



Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee
28 April 2026

Dear Marcelina Rejwerska

OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION PL/26/0300 4 Kings Road

1. SUMMARY

Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee object to this partially retrospective application for installation of security shutters to the retail units at 2-4 Kings Road for the following reasons.

- The external shutters are unsightly and do not comply with the Design Guide to Shopfronts SPD
- The property is a prominent corner building in the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area and this places additional obligations on owners and tenants in relation to the external appearance of their retail units.

2. HERITAGE

2.1 Abbey Corner is a prominent modern building within the Market Place/London Street conservation area. Whilst it may be a very functional building it is sensitive to its location and thoughtfully designed. The curve of the facade follows the site boundary and harmonises with the curves of Jacksons Corner to the north, the former Barclays Bank to the north-west and the Jacobs building to the west.

2.2 Developments in a conservation area should conserve or enhance the special character and appearance of the area. Security shutters do not meet this expectation and do not comply with Policy EN3 Enhancement of Conservation Areas.

2.3 The Design Guide for Shopfronts SPD sets out guidance for shopfronts in the town with additional specific guidance for those in conservation areas. Para 4.71 states 'Exterior security shutters should be avoided on listed buildings or within a conservation area in favour of laminated glass.' Elsewhere in the guidance Para 4.40 suggests that if laminated glass is not possible then internal grilles can be considered but not solid internal or external solid shutters. Numerous illustrative examples are provided within the design guide.

2.4 We note that three of the units have already installed shutters. Unit 4 occupied by Paesinos does not currently have shutters. This unit does however have two CCTV cameras which are highly likely to capture images of anyone walking along the street. We could not see any signage warning members of the public.

3. OTHER MATTERS

3.1 The description of the application as 4 Kings Road is incorrect as it has been confirmed that the application covers all 4 units and is partially retrospective. The description on the yellow site notice is similarly incorrect.

3.2 We note Matt Rodda MP's letter in relation to security in the area and its use in the application as justification for shutters. We agree that discussions about appropriate security measures in the area are appropriate. Without further details it is difficult to understand the scale of the problem identified. It will assist our future comments if Reading CAAC can be included in the discussions referred to and for us to gain an understanding of why internal shutters or laminated glass as set out in the shopfronts SPD do not meet that need.

3.3 We note in the plans that the pink and blue advertising bar is to be removed. We request that the two illuminated roundels are also removed. The advertising should be as approved in planning application PL/23/1658.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 This application should be firmly rejected and alternative solutions proposed by the applicant.

Yours sincerely

Evelyn Williams
Chair Reading CAAC
On behalf of Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee
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