,Tr}$ (specific sound level plus any adjustment for the characteristic features of the sound) as measured at a point 1 metre external to sensitive facades shall be at least 10dB below the existing background sound level, $L_{A90,T}$ when all plant/equipment (or any part of it) is in operation.

- 4.6 The most recent noise assessment appears to remain based on theoretical plant, rather than actual final proposed plant. As such, the suggested condition is still relevant because the noise assessment should be repeated once the exact actual plant is known (with all the precise specifications shown) so that the applicant can demonstrate that -10dB will be achieved. Given the current concerns that the proposed plant will not meet the required noise standard, it is also considered necessary to impose a condition seeking for automatic time clocks to be fitted to the plant equipment to be installed, to ensure that the plant is not operational between 2100 hours and 0700 hours on a daily basis. This is to maintain the residential amenity of nearby occupiers from potential noise disturbance.
- 4.7 In terms of lighting, the applicant has confirmed that no external lighting is proposed beyond that associated with the proposed signage and standard lighting internal to the building. Environmental Protection therefore has no concerns in this regard.
- 4.8 In relation to the construction and demolition phases, there is potential for noise, dust and bonfires, which may cause harm to nearby residents and businesses. The CMS currently submitted does not cover this sufficiently and therefore a condition is recommended to provide details as to what provisions are made in these regards. The standard hours of working during the construction and demolition phase is also sought to be controlled via condition.

iii) Berkshire Archaeology

- 4.9 An archaeological desk-based assessment was submitted with the application and provides useful information on the archaeological potential of the site, based on a number of sources such as the Historic Environment Record and historic mapping. It also provides information of the impact of the existing building. The site is located within the medieval core of Reading and within an Area of Archaeological Potential. However a basement constructed for the existing building will most likely have removed any archaeological remains on the site. In addition the current proposals do not include any works that involve ground disturbance. Therefore in this instance it is not necessary to recommend any further archaeological investigations in association with this application.

iv) Reading UK CIC

- 4.10 Reading UK CIC advise that a section 106 legal agreement will be required for an Employment, Skills and Training Plan (ESP) under the terms of the Council's SPD. In this instance this would take the form of two ESPs – one for the construction phase and one for the end use phase (given the applicant is a major retailer). In practice, the developer is required under the SPD to submit details of a local Employment and Skills Plan. This will need to be agreed with Reading UK CIC, who deliver ESPs on behalf of the Borough Council.

vi) Public consultation

- 4.11 A total of 12 notification letters were sent to nearby occupiers on Broad Street and Minster Street. Site notices were erected on both the Broad Street and Minster Street frontages on 29/07/2015, expiring on 19/08/2015. A press notice was published on 06/08/2015, expiring on 27/08/2015. No responses have been received.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.
- 5.2 Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
- 5.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'.
- 5.4 Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 requires the Local Planning Authority to exercise its powers under these regulations in the interests of amenity and public safety taking into account the provisions of the development plan, so far as they are material; and any other relevant factors. Regulation 3 states that factors relevant to amenity include: the general characteristics of the locality, including the presence of any feature of historic, architectural, cultural, or similar interest. Factors relevant to public safety include highway safety and whether the advert would hinder security or surveillance devices, including speed cameras.
- 5.5 The application has been assessed against the following policies:
National
National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Policy Guidance
- 5.6 **Reading Borough Local Development Framework
Core Strategy 2008 (Altered 2015)**
CS1 Sustainable Construction and Design
CS2 Waste Minimisation
CS3 Social Inclusion and Diversity
CS4 Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
CS5 Inclusive Access
CS7 Design and the Public Realm
CS9 Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities
CS20 Implementation of the Reading Transport Strategy
CS24 Car / Cycle Parking
CS25 Scale and Location of Retail, Leisure and Culture Development
CS26 Hierarchy of Centres
CS33 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
CS34 Pollution and Water Resources
CS38 Trees, Hedges and Woodlands
- 5.7 **Reading Centre Area Action Plan 2009**
RC5 Design in the Centre
RC6 Definition of the Centre
RC10 Active Frontages

5.8 Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012) (Altered 2015)

- SD1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- DM1 Adaptation to Climate Change
- DM2 Decentralised Energy
- DM3 Infrastructure Planning
- DM12 Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters
- DM19 Air Quality
- DM22 Advertisements
- DM23 Shopfronts and Cash Machines

5.9 Reading Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents

- Employment, Skills and Training SPD (2013)
- Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)
- Revised SPD on Planning Obligations under Section 106 (2015)
- Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2011)

5.10 Other relevant documentation

- St Mary's Butts / Castle Street Conservation Area Appraisal 2008
- Market Place / London Street Conservation Area Appraisal 2007

6. APPRAISAL

6.1 The main issues are considered to be:

- i) Principle of development – land use considerations
- ii) Scale, appearance, design and effect on heritage assets
- iii) Amenity / Quality of proposed & reconfigured retail floorspace
- v) Transport
- vi) Sustainability and energy
- vii) Other matters – Archaeology, S106, CIL & Equality
- viii) Advertisement Consent application

i) Principle of development – land use considerations

6.2 The lawful use of the existing building is Class A1 retail, having been most recently occupied by BHS. This proposal seeks to retain the Class A1 use and increase the gross internal floorspace at the site by 1050sqm (from 5936sqm to 6986sqm). In terms of the usable Class A1 floorspace specified by the applicant, this will increase by 1709sqm (from 3308sqm to 5017sqm) as a result of a rationalisation of the 'back of shop' spaces. The increase in retail floorspace within this primary shopping area is welcomed in principle, aligning with the general aims of policies CS25, CS26, RC6 and RC10.

6.3 The proposals will result in the amalgamation of one of the small retail units at ground floor level (119 Broad Street – shown as Crepe Affaire on the photograph above) to the demise of the proposed occupier. Given the site is not located within one of the designated 'small shop units' detailed by policy RC11, there is considered to be no policy basis to resist this. The even smaller kiosk style unit between the two (118 Broad Street – shown as Rollover Hot Dogs on the photograph above) is not part of the application site and is unaffected by the proposed development.

6.4 It is noted that the applicant is Primark Stores Ltd, who already have a presence in the town centre at nearby West Street. This application is however considered on the basis of any potential Class A1 future occupier at the site, and not necessarily

the applicant. Furthermore, no planning application has been submitted in respect of the current West Street store and it is not within the realms of the planning system to dictate where specific Class A1 retailers locate/possibly relocate to. Instead, each application must be considered on its own merits.

ii) Scale, appearance, design and effect on heritage assets

- 6.5 The proposals can be split into four distinct elements, namely: a) the second floor level extensions; b) the roof level plant enclosure above (third floor level); c) Broad Street shopfront and façade alterations; d) Minster Street shopfront and façade alterations. As such, each main element is considered in turn.

a) The second floor level extensions

- 6.6 The most significant works in terms of increasing the floorspace at the site is proposed through a second floor extension to the building. There is already a second floor covering around half of the existing footprint (fronting onto Broad Street), with the proposal effectively seeking to in-fill the remaining areas (predominantly in the area fronting onto Minster Street). It is proposed to adopt a contrasting appearance to the remainder of the building in the design at this point, with a Kingspan insulated external wall cladding panel system proposed. In general terms this would not be too dissimilar to the upper floor treatment to the east associated with the Oracle (when viewed from Minster Street), although the proposed colour would be a slightly darker grey and take advantage of technological advances in the quality/longevity of cladding in comparison with the neighbouring building. Officers accept that the design approach is an appropriate response to both the building and the prevailing context at this point, with the exact details of the proposed materials being secured via condition to ensure the finished quality is appropriate. As such, this element of the proposals is considered to comply with Policies CS7, CS33 and RC5.

b) the roof level plant enclosure above (third floor level);

- 6.7 Above the second floor extension it is proposed to install various plant (3 air handling units / 6 condensers / a chiller and an emergency generator) of various sizes and between 2m and 2.6m in height. All such plant will be located away from the two street elevations and away from the boundaries with neighbouring properties. In addition, a screen is proposed to surround the plant, raising in height to 2.5m. This will be set back between 5.5m and 9.3m from the parapet of the Minster Street elevation. All such works are considered to be of utilitarian design, but given the proposed set back from the frontages, would not be detrimental to the character and appearance of the building, neighbouring buildings or nearby listed buildings (and other heritage assets). In practice, the plant enclosure would appear similar to that seen on the aerial photographs (in section 1) to the east of the application site. With the above in mind, no issues are raised with this element of the proposals from a design perspective, with the proposals complying with Policies CS7, CS33 and RC5.

c) Broad Street shopfront and façade alterations;

- 6.8 Considering first the Broad Street shopfront alterations at ground floor level, the proposal seeks to upgrade the previous shopfront with the reintroduction of some traditional features in a more contemporary manner. More specifically, more explicit stallrisers and columns are proposed within the largely glazed shopfronts, while the clear line of the fascia zone remains unaltered. In addition, a previously

recessed entrance point has been altered to be flush with the street, which is welcomed from a safety and security perspective. Furthermore, the plans detail that a variety of window display zones will be created (and not covered with opaque material), in order to create an active frontage to the street. As such, the ground floor shopfront is considered to be appropriate in design and heritage terms, consistent with Policies CS7, CS33, DM23, RC5 and RC10.

- 6.9 At upper floor level it is proposed to remove all the existing pre-cast concrete elements and effectively strip it back to its base. There is considered to be no objection to such an approach, as the upper floors are not considered to be of any architectural merit in themselves or worthy of retention. The proposed replacement façade represents a contemporary design approach, comprising a combination of clear glass boxes (set with stainless steel spider fixings) and laminate panels, set within the remaining structural concrete fins (which will be cut back so as to not protrude as they do at present). This will be framed by a limestone cladding, with the eastern edge of the upper floors comprising grey brickwork (rather than glazing/laminate panels), adjacent to the decreetive 120 Broad Street (considered to be a non-designated heritage asset).
- 6.10 This element of the proposals has been subject to refinement during the course of the application, in order to address officer concerns with the originally proposed works. In short, it is now considered that the façade works are satisfactory in themselves, and just as importantly, the prevailing character and appearance elsewhere in the area. Along Broad Street there are generally few examples of the large expanses of glazing which are proposed here, with the upper floors generally being more traditional in nature. However, Metro Bank and the entrances to the Oracle illustrate a more recent approach incorporating largely glazed upper levels. As such, the character is not wholly uniform. In this instance, the provision of glazing, together with the other materials proposed, is considered to provide a suitably attractive frontage of sufficient quality in a contemporary style. Moreover, in itself, the proposal is considered to strike an appropriate balance between creating and maintaining both a vertical and horizontal rhythm which is apparent along Broad Street. The use of brickwork (render originally proposed) adjacent to No. 120 Broad Street is considered important in preserving a degree of continuity with the context of the neighbouring building. The revised proposal to show clear glazing at upper floor level is considered to be more in keeping with the prevailing character (bearing in mind nearby heritage assets and the requirement to ensure high visual quality), with a condition recommended to detail that this glazing will remain clear in nature in the future. A condition is also recommended for further details of all facing materials, again to ensure the design quality of the finished appearance. With all of the above in mind, the proposed works are therefore considered to comply with Policies CS7, CS33, DM23, RC5 and RC10.

d) Minster Street shopfront and façade alterations

- 6.11 Considering first the ground level works, it is initially noted that owing to land levels, there is effectively a lower ground (Minster Street level) and upper ground (ground floor level within the building) levels on this frontage. At these points it is proposed to increase the prominence of the entrance by effectively making this a double height entrance area, allowing better views into the store from ground level. This is strongly welcomed in improving the active nature of the frontage, in line with Policies DM22 and RC10. Furthermore, the upper ground floor level (following revisions during the course of the application) includes an active display window, which is also considered appropriate. In the remaining areas it is proposed to install graphics rather than active display windows, owing to

structural constraints. In the past such areas have been obscured (see relevant history above) and so this element is, on balance, considered appropriate. In terms of other general shopfront features, the language of the existing shopfront remains (despite all finishes being replaced), with the columns and stallrisers being suitable in design terms in the context of the building and surrounding character along Minster Street. As such, at the lower levels, the proposed works are considered to comply with Policies CS7, CS33, DM23, RC5 and RC10.

- 6.12 At upper floor level, the proposal is to overclad the existing concrete panels with powder coated pressed aluminum metal panels. The existing surrounds and fins will be retained, made good and decorated in a dark grey colour (a corporate branding colour of the applicant). The result is considered to represent a tangible visual improvement to the streetscene when compared with existing. It is also considered to sufficiently relate to other floors of the building, the Broad Street elevation and not harm the setting of neighbouring buildings or nearby listed buildings. Like the Broad Street elevation, details of the precise materials will be secured via condition in order to ensure the finished appearance is of a suitably high quality. Therefore, this element too is considered to comply with the aforementioned design/heritage/active frontage policies.

iii) Amenity / Quality of proposed & reconfigured retail floorspace

- 6.13 In terms of overlooking, visual dominance, and daylight/sunlight amenity impacts, no significant adverse impacts are envisaged for any adjoining or nearby occupier (either commercial or residential occupiers). The proposed second floor extension would infill areas where neighbouring buildings (which are not in residential use) are already higher than the host building, which downplays possible concerns in this regard. It was witnessed during the officer site visit that there are neighbouring windows at the John Lewis building which would face the second floor extension at close distances, but these were seen to serve storage areas, rather than prime retail or café space. The roof top plant would be set in from the boundary in order to minimise any overlooking, visual dominance or daylight/sunlight concerns.
- 6.14 With regard to noise and disturbance, the applicant has submitted a Plant Noise Assessment. This has been considered by the Council's Environmental Protection officers. As detailed at section 4 above, officers are, following the submission of clarifications and further details during the course of the application, satisfied that the proposed development is appropriate subject to more details being secured via condition. The control of noise and dust during the construction phase will also be controlled within the recommended CMS condition.
- 6.15 In terms of crime and safety, the proposal is considered to have incorporated features which will reduce the potential for crime and possible anti-social behaviour. The existing Broad Street and Minster Street entrance include recessed areas (most significantly on Broad Street), which provides opportunities for potential crime/fear of crime, and an area for anti-social behaviour, such as rough sleeping for example. The proposal seeks to remove these recessed entrances, and instead the entrances will be flush with the façade of the shopfront windows. Such features are welcomed within the context of policy DM4.
- 6.16 The applicant has shown an unusually high level of detail on the proposed floor plans, indicating the likely layout and full range of facilities provided on site for staff and customers alike. In overall terms it is demonstrated that a high quality retail offer will be provided for customers through the proposed layout, while a

range of staff facilities are shown to be provided on site. These include a dedicated staff café, meeting and training rooms and staff showers/locker rooms. All such facilities will assist in contributing to the overall vibrancy of the town centre.

iv) Transport

- 6.17 As detailed at section 4 above, there are no transport based concerns with the proposals, subject to a Construction Method Statement (CMS) being secured via condition. This is duly recommended.

v) Sustainability and energy

- 6.18 Given the scale and nature of the proposals a sustainability statement, incorporating a BREEAM pre-assessment, has been submitted. This has been considered on the basis of the 'new' second floor, which the report details as being just beneath 1000sqm in floorspace. On the basis, in accordance with the SPD, the required BREEAM target level is 'Very Good'. The pre-assessment concludes that 59.29% of credits will be targeted and considered achievable, with it being possible to achieve 65.74% in a best-case scenario. Both levels are above the minimum 55% of credits required to meet a BREEAM 'Very Good' level, and also within the 3% buffer detailed in SPD. This is welcomed in line with policy CS1 and SPD. The standard condition is recommended, seeking a final design stage and final certificate prior to occupation accreditation, to ensure that the 'Very Good' standard is achieved in practice.
- 6.19 The applicant has also submitted an Energy Strategy, which demonstrates that a variety of passive design and energy efficiency measures are proposed to be incorporated in the design. In terms of renewable energy, air source heat pumps are proposed, which would terminate at roof level. It is concluded that the various measures proposed will reduce energy demand and carbon emissions at the site, when compared within the context of Building Regulations Part L. In short, it is evident that the applicant has given considerable thought to the inclusion of various measures to minimize energy use and demand across the site, which is welcomed in line with CS1. In such circumstances it is recommended for a condition to secure the development being carried out in accordance with the measures detailed within the Energy Strategy submitted.

vi) Other matters - Archaeology, S106, CIL & Equality

- 6.20 Archaeology - As detailed in section 4, Berkshire Archaeology has considered the report submitted by the applicant. On the basis of the content of the information provided, Berkshire Archaeology are content that no further archaeological investigations are required, and no conditions are necessary in this instance.
- 6.21 S106 Legal Agreement - As outlined in section 4, UK CIC recommends that an Employment, Skills and Training Plan (ESP) is secured via legal agreement, given that over 1000sqm of additional floorspace is proposed. Both a construction phase and end use phase (given the applicant is a major retailer) ESP is sought in this instance. The applicant has agreed an in-principle willingness to enter into a legal agreement on this basis.
- 6.22 It is considered that the obligation referred to above would comply with the National Planning Policy Framework and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in that it would be: i) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning

terms, ii) directly related to the development and iii) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. This Head of Term has been agreed by the applicant and a S106 Legal Agreement is in the process of being prepared to secure this contribution. As noted above, the update report may include a further Head of Term concerning affordable housing (depending on the outcome of existing on-going discussions).

- 6.23 CIL - The applicant has submitted the necessary CIL form within the application submission. Although the proposals in themselves are CIL liable, there will be no charge in line with the current charging schedule (£0 for Class A1 retail in the Central Reading area).
- 6.24 Equality - In determining these applications the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to these particular applications.

vii) Advertisement Consent application

- 6.25 As detailed in section 5 above, for advertisement consent applications only amenity and public safety considerations can be taken into account. As outlined at paragraphs 2.3-2.4 above, more signs were originally proposed than are now. More specifically, the high level signage on the Broad Street elevation was omitted from the proposals following officer concerns.
- 6.26 The remaining signage is all at ground floor level (or a combination of lower ground / upper ground floor level on the Minster Street elevation, given the land levels at the site creating an unusual arrangement at this point) and, in short, is not considered to result in any amenity or public safety concerns. More specifically, the signage follows the general approach applied previously by BHS, set primarily above the shopfront. The proposed fascia signs are considered to be suitable in terms of size and appearance (in the context of the building as a whole and the prevailing context). Meanwhile the projecting signs are in excess of 3.5m above street level, resulting in no public safety concerns.
- 6.27 Transport officers have confirmed approval of the proposed signage, subject to a condition limiting luminance levels. In this regard all signage will be internally illuminated, with the main fascia sign comprising individually illuminated lettering for the intended occupier. The signs are not considered to have a harmful impact on neighbouring buildings (heritage assets) or the nearby conservation areas and listed buildings. As such, the advertisements are considered appropriate subject to the standard conditions and the aforementioned luminance levels being limited.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposals are considered to be acceptable within the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. As such, full planning permission is recommended for approval, subject to the stated conditions and completion of the S106 Legal Agreement. Advertisement consent is recommended to be granted subject to the specified conditions.

Drawings and documents for 151221/FUL:

01 Rev 4.1 – Existing Basement, as received 13/07/15
02 Rev 4.1 – Existing Ground Floor, as received 13/07/15
03 Rev 4.0 – Existing First Floor, as received 13/07/15
04 Rev 4.0 – Existing Second Floor, as received 13/07/15
05 Rev 4.0 – Existing Third Floor, as received 13/07/15
07 Rev 4.0 – Existing Sections, as received 13/07/15
08 Rev 4.0 – Existing Elevations, as received 13/07/15

09 Rev 4.1 - Location and Site/Block Plan, as received 13/07/15

15 Rev 4.1 – Proposed Section A-A, as received 13/07/15
102 Plant Deck Section, as received 13/07/15
116 Rev 4.5 – Proposed Elevations Broad Street, as received 23/09/15
117 Rev 4.2 – Proposed Elevations Minster Street, as received 21/09/15
209 Rev 4.1 – Proposed Basement Scope of works, as received 13/07/15
210 Rev 4.3 – Proposed Ground Floor Scope of works, as received 13/07/15
211 Rev 4.2 – Proposed First Floor Scope of works, as received 13/07/15
212 Rev 4.2 – Proposed Second Floor Scope of works, as received 13/07/15
213 Rev 4.1 – Proposed Third Floor Scope of works, as received 13/07/15

Design and Access Statement by 3d Architects dated July 2015, as received 13/07/15
Planning Report by Chart Plan (2004) Limited, dated July 2015, as received 13/07/15
Plant Noise Impact Assessment by Hoare Lea Ref REP-1005891-TH-20150921-4 Rev 4, dated & received 21/09/15
Construction Management Plan Rev 2 by Mace, dated & received 28/08/15
Existing / Proposed Floorspace Schedule, as received 25/08/15
Planning Areas Rev 1.1, as received 13/07/15
Primark Reading Proposed Finishes, as received 13/07/15
Energy Statement by CHB Sustainability, Ref CHBS-YX-15018-1, dated 12/06/15, as received 13/07/15
Sustainability/BREEAM Pre-Assessment Report by CHB Sustainability, Ref CHBS-YX-15018-2, dated 12/06/15, as received 13/07/15
Letter from GIA Ref 9689/OL/160615, dated 16/06/15, as received 13/07/15
Workplace Travel Plan by Milestone Transport Planning, Ref 15/065 dated July 2015, as received 13/07/15.
Transport Statement by Milestone Transport Planning, Ref 15/065 dated July 2015, as received 13/07/15.
Heritage Desk-Based Assessment by Cotswold Archaeology Ref 770209 / 15204 dated May 2015, as received 13/07/15

Drawings for 151241/ADV:

09 Rev 4.1 - Location and Site/Block Plan, as received 13/07/15
95 Rev 4.2 – Proposed External Signage Option 2, as received 23/09/15

Case Officer: Jonathan Markwell

[illegible]

Broad Street - Image

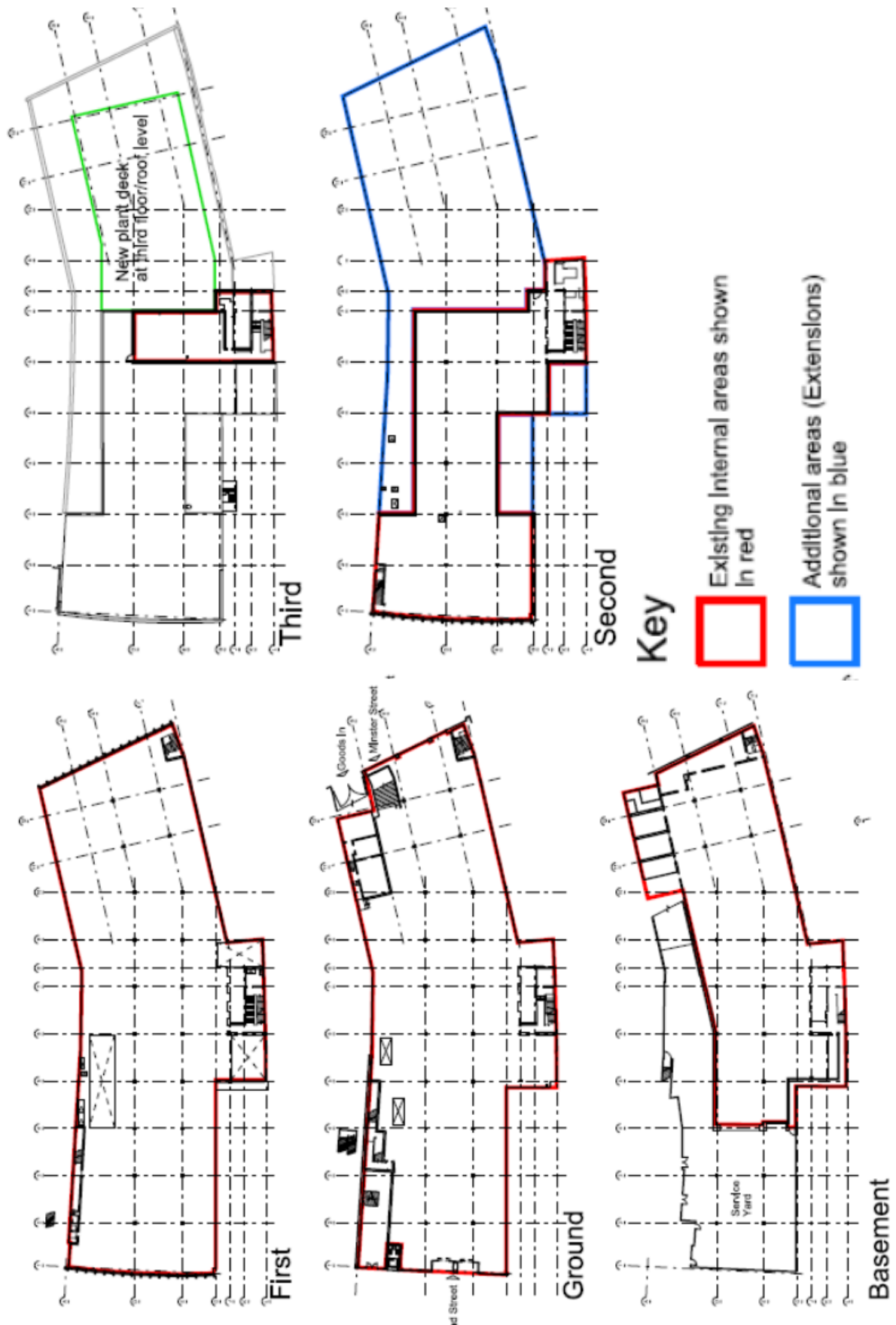
Section Annotations:

- Lightweight concrete composite panels with a 100mm insulation layer to be installed over the existing concrete structure (see also page 100, 101).
- Lightweight concrete composite panels with a 100mm insulation layer to be installed over the existing concrete structure (see also page 100, 101).
- Steel structure (see also page 100, 101).
- Lightweight concrete composite panels with a 100mm insulation layer to be installed over the existing concrete structure (see also page 100, 101).
- Steel structure (see also page 100, 101).

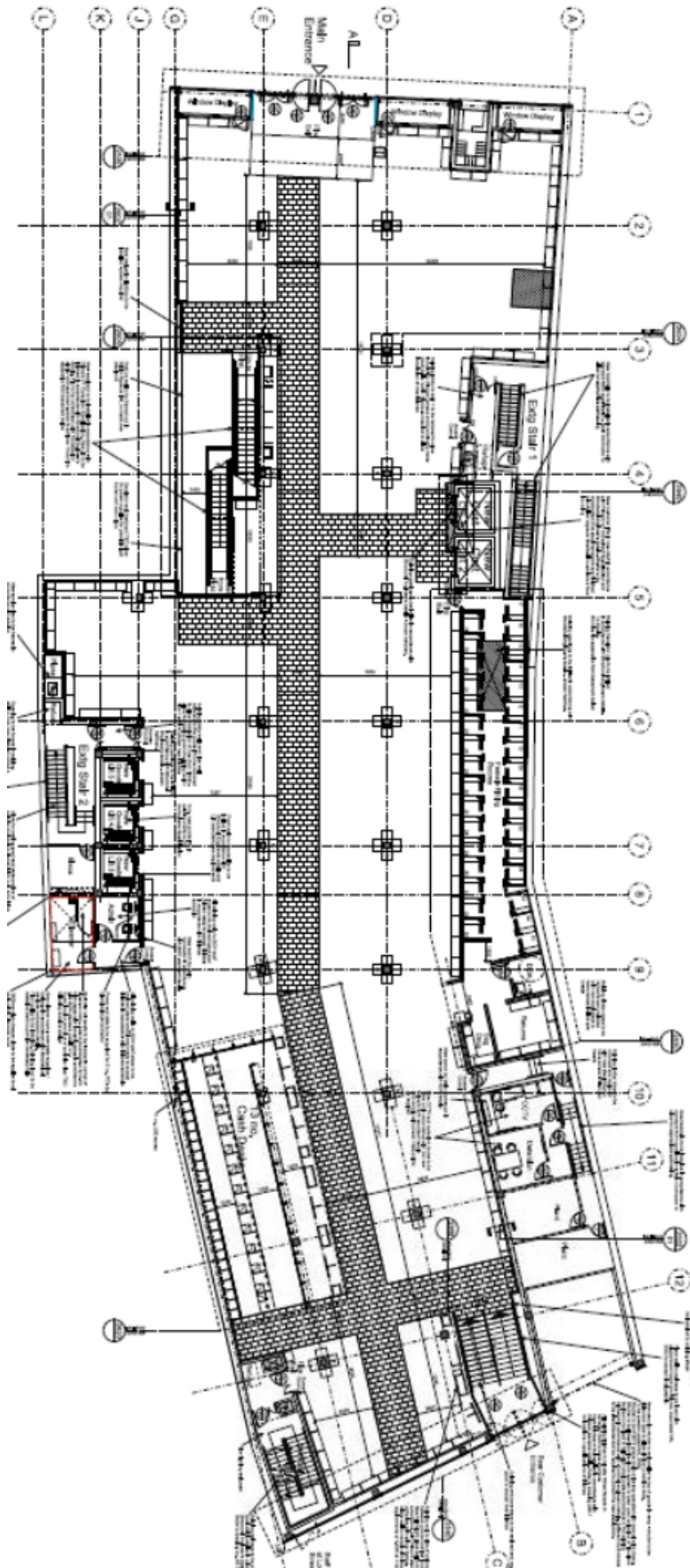
Plan Annotations:

- Lightweight concrete composite panels with a 100mm insulation layer to be installed over the existing concrete structure (see also page 100, 101).
- Lightweight concrete composite panels with a 100mm insulation layer to be installed over the existing concrete structure (see also page 100, 101).
- Steel structure (see also page 100, 101).
- Lightweight concrete composite panels with a 100mm insulation layer to be installed over the existing concrete structure (see also page 100, 101).
- Steel structure (see also page 100, 101).

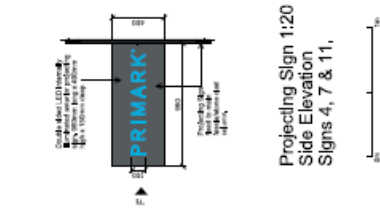
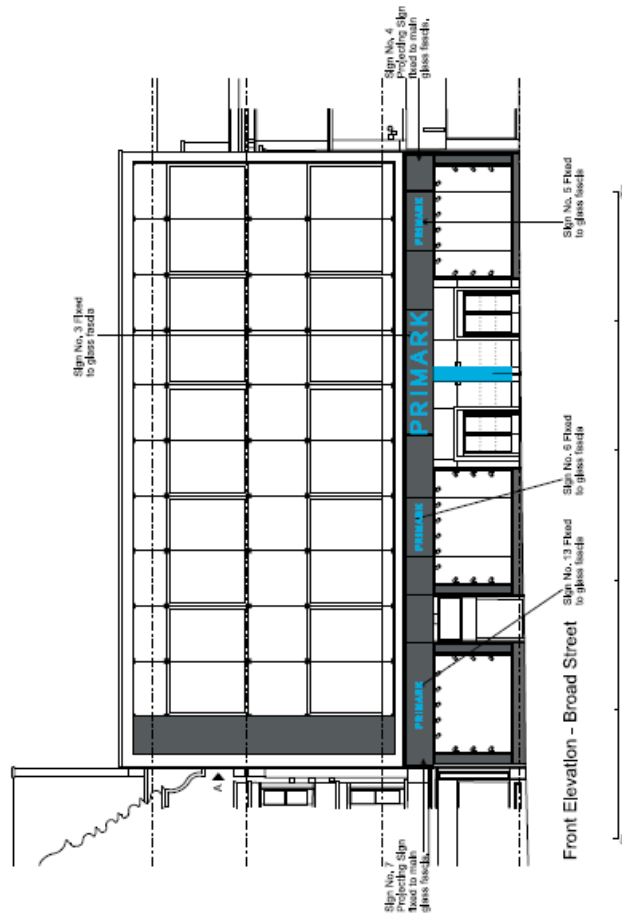
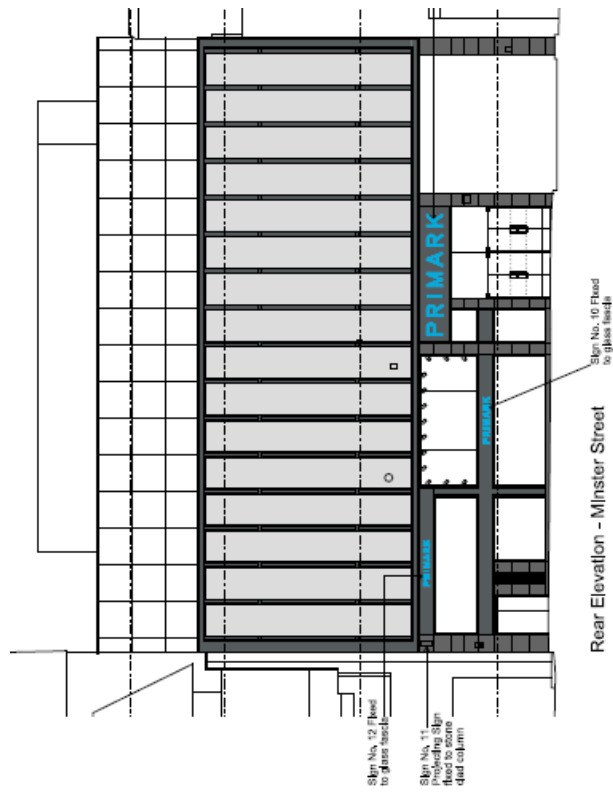
Plans showing the extent of the proposed extensions to the building



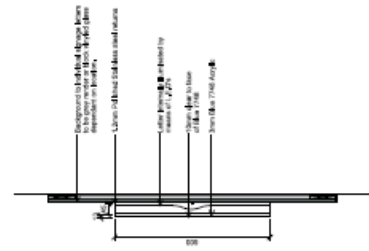
Typical floor plan - Ground Floor Level



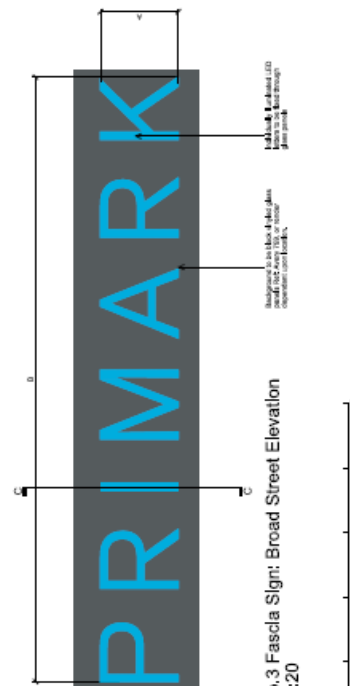
Proposed signage



Projecting Sign 1:20
Side Elevation
Signs 4, 7 & 11,



Proposed Signage Details 1:10
Fascia Sign - Section CC



Sign No.3 Fascia Sign: Broad Street Elevation
Scale 1:20



View from the site looking towards the area where the second floor and roof plant extension is proposed (John Lewis building on the right)



Internal view at ground floor level during the officer site visit (01/09/15)