



Planning Statement

87 Southampton Street, Reading, RG1 2QU

Elevation and Fenestration Alteration at ground
floor level

October 2026

J Butterworth Planning Limited
71-75 Shelton Street
London, WC2H 9JQ
0330 043 4577
jeremy@jbutterworthplanning.co.uk

jbutterworthplanning.co.uk

Title	Planning Statement
Project	87 Southampton St
Client	Wave
Issue	Final
Project No	24008

Prepared By Jeremy Butterworth BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

J Butterworth Planning Limited is registered in England & Wales Company No. 9533429
Registered Office: 71-75 Shelton Street, Covent Garden, London, WC2H 9JQ

Formatted for double-sided printing.

Limitations

This document has been prepared for the stated purpose in accordance with the Agreement under which our services were commissioned, and should not be used for any other purpose without the prior written authority of J Butterworth Planning Limited. I accept no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than for which it was commissioned.

© J Butterworth Planning Limited. All rights reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced or published in any form or by any means, including photocopying, storage on computer or otherwise without the prior permission of the copyright holder.

Contents

1	Introduction and Development Proposals.....	4
1.1	Introduction	4
1.2	Purpose	4
1.3	Proposed Development.....	5
1.4	Supporting Documents.....	5
2	Site Location, Description and History	6
2.1	Site Location and Description.....	6
2.2	Planning History	6
3	Development Plan Context, Designations and Assessment	8
3.1	Development Plan Context, Designations and Relevant Policies	8
3.2	Material Consideration – National Planning Policy Framework.....	8
4	Planning Assessment	10
4.1	Introduction	10
4.2	Principle of Development.....	10
4.3	Design.....	10
4.4	Impact on Neighbouring Amenity	11
4.5	Other Matters	11
5	Summary and Conclusion	14
5.1	Summary	14
5.2	Conclusion	14

1 Introduction and Development Proposals

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This statement represents a Planning Statement submitted in support of the planning application for elevation and fenestration alterations at ground floor level (the 'proposed development') at 87 Southampton Street, Reading, RG1 2QU (the 'site').
- 1.1.2 The application is intended to accompany a simultaneous application for prior approval for conversion of the building to residential use.
- 1.1.3 This is discussed in more detail below.

1.2 Purpose

- 1.2.1 Planning law¹ requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 1.2.2 The Courts² have determined that it is enough that a proposal accords with the development plan when considered as a whole. It is not necessary to accord with each and every policy contained within the development plan. Indeed, it is not at all unusual for development plan policies to pull in different directions.
- 1.2.3 The position was also clarified by Patterson J in *Tiviot Way Investments Ltd v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and Stockton-on-Tees BC* [2015] EWHC 2489 Admin) at paragraph 31:

I do not accept, lest it be thought to establish the proposition, that the case of Hampton Bishop (supra) establishes that a breach of one key policy was sufficient to find conflict with the development plan as a whole.

- 1.2.4 The Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 defines the Development Plan for the purposes of this assessment process as the strategy for the region in which the site is located and development plan documents, taken as a whole, which have been approved or adopted for the area.
- 1.2.5 The purpose of this statement is therefore to identify Development Plan policies that are relevant in the assessment of the development proposals. Then to determine if the proposals conflict with their provisions and if they do, to determine whether there are material considerations which outweigh such conflict.

¹ Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

² See for example *BDW Trading Ltd. v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government* [2016] EWCA Civ 493; [2017] P.T.S.R. 1337, at paragraphs 18 to 23; *Gladman Developments Ltd. v Canterbury City Council* [2019] EWCA Civ 669; [2019] P.T.S.R. 1714, at paragraphs 21 and 22; and *Chichester District Council v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government* [2019] EWCA Civ 1640; [2020] 1 P. & C.R. 9, at paragraphs 31 and 32).

1.3 Proposed Development

1.3.1 The proposed development can be summarised as:

- The existing window at ground floor level on the side elevation is replaced with a door to allow independent access to the proposed flat (subject to prior approval).

1.3.2 This is discussed in more detail below.

1.4 Supporting Documents

1.4.1 The application is accompanied by the following documents in addition to this Statement:

- Application Form
- CIL Form
- Site Location Plan
- Existing Plans
 - A-10-010 Existing Block Plan
 - A-10-011 Existing Floor Plans
 - A-11-010 Existing Sections
 - A-12-010 Existing Front and Rear Elevations
 - A-12-011 Existing Side Elevations
- Proposed Plans
 - A-13-010 Proposed Block Plan
 - A-13-011 Proposed Floor Plans
 - A-14-010 Proposed Sections
 - A-15-010 Proposed Front and Rear Elevations
 - A-15-011 Proposed Side Elevations

2 Site Location, Description and History

2.1 Site Location and Description

- 2.1.1 The application site comprises 87 Southampton Street, a detached building set back from the east side of the street, close to the junction with Crown Street (to the north).
- 2.1.2 The ground and first floor levels are currently occupied offices and the second floor is currently an unoccupied office.
- 2.1.3 The surrounding area is a mix of office and residential uses, together with a high-level car parking space immediately to the east.
- 2.1.4 The site is not a listed building and not located within a conservation area. A number of buildings on the west (opposite) side of Southampton Street at this point are listed.



Site in street scene



Rear of Site

- 2.1.5 The site is easily accessible by sustainable forms of transport and is 1.2km from Reading railway station.
- 2.1.6 In addition, frequent bus routes pass the site towards central Reading.

2.2 Planning History

- 2.2.1 The relevant planning history includes:
- 220204 - Additional storey to provide 1 x 2-bed residential unit above the second floor. Prior Notification under Class AA, Part 20 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (Amended Description) – Approved April 2022

- 221943 - Change of use from Class E (offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 3 Residential Flats. Prior Notification under Class MA, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 – refused February 2023

2.2.2 The 2023 refusal under Class MA was refused for the following three reasons:

1. The development subject of this prior notification fails to meet criteria Class MA.2.(2) (f) (provision of adequate natural light) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

2. The development subject of this prior notification fails to meet criteria Class MA.2.(2) (d) (Impacts of noise from commercial premises on the intended occupiers of the development) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).

3. The applicant has failed to sufficiently demonstrate that the building subject to this Prior Approval application was vacant for a continuous period of at least 3 months immediately prior to the date of the application for prior approval. The proposal therefore fails to meet criteria MA.1(1) (a) (vacancy qualification of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)).

2.2.3 A further application under Class MA for ‘change of use of 2nd floor from Class E (offices) to C3 (dwelling houses) to comprise 1 flat. Prior Notification under Class MA, Part 3 of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015’ was approved in June 2024 (Ref: 240351).

2.2.4 The permissions have not been implemented.

3 Development Plan Context, Designations and Assessment

3.1 Development Plan Context, Designations and Relevant Policies

- 3.1.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the provisions of the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This represents the starting point for assessing the development prospects for a particular site or property.
- 3.1.2 For the purposes of this assessment the Development Plan for the site comprises the **Reading Local Plan** (2019).
- 3.1.3 The site has no specific designations.
- 3.1.4 The following policies of the Local Plan have been identified as of most relevance:
- CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
 - CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
 - CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change
 - CC7: Design and the Public Realm
 - CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
 - EM1 Provision of Employment
 - H1 Provision of Housing
- 3.1.5 These are discussed in more detail below, where relevant.

3.2 Material Consideration – National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.2.1 The Government's National Planning Policy Framework (2026) (the 'NPPF') is a material consideration in the assessment of development proposals. The Framework confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 3.2.2 The NPPF confirms that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways:
- *an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
 - *a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and*

- *an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.*

3.2.3 The NPPF emphasises that these objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged.

3.2.4 The NPPF seeks to ensure that development proposals are informed by appropriate information and decided in a way which is proportionate, timely and effective.

3.2.5 An assessment of the NPPF confirms that the proposed development is consistent with national planning policies, and this provides further support for the proposed development.

3.2.6 No supplementary planning guidance has been identified as being relevant.

4 Planning Assessment

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The following assessment considers the relevant Development Plan policies identified in the preceding section and the degree to which the proposed development complies with their provisions or not as the case may be.
- 4.1.2 From a review of the Development Plan, it is considered that the following planning issues are considered to be material to the determination of the application.
- Principle of development
 - Design
 - Impact on neighbouring amenity
 - Other matters
- 4.1.3 These are discussed below in respect of the Development Plan and any material considerations.

4.2 Principle of Development

- 4.2.1 There is no change of use proposed as part of this application which is for external works to the existing building only.
- 4.2.2 Although the application indicates that the proposed works would facilitate the change of use of the building from offices to residential proposed under separate prior approval application (submitted concurrently and therefore has not yet been determined).
- 4.2.3 Notwithstanding this, the application for external changes can still be considered on its own merits and in this regard, it is noted that Local Plan Policy EM1 encourages improvements and new floorspace for business use.
- 4.2.4 In addition, Local Plan Policy H1 encourages new dwellings in Reading and therefore the proposed external works are also compatible should there be any change of use to residential.
- 4.2.5 In this regard, subject to the considerations below, the principle of the alterations to the building should be acceptable.

4.3 Design

- 4.3.1 In respect of design considerations, the NPPF seeks to promote high quality, healthy, inclusive and sustainable places, through setting clear expectations about design outcomes and the use of relevant tools and processes.
- 4.3.2 Local Plan Policy CC7 states that all development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located.

- 4.3.3 Developments will also be assessed to ensure that they respond positively to their local context and create or reinforce local character and distinctiveness, including protecting and enhancing the historic environment of the Borough and providing value to the public realm.
- 4.3.4 The building is not listed or locally listed and therefore the proposed development has no impact on any heritage features.
- 4.3.5 The proposed development seeks to replace a window in the side elevation with a window.
- 4.3.6 This will not be visible in the street scene and will have limited impact on the appearance of the building.
- 4.3.7 Therefore, there should be no design objections.

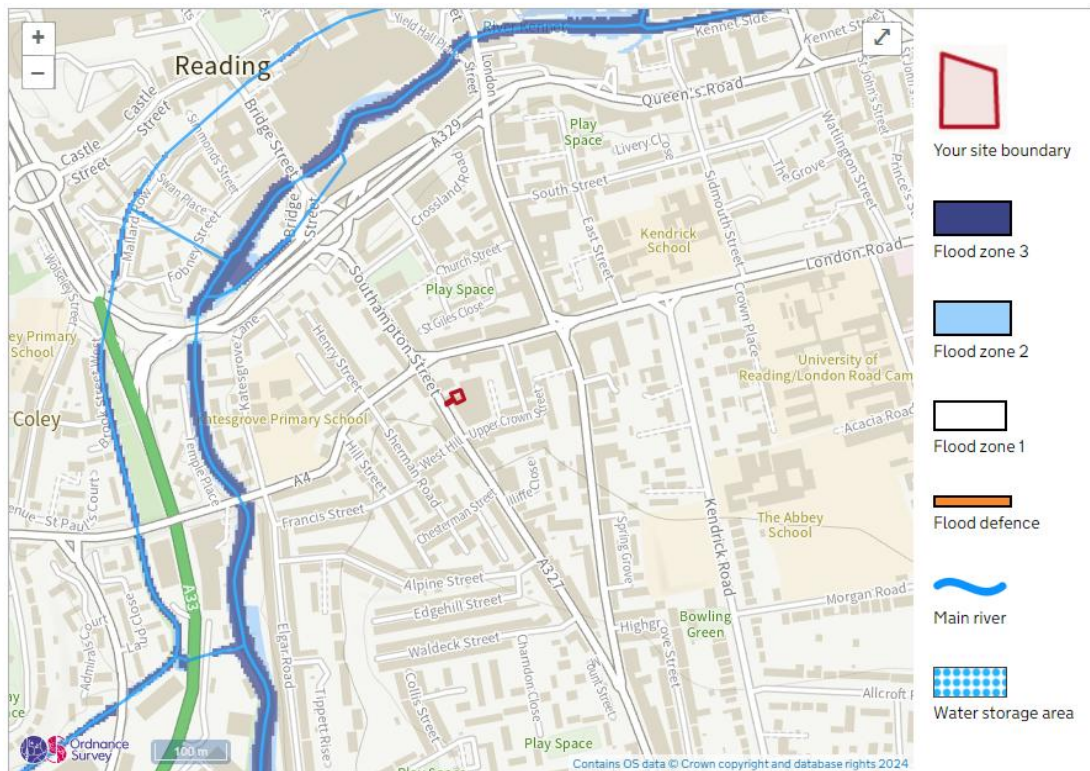
4.4 Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

- 4.4.1 Local Plan Policy CC8 states that development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, in terms of:
 - *Privacy and overlooking;*
 - *Access to sunlight and daylight;*
 - *Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development;*
 - *Harm to outlook;*
 - *Noise and disturbance;*
 - *Artificial lighting;*
 - *Vibration;*
 - *Dust and fumes;*
 - *Smell;*
 - *Crime and safety; or*
 - *Wind, where the proposals involve new development of more than 8 storeys.*
- 4.4.2 At ground floor level the proposed development introduces only a new door in place of an existing window. This will have no impact on the amenity of any neighbouring occupiers and therefore accord with Policy CC8.

4.5 Other Matters

- 4.5.1 Local Plan Policy CC3 states that all developments will demonstrate how they have been designed to incorporate measures to adapt to climate change. Local Plan Policy CC2 states that the design of buildings and site layouts should use energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change.
- 4.5.2 However, the proposed development seeks only minor external alterations to the property and therefore there are limited opportunities to enhance the sustainability of the building.

- 4.5.3 Nevertheless, any amendments required will seek to enhance the sustainability of the building, where possible including double glazing and more efficient materials.
- 4.5.4 The site is easily accessible by sustainable forms of transport and is 1.2km from Reading railway station.
- 4.5.5 In addition, frequent bus routes pass the site towards central Reading.
- 4.5.6 The site is accessible by walking and sits close to retail facilities at central Reading.
- 4.5.7 However, the proposed development sought by this application makes no change to the use of the building and therefore there should be no highways implications.
- 4.5.8 The Environment Agency Flood Map (below) confirms that the site lies within Flood Zone 1 where the chance of flooding in any given year is less than 1 in 1000 (0.1%).



- 4.5.9 In addition, the Surface Water Flooding Map shows that the site has a less than low chance of surface water flooding as shown in the 1 in 100 'Annual Likelihood of Flooding' map:



4.5.10 However, there is no change to the use of the building as a result of this application and therefore a flood risk assessment is not required.

5 Summary and Conclusion

5.1 Summary

- 5.1.1 This statement represents a Planning Statement submitted in support of the planning application for elevation and fenestration alterations at 87 Southampton Street, Reading, RG1 2QU.
- 5.1.2 The application is intended to accompany a simultaneous application for prior approval for conversion of the building to residential use.
- 5.1.3 The purpose of this statement is to identify Development Plan policies that maybe relevant in the assessment of the development proposal; and to consider whether the proposal conflicts with their provisions and, if so, whether there are material considerations that outweigh any conflict with the Development Plan.
- 5.1.4 An assessment of the relevant planning policies in the adopted Development Plans confirms that there is no significant conflict with their provisions and that the statutory test imposed by Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act and Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 is met.
- 5.1.5 An assessment of the National Planning Policy Framework confirms that the proposed development is consistent with national planning policies and provides further support for the application.
- 5.1.6 The above confirms that:
- The principle of development is acceptable.
 - There are no design impacts.
 - There will be no material impact on neighbouring amenity.
- There are no technical matters which would prevent the granting of planning permission.

5.2 Conclusion

- 5.2.1 In conclusion, the proposed development is considered compliant with the relevant provisions of the development plan. Planning law dictates that this justifies a grant of planning permission. Assessment against the policies contained within the Framework, which is a material consideration, further confirms that the development can be considered to be a form of sustainable development and therefore benefit from the presumption in favour of sustainable development which is a golden thread running through decision-taking.
- 5.2.2 The proposal is therefore promoted on this basis and that it can be supported and receive a grant of planning permission.

Jeremy Butterworth BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI

October 2026