

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT CULTURE & SPORT
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 9 JANUARY 2018

ITEM NO. 10

Ward: Abbey

App No.s: 181566/FUL and 181567/LBC

Address: 3-5 King Street, Reading

Proposals: 181566/FUL: Proposed change of use for floors 2, 3 and 4 from A2 to B1 use. Various external works including the extension of floor plates and minor internal amendments to facilitate the refurbishment of the existing building to create ancillary storage at basement and class B1 (Business) use on 3 upper floors (amended description).

181567/LBC: External and internal works including the extension of floor plates at floors 2, 3 and 4 and minor internal amendments to facilitate the refurbishment of the existing building to create ancillary storage at basement and refurbishment for office use on 3 upper floors.

Applicant: Threshold Land and Estates Ltd.

Date received: 05 September 2018

Major Application: 13 week target decision date: EOT 11 January 2019

RECOMMENDATION:

181566/FUL:

GRANT planning permission.

Conditions:

1. TL1 - Time limit
2. Approved Plans
3. Use only as B1(a) offices and no other use (whether or not 'permitted development'/a 'permitted change')
4. C5 - Construction Method Statement
5. Noise assessment for mechanical plant: submission of details
6. Submission of waste collection arrangements and bin storage
7. Submission of strategy for suitable construction hours
8. Materials to be as proposed (masonry, window details).
9. Provision of staff changing rooms and showers and cycle storage
10. Provision and retention of all accessible facilities, including installation and retention of lift(s)

Informatives:

- Terms and conditions
- Conditions precedent (discharging of conditions)
- Separate advertisement consent (and LBC) may be required for any future signage
- Full Building Regulations application is required. Any additional means of escape may require further works. Applicant should check to see if further

- permission/consent is required as a result of Building Regulations requirements
- Positive & Proactive

181567/LBC:

GRANT Listed Building Consent.

Conditions:

1. Time limit
2. No removal of original features/building fabric
3. Materials to be as proposed (masonry, window details)
4. No cutting of any masonry unless details submitted and agreed

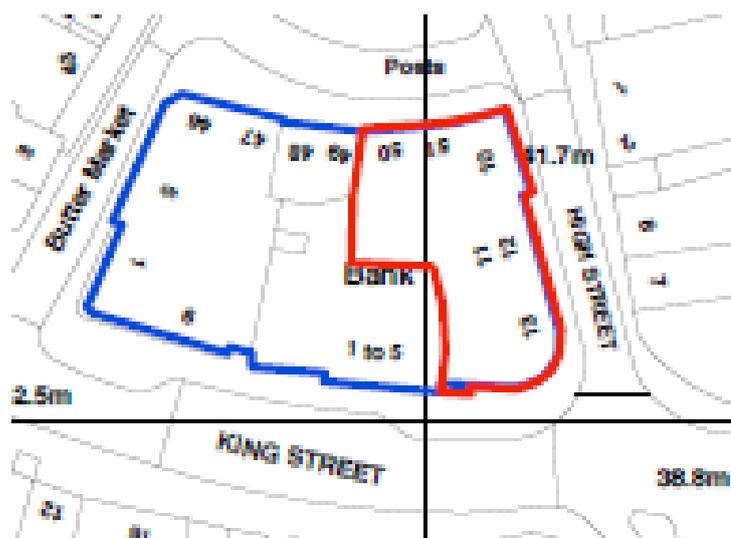
Informatives:

- Development Plan
- Terms and conditions
- Conditions precedent (discharging)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The application site is situated on the northern side of King Street and has frontages to King Street (south), High Street (east) and the Market Place (to the north). The site comprises four buildings of varying age and construction type which form a single unit which operated as Barclays Bank until 2009. Three of the four buildings are Grade II Listed and these date from about 1800-1870: 3-5 King Street, 50-51 Market Place and 10 High Street. The fourth part is a 1970s element with a curved façade towards the King Street/High Street corner, which then continues along High Street. The application relates to 3-5 King Street. The site is prominently located within the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area, as it effectively has three frontages. The red line of the application site is not the same over all floors and shares some servicing and fire escape routes with the building(s) to the west, see attached plans. It is in the Central Core, Reading Central Area, AQMA zone and within an area of Archaeological potential.

1.2 The application site and adjoining commercial units towards Buttermarket form an 'island site'. The site is therefore accessed and has main entrances from King Street and Market Place. Market Place provides high quality sitting-out space with occasional event use, typically food markets.



2. PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 There is an extensive planning history for the wider site with 1-2 Kings Street gaining permission to be converted to form bank offices in 1951 and 3/5 Kings Street being referred to as the 'Barclays Bank Redevelopment' with alterations to provide office space and the remodelling of shops from 1976.

76/882	Construction of new 4 storey office building - the modern building with the curved wall which fronts onto King Street/High Street.	Approved 1977
091501	Change of use from Class A2 (Financial and Professional Services) to Class A3 (Restaurants and Cafes) on ground floor, ancillary storage at basement and Class B1 (Business) use on 3 upper floors.	Approved 2010 Permission with s106, not implemented
150051	Change of use at ground floor level from A2 (Financial and Professional Services) to A3 (Restaurants and Cafés) and demolition and insertion of shopfront to corner of High Street/King Street.	Permitted 2015
170636	Change of use of Ground and Basement floors to Restaurant (Class A3) and associated rooftop plant.	Permitted 2017

- 2.2 Therefore, as confirmed by the Council's Planning Solicitor, the existing use of the building within the application is A2 (Financial and Professional Services), as the office space above was related to the banking use of the premises. Subsequent planning and listed building permissions granted change of use of the ground and basement floors to Restaurant A3 use in 2017 for two operators, The Botanist and Honest Burger.

- 2.3 Pre application advice was sought in July 2018.

3. PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The upper floors (previously in use as ancillary banking offices for the Barclays bank) would be converted to separate B1 offices. These offices would be accessed from the two existing circulation areas, stair cores and lifts within the building: one towards the front on King Street (via an improved entrance doorway within the 1970s building) and the other from the rear on Market Place. There are two basement areas which would be linked to the ground floor use (west basement) and the upper office use (east basement).
- 3.2 The principal changes to the historic building (externally) would be minimal. These would be limited to the entrance lobby areas/entrances on the ground floor entrance areas onto Market Place and King Street and the basement area to the Market Place entrance area.
- 3.3 An extension is proposed for the second and third floor areas into the lightwell. This should have minimal detrimental impact on the Aquarium offices which are situated on the opposite side of the lightwell.

3.4 The proposal includes:

- An extension over the existing first floor Office pod in the central lightwell to extend the second floor, third floor and roof area to provide office space and roof deck in which to relocate new and replacement plant
- Replacement of windows throughout the building with sympathetic double glazing;
- To provide wheelchair access by internal restructuring to provide accessible lift provision.

3.5 The applications are for full planning permission and associated listed building consent (LBC) and seek refurbishment of the building. The applicant seeks to provide office space for start-ups or developing small organisations in a contemporary 'loft' space environment whilst retaining many of the historical features of the building. Future applications would therefore be required, as necessary for signage or any other alterations to the building. These applications have been submitted with accompanying DASs and heritage statements and are being reported to your meeting as a Major level of floorspace is involved.

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 The Council's **Transport Strategy** section does not object to the planning application. Cycle storage and changing facilities will be provided in the basement. The A2 and B1 uses are similar in terms of their travel intensity. Conditions for a CMS and cycle parking are recommended.

4.2 **Reading CIC UK** welcomes a B1 use. They are very much in favour of retaining small or start-up business office space in the town centre and would like to work with the applicant by being introduced to tenants or gain a commitment to support start-up events.

4.3 The Council's **Environmental Protection Team** considers that there are unlikely to be residents close enough to be affected by noise from an office use. However there may be sensitive receptors (residential, at distance) and offices (immediately above and immediately adjacent) who may be adversely affected by associated plant noise. In the circumstances, it is recommended that any plant noise associated with the proposed uses complies with the recommended criteria of no more than 0dB above the existing background level from the nearest sensitive receptor's façade. In terms of disturbance to nearest office/residential uses, suggest that a condition for hours of construction should be considered.

4.4 The following neighbouring properties were consulted by letter:

Broad Street: Hobgoblin Pub 2 Broad Street, 3, The View 4-5

King Street: 1-5 First floor, Second Floor, Third Floor, 6, Healthy Planet 3-5

King Street: 10-12: Richard Company 207 Ltd

King Street: 16, 17-18, 24, 25

The Aquarium: Unit 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

King Street: Jackson's Corner 1-9

Kings Road: Flat 6 at 7 Kings Road, 9, 2, Flats 1-7 5 Kings Road, 11-13

Buttermarket: 2-3, 4, 5

Market Place: 1-2, 3, 4, Soane Point 6-8, 9-10, 42, 43, 46, 47

High Street: 7, 8, 8a

Duke St.: 2, Dukesbridge Chambers, Third Floor, Dukesbridge Chambers, 1 Legal & General Financial Services, Dukesbridge Chambers, Charles Stanley, Dukesbridge Chambers, Fourth floor

- 4.5 No letters of objection have been received at the time of writing, although any subsequently received will be reported to your meeting.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. The requirements of s66 and s71 of the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990 also apply.

- 5.2 The application has been assessed against the following policies:

5.3 National

National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF (2018)

2. Achieving sustainable development

6. Building a strong, competitive economy

Planning Policy Guidance - PPG (2014 onwards)

5.4 Reading Borough Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2008) (Altered 2015)

CS1 Sustainable Construction and Design

CS4 Accessibility and the Intensity of Development

CS5 Inclusive Access

CS7 Design and the Public Realm

CS9 Infrastructure, Services, Resources and Amenities

CS11 Use of Employment Land for Alternative Uses

CS20 (Implementation of The Reading Transport Strategy (Local Transport Plan 2006-2011))

CS23 Sustainable Travel and Travel Plans

CS24 Car/Cycle parking

CS33 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

CS34 Pollution and Water Resources

5.5 Reading Central Area Action Plan (2009)

RC5 Design in the Centre

RC6 Definition of the Centre

5.6 Sites and Detailed Policies Document (2012) (Altered 2015)

SD1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development

DM4: Safeguarding Amenity

DM12: Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters

DM14: Impact of main town centre uses

5.7 Supplementary Planning Documents

SPD - Planning Obligations

SPD - Sustainable Design and Construction

SPD Employment, Skills and Training

SPD Parking Standards and Design

5.8 Other relevant documentation:

Historic England Good Practice Advice

Market Place/London Street Conservation Area Appraisal (2007)

New Local Plan (Draft Reading Borough Local Plan: There are no major proposed changes from adopted policy.

5. APPRAISAL

6.1 The main issues raised by this application are:

- a) Principle of the change of use
- b) Impacts on the fabric of the Listed Building
- c) Servicing and operation
- d) Access for all

a) Principle of the change of use

6.2 With reference to the Reading Central Area Action Plan, the site is located within the 'Central Core', 'Office Core' and 'Primary Shopping Area', as set out in Policy RC6 (Definition of the Centre). Supporting Para 8.10 sets out that the sequential approach will be applied to leisure and office uses to specify that they are located within the town centre. In terms of Core Strategy Policy CS10 (Location of Employment Development), B1 offices are very similar in nature to the present (last) use as A2 ancillary offices to the bank.

6.3 Although there has been a long intervening period and the ground floor is now no longer in A2 use, the Council's Planning Solicitor advises that the upper floors in the building retain an established A2 use. Given this, your officers advise that the proposed B1(a) offices use and the current (last) A2 use are quite similar and an office use of the upper floors is compliant with the above policies. Officers are aware of the support from Reading UK CIC for this proposal on the basis that the intentions of the occupiers are as small business or start-ups. Whilst this is noted, it is not considered to be capable of control via this application, although the applicant has indicated that they (voluntarily) wish to work with Reading UK CIC in this case.

6.4 On the basis that the change from A2 to B1(a) is not materially different, no end-user employment and skills plan (ESP) is considered to be required in this instance and no conflict with Policy CS11 is identified.

6.5 In summary, the B1 use, as applied for, is considered to be acceptable in terms of adopted planning policy and suitable to this central location.

b) **Impacts on the fabric of the Listed Building**

- 6.6 The proposal would result in the renovation and re-use of the upper floors of this Listed building which have remained vacant for about 10 years, previously used as A2 ancillary office space.
- 6.7 This is a key site in the Conservation Area and by virtue of the fact that the buildings are attached to each other, the entire application site is effectively "listed", including the 1970s part.
- 6.8 The part of the building which currently houses the Honest Burger restaurant and the floors above it is a 1970s modern extension which does incorporate elements of original historic fabric, most notably the elevations and entrances from the Market Place. However, much of the internal structure behind the historic facades has been re-built in concrete, including the insertion of modern concrete office floor plates.
- 6.9 The extensions to the floorplates at 2nd, 3rd floor level and roof level would all be located within the internal lightwell and therefore be screened from view from the surrounding public views. The extension would affect an existing late 1970s, red brick wall to the lightwell only.
- 6.10 There will be no external changes to the building that could harm its character. However, the proposals include the replacement of all windows over the Honest Burger unit. Over the older, historic building towards Market Place/High Street, these consist of 21 sash windows. Although these appear sympathetic in style, these are in fact modern (C.20th.) timber replacements, which although generally suitable in terms of appearance to the historic building, are of poor condition, and the Council's Conservation Consultant advises these can be replaced with suitable timber double-glazed units in this instance. A further 39 Aluminium windows over the 1970s element would be replaced by new aluminium versions, and subject to details, this is acceptable. A condition would secure full details of these items.
- 6.11 The applicant advises that in extending the floors and replacing the windows, no cutting of surrounding masonry (historic fabric) is envisaged, but a condition is recommended to require separate details to approve in the event of a need for the cutting of masonry, to protect the fabric of the listed building.
- 6.12 Subject to conditions as indicated above, it is considered acceptable in terms of Core Strategy Policy CS33 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment) and RCAAP Policy RC5.

c) **Servicing and operation**

- 6.13 It should be firstly borne in mind that there is an extant A2 use and the proposed use is similar in many respects, including servicing.
- 6.14 The site has access to existing shared refuse entrance/facilities, accessed from Market Place, however, the application form states that waste management will be via the existing waste area located in the adjoining building which forms part of the ownership. The adjacent Aquarium office building's waste is located in the

basement level and accessed via Market Place. A waste strategy and a servicing and delivery operations strategy will need to be provided and conditions should require these.

- 6.15 The site is in a central location and close to the bus stops on Market Place (east side) and bus stops on Kings Road (outside the 'Jacksons' building). No parking provision is offered for staff or visitors and this is considered to be appropriate in this case. Public cycle parking is located nearby at the end of Broad Street and in Town Hall Square. Cycle storage and changing facilities for staff of the proposed B1 office use will be provided in the basement as part of the proposed refurbishment. The three shower rooms proposed and the large basement will be suitable for providing facilities for both walking and cycling uses and facilities shall be required by condition, in order to be in accordance with Core Strategy policies CS20 (Implementation of The Reading Transport Strategy (Local Transport Plan 2006-2011)), CS23 (Sustainable Travel and Travel Plans) and CS24 (Car/Cycle Parking).
- 6.16 The Transport Strategy section has suggested that a construction method statement is required and given the numerous bus movements, traffic restrictions and other uses loading and unloading in this area, I would agree that this is required, to avoid undue disturbance to other uses in this relatively dense environment. The adjoining office users in the units to the west towards Buttermarket are considered to be the nearest sensitive uses likely to be affected from disturbance during construction.

d) Access for all

- 6.17 The existing building is not currently accessible due to the historic internal layout, which has been constructed in separate ad hoc stages. There are existing changes of levels within the building, most notably, a change of approximately half a floor between the entrances on Market Place and the main ground floor.
- 6.18 The installation of new lifts will provide disabled access to all levels including the basement. The entrance from King Street into the building is up four steps into the 1970s office entrance. This will mean that disabled persons' access will only be via Market Place. Whilst not an ideal solution, it would give the opportunity for disabled people to access the B1 offices on the upper floors. Internally, there are areas of the B1 use which would not be easily accessible to disabled people, although the majority of the floorspace would be and this is considered to be acceptable, given the constraints of the historic building. The renovation works will improve access within the building to create a disabled entrance from Market Place, shower room/changing area and disabled WCs. A condition such that all facilities as indicated within the B1 use shall be available to disabled people is recommended to meet the requirements of Core Strategy Policy CS5 (Inclusive Access).

Other issues

Sustainability

- 7.1 Although the Council's adopted SPD, Sustainable Design and Construction technically applies to this major application, the renovation does not involve significant works, the change of use is not substantially different from A2 ancillary use to B1(a) use

and the proposal is constrained by the existing structure of the Listed building There will be extremely limited opportunities for incorporating sustainability measures in this development, particularly as there is negligible building work. In this instance, it is likely that meeting the requirements of the present Building Regulations is sufficient and the development is considered to be compliant with Policy CS1 (Sustainable Construction and Design).

Affordable housing/ESP

7.2 The change of use from A2 to B1 is not considered to be a substantial change from its current use. As such in this instance, no financial contribution towards affordable housing or and ESP is considered to be necessary. The application complies with policy CS11: Use of Employment Land for Alternative Uses.

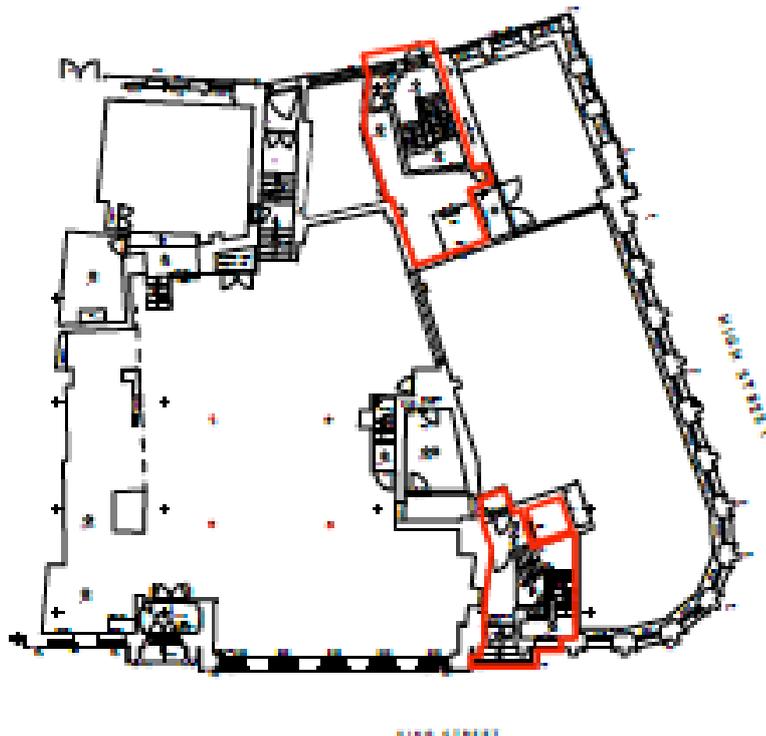
- CIL

7.3 The net increase in floorspace (floorplate extensions) is under the limit for a CIL contribution to be applicable.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 The uses proposed are compatible with the functions of the town centre and are a suitable re-use for the upper floors of the listed building and would provide activity and vitality at this key central site. These applications are therefore recommended to you for approval.

Plans:
Ground floor



Market place proposed no change



40.00m AOD

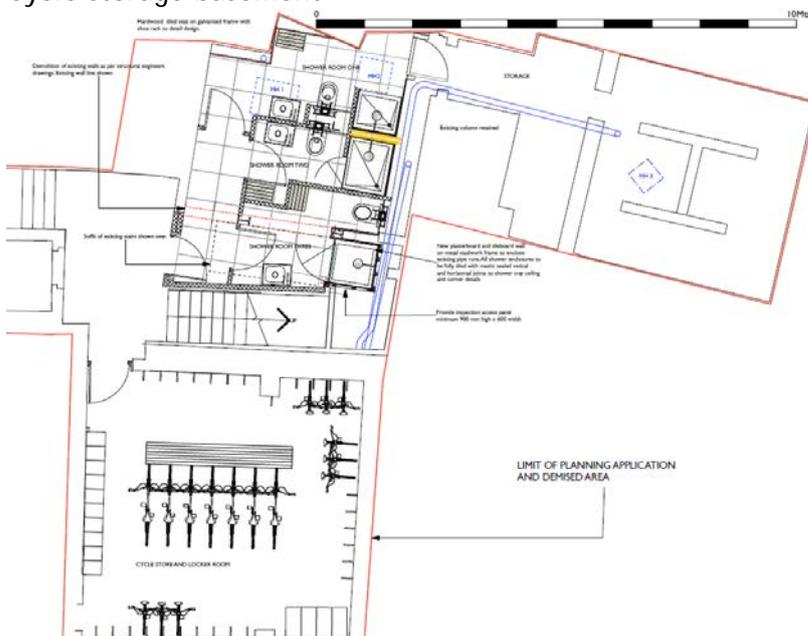
ELEVATION 1

High street proposed elevation



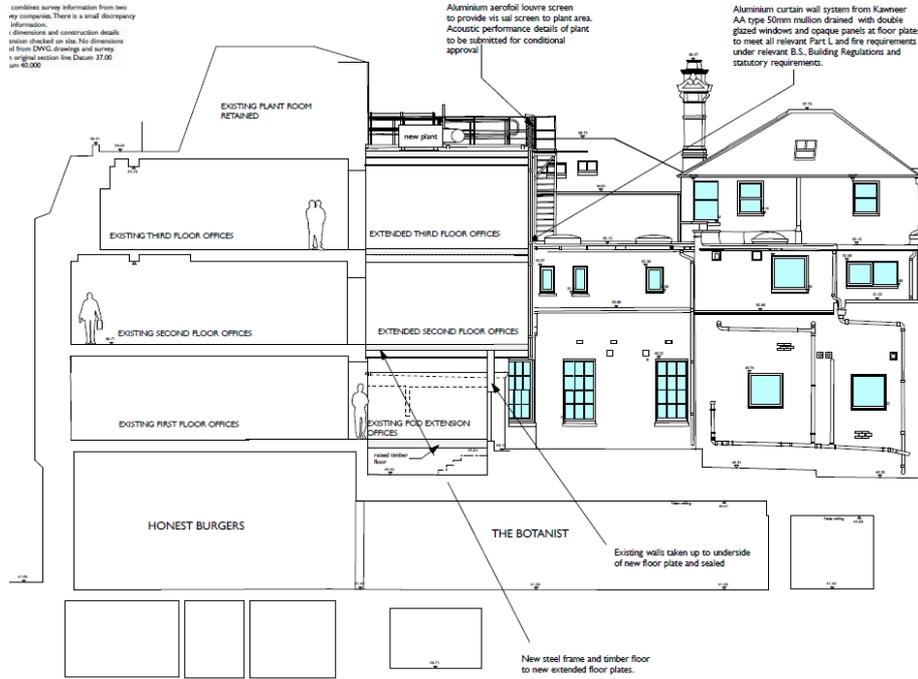
HIGH STREET ELEVATION

Cycle storage basement

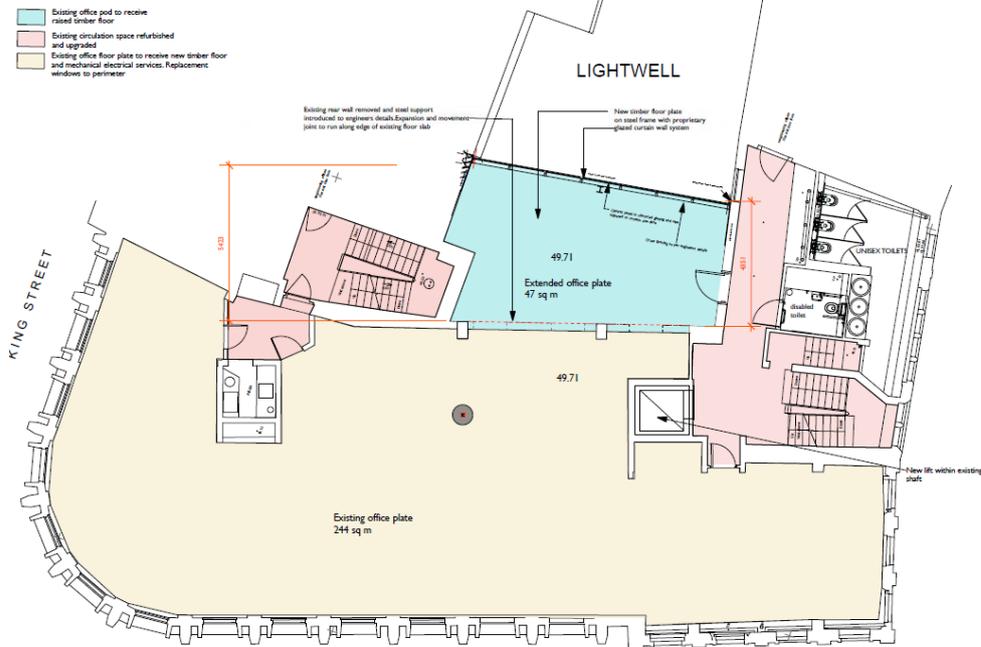


Short section proposed internal

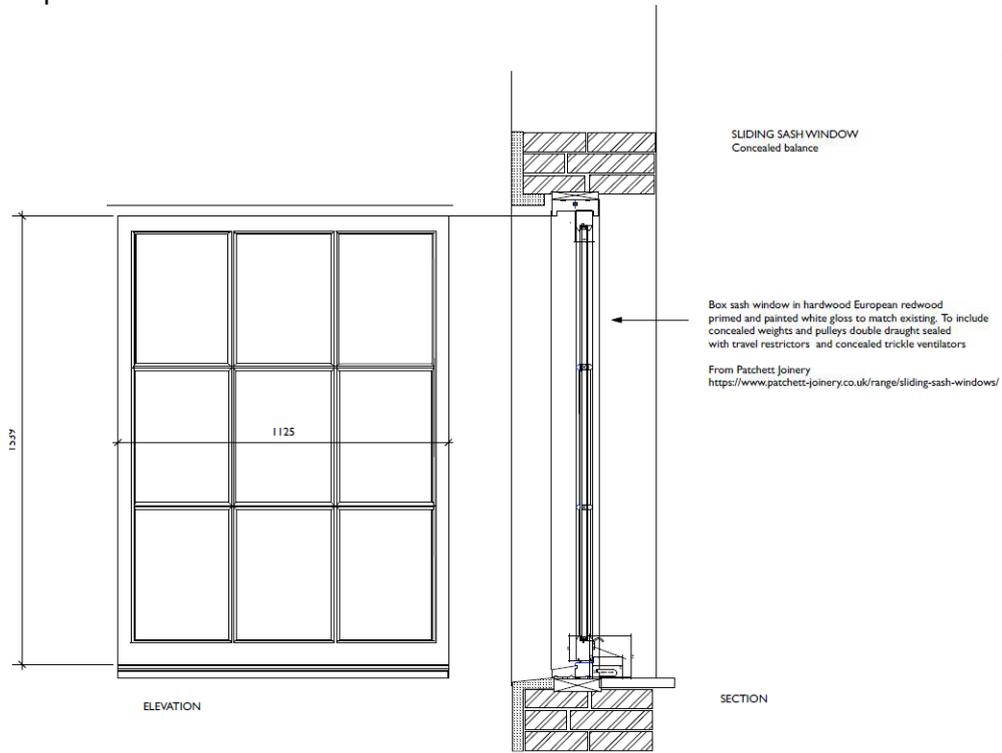
combines survey information from two
 very complex. There is a small discrepancy
 information.
 dimensions and construction details
 inson checked on site. No dimensions
 of from DMG drawing and survey
 original section line Datum: 37.00
 am 45.000



Example proposed floorplan - second floor



Replacement window materials



Case Officer: Nathalie Weekes