

Heritage Statement

037 Broad Street, Reading RG1 2AA
037BRO-CC-XX-RP-004

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MEMBER

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This heritage statement is produced for submission to Reading Borough Council.
- 1.2. This is a supporting document as part of a Listed Building consent and advertisement consent specific to 037 Broad Street, Reading, RG1 2AA, and should not be used for any other purposes.

2. Design Proposal

- 2.1. The proposed works include the addition of contextually appropriate signage, while retaining the shopfront as existing.
- 2.2. The proposed works also include minor internal refurbishment to both the ground floor and first floor levels. Top two floors will remain unchanged. These include the installation of a lightweight internal stud partition, minor surface upgrades and MEP (mechanical, electrical and plumbing) adjustments.
- 2.3. All internal works are designed to be fully reversible and non-intrusive, with careful consideration given to avoiding any disruption to the historic fabric of the building.
- 2.4. The purpose of this document is to outline the design rationale and demonstrate compliance with planning policies and guidance relevant to the Reading Borough Local Plan City Plan (2019).
- 2.5. The proposed signage design seeks to maintain traditional proportions and details in line with the established architectural character of the listed building. High-quality, sympathetic materials are proposed throughout.

3. Description of property and adjoining properties

- 3.1. The property is a ground-floor commercial unit located within a Grade II listed building (List entry number-1113564) on Broad Street, part of a collection of similarly listed buildings in the vicinity. The surrounding area is known for its commercial vibrancy and eclectic architecture.
 - 3.1.1. The site is not located within a flood risk zone; therefore, no Flood Risk Assessment is required.

4. Design and concept for the proposed development

- 4.1. The proposed signage design retains the proportions of the streetscape, with freestanding metal letters on the fascia that are well-proportioned to its length and depth, not exceeding half of the fascia's overall height and length, with a 50mm maximum depth.

4.2. The proposed projecting sign is constructed from traditional metal and utilises the existing projecting sign location. The metal bracket is simply detailed with a solid, appropriate appearance, seamlessly integrating with the surrounding historical context.

5. The internal refurbishment works include:

- Removal of unoriginal sink and WC from the first floor;
- Decorative brick slips on modern plasterboard.
- Floor tiles installed over the modern timber floor using a decoupling system to avoid damage to existing thresholds;
- Patch repair to existing suspended plasterboard ceilings.

5.1. Services will be routed through existing risers and ducting paths where possible.

5.2. All existing penetrations to be reused and maintained where possible.

6. Windows and Doors

6.1. The shopfront will remain as existing. All existing doors and windows will remain unchanged.

6.2. No changes are proposed to external thresholds or shopfront access.

7. Materials

7.1. The timber fascia will be retained as existing.

7.2. The proposed materials for both the projecting and fascia signage include high quality aluminium, to be finished in black (RAL 9005). These materials are consistent with the historic character of the area and offer a durable, low-maintenance and modern solution.

7.3. The following materials will be used in the internal refurbishment:

- Decorative brickslips on modern lining only (original wall untouched);
- 600x600 mm ceramic porcelain tiles applied to modern timber floor using a decoupling system;
- Patch repair of existing suspended plasterboard ceiling where necessary

7.4. All materials are historically sympathetic and visually consisted with the character of the original building. Care has been taken to preserve the listed character while introducing functional, contemporary finishes in line with conservation policy.

8. Impact

- 8.1. The proposal is designed to be sensitive to the building's Grade II listing and its prominent location within Reading Town Centre.
- 8.2. The works have been designed to be non-invasive and fully reversible.
- 8.3. The proposal improves the internal usability of the unit while preserving all key features of architectural and historical significance.
- 8.4. The works will enhance and preserve the historic streetscape and bring an underused retail frontage back into vibrant commercial use, supporting the commercial vibrancy of the area.

9. Access

- 9.1. The proposal does not alter access to the unit. The existing ramp and thresholds are retained in full.

10. Compliance with Planning Policies

- 10.1. The proposal aligns with the **Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)** and **Design Guide for Shopfronts (2022)**, specifically:

- 10.1.1. **Policy OU4 (Advertisements):** The proposal enhances the buildings appearance and contributes positively to the public realm.
- 10.1.2. **Policy OU5 (Shopfronts):** The signage respects the listed building while creating an active street frontage.
- 10.1.3. **Policy EN1 (Protection and Enhancement off the Historic Environment):** The minor refurbishment works and proposed updated signage protects and enhances the local distinctiveness of the area.
- 10.1.4. **Design Guide for Shopfronts:** The well-proportioned lettering on the fascia ensures a consistency with neighbouring shops and respects the historic and contextual language is preserved.

11. Summary

- 11.1. The proposed alterations at 037 Broad Street represent a respectful and high-quality intervention that enhances the appearance and functionality of the commercial unit while preserving the historic value of the building and its setting.

11.2. The project maintains the original proportions and character of the street while incorporating durable and historically appropriate materials.

It is respectfully requested that this planning application is approved, as the proposed changes will enhance the appearance and accessibility of the property while preserving the historic integrity of Broad Street.