

SEVEN BRIDGES HOUSE, 19 BRIDGE STREET, READING, RG1 2LR

Design and Access Statement in Support of Application for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for change of use from vacant office (B1) to restaurant (A3) with associated internal and external modifications.

Applicants: Arc Design & Build
Agent and Architects: Michael Jones Architects
Heritage Consultant: Owens Galliver Architects LLP
Planning Consultant: Walsingham Planning

September 2015

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INTRODUCTION

The property relating to this application for planning permission and listed building consent is Seven Bridges House, 19 Bridge Street, Reading, RG1 2LR. The building is Grade II Listed, originally dating from the early 19th century, and has most recently been used as an office at ground and first floor level, with storage and plant space in the basement. Seven Bridges House is not in a conservation area.

The proposal in this application is to change the use of the building from offices to a restaurant and bar. The proposal includes sensitive internal and external modifications to the building to provide suitable accommodation for the new use. In principle the design approach has been to keep modifications to a minimum, and where changes are made, to make them in keeping with the existing building to minimise their impact on the appearance and plan form.

This planning application is being made following the submission of a pre-application, in which we were seeking guidance from the planning department on the appropriateness of our proposals. As well as describing the proposed scheme in the context of the existing building, this Design & Access Statement gives details of the changes that have been made following the pre-application advice, particularly in response to the Council's Consultant Conservation Officer's comments. For reference a full copy of Reading Borough Council's Pre-application Report is included in Appendix A of this Design & Access Statement.

In addition to this Design & Access Statement, a separate Heritage Statement and a Planning Statement support this application. These can be found in the Appendix of this Design & Access Statement.

The Heritage Statement, produced by Owens Galliver Architects LLP, examines the history of the property, gives a chronology of the building, and notes the condition of the few suspected remaining original features. This report can be found in Appendix B

The Planning Statement, by Walsingham Planning, examines the proposal in the context of local and national planning policy, and concludes that the proposal would be compliant with current policies. This report also includes a Flood Risk Assessment. The Planning Statement has been submitted as a separate document to this Design & Access Statement.

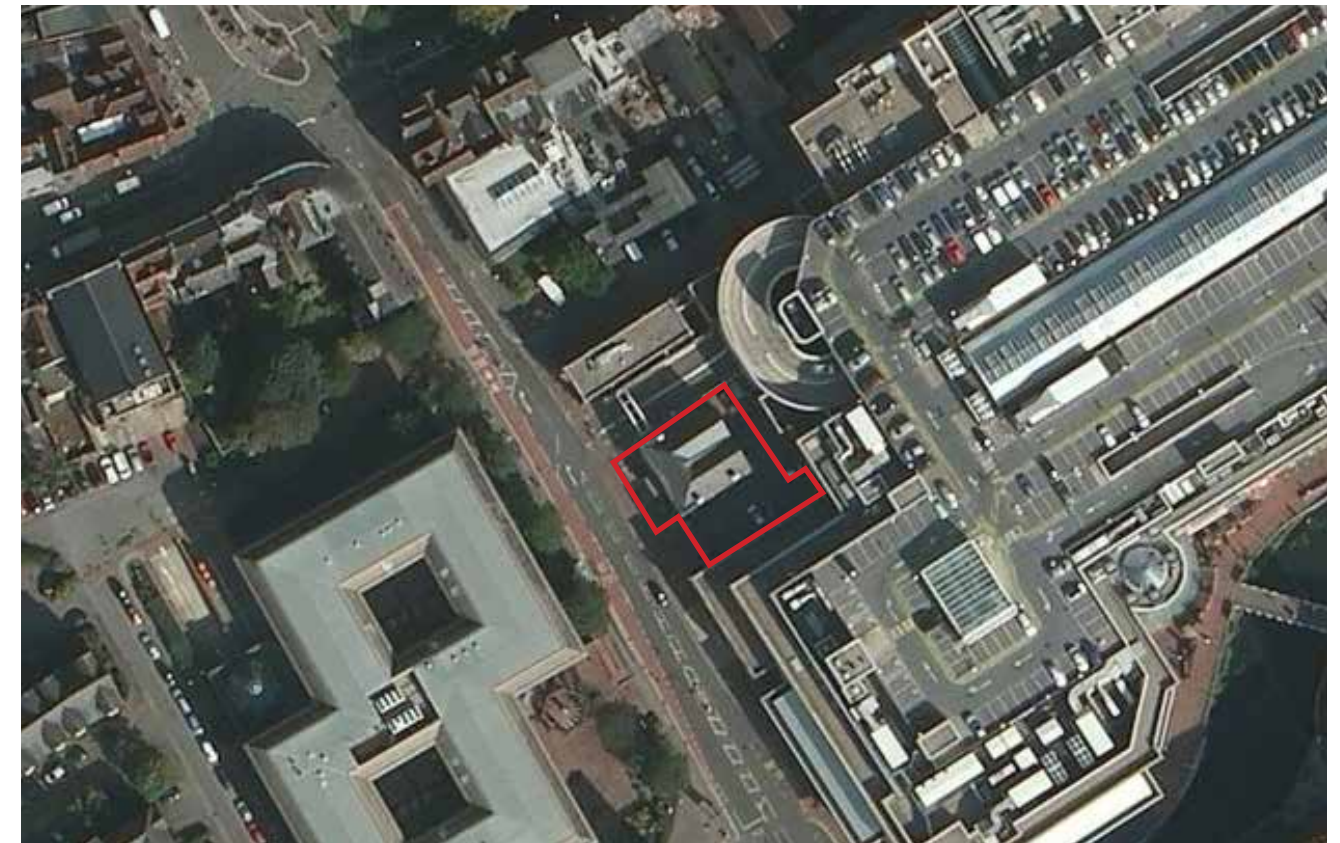


Figure 1 - Aerial Photograph showing Seven Bridges House



THE EXISTING BUILDING

The Building was first listed on 22nd March 1957. The most recent amendment to the listing was on 14th December 1978. The list description reads:

'Early C19. Attributed by Pevsner to Soane but this is probably an error. 2 storey villa. Brick with stucco string between ground and 1st floors, stucco cornice, parapet and hipped slate roof. 5 windows on first floor, glazing bar sashes with moulded architraves (spoiled by poor double glazing). 4 windows and central door on ground floor with double panelled doors and radiating fanlight over. Greek Doric portico with fluted columns and pilasters supporting and plain cornice; panelled soffit. Interior altered but enriched ceiling cornice kept on ground floor.'

The existing building is currently available to let as office space with limited parking provision, and has been empty for some time (see Planning Statement). Although the building's elegant facade does contribute positively to the street scene, the lack of activity that it provides, particularly in combination with the empty car park associated with the building, currently offers little in the way of atmosphere and activity to the area.

Seven Bridges House itself has undergone many changes throughout its history, and very little of the building's internal fabric is thought to be original, with large portions of the ground floor partitions formed of modern studwork (see existing drawings and Heritage Statement).

The immediate locale is predominantly commercial, with The Oracle Holy Brook multi-storey car park entrance directly to north, The Oracle shopping complex surrounding it to the east and south and Reading County Council Office's directly opposite. The neighbouring buildings use the Seven Bridges House car park for their fire escape routes. There is also a small smoking shelter in the north-east corner of the site, which appears to be used by staff and security from the Oracle shopping centre.



Figure 2 - Front view of Seven Bridges House



Figure 3 - Rear view of Seven Bridges House

THE DESIGN APPROACH

The Council's Pre-application Report attributes a large amount of significance on the fact that there had been a reference to Sir John Soane as the original architect of this building. In fact, the Heritage Statement produced to accompany this application provides substantial evidence to demonstrate that this claim is false, this proposition is one that is supported by the Listed Building Description which states that the building is 'Early C19. Attributed by Pevsner to Soane but this is probably an error'. Regardless of this, the existing building is Grade II Listed, and this must be respected in all aspect of our proposals, particularly in the elegant appearance of the building from the street and the remaining original internal features.

The Pre-application advice makes reference to Historic England advice on how listed buildings should be treated, it particularly highlights the following statements:

'Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact.'

and

'Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance.'

The proposed scheme in this application has been carefully considered to make best use of the existing spaces within the listed building. Although in some area we have not followed the pre-application advice word-for-word, strategic decisions have been made to avoid the need for substantial changes to the key features and plan form of the building, and modifications to existing elements are only proposed where we believe they are required to *enhance* the significance of this heritage asset. Where modifications are proposed, steps have been taken to *minimise* the changes to *mitigate impact*, while still providing the facilities required to make sure the new use as a restaurant *enhances* the listed building.

PROPOSED BASEMENT

No structural modifications or modifications to the building fabric in the basement are proposed. The basement of the building is proposed as plant space, food storage and a cellar. A cold storage unit will be installed in the food storage room. The existing rear access from the basement is to be retained and used as a service access for deliveries and maintenance.

No comment was made in the Council's Pre-application Report in relation to the proposed use of the basement.



Figure 4 - The existing basement is in good condition and is ready to be used as plant and storage space.

PROPOSED GROUND FLOOR PLAN

Entrance Hall

Following Pre-application feedback from the Council, the amount of demolition proposed in the walls either side of the Entrance Hall has been substantially reduced. The current proposal provides for widening of the two existing doors (GD03 & GD12 on plans) to form two sets of double doors linking the proposed bar area and the proposed Ground Floor Dining Room. Door heights would be equal to the existing doors, allowing cornices and timber mouldings in the Entrance Hall and Front Rooms to be fully retained, and allowing the plan form and two key walls, running the length-wise, creating the principal 'Reception Rooms' to be clearly visible. The new doors and door openings will re-use existing linings and architraves where possible, and otherwise will be constructed to match the doors (see drawing 1015.10.03.Pln1.202).

The demolition of the existing doorway (GD04) and section of wall adjacent to the bottom of the staircase is no longer proposed. Instead this area is to be retained as existing. The door on the opposite side of the Entrance Hall (GD11), instead of being removed and blocked up, will be retained and fixed closed (see drawing 1015.10.03.Pln1.203). Both of these modifications to our proposals serve to retain the original plan form of the building, and minimise impact on the existing building.

Front Windows

The tall front sash windows and shutters will be retained in their current form so as not to harm the appearance of the building, but glazed balustrades will be introduced to protect them from the inside. Frameless glass will be used to minimise visual intrusion and impact on the existing appearance of the building both internally and externally (see drawing 1015.10.03.Pln1.206)

Ground Floor Bar

In their pre-application report the Council suggested that it was inappropriate to locate the bar in the existing large space on the northern (left-hand) side of the ground floor. In fact, due to the size of bar required by the new occupant, this is the only existing room that is suitable. The provision of the bar in this space does not result in any structural modifications to the building, or changes to the existing plan form, therefore its impact on the existing listed building is minimal.

Cased Opening in Ground Floor Dining Room

From visual inspection of the wall separating the existing Office (GF07) and Server Room (GF06), it is suspected that at some point in the building's history this wall has been removed and later re-constructed. This is due to the fact that the central portion of the wall is much thinner than the rest of the existing spine wall.

As advised in the pre-application report by the Principal Conservation Officer, we are proposing that the new opening in the wall between the two southern (right-hand) Ground Floor rooms is a 'cased opening', lined in the same way as the existing door openings. The opening heights are equal to those of the existing door openings, and allow the retention of the existing timber mouldings and cornices at high level (see drawing 1015.10.03.Pln I.204). Due to the fact that there is a down-stand and substantial side 'wings' of the wall retained, the original plan form of the building will be clearly visible.

As we also believe that this wall has previously been removed and reconstructed, we do not believe we are removing any original building fabric by forming this opening.

Toilets

The toilets will be left in their existing locations, and existing partitions, although all believed to be modern additions, will be retained. Modifications will be made to the existing kitchen area to provide additional toilets required as a result of the new use. This area will be sensitively refurbished to provide a higher standard of sanitary accommodation required of a restaurant.

No comment was made in the Council's Pre-application Report in relation to the proposed toilet area.

PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN

Main Front Dining Room & Bar

In order for the restaurant to operate efficiently there is a need for a bar on the first floor. The Council's Pre-application advice criticised our decision to locate the first floor bar outside of the main front space, suggesting that the bar would '*easily be [sic] fit in to the large, rectangular meeting room at the front of the building*', and that this would remove the need for demolition of a wall. In our view, the large first floor space in the front section of the building is a key historic feature of the existing building, and a key part of the original building's plan form. To minimise impact on this space we have decided to keep the bar located in one of the rear rooms, with a relatively modest opening in the back wall of this main space which will act as a serving hatch (see drawing 1015.10.03.Pln1.207).

An opening of similar size and proportion is proposed in the same wall on the other side of the access door (FD02), which will provide views through to the kitchen from the large dining area (see drawing 1015.10.03.Pln1.208).

The two openings in this rear wall (see drawing 1015.10.03.Pln1.040) are sized to allow the space to operate successfully in its new use, but are not substantial enough to change the volume of the original space, or harm the plan form. Both openings will be treated in the same way as other openings that exist throughout the building, with white painted timber linings, and moulded architraves.

Reinstatement of fireplaces, that no doubt originally existed, at either end of this large space, will provide two focal points in this Main Front Dining Room.

Provision of Kitchen on First Floor

We are proposing that the kitchen would be located at first floor level, above the toilets. Again, this is contrary to the advice given in the Pre-application Report, which suggests that the kitchen could be located at ground floor level avoiding the need for unnecessary demolition of the rear wall to the main space. After careful consideration, we have established that locating the kitchen on the first floor, and removing a small portion of the rear wall of the Main Front Dining Room, would have less of an impact on the listed building than locating the kitchen on the ground floor. By locating the kitchen directly above the existing toilets, it allows us to easily connect water supplies and drainage with minimal impact on existing fabric. The substantial ceiling void above the toilet area also means that these services will be out of sight. The first floor location of the kitchen will also minimise impact caused by the installation of ventilation ductwork required for the kitchen extraction system, which can easily go up into the roof space and out through the rear gable of the building causing minimal harm to the listed building.



Figure 5 - Our proposal seeks to convert the main space in the first floor front room into a Main Dining Room. The volume and form of the existing space (shown in the photograph above) will be retained.

PROPOSED EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS

Rear Service Area

The cold storage room and cellar will require artificial cooling. External plant equipment associated with these cooling systems will be located out the back of the building. These units will be positioned adjacent to the existing, much larger, air handling units for the retained air conditioning system. They will not be visible from the front or side of the building and therefore will not have any detrimental impact on the appearance of the listed building. The units are also not located near to any residential accommodation, or any adjacent office accommodation, and therefore noise pollution is not expected to be an issue. The specification and location of the proposed units is shown on the application drawings.

Supply and extract grilles for the kitchen extraction system will be installed at high level on the rear elevation of the building. These grilles will not be visible from the front or side of the property. Because of the type of closed cookers proposed for the kitchen, and the clean nature of the cooking (only pizzas and pies) that will be undertaken in this restaurant, it is not anticipated that the extract grille will result in any issues with cooking odour pollution.

A freestanding secure bin storage building is proposed to the rear of the property. This will be an independent lightweight timber structure, which will accommodate the likely additional waste production resulting from the change of use, whilst allowing the area to remain clean and tidy (see drawing I015.I0.03.Pln I.209).

No comment was made in the Council's Pre-application Report in relation to the proposed secure bin store, or proposal to provide a kitchen extraction system.

External Dining Area

Car parking is not seen as a key requirement for the proposed restaurant, it is therefore proposed that part of the existing car park is allocated to form an external dining area.

Fire escape and service access for Seven Bridges House and the surrounding buildings will be retained as required.

Soft landscaping would be introduced to this area in the form of freestanding timber planters. The introduction of this soft landscaping and would be welcomed in what is currently an unused and very sparse area of hard surfaces.

The area we are proposing to use as external dining is south facing so is at an ideal orientation for use in summer months. There is no residential accommodation in close proximity to this area, we therefore do not anticipate that noise disturbance will be an issue.

No comment was made in the Council's Pre-application Report in relation to the proposed external dining area.

Formation of Door in South Elevation

In order to provide direct access from inside the building out into the external dining area, the conversion of an existing side window into a door is proposed (W06 into GD14 – see drawing I015.I0.03.Pln I.200). By positioning the new doorway in the same location as the existing window, we are minimising the change to the existing fabric of the building.

The existing drawings produced by Broadway Malyan from the 1990 planning application (see appendix of Heritage Statement) show that relatively recently in the building's history, there was a large opening in this area of the external wall providing access into a side extension (now demolished). By locating the new side door in the same location as this window (and the previous opening), we can be sure that we are not causing any harm to any original fabric of the building.

No comment was made in the Council's Pre-application Report in relation to the proposed side door.

OTHER GENERAL ITEMS

Removal of Existing Services

It should be noted that there is currently a large amount of services running through the existing building, concealed behind skirting boards and within the floors and walls. The remainder of these services is contained in surface mounted plastic trunking and conduit. The long runs of surface mounted conduit and trunking, and the high number of sockets and switches, clutter up the internal walls and inevitably harm the appearance of the spaces in the building. The majority of these visible services, which are a result of the buildings use as a office, will not be required in the new use as a restaurant, therefore they can be removed returning the original walls to their tidier clutter free appearance.

The benefit of the removal of the clutter caused by these services is clearly made apparent by comparing our existing and proposed drawings for the rear wall of the Main First Floor Dining Room (1015.10.01.Exg.040 & 1015.10.03.PlnI.040

Furniture & Joinery

All dining tables and chairs proposed in the restaurant are free standing and therefore will not have any impact on the built fabric, or the listed building.

Built in joinery is proposed for bar areas, and in the proposed kitchen. This joinery will all be designed and detailed to be in keeping with the listed building. These installations will not cause any harm to the existing fabric and will be easily reversible.

Compliance with Fire Regulations

Due to the number of proposed occupants, and the open plan nature of the Ground Floor Plan, our pre-application proposal contained a number of alterations that were required in order for the building to meet the Fire Regulations. Now that internal doors have been introduced, separating the Bar and Ground Floor Dining Area from the Entrance Hall, some of these measures are no longer required. The fire curtain that was proposed in the Entrance Hall, and the ramp providing a disabled escape route to the rear of the building have both been omitted, further minimising the impact of our proposals on the existing listed building.

Transport & Accessibility

The site is located in the centre of Reading and is easily accessible by public transport, existing cycle parking is also located very close to the existing building.

The existing building is easily accessible from the front either by steps up to the main front door, or via the disabled ramp to one side. The proposed modifications to the building in this application do not affect accessibility.



Figure 6 - The existing building's walls are peppered with services; surface mounted trunking, conduit, switches and sockets. As part of the refurbishment the majority of these services will be removed and the existing walls tidied up.



Figure 7 - Large amounts of services are currently run within the floor voids to enable the building to be used as offices

As stated in the Council's Pre-application Report, no dedicated parking would be required as part of the proposed use of the building as a restaurant.

The Council's Pre-application Report requests that an on site turning circle is provided for service deliveries. It is likely that 7.5 tonne vehicles, measuring approximately 8m in length, will carry out most service deliveries. A standard turning circle is shown on the accompanying diagram showing that it is not possible to turn a vehicle this large on the existing site (see drawing 1015.10.03.Pln1.210). It is proposed that vehicles of this size would have to reverse into the site to make their deliveries. They would then exit in forward gear. Space is provided around the edge of the outdoor seating area to allow for smaller service vehicles to access the rear of the building, and to maintain existing rights of way and fire exits from surrounding buildings. The restaurant management would schedule their larger deliveries to happen during less busy times to minimise disruption.

Signage

No signage is included in this application for planning permission and listed building consent. Once permission for this proposal is established, a separate application for appropriate signage will be submitted.

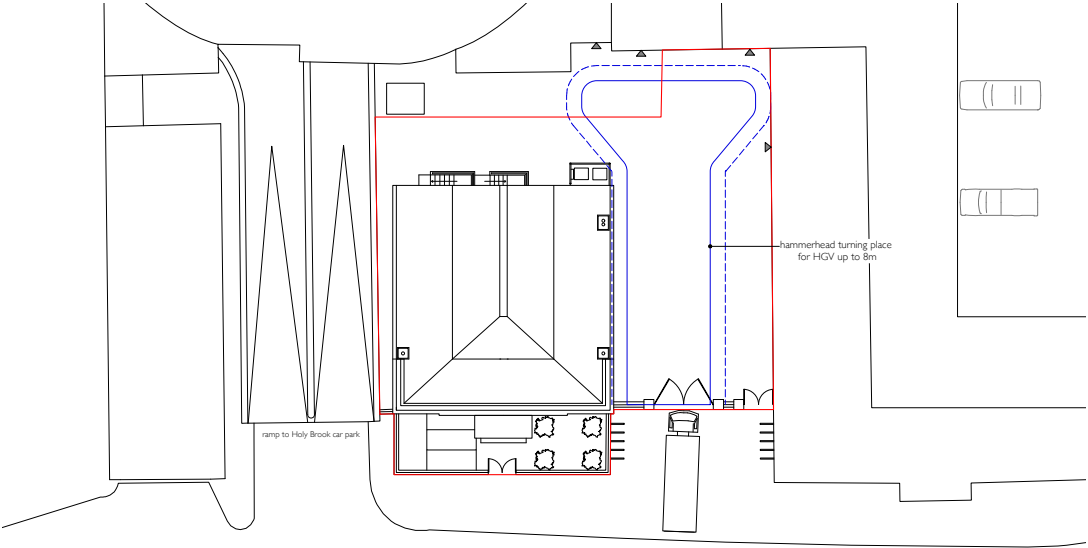


Figure 8 - Site Plan Showing Vehicle Turning Circle - 1:500
It is not possible to turn a 7.5 tonne vehicle within the existing site boundary. The site boundary above is shown in red and the hammerhead turning area for the vehicle is shown in blue.

CONCLUSION

The Planning Statement accompanying this application has demonstrated that the principle of our proposal for the change of use of this building from a vacant office into a restaurant is acceptable in planning terms; this view is confirmed by the pre-application report that has been produced by Reading Borough Council.

In listed building terms, although the pre-application advice provided by the Conservation Officer has not been followed word for word, we believe the changes that have been made, and additional information that has been provided, as part of this full application for planning permission and listed building consent, are sufficient to satisfy the conservation officer that our proposals are sensitive to the existing building, they would not cause any harm to the original fabric or plan form of the building, and they seek to retain the key spaces as they were intended by the original architect. An example of this would be the importance we have placed on retaining the volume of space in the first floor front room, as well as the retention of the plan form and original features, such as cornices and mouldings, in the existing ground floor front rooms.

In order to demonstrate the nominal impact our proposals would have on the original fabric of the existing building, we have prepared a room-by-room schedule of existing features, which describes key features of the existing building, and provides details in note form on how these items are affected by our proposals (see Appendix C). This schedule demonstrates that the majority of existing features that are modified or removed by these proposals are modern additions whose removal will not be detrimental to the building's listing, in fact in many cases the changes proposed would lead to improvements in ones appreciation of the original architectural intention of the building.

We hope it is clear that our intentions towards this listed building are to bring it back into use, in a way that is respectful to the original building in terms of appearance and materiality, as a vibrant restaurant for the benefit of the people of Reading, and we look forward to receiving support for these proposals.

Andrew Breathwick RIBA

For and on Behalf of Michael Jones Architects.

APPENDIX A

Reading Borough Council's Pre-application Report

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14 July 2015

Your contact is: Mr Matthew John Burns, Planning

Without prejudice

Dear Ms Rankin

Re: 150655/PREAPP - Pre-application enquiry relating to a change of use from offices to restaurant with changes to interior layout, new external door replacing window at ground floor level on the south elevation, ramp at the rear in place of an existing staircase, and new signage on the south and west elevations.
Seven Bridges House 19 Bridge Street Reading RG1 2LS

This letter is in response to the above pre-planning application enquiry received on 15th April 2015 and subsequent site visits.

The proposal

The enquiry relates to a proposed change of use from offices (B1a) to restaurant (A3) with changes to interior layout, new external door replacing window at ground floor level on the south elevation, ramp at the rear in place of an existing staircase, and new signage on the south and west elevations.

A location plan and existing and proposed floor plans and elevations have been provided.

Site description

The application site is located on the east side of Bridge Street and consists of a two storey office building which is currently unoccupied. The Building is Grade II Listed. The site is located within the Central Core and Primary Shopping Area of the Town Centre and is located within Flood Zone 2. The surrounding area comprises of a range of different uses and contains buildings of mixed character.

Relevant Planning History

900380 - Listed Building Consent - Internal and external works to facilitate use as offices; demolition of additions to south and rear elevations - Granted

950105 - Listed Building Consent - Repair and restoration of house. Demolition of 20th Century additions to side and rear with adjoining elevations reinstated to match existing -

970063 - Renewal of 90/1014/LB for internal and external works to facilitate use as offices;
demolition of additions to south and rear elevations

980893 - Use as either office (class B1) or doctor's surgery (class D1) of the
Town and Country Planning (Use classes) Order 1987 - Granted

990926 - Change of use for education and training purposes under class D1 of the Town and Country
Planning (Uses Classes) Order 1987 - Granted

Relevant Policies

Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2008)

CS1 (Sustainable Construction and Design)

CS7 (Design and Public Realm)

CS24 (Car/Cycle Parking)

CS25 Scale and Location of Retail, Leisure and Culture Development

CS26 Hierarchy of Centre's

CS27 Maintaining the Retail Character of Centre's

CS33 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

CS35 Flooding

Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012)

SA11 (Settlement Boundary)

D4 (Safeguarding Amenity)

DM12 (Access, Traffic and Highway Matters)

Reading Central Area Action Plan (RCAAP) (2009)

RC5 Design in the centre

RC6 Definition of the Centre

RC10 Active Frontages

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

Sustainable Design and Construction (2011)

Consultation Comments

Listed Building - Significant revisions required or refuse proposed change of use and Listed Building
Consent.

Transport - No objection in principle, however seek that an on-site turning area is provided within the
site due to the likely increase in deliveries as a result of the proposed change of use.

Environmental Protection - No objection.

Appraisal

Principle/Use/Impact on Listed Building

The proposed A3 use is a town centre use as referred to in the RCAAP Policy RC6. The proposal is
located within the RCAAP Town Centre Area and within the Primary Shopping Area. Within the Central
Core area town centre uses, such as A3, are considered are encouraged. Whilst resulting in a loss of
office space it is my understanding that the building is vacant and has been for some time. The site is
not located within the Office Core of the Town Centre or within the Core Employment Area.

Notwithstanding the above the site is Grade II Listed and therefore the impact of any change of use
upon the heritage status of the building must also be considered. The following comments have been
provided by the Council's Consultant Conservation Officer:

NATIONAL LISTED-BUILDING POLICY.

Firstly, it should be firmly noted that the NPPF gives firm guidance which is the basis for an objective analysis of these proposals. It is wholly inadequate for the architects to say Reading Borough Council is “subjective” while completely ignoring national conservation and Listed-Building policy. At present, the proposals makes a most unconvincing case.

In fact, the NPPF states clearly:

*“When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, **great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation**. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction... As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or ...require[s] clear and convincing justification.” [Para 32]. Further, Paragraph 126 also reminds applicants that because listed-buildings are irreplaceable, they should therefore be conserved in an appropriate manner. The Core Principles in Para 17 state the main aim should be to “conserve heritage assets appropriately... so they can be enjoyed... [for] future generations.”*

Para. 58 also refers to LPA’s being mindful of sustaining “an appropriate mix of uses”, and Paragraph 60 reminds applicants that it is “proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.”

SIGNIFICANCE

The Buildings of England (Nikolaus Pevsner) describes 19 Bridge Street thus:

“The only noteworthy house ‘on Bridge Street’ is SEVEN BRIDGES HOUSE, the original Simonds house by the brewery. Five bays, Roman Doric porch. By Soane, 1790.” Therefore, this is a high-significance, late Georgian building. Being ‘designated’ as a Listed-Building, it is among the top percentage of historic buildings in England. Further, Seven Bridges House enjoys a provenance linked to an outstanding, greatly respected C18 architects nationally. Consequently, this historic building demands to be treated with respect and its significance used as the first basis to create proposals. The use should be fit to the Listed-Building, not the reverse, in order to conserve it “in a manner appropriate to its significance.”

Historic England, advice on how Listed Buildings should be treated for the “best-practice” or sensitive approach, says: Schemes should -

A) Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact:

“seeking alternative ways of working to achieve ...objectives as well as conservation of the historic environment...”; [and] at least minimising conflict.”

B) Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance

“The optimum sustainable scheme is therefore one that can clearly show that **it avoids, minimises or mitigates conflict between heritage conservation** and any other **public benefits** it may deliver. This may be achieved, for example, by reconsidering the means of providing the public service..., the location or the design. **Harm may be avoided if the design** thoughtfully reuses the heritage asset, responds to the local character and **avoids intervention where unnecessary...**”

ASSESSMENT:

The pre-application plans propose a change of use to restaurant from offices. However, it must be said that a restaurant is not a ‘public benefit’ such as a hospital giving it any over-riding consequence. In fact, the NPPF advice to strike “an appropriate mix of uses” does not really suggest that there is an over-riding need for restaurants in Reading town centre, for example, that could possibly justify harm to a Listed building. Even in the previous use, respect was paid to conserve the original plan-form and layout, to a large degree. Therefore, any further intrusion into the floor-plan involving demolition or loss of significance could be contentious, in this situation, and is not justified either, for example, by saving a “Building at Risk,” or by offering any “public service” or benefit, as

there are a plethora of restaurants in Reading, nearby. So, this grounds for insensitive alterations simply does not exist.

There needs to be exceptionally strong reasons to accept loss of historic fabric, or demolition, and must be proven to be sound in Listed-Building terms, to be justified. For example where there is a 'conservation deficit' whereby an LB has fallen into great risk of disrepair or collapse. In this case, Seven Bridges House is in very good condition, and therefore, not at risk in any way. While it is vacant, it is not on Historic England's "At Risk Register" so while it would be good for it to have some form of new use, this must be appropriate in Listed-Building terms. A vacancy would not, in itself, argue for any change of use or harmful impacts which is poorly based- or ignores the NPPF guidance and Historic England's national advice.

The proposed conversion would not conserve the original plan-form, which is a significant feature of any Listed-Building. It seems apparent from our site visit, and by looking at the (original) basement plan, that Seven Bridges House always had (or was intended to have) load-bearing walls at Ground Floor (running length-wise) to create the principle 'Reception Rooms.' The 'assembly room' on the First Floor, similarly is the original spatial volume and shape, so should be respected, in my professional view.

No convincing case has been made to prove that another, more appropriate way, could be found to use this LB that also will retain its historic layout and room volumes more sensitively, and fit uses into existing spaces. Indeed, this should be the starting point- to use the existing spaces for larger-scaled items, for example; but this has not been attempted here. There is no adequate justification, for example, to demolish the room layout on the Ground Floor in the entrance Lobby, as losing this feature would destroy an original feature yet add no meaningful use- or restaurant 'cover' here, so is unsound.

Secondly, the demolition adjacent to the staircase, an original 'character-defining' feature, is unsound, because there is not gain in terms of usable space, and it requires an awkward arrangement with a new fire curtain, so seems poorly thought through in Listed-Building terms, as it removes an essential part of the floor-plan and understanding of room layout key to a Georgian townhouse.

On the Second floor, there seems little sense in demolishing two walls- one to insert a 2nd bar, which could easily be fit into the large, rectangular meeting room at the front of the building. Further, it seems more sensible to consider disposal of uses more sensitive. (A kitchen could be fit on the Ground Floor, for example, where there is already a large room on the right-hand side- where it could be located to the rear. An open 'bar' or glazed screen could allow clear viewing without any demolition or loss of floor-plan. Further, it makes little sense in Listed-Building terms, to suggest making a private dining room by sub-dividing the left-hand rear room, and at the same time, demolishing a load-bearing cross-wall, to insert a secondary bar (see above).

SIGNAGE:

The house signs proposed presently appear over-provided, poorly located, and inappropriate in this case, as it would leave this discreet Georgian building appearing more as an industrial, 'warehouse' building, or pub, which it was never intended to appear. The 'polite' Georgian design, with its balanced 5-bay façade and neo-Classical proportions deserves greater respect than to be plastered with signs at Ground and roof-level, and 'twinkle-light's festooning its stringcourse area, obscuring the delicate Doric columns, portico and 'gauged' arches. There needs to be a more considered approach to signage, and the "Pizza-Pies-Cider" wording does not actually have to be plastered across the most significant architectural features of the façade, and 'shouting' from the roof-top, or painted directly on the original brick-work, which is in fact in excellent condition for its age (and not spoiled by inappropriate modern pointing).

Please can the applicant and his design team give serious thought to a more sensitive, 'light-touch' approach with this delicately-proportioned and Georgian Listed Building? Otherwise, in my view, it may well be the case that this particular restaurant change of use could be unacceptable in principle, if a more sensitive, 'conservation-based' approach is not taken up, across the board.

However, I would be willing to look at any revised proposals if it helps to secure a new use that can be more appropriate to the historic building, and better suited to this special asset.

Further comments from the Principle Conservation Officer on the issue of the plan form of the listed building were provided on 18/6/2015:

There is an underlying assumption in Listed-Building terms to conserve the 'principle Reception rooms' on the principal floors. In order to connect two separate Reception Rooms, the normal, and more sensitive method (in this case- the 2 right-hand side rooms) is to use a 'cased-opening' to conserve as much of the cross-wall as possible. There should be a 'down-stand' conserving the cornice and a substantial part of this cross-wall; the side 'wings' should be conserved to allow a width of 'double-doors' or equivalent, to be discussed and confirmed. [This is the case, even in the event that there was a previous opening, however, I cannot see this was convincingly proven or explained on site; the actual loss of a wall was in the room to the rear.]

In my view, the very large opening on the left-hand side is now 'historic' - that is to say, a past event. However, as this approach to erode the plan-form did not treat this connection very sensitively, it is a poor precedent- not setting a good example for this case; except to 'do better' by the Listed Building this time.

Further, retention and respect for the original plan-form means that there is much unnecessary demolition proposed, which infers loss of this important feature. There is no need at all to demolish the Hall walls, especially by the foot of the stairs to "open-up" the layout (bringing the unpalatable need to install a Fire-Screen). This must be reconsidered from "first-principles."

In fact, if reconsidered carefully, it appears the left-hand side Ground floor - already altered- gives a large space any potential leasee could use to locate the Kitchen, which is a primary use in restaurant terms, so gives a good space to install a glazed screen for 'public viewing' the operator desires, which offers a far better location- in LB terms- than the proposal to put it on the top floor, because this avoids the suggested demolition of the 1st Floor cross-wall. This also needs to be reconsidered "from first-principles" also. The Ground-floor Bar, as presently proposed seems over-scaled. Should the operator wish to have 2x Bars, then they can be more discreetly tucked into other rooms. Doing this will avoid so much needless demolition; as currently proposed, this aspect would be unacceptable.

Top Floor- Principle Reception Room: There is no excuse for taking down a wall on the left-hand side of the 'Assembly Room' on the top floor, as proposed. If another Bar is desired here, it should be located in one end (etc.) of this large room, not resort to demolition to sandwich it into another discreet room behind, as this would be poor planning, in LB terms. The private dining room can utilise the existing discreet room on the left-hand rear, and then this avoids the demolition proposed, which is presently unjustified, and unsound.

Amenity

The Environmental Protection Officer has raised no objection to the proposed development. Given the surrounding occupiers it is my opinion that the proposed change of use would not result in any significant adverse harm to the amenity of surrounding properties.

Transport

The proposal is for the change of use from offices to restaurant with changes to interior layout. The external elevations will mostly be unchanged with the exception of a new door in the place of an existing window at ground floor level on the South elevation a ramp at the rear in place of an existing staircase, and new signage on the South and West elevations.

In principle there are no objections to the proposal given that the site is located within the town centre area and therefore we would not require any dedicated car parking for customers or staff.

Cycle parking is located either side of the existing vehicular access and these should be retained and illustrated on any proposed plans.

However, the facility is likely to require increased service deliveries and therefore an on-site facility should be provided that includes an on-site turning area. This should be illustrated if a full application were submitted.

Conclusion

In conclusion, based on the comments above, in particular the concerns regarding the impact of both the proposed change of use and physical alterations upon the Grade II Listed Building, it is my opinion that it would not be worthwhile submitting an application for planning permission or Listed Building Consent for the proposal. If you take on board the advice in this letter a more sensitive conversion could emerge which would meet relevant conservation policies aimed at protecting heritage assets such as this building.

You may wish to submit a further pre application request if you can take into account the issues outlined above.

Please note that the Council implemented its Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charging schedule in April 2015. Please check the guidance on the Council website for further information and to see if a proposed development would be liable for the levy.

The Validation Checklist document, also on the Council website, sets out what information is required as part of a planning application.

This advice is given on a without-prejudice basis and not all policies have been considered. This advice is in good faith and will not over-ride the formal consideration of a planning or listed building consent application by the Council. If you wish to discuss the contents of this letter, please contact me on the number given above.

Yours Sincerely

Julie Williams

Pp Matt Burns

APPENDIX B

Heritage Statement by Owens Galliver Architects LLP

owens galliver architects

HERITAGE STATEMENT

SEVEN BRIDGES HOUSE (19 BRIDGE STREET) at one time LINDEN HOUSE,

ON BEHALF OF

ARC DESIGN AND BUILD

08SEP15

oga ref 15-1600/heritage 08sep15

10 HIGH STREET PANGBOURNE READING BERKSHIRE RG8 7AB

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Owens Galliver Architects LLP

is a limited liability partnership registered in England and Wales under number OC352203
The registered office is as above. References to Partners are to Members, listed below

Chris Owens MA (Cantab) Dip Arch RIBA **Paul Galliver** Dip Arch RIBA

SEVEN BRIDGES HOUSE (19 BRIDGE STREET) at one time LINDEN HOUSE,
INCLUDING COMMENT ON HOUSE DESIGNED FOR W B SIMONDS BY JOHN SOANE

1. INTRODUCTION

ARC Design and Build are applying for Planning and Listed Building Consents for the Change of Use and alterations of the building.

Owens Galliver Architects LLP have experience in working with Listed Buildings, in their extension, conversion, and refurbishment, built up over 30 years.

We have been appointed by ARC Design and Build to advise on the history and fabric of the building, and the implications of their proposals on the building, and prepare a Heritage Statement.

We have carried out a non-invasive inspection of the building and carried out research into the history such as is reasonably available at local resources and from reputable on-line sources.

A Chronology derived from Directories maps and publicly available research, the maps, John Soane drawings, and drawings from 1990 illustrating the building, and current day photographs are attached.

2. SUMMARY

The building was built between 1802 and 1853.

The Building is Listed Grade II [see attached], and referred to in Pevsner's Buildings Of England.

Notwithstanding Nikolas Pevsner, there is no evidence that it was designed by John Soane (1753-1837), on the contrary there is much evidence that the house he designed for WB Simonds (Simonds Brewery) was at 21 Bridge Street, and demolished between 1900 and 1912 .[see Chronology]

The building has had a variety of uses. Perhaps initially it was a house related to a commercial operation (in the same manner as WB Simonds house beside his brewery, and two other adjoining properties beside their premises). Later (as Linden House) it was a Ladies Seminary, then Friendly Society Assembly Rooms, and the brewery Social Club and offices, before becoming independent offices late in the 20th Century.

The building, certainly in the 20th C, underwent significant alterations both internally and externally, including demolition of original "extensions" and modern two storey extensions, concluding in 1997/98 when the building was thoroughly refurbished.

3. SETTING

The property is to the east of Seven Bridges Street (Bridge Street from the 1860's onwards).

In 1802 the site area was occupied by a large wide deep plan set of buildings, no doubt commercial, direct on to the street.

The building footprint recognisable as 19 Bridge Street appears on the drawn "Reading Survey", a detailed large scale plan of 1853. It is set back from the street. To its north is a commercial yard at the rear of a deep plan building, lined by small buildings; to the east 19 BS backs directly on to terraces of small commercial premises, with no rear yard or garden. To the south is a new road, Gas Lane, and to the south of that apparently another large house backing onto a commercial yard. Further south is the recognisable footprint of WB Simonds house by Soane, and their brewery complex. Beyond that is a further apparent large house with commercial premises to the rear. One of these was a Simonds' timber merchants. The businesses benefitted from proximity to the Kennet and Avon Canal.

On the west of the street is a mix of commercial premises, almshouses, houses, and pubs.

The house is therefore fully engaged in the commercial world of mid 19th C Reading.

As the commercial activities of the area prospered and varied, by the 1870's it was no longer a house, and by the late 19th C had become Assembly Rooms, and latterly was acquired as a Social Club by the brewery, which had surrounded it by 1941, taking over buildings possibly 100 years old at the time.

No doubt the large full frontage first floor room was an attraction for a school, assembly rooms, or social club, and changing times, the lack of garden space coupled with the growing large scale brewery buildings and adjoining manufactories, meant it was no longer tenable as a house.

The building survived the demolition of the surrounding Courage brewery in the 1970's, and is now surrounded by the Oracle Shopping Centre.

4. THE BUILDING

The building echoes the form typical of a 19th Century townhouse. It is double fronted with a central hall and staircase, with (originally) two principal front rooms, one in each corner, and perhaps four smaller rooms to the rear, with basement "offices", and on the first floor a grand high ceiling full frontage reception room, and to the rear two, or perhaps originally four, rooms.

The building is solid brickwork, in random "Flemish" bond, with double hung sash windows and "stone" cills, double pitched slate roof with central valley, and hipped at front and gabled at rear. The front has a stucco parapet and string course, and a plain timber columned portico.

The plan (windows, the lack of chimney in one quarter and the high lunette window well above the stair landing) seem to reflect the lack of accessible outside space at the rear and sides and perhaps close connection to the uses and buildings around it, especially to the rear.

No invasive inspection of building fabric was possible, as the building is in a good structural and decorative condition and not in the ownership of the Applicant. It is clear from surface inspection, however, that the building has undergone extensive and thorough refurbishment. This is supported by inspection of an old photograph, and "as existing" plans and elevations dating from the early 90's. [see list below].

It is clear that the building plan was significantly altered over time, and that many of these alterations were subsequently removed. In addition openings that existed pre 1990 have been closed up since then.

It would seem likely from their condition and detailing that all the windows (sashes and fittings at least) are replacements.

Internal joinery is largely modern to match, including the stair balustrade (following re-instatement of the likely old stair layout), and the skirtings which appear made from standard parts. Some door linings may be original (and have been upgraded to meet modern fire requirements), but many are not, and do not match. All the doors are similar, including those in new openings, and have fire strips, suggesting they are all new.

Where accessible, it is clear that floors have been rebuilt.

SEVEN BRIDGES HOUSE (19 BRIDGE STREET) at one time LINDEN HOUSE,
AND RELATED INFORMATION INCLUDING ON HOUSE DESIGNED FOR W B SIMONDS BY JOHN SOANE

5. CHRONOLOGY

- 1785William Blackall Simonds establishes brewery in Broad Street, but quickly expands and moves to Bridge Street (SM/JOL)
- Pevsner 2014states that 19 Bridge Street ["Seven Bridges House"] is original home of William Blackall Simonds, and dates 1785-1790 (not supported by 1802 Coates map)
- 1789-1790brewery complex by Soane (SM/JOL)
- 1791Soane's house for Simonds in Bridge Street finished (SM/JOL)
- 1794Soane added a brewhouse (SG)
- 1798John Mann map (RL)shows location of future 19 Bridge Street as a terrace; also shows a single large house plus building to rear in location of Soane/Simonds house as shown on future maps
- 1802Soane survey drawing of Simonds house, Bridge Street (SM/JOL) –clearly not 19 Bridge Street, matching later map footprints of building further south.
- 1802Charles Coates Map of Reading (RL)

shows brewery site and footprint of Soane brewery buildings and Soane/Simonds's house. Location has number "19" on it which refers to a legend on the map, stating "Symonds Brewhouse". Possible source of Pevsner error?

Shows deep plan wide building on site of future 19 Bridge Street
- 1803"some further offices made" to Soane/Simonds house (SG)

drawings showing large extension on north side (SM) [largely as 1853 survey footprint]
- 1839Yorke's Directory (RL)19 Bridge Street is premises of Abraham Armstrong,

plumber painter and glazier
- 1842Snare's Directory (RL)19 Bridge Street is premises of Abraham Armstrong,

plumber painter and glazier
- 1853"Reading Survey" sheet 17, approx 1:800 (RL)

Shows Soane/Simonds house with northern extension and no single storey southern wing

Shows "Linden House" (as 19 Bridge Street now) with south east extension and yard to rear and other commercial premises to north in separate yard; Gas Lane to south.

Shows a house-like footprint on future site of brewery buildings south of Gas Lane
- 1859Macauley's Directory (RL)19 Bridge Street occupied by Henry Knapp Busbell,

wholesale and retail dealer in lamps, oil etc..

Simonds are at Brewery and 22 Bridge Street
- 1859-60Register of Electors (RL)HKB owned a house in Bridge Street (but not in 1860-61)

–but not necessarily 19 BS?
- 1861Burgess List (RL)Simonds live in Bridge Street
- [1864Burgess List (RL)HKB now in Southampton Street]
- 1865Burgess List (RL)Simonds live in Bridge Street

- [1870 Lock's Directory (RL) HKB now in Horn Street]
- 1874 Smith's Directory (RL) 19 Bridge Street shown as Linden House, Mrs Strong's Seminary
- 1877 Smith's Directory (RL) Linden House, Mrs Strong's Ladies School
- 1879 OS Town Plan 1:500 (OM)
- Shows Soane/Simonds house with northern extension and no single storey southern wing
- Shows Linden House (as 19 Bridge Street) with south east extension and yard to rear and other commercial premises to north in separate yard; Gas Lane to south.
- Brewery buildings south of Gas Lane extended to road.
- 1899 Kelly's Directory (RL) shows 19 Bridge Street as Friendly Society Assembly Rooms
- 1900 OS plan (RL)
- Shows Soane/Simonds house with northern extension and no single storey southern wing
- Shows Linden House (as 19 Bridge Street) with south east extension (reduced) and yard to rear and other commercial premises to north in separate yard; Gas Lane to south.
- Brewery buildings south of Gas Lane extend to road.
- "The [Soane] house was demolished about 1900." (SG)
- 1912 OS Plan (RL)
- Soane/Simonds house appears demolished and replaced with similar but different footprint
- Shows Linden House (as 19 Bridge Street) with south east extension (reduced) and yard to rear and other commercial premises to north in separate yard; Gas Lane to south.
- Brewery buildings south of Gas Lane extend to road.
- 1913 Goad Insurance plan (RL)
- 19 Bridge Street footprint as 1853 map, noted as "Assembly Rooms & D"
- 1931 OS Plan largely as 1912 OS Plan
- "19 Bridge Street was not originally part of the brewery but was eventually taken over by them and used as offices and a social club." (MHR/W)
- 1941 GOAD plan (RL) 19 Bridge Street shown as Social Club, amongst brewery buildings
- 1947 GOAD plan (RL) 19 Bridge Street shown as Social Club, amongst brewery buildings
- 1957 Seven Bridges House Listed Grade II (Listed as Lynden House)
- "The brewery buildings were demolished in the 1970s" (SG)
- 1978 Seven Bridges House Listing amended –see attached
- windows "with moulded architraves (spoiled by poor double glazing)"
- "interior altered"
- "enriched ceiling cornice kept on ground floor"
- [no mention of alterations or 20th C extensions]
- 1980 Photograph (RL/PS) shows road frontage including (20th C?) side extension to south
- (as shown on "as existing" drawings 1990)

“Pevsner in his Buildings of England series for Berkshire states that Linden House, a privately owned early 19th century property also facing Bridge Street and next door to the brewery but separated by Gas Lane and subsequently taken over by Simons as an office and social club and known as Seven Bridges House, was the house that Soane built, and this has often proved misleading and is entirely wrong” (SG 1999)

- 1990 described as Reading Business Venue
- Listed Building Application 90/1014 (RBC) for alterations for use as offices, inc demolitions of 20th C additions.
- “as existing” drawings and “as proposed” drawings (not implemented?) – [see below]
- 1995 described as Reading Business Venue
- Listed Building Application 95/00741 (RBC) (recorded as 95/0105 by RBC incorrectly) “internal and external works to facilitate use as offices; demolitions of 20th C additions, elevations re-instated to match existing”
- no records extant at RBC Planning (but apparently implemented)
- 1997 renewal of 90/0104
- 1998 described as Reading Business Venue
- Change of Use application for conversion to Offices or Doctors surgery permitted
- 2000 described as Reading Business Venue
- Change of Use application for conversion to Education Use.

Last use appears to be Offices

Pevsner 2014 no reference to Soane; perpetuates that 19 Bridge Street [“Seven Bridges House”] is original home of William Blackall Simonds, and dates 1785-1790 (not supported by 1802 map)

REFERENCES

GOAD Insurance plans, Reading Library

MHR Manns History of Reading

OM Old Maps.co.uk

PS Peter Southerton

RBC Reading Borough Council Planning Department

RL Reading Library

SG Sidney Gold Biographical Dictionary of Architects at Reading 1999

SM/JOL Soane Museum/Jeromeonline

W Wikipedia 2015

Other catalogue resources searched,

for “Linden House”, “Bridge Street”, “Simonds”, “Friendly Society”

Berkshire Record Office

National Archives.

6. LAYOUT IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO CURRENT LAYOUT (1990)

Ref Listed Building Application 90/1014 (RBC) for alterations for use as offices, inc demolitions of 20th C additions. Renewed 1997.

Items of interest shown on “as existing” drawings and “as proposed” drawings

As Existing Ground floor plan shows

- a vestibule
- Door in vestibule to right front room
- No door in hall to right front room
- No wall between hall and left front room
- Stairs cut short and turned with third flight to rear, and all partitioned off from hall
- No door from hall to right central room
- No door from rear hall to right rear room
- door from stairs to right rear room
- door from stairs to left rear room
- No wall between rear hall and left rear room
- No wall between right central room and right rear space
- Extension to rear/east
- Extension to side/south
- North window blind

As Existing First floor plan shows:

- Lightweight stud partition dividing Landing
- Lightweight stud partition dividing right rear room
- Lightweight stud partition lobbies and cupboards
- Door between inner landing and right rear room
- Single leaf door between inner landing and front room
- Door between left rear room and front room
- Wide opening between right rear room and front room
- Extension to rear/east
- Extension to side/south
- Two blocked (?) doors from half landing to rear extension
- Opening right rear to extension
- Opening right rear central to extension
- Two door openings into south extension
- Small window on south wall, centre
- [NB windows largely as now on plan on rear right]

As Existing rear elevation shows:

Windows as now, but bottom left heads different to now

Opening to basement, now blocked

As Existing side south elevation shows

Various blocked openings and doorways now blocked, into extension

As Existing front elevation shows

Ground floor windows different glazing pattern

7. NOTES ON FEATURES OF CURRENT CONDITION

General	all skirtings new, with pipes behind, board topped with [architraves] as moulding, with space behind vented. doors have intumescent smoke strips let in to leaf edges, and are 44 thick. Window shutters have modern screws Window glass (single glazed) is toughened Window glazing bars all clean cut arrisses Window sashes have clean new chords Paintwork on joinery has bleed through from knots "stone" cills appear all new.
Hall	panelling to side of front door is new, with cables behind
Ground floor	wall between hall and left front room appears lighter weight Left front room refloored (seen through data/cable outlets) –modern joists, counterbattens and modern ceiling board below
First Floor	old door case landing into right central, upgraded stop, new architraves Partition between landing and front room is lightweight Rear left floor upgraded, modern joists and counter joists with gap between, chicken wire and quilt (fire protection detail)
Roof space	No evidence that roof has been altered for extensions–built as a whole; vertical iron tie bar system appears original Central valley beam supported on major timber cross beam above [lightweight] partition between landing and front room modern steel beams and bolts re-inforcing major timber elements ("trusses" over front room) inserted into rafter plane some modern timber purlin props re-roofed with British Standard felt; modern lead modern steel riblath ceiling battens visible below
Rear east elevation	considerably re-worked brickwork; infilled doorway to basement (replaced with new arrangement) ground floor left windows have new soldier course heads
Side south elevation	considerably re-worked brickwork Infilled openings manifest Modern cast downpipes
Front Elevation	windows replaced since 1990 New stone window cills Porch columns appear old (in need of repair) Fanlight likely original Canopy plain, no mouldings No external architraves (plain render) not as Listing.

8. CONCLUSION

The building is of unknown origin within the first half of the 19th C. It was probably built as a merchants house closely related to business.

It has had a number of uses over the years, but for much of its life it was not a house. For most of its life it was a place of assembly and leisure.

The architect is unknown.

As the uses changed over the years, the building was altered a number of times, and was subsequently thoroughly refurbished with further alterations and re-instatements. Some walls although apparently original are replacements.

However, the original shell (albeit altered and repaired) and structure is substantially original and what is probably the original plan is recognisable.

Little remains of original features except a decorative cornice, portico columns, a fanlight, and some joinery.

The general joinery (where original) is simple and typical of the period, and has been copied or echoed in the refurbishment.

9. FUTURE PROPOSALS

The building in future is still ideally suited to an assembly or leisure activity, given the scale of the rooms and plan, with a large central staircase, and of course given its history.

Interventions proposed in future should maintain the approach most recently carried through in the 1990's, so that the plan is still recognisable. Respect should be given to the joinery remaining by again copying it. New openings in walls should be restrained in size, and ideally located where old openings are known to have been. Services should be concealed within floors or skirtings; any new recessed items should be located where the background has already been affected.

APPENDICES:

A. LISTING

B. PHOTOGRAPHS 2015

C. DRAWINGS OF 19 BRIDGE STREET 1990

D. SOANE DRAWINGS OF 21 BRIDGE STREET

E. MAPS



© Mr Richard Swynford-Lain

IoE Number: 38770
 Location: SEVEN BRIDGES HOUSE, 19 BRIDGE STREET (east side)
 READING, READING, BERKSHIRE
 Photographer: Mr Richard Swynford-Lain
 Date Photographed: 09 October 2003
 Date listed: 22 March 1957
 Date of last amendment: 14 December 1978
 Grade: II

The Images of England website consists of images of listed buildings based on the statutory list as it was in 2001 and does not incorporate subsequent amendments to the list. For the statutory list and information on the current listed status of individual buildings please go to [The National Heritage List for England](http://www.historicengland.org.uk/monuments-and-buildings/national-heritage-list-for-england/).

BRIDGE STREET

5128

(East Side)
 No 19 (Seven Bridges House)

BRIDGE STREET 1. 5128 (East Side) No 19 (Seven Bridges House) (Formerly listed as Lynden House) SU 7173 SW 2/30 22.3.57. 2. Early C19. Attributed by Pevsner to Soane but this is probably an error. 2 storey villa. Brick with stucco string between ground and 1st floors, stucco cornice, parapet and hipped slate roof. 5 windows on 1st floor, glazing bar sashes with moulded architraves (spoiled by poor double glazing). 4 windows and central door on ground floor with double panelled doors and radiating fanlight over. Greek Doric portico with fluted columns and pilasters supporting and plain cornice; panelled soffit. Interior altered but enriched ceiling cornice kept on ground floor.



Royal Photographic Society



Historic England

Historic England



Heritage
LOTTERY FUNDED

Heritage Lottery Fund



Department of Culture
Media and Sport

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SOUTH AND EAST ELEVATION



SOUTH ELEVATION (ALTERATIONS)



EAST ELEVATION (ALTERATIONS)

19 BRIDGE STREET, READING



DOOR



CILL



PIPEWORK



TOUGHENED GLASS



WINDOW HEADS



CABLES BEHIND JOINERY



FINE FINISH BARS



VENTILATED SKIRTINGS

19 BRIDGE STREET, READING
MODERN MATERIALS AND FEATURES



STEEL STRUCTURE AND INSULATION



FIRST FLOOR CONSTRUCTION



STEEL STRUCTURE



ROOFING FELT



STEEL LATH CEILING

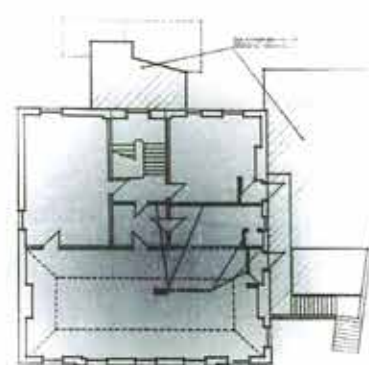
**19 BRIDGE STREET, READING
MODERN INTERVENTIONS**



BASEMENT



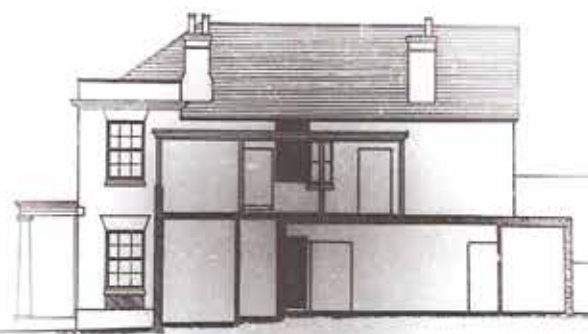
GROUND FLOOR



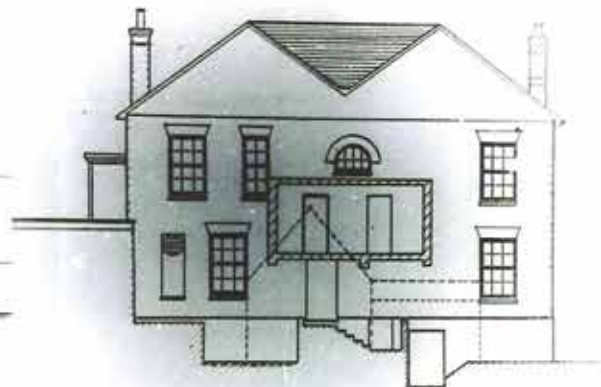
FIRST FLOOR



FRONT ELEVATION

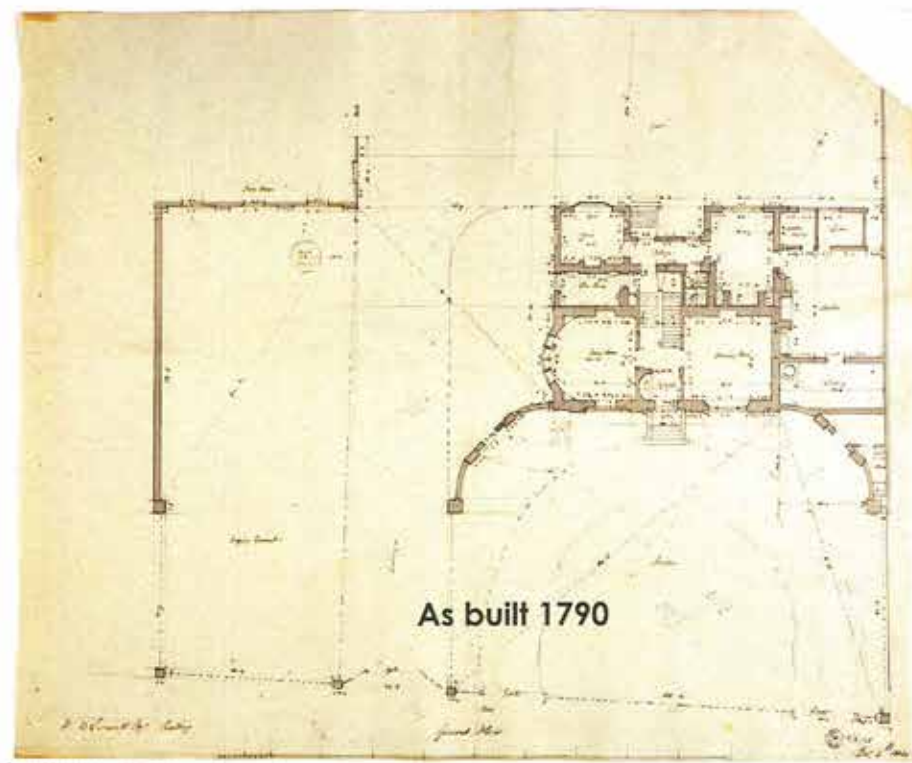


SOUTH ELEVATION

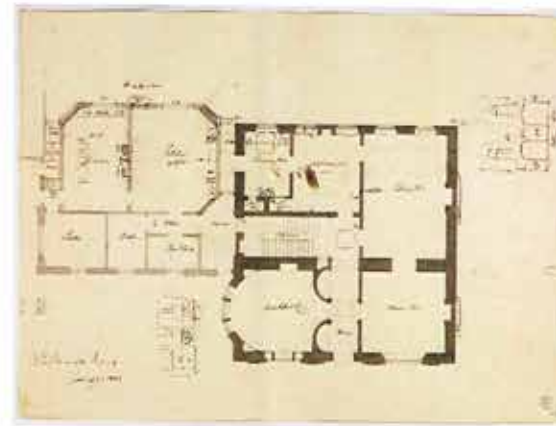


REAR ELEVATION

**19 BRIDGE STREET, READING
1990 AS EXISTING (DRAWINGS BY BROADWAY MALYAN)**



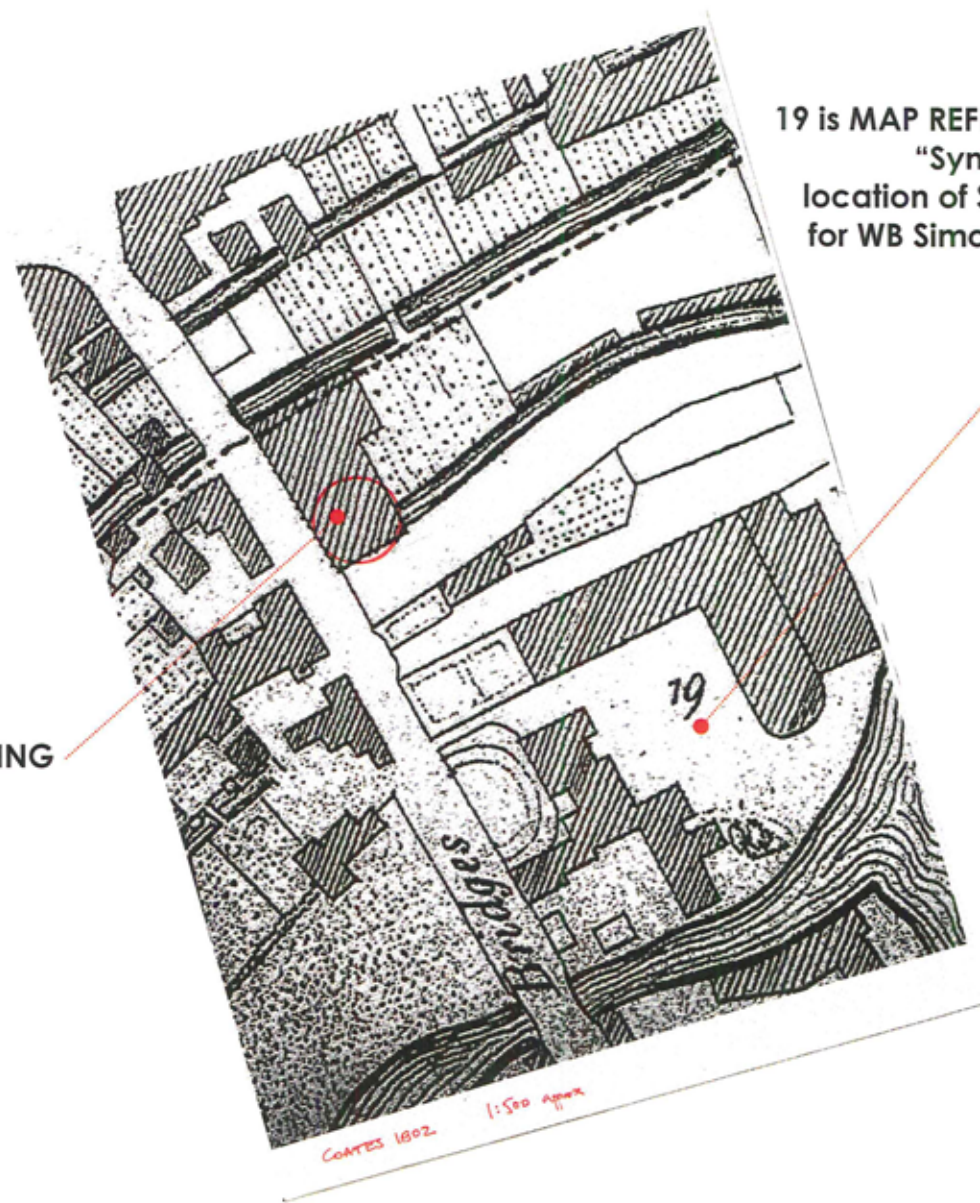
As built 1790



As extended 1803



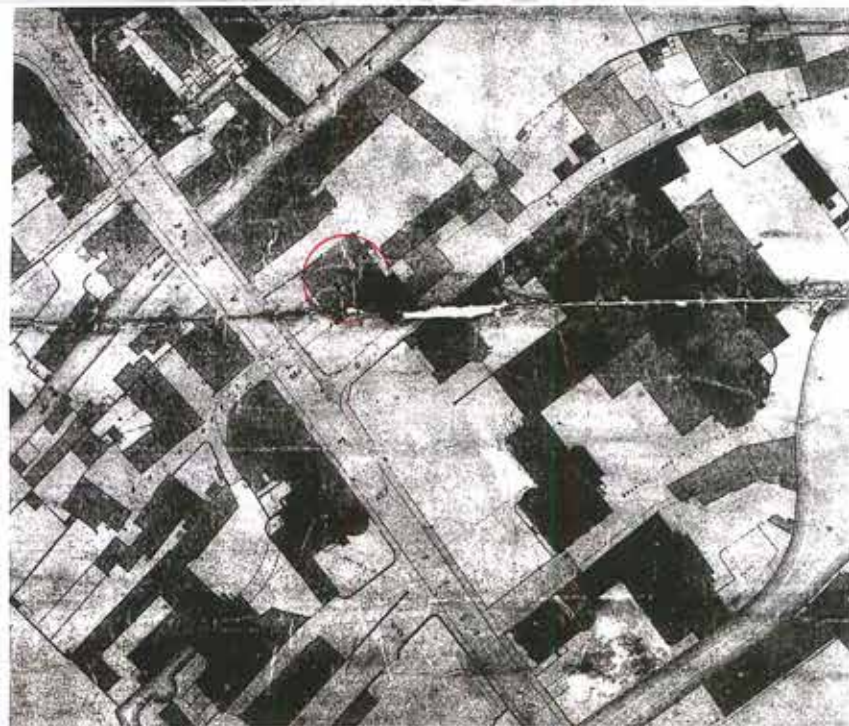
BRIDGE STREET, READING
 John Soane record drawings of WB Simonds house (21 Bridge Street)
 (Soane Museum on line)



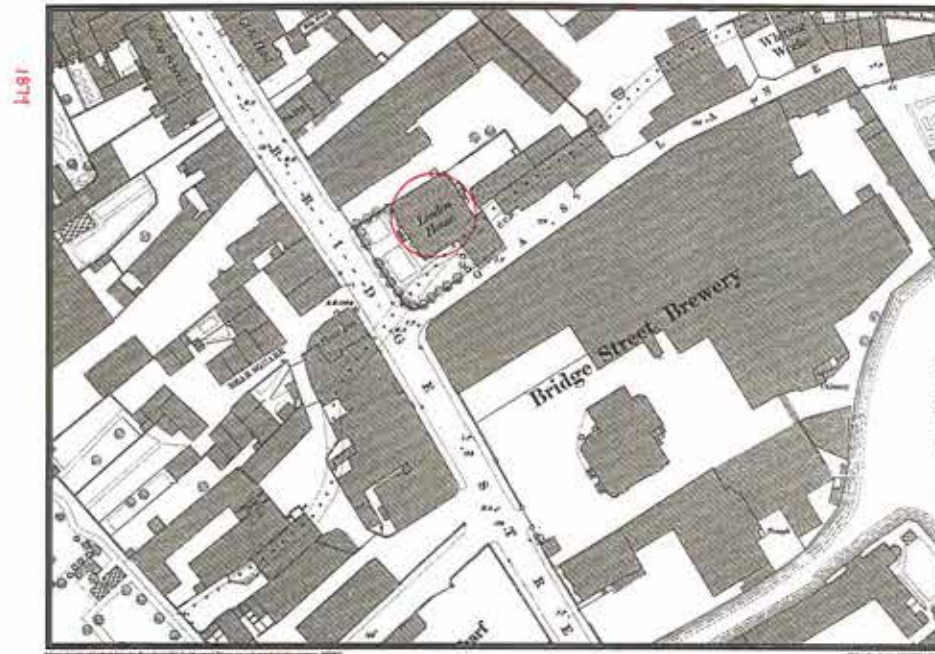
19 is MAP REFERENCE TO LEGEND AT FOOT
"Symonds Brewhouse";
location of Soane brewery and house
for WB Simonds (see record drawing)

LOCATION OF 19 BRIDGE STREET, READING

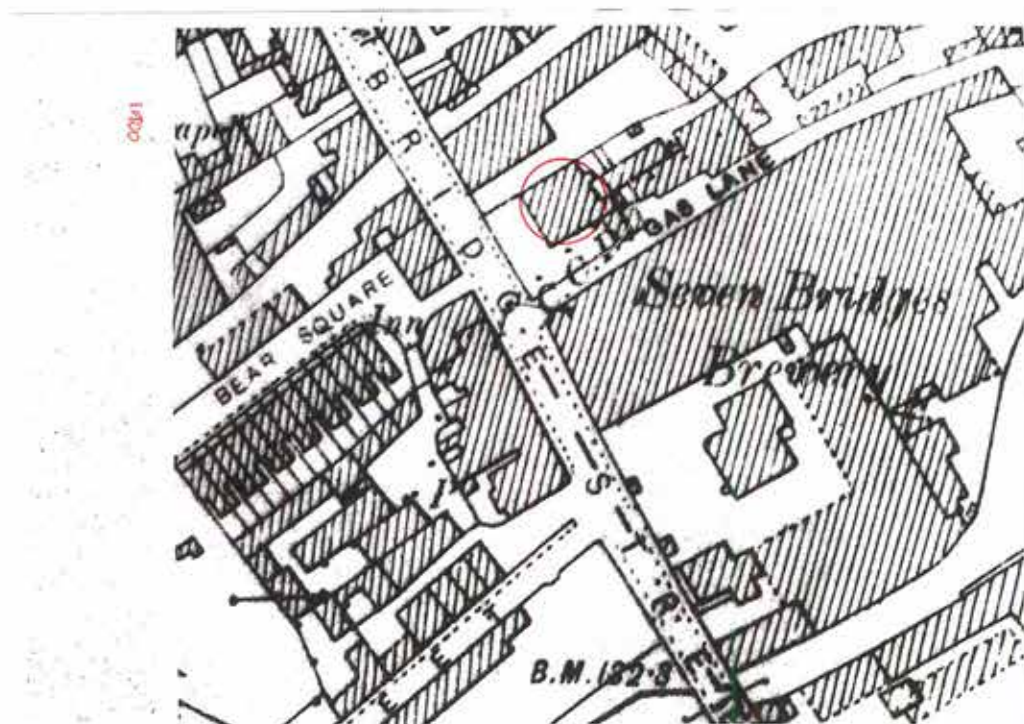
19 BRIDGE STREET, READING
1802 Coates (Reading Library)



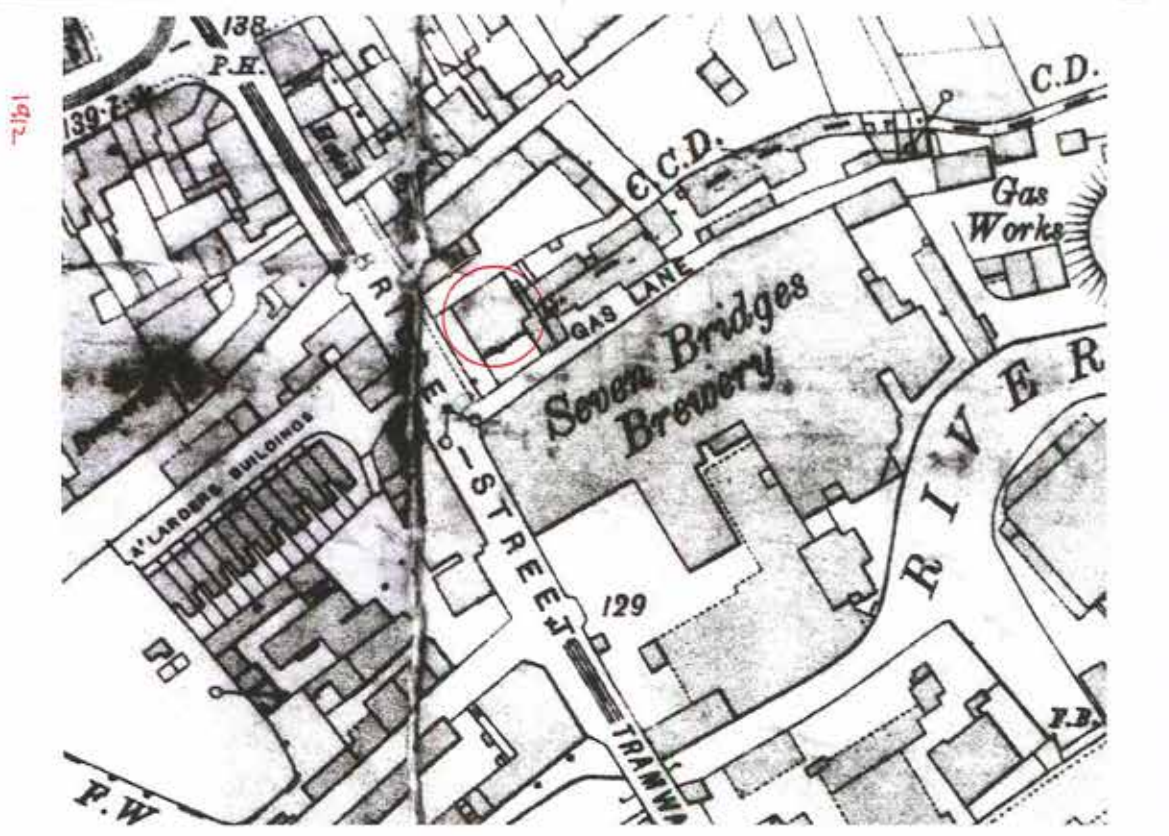
19 BRIDGE STREET, READING
1853 Reading Survey (Reading Library)



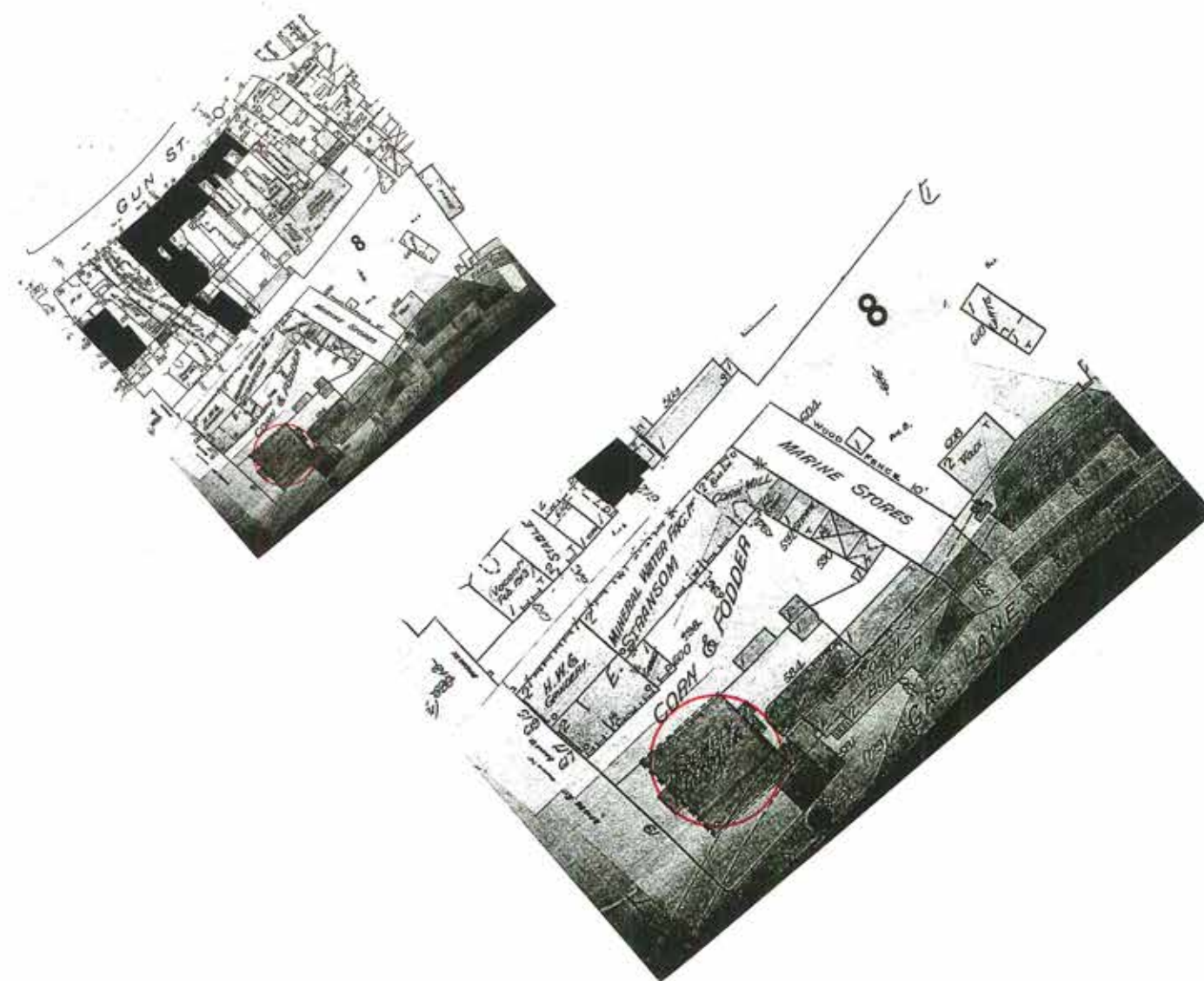
19 BRIDGE STREET, READING
1879 1:500 OS



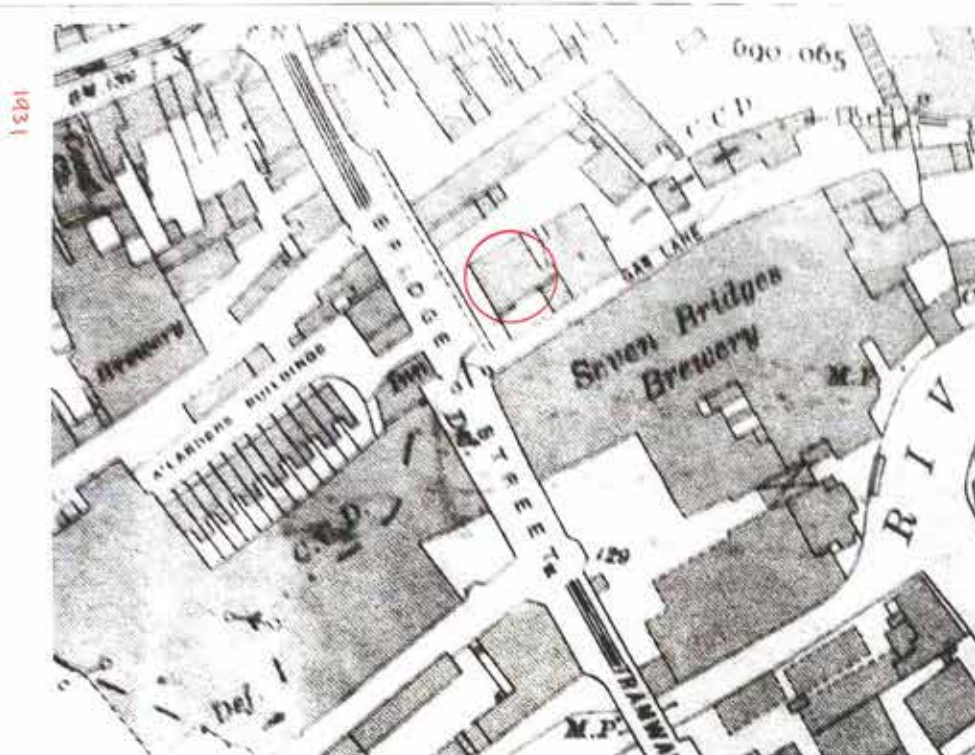
19 BRIDGE STREET, READING
1900 OS (Reading Library)



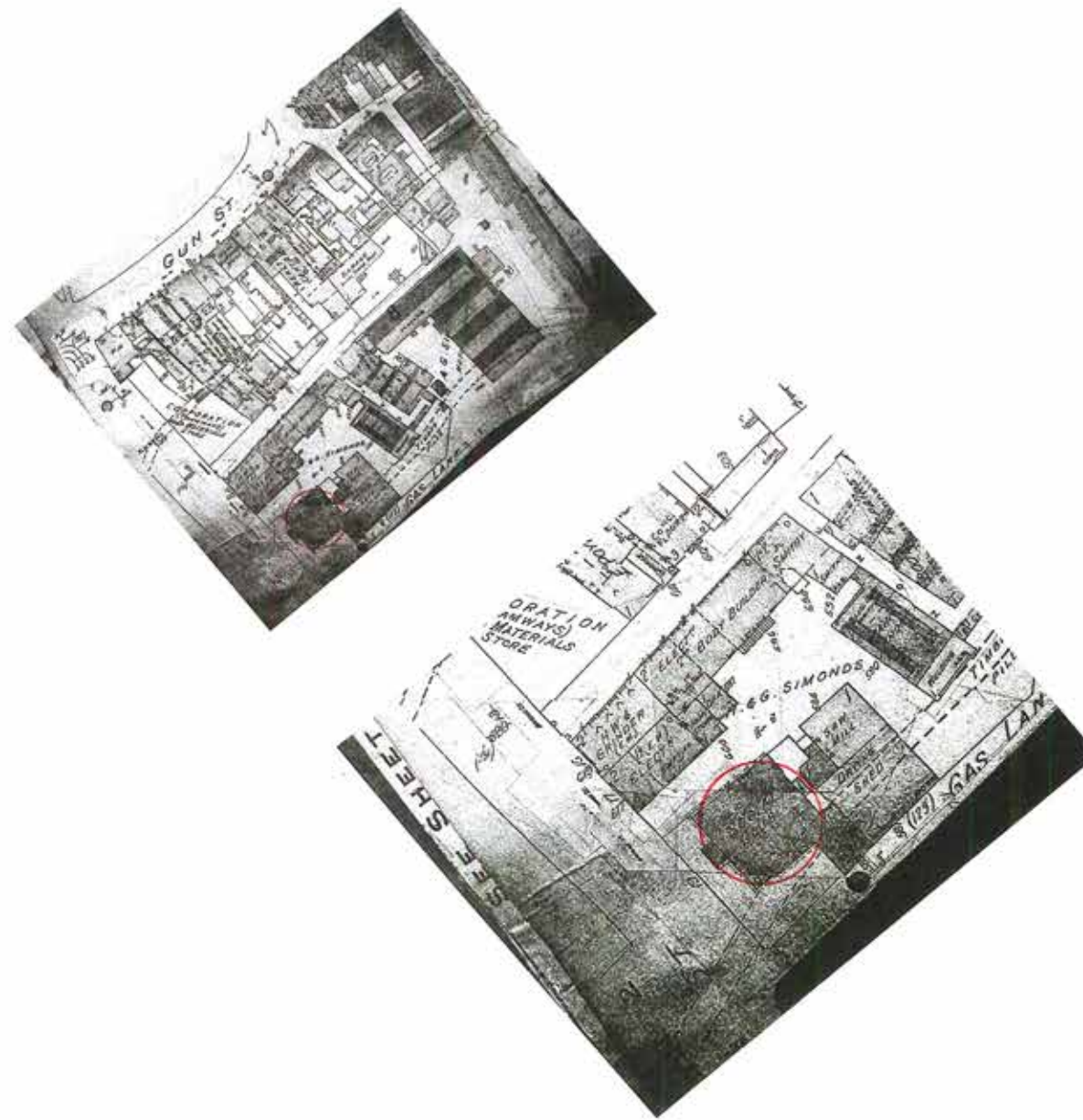
19 BRIDGE STREET, READING
1912 OS (Reading Library)



19 BRIDGE STREET, READING
1913 GOAD (Reading Library)



19 BRIDGE STREET, READING
1931 OS (Reading Library)



19 BRIDGE STREET, READING
1941 GOAD (Reading Library)

APPENDIX C

Schedule of Existing Features

Seven Bridges House, Reading

Schedule of Existing Features

September 2015

The following is a detailed schedule of all the key features throughout the ground and first floor of the existing property, with information on whether or not we suspect each feature to be part of the original fabric of the building, and information on how the proposal in this application for planning permission and listed building consent will affect this particular feature. This schedule has been prepared by visual inspection of the elements on site. No intrusive investigation has been carried out. Room, window and door references are marked on existing drawings.

GROUND FLOOR

Entrance Hall – GF01

Feature	Description of Existing	Original Feature?	Proposal
Front door	Painted timber front door with built in timber shutters on either side, Decorative fanlight above door and internal painted timber coving. All in good condition. Could be original but has been refurbished.	Partially/ Yes	Front door, fanlight and shutters will be retained in their current condition
Skirting	White painted timber skirting. 290mm high and 50-60mm deep. Appears to conceal services such as wiring and pipe work. Original skirting may be present underneath.	No	Skirting will be retained
Ceiling	Flat ceiling with some penetrations for recessed spotlights and smoke detectors. Condition suggests that it is not original. Front and rear sections are separated by an archway along spine wall. This element is original. There is water damage at ceiling level above the door at the bottom of the staircase.	Partially/ Yes	Water damaged area will be repaired and existing ceiling will be retained.
Cornice	Simple cornice in front section of entrance hall, not in keeping with more elaborate cornices of GF02 and GF07, but could be original	Unknown	Existing cornice will be retained
Walls	Painted plaster finish. Untidy surface mounted conduit contains some electrical services, others are chased into walls. Generally walls	Partially	Surface mounted conduit will be removed where services are no longer required due to the new use as a

	are solid masonry, but wall between Entrance Hall and Office GF02 is studwork.		restaurant. Widening of door openings will occur, but plan form of building will be maintained.
Internal doors	Solid timber, painted, 6 panel doors. Doors are fire resistant construction and thickness of paint around detail on panels and architraves suggests that they are modern replicas.	No	Doors GD03 & GD012 will be removed and replaced with wider double doors of similar quality and style. See drawing I015.I0.03.PlnI.202
Staircase	White painted timber treads, risers, cut stringer, balusters and scrolling handrail. Modern carpet runner. Possibly original staircase, but may not be in original location.	Unknown	Existing staircase left as existing. Carpet runner will be replaced.
Dado	In rear section a mid height dado rail runs up with the staircase.	No	Dado will be left as existing.
Floor	Floor has been covered with ply and carpeted. Floorboards and structure below are suspected to be original, although penetrations exist in several locations where services have been installed	Partially	Carpet and plywood will be lifted. Floorboards below inspected for suitability. If appropriate will be restored and used as floor finish.
Radiator	Large wall mounted painted metal radiator. Pipe work comes from behind skirting board.	No	Radiator will be removed and replaced with new. Existing pipe work will be re-used.

Office – GF02

Feature	Description of Existing	Original Feature?	Proposal
Windows	2 no large front windows, painted timber sashes with built in shutters. Good condition. Thickness of paintwork suggests windows, linings and architraves are not original, but good restoration job is possible. This room also has one side and one rear facing sash window. They are of the same type/quality, but do not have timber shutters.	Unknown	All windows retained as existing. Large front windows will have glass balustrade installed internally as protection. See drawing I015.I0.03.PlnI.206.
Skirting	White painted timber skirting. 290mm high and 50-60mm deep. Appears to conceal services such as wiring and pipe work. Original skirting may be present underneath.	No	Skirting will be retained as existing
Radiators	Office GF02 contains 4 no. floor standing painted metal radiators. Pipe work runs beneath floorboards.	No	Existing radiators will be removed. Three of the four will be replaced with new ones. Where possible existing pipe work will be re-used to limit further

			damage to existing fabric.
Chimneybreast	GF02 contains one chimneybreast in front section, now blocked up. It is likely that there was a feature fireplace in this front room.	Yes	Chimneybreast will be retained. As part of the refurbishment the fireplace will be restored.
Ceiling	Ceiling in front part of room is higher, with decorative cornice. Rear ceiling is lower and has no cornice. Front ceiling contains one large recessed ceiling spotlight. Rear area has two large modern pendant lights. Water damaged area and crack in wall are visible above door to hallway.	Possibly partially/ Unknown	Retained as existing. Recessed spotlight in front will be replaced with pendant. Modern pendants in rear will also be replaced. Wiring will be re-used where possible. Water damaged area will be investigated and repaired.
Cornice	Decorative cornice around front part of room. Could be original. Unusual relationship exists between cornice and spine wall suggesting, if original, cornice may have been modified (see photograph 1).	Partially/ Yes	Retained as existing
A/C units	Office GF02 contains three wall mounted air conditioning units. Pipe work appears to run under floorboards.	No	Air conditioning units will be retained, and will be covered using painted timber covers.
Ceiling track	The down stand between front and rear sections of office GF02 contains a track for a sliding partition. The shape of the ceiling and floor above suggest that there may be some structural work required here.	No	The track will be removed, the ceiling inspected for structural stability and made good if required. The down stand will remain so that the existing cornice can still run around the front section of the space.
Floor	Floor has been covered with ply and carpeted. Floorboards and structure is suspected to be original, although penetrations exist in several locations where services have been installed	Partially	Carpet and plywood will be lifted. Floorboards below inspected for suitability. If appropriate will be restored and used as floor finish.
Walls	Area of damp is visible at low level in the far rear corner of the room	No	Will be investigated and repaired.

Toilets - GF03 & GF04

Feature	Description of Existing	Original Feature?	Proposal
Ceiling	Suspended ceiling, plastic ceiling access hatches, large recessed ceiling lights.	No	Existing ceiling will be retained as existing. Recessed lighting will be removed and new recessed spotlights installed.
Floor	Floor finish is low quality lino, probably laid on plywood on top of original floorboards. Skirting	Partially	Lino will be lifted and new floor finish lad on top of plywood. Original



Photograph 1 - Unusual detail in office (GF02) where spine wall meets cornice

	throughout toilet area does not match skirting in rest of building.		floorboards and joists will not be damaged.
Internal Doors	Solid timber six panel doors to match other doors throughout building. Probably not original	No	Where appropriate doors will be retained and re-used. Where new doors are required they will be constructed to match the existing.
Walls	Internal walls and toilet cubicle walls in this area are stud partitions.	No	Walls are retained as existing

Kitchen - GF05

Feature	Description of Existing	Original Feature?	Proposal
Ceiling	Suspended ceiling, plastic ceiling access hatches, large recessed ceiling lights.	No	Existing ceiling will be retained as existing. Recessed lighting will be removed and new recessed spotlights installed.
Floor	Floor finish is low quality lino, probably laid on plywood on top of original floorboards. Skirting throughout toilet area does not match skirting in rest of building.	Partially	Lino will be lifted and new floor finish laid on top of plywood. Original floorboards and joists will not be damaged.
Kitchen Units	Low quality laminated kitchen units. In poor condition.	No	Kitchen units will be removed to make way for additional toilets.
Windows	Kitchen has two large windows. W07 is a large sash window similar to others in the building, however left hand side reveal has been plastered instead of timber lined, possibly when kitchen was installed. W08 is a timber casement window, also with plaster reveals.	Partially/Unknown	Windows will be retained as existing. Removal of kitchen units will expose window cills. These will be made good in keeping with the rest of the windows in the building.

Server Room – GF06

Feature	Description of Existing	Original Feature?	Proposal
Skirting	White painted timber skirting. 290mm high and 50-60mm deep. Appears to conceal services such as wiring and pipe work. Original skirting may be present underneath.	No	Skirting will be retained as existing
A/C unit	Server Room GF06 contains a single wall	No	Air conditioning unit will be removed.

	mounted air conditioning unit. Pipe work appears to run under floorboards.		
Windows	Room contains single side facing painted timber sash window Good condition. Window is not original as existing drawings from early 90s show there is an opening in this wall. Window has metal bars fixed internally.	No	Window is being removed and opening converted into a door to access the external dining area. See drawing 1015.10.03.Pln1.200
Radiator	Server Room contains a single floor standing painted metal radiator. Pipe work runs beneath floorboards.	No	Radiator will be removed.
Ceiling	There is a large down stand running across the room probably containing a beam, which suggests that a load-bearing wall has been demolished. The ceiling is unlikely to be original. The room has no cornice.	No	The existing ceiling will be retained.
Floor	Floor is lined with plywood and then carpeted. Large timber joists and floorboards below could be original. In the corner of the room a large amount of cabling is penetrating a hole in the floor. Floor void beneath floorboards is around 400mm deep.	Partially	Carpet and plywood will be removed. If floorboards are suitable they will be made good and used as floor finish. Services penetrating floor will be removed and the hole in the floor repaired.
SW Wall	Wall between Server Room and Office (GF06) is stepped in plan and section, as if it has previously been demolished and rebuilt. See photograph 2.	No	An opening will be formed in the centre of this wall to link spaces GF05 and GF06. The opening will be lined in the same way as the existing doors and windows, and will be sized so as not to affect the plan form of the building (see drawing 1015.10.03.Pln1.204). The central section of wall we are removing is the thinner part suspected to be non-original fabric.

Office – GF07

Feature	Description of Existing	Original Feature?	Proposal
Windows	2 no large front windows, painted timber sashes with built in shutters. Good condition. Thickness of paintwork suggests windows, linings and architraves are not original, but good restoration job is possible. This room also has one side facing sash window. This is of	Unknown	All windows retained as existing. Large front windows will have glass balustrade installed internally as protection. See drawing 1015.10.03.Pln1.206.



Photograph 2 - Step in wall in sever room (GF06) suggesting this wall has previously been demolished and rebuilt.

	the same type/quality, but does not have timber shutters.		
Skirting	White painted timber skirting. 290mm high and 50-60mm deep. Appears to conceal services such as wiring and pipe work. Original skirting may be present underneath.	No	Skirting will be retained as existing
Radiators	Office GF07 contains 2 no. floor standing painted metal radiators. Pipe work runs beneath floorboards.	No	Existing radiators will be removed and replaced with new. In some cases replaced with new ones. Where possible existing pipe work will be re-used to limit further damage to existing fabric.
Chimneybreast	GF07 contains a chimneybreast. It is currently blocked up. It is likely that there was originally a fireplace in this room	Yes	Chimneybreast will be retained. As part of the refurbishment the fireplace will be restored.
Ceiling	Ceiling contains one large central modern pendant, also has decorative cornice all the way around the room.	Unknown	Retained as existing. Central pendant light will be replaced. Wiring re-used where possible.
Cornice	Decorative cornice around whole room. Could be original.	Yes	Retained as existing
Walls	Mid height dado rail & crown moulding just below cornice. Possibly original, but paint thickness suggests they are not. Perspex fixed to wall below dado rail in some areas, presumably where desks were located in office.	No	Dado moulding will be retained where openings in wall are not proposed. crown moulding will be retained in full. Perspex fixed to wall will be removed and walls made good.
A/C units	Office GF07 contains a single wall mounted air conditioning unit. Pipe work appears to run under floorboards.	No	Air conditioning unit will be removed.

FIRST FLOOR

Landing - FF01

Feature	Description of Existing	Original Feature?	Proposal
Skirting	White painted timber skirting. 290mm high and 50-60mm deep. Appears to conceal services such as wiring. Skirting also contains several plug sockets Original skirting may be present underneath. Large plastic trunking exists above skirting around some of room providing additional sockets.	No	Skirting will be retained as existing. Plastic trunking will be removed.
Floor	Floor is lined with plywood and then carpeted. Floor structure is made up of two layers of joists running perpendicular to one another forming a service void. There is an area of water damage on the floor adjacent to the door to Office FF04.	Partially	Carpet and plywood will be removed. If floorboards are suitable they will be made good and used as floor finish. Area of damaged floor will be investigated and made good.
Ceiling	Existing ceiling contains a loft hatch leading up into a large roof space. Ceiling also contains large central pendant light and recessed ceiling spotlights	Unknown	Loft hatch retained, recessed lighting removed and ceiling made good. Pendant light removed and replaced with new pendant light. Existing wiring re-used where possible.
Windows	Semicircular Toplight above staircase.	Unknown	Existing window retained.
Walls	Walls have mid height dado, no cornice. Pipe running down from loft space terminates at low level.	Yes	Existing walls retained as existing. Pipe running down from loft space removed.

Office - FF02

Feature	Description of Existing	Original Feature?	Proposal
Radiators	Office FF02 contains three floor standing painted metal radiators. Pipe work runs beneath floorboards.	No	Radiators will be removed. Where possible pipe work will be re-used to provide new heating for kitchen.
Skirting	White painted timber skirting. 290mm high and 50-60mm deep. Appears to conceal services such as wiring. Skirting also contains several plug sockets. Original skirting may be present underneath. Large plastic trunking exists above	No	Skirting will be retained as existing. Plastic trunking will be removed.

	skirting around some of room providing additional sockets.		
Ceiling	Flat plastered ceiling, no cornice present, Single large modern pendant light in centre of room and two large recessed ceiling lights. Other fixtures are present such as projector and screen brackets.	Unknown	Lighting and other fixtures will be removed and replaced with new lighting. Ceiling will be retained and made good. 450mm diameter Penetration through ceiling will be required for kitchen extraction ductwork. This will be positioned to avoid damaging ceiling structure.
A/C unit	Room contains a single ceiling mounted air conditioning unit.	No	Air conditioning unit will be removed.
Floor	Floor is lined with plywood and then carpeted. Floor structure is made up of two layers of joists running perpendicular to one another forming a service void. Void is approx 120mm deep. Bottom area of void appears to contain some fire protection as separation between floors. Floorboards have several holes where cables are brought through.	Partially/No	Carpet and plywood will be removed. If floorboards are suitable they will be made good and used as floor finish. Services penetrating floor will be removed and the holes in the floor repaired. Fire protection will be retained.
Windows	Room contains single side facing painted timber sash window and two rear facing painted timber sash windows. Good condition. Thickness of paintwork suggests windows, linings and architraves are not original, but good restoration job is possible. All windows have 'Latchway Pushlock' mansafe system installed for cleaning windows.	Partially/ Unknown	Windows will be retained as existing.
Internal Doors	Solid timber six panel doors to match other doors throughout building. Probably not original, but some parts of lining/architrave may be.	Partially/No	Door to Office FF02 will be removed and opening widened. New double doors will be installed to provide access to kitchen. Doors will be held open and close on triggering of fire alarm. Door design and opening treatment will be as per existing doors. See drawing 1015.10.03.Pln1.205.

Office - FF03

Feature	Description of Existing	Original Feature?	Proposal
Radiators	Office FF03 contains five floor standing painted	No	Existing radiators will be removed and

	metal radiators. Pipe work runs beneath floorboards.		replaced with new ones. Existing pipe work will be re-used.
Skirting	White painted timber skirting. 290mm high and 50-60mm deep. Appears to conceal services such as wiring. Skirting also contains several plug sockets Original skirting may be present underneath. Large plastic trunking exists above skirting around some of room providing additional sockets.	No	Skirting will be retained as existing. Plastic trunking will be removed.
Ceiling	Curved skeliling/ceiling giving the space additional height and a grand assembly room feel. Ceiling contains 3 modern pendant lights.	Partially	Modern pendant lights will be removed and replaced with new ones. Where possible wiring will be re-used.
A/C unit	Room contains two ceiling mounted air conditioning units.	No	Existing air conditioning units will be retained and re-used to cool the space.
Floor	Floor is lined with plywood and then carpeted. Floor structure is made up of two layers of joists running perpendicular to one another forming a service void. Void is approx 120mm deep. Bottom area of void appears to contain some fire protection as separation between floors. Floorboards have several holes where cables are brought through. Existing floor dips noticeably near the centre of the southwest wall.	Partially/No	Carpet and plywood will be removed. If floorboards are suitable they will be made good and used as floor finish. Services penetrating floor will be removed and the holes in the floor repaired. Dipped area will be investigated for structural defects. A new raised floor level is proposed for the Bar.
Windows	Room contains single side facing painted timber sash window and five forward facing painted timber sash window. Good condition. Thickness of paintwork suggests windows, linings and architraves are not original, but good restoration job is possible.	Partially/ Unknown	Windows will be retained as existing.
Internal Doors	Single solid timber six panel door to match other doors throughout building. Probably not original	No	Existing door will be retained as existing.

Office - FF04

Feature	Description of Existing	Original Feature?	Proposal
Radiators	Office FF04 contains two floor standing painted metal radiators. Pipe work runs beneath floorboards.	No	Radiators will be removed and replaced with new. Existing pipe work will be retained and re-used.
Skirting	White painted timber skirting. 290mm high and	No	Skirting will be retained as existing.

	50-60mm deep. Appears to conceal services such as wiring. Skirting also contains several plug sockets. Original skirting may be present underneath. Large plastic trunking exists above skirting around some of room providing additional sockets.		Plastic trunking will be removed.
Ceiling	Flat plastered ceiling, no cornice present, Single large modern pendant light in centre of room and two large recessed ceiling lights.	Unknown	Lighting and other fixtures will be removed and replaced with new lighting. Ceiling will be retained and made good.
A/C unit	Room contains a single ceiling mounted air conditioning unit.	No	Air conditioning unit will be relocated to serve Dining Room 2.
Floor	Floor is lined with plywood and then carpeted. Floor structure is made up of two layers of joists running perpendicular to one another forming a service void. Void is approx 120mm deep. Bottom area of void appears to contain some fire protection as separation between floors. Floorboards have several holes where cables are brought through. Existing floor dips noticeably near the centre of the southwest wall.	Partially/No	Carpet and plywood will be removed. If floorboards are suitable they will be made good and used as floor finish. Services penetrating floor will be removed and the holes in the floor repaired. Dipped area will be investigated for structural defects. A new raised floor level is proposed for the Bar.
Windows	Room contains single side facing painted timber sash window and single rear facing painted timber sash window. Good condition. Thickness of paintwork suggests windows, linings and architraves are not original, but good restoration job is possible. Both windows have 'Latchway Pushlock' mansafe system installed for cleaning windows.	Partially/ Unknown	Windows will be retained as existing.
Internal Doors	Solid timber six panel doors to match other doors throughout building. Probably not original	No	Existing door will be retained as existing.

APPENDIX D

List of Drawings Included in Application

Seven Bridges House, Reading

Application for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent
September 2015

Schedule of Drawings included in Application

Drawing Title	Scale	Sheet Size	Drawing Number
Site Location Plan	1:1250	A3	1015.10.01.Exg.001
Existing Site Plan	1:200	A3	1015.10.01.Exg.002
Existing Basement Plan	1:100	A3	1015.10.01.Exg.021
Existing Ground Floor Plan	1:100	A3	1015.10.01.Exg.022
Existing First Floor Plan	1:100	A3	1015.10.01.Exg.023
Existing Roof Plan	1:100	A3	1015.10.01.Exg.025
Existing Front Elevation	1:100	A3	1015.10.01.Exg.060
Existing Side Elevation (South East)	1:100	A3	1015.10.01.Exg.061
Existing Side Elevation (North West)	1:100	A3	1015.10.01.Exg.062
Existing Rear Elevation	1:100	A3	1015.10.01.Exg.063
Proposed Site Plan	1:200	A3	1015.10.03.Pln.002
Proposed Basement Plan	1:100	A3	1015.10.03.Pln.021
Proposed Ground Floor Plan	1:100	A3	1015.10.03.Pln.022
Proposed First Floor Plan	1:100	A3	1015.10.03.Pln.023
Proposed Roof Plan	1:100	A3	1015.10.03.Pln.025
Proposed Front Elevation	1:100	A3	1015.10.03.Pln.060
Existing Section A'A – Assembly Room	1:50	A3	1015.10.01.Exg.040

Proposed Side Elevation (South East)	1:100	A3	1015.10.03.Pln.061
Proposed Side Elevation (North West)	1:100	A3	1015.10.03.Pln.062
Proposed Rear Elevation	1:100	A3	1015.10.03.Pln.063
Proposed Section A'A – Assembly Room	1:50	A3	1015.10.03.Pln.1.040
Proposed Internal Elevation B – Pot Wash Wall	1:50	A3	1015.10.03.Pln.1.130
GD14 – Proposed Door to Outside Dining Area	1:20	A3	1015.10.03.Pln.200
GD02 – Widened Rear Door	1:20	A3	1015.10.03.Pln.201
GD03 & GD12 – Proposed Dining Room Doors	Varies	A3	1015.10.03.Pln.202
GD11 – Existing Fixed Door	1:20	A3	1015.10.03.Pln.203
GF06 – GF07 – Proposed Opening	Varies	A3	1015.10.03.Pln.204
FD01 – Proposed Kitchen Doors	1:20	A3	1015.10.03.Pln.205
W01-W04 – Front Windows	1:20	A3	1015.10.03.Pln.206
W23 – Bar Opening	Varies	A3	1015.10.03.Pln.207
W24 – Kitchen Window	Varies	A3	1015.10.03.Pln.208
Bin Storage	1:20	A3	1015.10.03.Pln.209
Service Vehicle Turning Diagram	1:200	A3	1015.10.03.Pln.210