



HB Planning Services

81-85 Station Rd,
Croydon, CR0 2AR.

HERITAGE STATEMENT

8A High Street, Reading
RG1 2EA

1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the proposed change of use of the ground floor at 8A High Street, Reading RG1 2EA, from a retail unit to a takeaway restaurant. The proposal includes the insertion of a new entrance door and installation of an external extractor fan. This statement assesses the potential impact of the proposed works on the character and appearance of the existing building and the surrounding heritage context.

2. Site Context

The site is located on Reading High Street, within a mixed-use area comprising mainly retail and commercial premises at ground floor level with offices and residential uses above. The building forms part of a historic streetscape with buildings of late Victorian and early Edwardian architectural styles. The building at 8A High Street, known as 'Bank Chambers', exhibits strong architectural detailing, including decorative terracotta and faience tiling, arched window openings, and ornate cornice work typical of its period.



Figure 1: Front elevation of 8A High Street, Reading.

3. Heritage Significance

The building is a grade II listed and it contributes positively to the character of the High Street due to its architectural composition, materials, and detailing. The property may lie within or adjacent to a conservation area, and as such, consideration must be given to preserving and enhancing the character of the area. The principal heritage value of the building lies in its decorative façade and its contribution to the overall historic setting of the High Street.

4. Proposed Works

The proposal involves the change of use of the existing ground floor unit from retail to a takeaway restaurant. The works include the insertion of a new entrance door on the front elevation to improve customer access and the installation of an extractor fan to the rear of the property to serve the new kitchen area.



Figure 2: Rear elevation showing area for proposed extractor installation.

5. Impact Assessment

The proposed alterations have been designed to be sympathetic to the building's existing architectural features. The new entrance door will be designed to match the proportions and materials of the existing frontage, ensuring minimal visual disruption. The proposed extractor fan

will be positioned to the rear of the property, away from public view, and finished in a neutral colour to reduce visual impact. The works will not affect the building's key decorative elements or its contribution to the wider streetscape.

6. Conclusion

The proposed development represents a minor alteration to the existing building and will not harm its architectural character or the surrounding heritage context. The works are fully reversible and will ensure the continued active use of the property, supporting the vitality of the High Street. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposal preserves the significance of the heritage asset and accords with local and national planning policies.