

Date June 25

Ref. 9436

**Alterations to the shop front to provide additional door to upper floor areas,
provision of rear external staircase for access to rear service area from upper floors
at 58 Kings Road, Reading RG1 3AA**

Proposal

This application seeks full planning permission for alterations to the existing shopfront and rear elevation at 58 Kings Road, Reading RG1 3AA, in connection with the building's continued mixed-use occupation.

The proposed works include:

- Alterations to the shopfront to incorporate an additional entrance door providing dedicated access to the upper floor residential units, ensuring functional separation between the commercial and residential uses;
- Installation of rear external metal stairs to allow direct access from the upper floors to the rear service area for bin and cycle storage;
- Retention and enhancement of the existing ground floor commercial unit, with no change to its primary frontage beyond the above access alterations.

The proposal seeks to support the effective use of the building as a mixed-use premises, improve accessibility, and provide safe and practical servicing arrangements for future residential occupiers. The design is modest, respectful of the host building, and uses durable, high-quality materials in keeping with the local character.

The proposal includes the installation of a tiled stall riser, which complies with Paragraph 4.11 of Reading Borough Council's Shopfront Design SPD (2022). The guidance states that applicants should "retain or re-install existing stallrisers with a moulded and projecting cill at the base of the shopfront of at least 300mm (450mm to 700mm preferred) in height in order to form a solid visual base." The proposed tiled stall riser will provide a durable and visually robust lower section to the shopfront, helping to protect the glazing from damage, reduce maintenance needs, and reinforce the traditional proportions of the frontage in accordance with the Council's design expectations.

We believe that the application complies with the Design for Shopfronts guide 2022.

The proposed alterations have been designed to comply with the principles set out in Reading Borough Council's Shopfront Design SPD (2022), including:

1. High-Quality Traditional Materials

The use of a hardwood timber shopfront frame, finished in RAL 7016, reflects the guidance in Section 4 – Materials of the SPD, which encourages the use of high-quality, durable materials that complement the architectural character of the host building.

2. Stall Riser (Paragraph 4.11)

The proposed tiled stall riser accords with Paragraph 4.11, which emphasises that:

"Stall risers form an integral part of a traditional shopfront and provide a solid base. They should be retained or reinstated using durable and complementary materials such as brick, tile, or stone."

3. Proportion and Entrance Positioning

The inclusion of a new entrance to the upper floors is in line with Paragraphs 2.2 and 3.4, which support well-proportioned shopfronts and appropriate accommodation of separate residential access, provided it does not dominate or detract from the commercial frontage.

4. Sympathetic Modern Design

The proposal uses a modern but respectful design, which reflects the SPD's broader aim to encourage *"high-quality design that is sensitive to context while allowing for innovation and contemporary detailing"* (Paragraph 1.3).

5. Rear Access for Servicing

The proposed metal rear stair ensures functional and independent access for refuse and cycle storage, consistent with good design practice and supporting safe, practical servicing for upper-floor occupants without disrupting the front elevation.