

19 May 2025

Planning Department Team
Reading Borough Council

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Dear Sir/Madam

Planning application Ref:(Listed Building Consent) PL/24/1556

Re: Application for Approval of details reserved by a condition (discharge)

SITE LOCATION: 35-37, St. Mary's Butts, Reading RG1 2LS

Condition to be Discharged:

Condition 3 on decision Notice:

"No works shall commence on site until a scheme of internal design, including photographs and a schedule of works relating to revealing any historic features as outlined in the submitted Heritage Statement. This shall be accompanied by a full material schedule (along with samples), including type of finishes, and shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The submitted details must be referenced against the approved plans and must show the relationship with the surrounding / original fabric. The works shall then progress in strict accordance with the approved details unless agreed otherwise in writing by the Local Planning Authority."

Description of Schedule of Works:

Historic Features:

Fire Place:

At the rear of number 35's rear wing is an open fireplace with timber bressummer. Fireplace is considered to have a substantial importance in the historic significance of the building. In the existing setting, the fireplace was hidden behind the shelving units of the retail/grocery store.

The removal of the shelving units from the shop has revealed the fireplace.



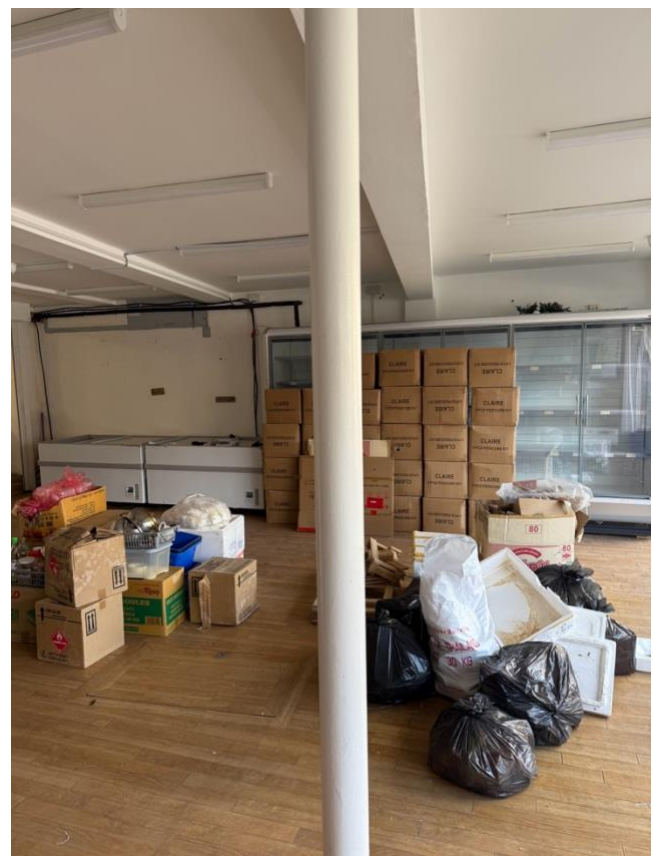
Picture 1, Open fireplace at the rear of number 35's rear wing wall

In current condition, as shown in the above picture, some external fixtures are attached to the bressummer. These metal strips will be removed. Additionally, the electric socket installed in the back wall of the fireplace will also be removed to completely restore the fireplace to the original condition by removing all the external objects. The electric socket is fitted on an exterior Pattress box with external wiring. The removal of electric socket would not damage the brick work in chamber lining, and any holes left by screws will be filled by lime base mortar. Despite some visible cracking, the timber bressummer is in structurally stable condition. No repairs to the wooden cracks are proposed.

The wing walls of the fireplace will be repainted to the existing Pure White, (RAL 9010) colour as a part of repainting of shop's interior. Front hearth (timber sill) will be repainted to RAL 070 60 30 (Light oak brown) colour to provide more traditional look to this historic feature and to match with the Oak bressummer. Brick work forming the Inner heart and Chamber lining will be retained to its current/ original state.

The proposed renovation works to the Fireplace will restore this important historic feature of the building interior and will contribute positively toward the historic fabric of the listed building. The proposed restoration of the fireplace will not affect adversely the setting of the listed building or the fireplace itself.

Round Columns:



Pictures 2 and 3, round columns supporting the jetty of No 37.

As described in the detailed reasons of designation, there are C20 features and finishes with round columns supporting the jetty of number 37. Again, the removal of the shelving has revealed the key feature of the interior. The visual inspection shows

no signs of deterioration to the columns. The columns will be kept revealed to showcase this interior feature. No repairs to the columns are proposed.

Ceiling Joists:

The historic England description also mention “*some exposed ceiling joists*”. In the current state, the ceiling joists are covered by plaster boards. The applicant has confirmed that the ceiling joists were concealed before they acquired the site in 2022. The previous marketing brochure also shows the covered joists, please see the attached file.

Given the current covered ceiling state, it is difficult to determine the exact location of the historic exposed ceiling joists. In this context the historic description is also unclear, which only states “*some exposed ceiling joists*” but does not provide a concise location of the joists. Further, the building owner is also unaware of the exact location of these ceiling joists.

Therefore, the current scope of development does not include the exposing of the ceiling joists, as it is anticipated that removal of fully covered ceiling plaster boards will cause more harm than the benefit to the internal fabric to the listed building and would create unnecessary additional works including changing of the ceiling lights and associated electric wiring/ electric works.



Pictures 4 and 5, Ceiling current condition

In addition to conservation of above-described historic features, the proposal also includes brief internal renovations as follows.

Internal Renovations (listed building)

- **Interior Walls and Ceiling (Paint):**

- Paint of interior walls is also faded and detreated considerably. The proposal also includes repainting of the interior walls of the shop. Currently walls are painted to Pure White, (RAL 9010) colour. The proposal is to repaint the walls to the existing Pure White, (RAL 9010) colour,
- Similarly, the ceiling is also proposed to be repainted to an existing Pure White, (RAL 9010) colour.

The repainting of the walls and ceiling has been approved in the Listed Building Consent application Ref: PL/24/1556. The sample of the paint will be submitted upon the acknowledgement of this application for approval.

- **Flooring:**

- Currently the shop is fitted with Natural Oak effect wood flooring. The wood floor is installed on a standard timber suspended subfloor. The surface of the wood floor has scratches, stains, and wear. The proposal is to restore and refinish the wooden floor to its original condition.
- The restoration of the flooring would not harm the significance of the listed building but would contribute positively toward the significance of the listed building interior.



Picture 6, Wooden floor

Conclusion:

The prominent historical features including open fire place and round columns will be revealed and restored back to the original conditions.

The recommendations of the conservation officer are fulfilled.

The proposed internal renovations including, repainting of walls and ceiling and restoration of wooden flooring would not harm the significance of the listed building but would contribute positively toward the significance of the listed building interior.

Based on these, it is requested to discharge the condition 3 in the LBC decision and approve this application.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Muhammad U Safdar

BSc (Hons), MSc, Phd, Member of ICE & BGA