

Design & Access Statement

80
GEORGE STREET



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Design and Access Statement - 1720 - HOF, 75 - 81 George Street, Richmond, London

In Support of Full planning Application

Proposal:

External alterations: Erection of additional storey at fourth floor (with associated roof terrace) and plant room above; 2nd floor rear extension; replacement of roof to the adjacent existing single storey extension at rear to include roof light; enclosed staircase to rear; terraces to rear; and associated plant. Other elevational alterations include; removal of canopy to 75-81 George Street; new shopfronts to 4 Paved Court, Golden Court entrance, and King Street and George Street frontages; new fenestration throughout; and new canopies.

Change of use of 75-81 George Street from A1 (retail) to mixed use comprising: Class B1 to the existing floors 2,3 and the new fourth floor; Flexible Class A1 and Class B1 (existing floor 1); Class A1 (existing ground); Flexible Class A1 and Class D2 (existing basement); and Change of use of 16 Paved Court/20 King Street to Class B1 (existing floors 1,2).

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1. Introduction

1.1 General

1.1.1 This Design & Access Statement has been prepared by Colman Architects on behalf of Canadian & Arcadia in respect of a planning application for the conversion and extension of 75 - 81 George Street, Richmond, London. The redevelopment aims to renovate the existing basement and ground floor A1 retail floors and convert the retail space into Class A offices on first, second and third floor with the addition of an extra fourth (office) floor.

1.1.2 As shown in drawing 1720/P(--)-02, the site includes the following buildings: 75 – 81 George Street, 4-8 Paved Court and 16 Paved Court/20 King Street. As numbers 6 and 8 Paved Court, and 20 King Street are Grade II Listed Buildings under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, this application will be accompanied by a Listed Building Consent application for elements pertaining to those properties.

1.1.3 The site is owned by Canadian & Arcadia, part of the Canadian & Portland Estate (Holdings) Ltd group, a private property investment company with investments in a wide variety of commercial property classes. This Richmond property, together with a mixed use scheme in Kingston and its head office building in New Bond Street, is one of the applicant's main holdings. All of these holdings have a retail and office element so Canadian & Arcadia feels it understands the market for this type of property very well. Furthermore, its chairman is a local resident and has enjoyed living in Richmond for over 45 years. As such, they have a vested interest in ensuring the viability and success of Richmond Town Centre.

1.2 Purpose of this Statement

1.2.1 This Design & Access Statement explains the design principles and concepts that have been applied in formulating the redevelopment proposals. It should be read in association with the separate Planning Statement and Planning Drawings and other documents listed in the Appendix.

2. The Existing Site & its Context

2.1 Existing site

2.1.1 The site is located at the centre of the town, to the South of Richmond Green and The Green. It is enclosed by Paved Court and Golden Court to the North, King Street to the West, by King Street and George Street to the South and by George Street and Golden Court to the East.

2.1.2 Richmond Green is roughly square in shape and together with the Little Green, a small supplementary green stretching from its southeast corner, is 12 acres (0.05 km²) in size. The Green is surrounded by well-used roads that provide vehicle parking for both residents and visitors. The south corner leads into our site and George Street.



2.1.3 George Street remains a prime retail location and 75-81 George Street (House of Fraser) is a key figure in anchoring Richmond town centre, linking Hill Street with George Street. Its prominence is evident for any person visiting by road as it is one of the first buildings to welcome them to Richmond on the one-way traffic system of George Street.

2.2 Context

2.2.1 Richmond is a suburban town in south-west London, 8.2 miles southwest of Charing Cross, on a meander of the River Thames. After the opening of the railway station in 1846, the town was absorbed into a rapidly expanding London and it is now part of the London Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames.

2.2.2 It has many protected Conservation Areas and a large number of parks and open spaces, including Richmond Green which is situated immediately to the north of the site. During the 18th century, many Georgian terraces were built around Richmond Green and these remain well preserved. Indeed, many have listed building architectural or heritage status.

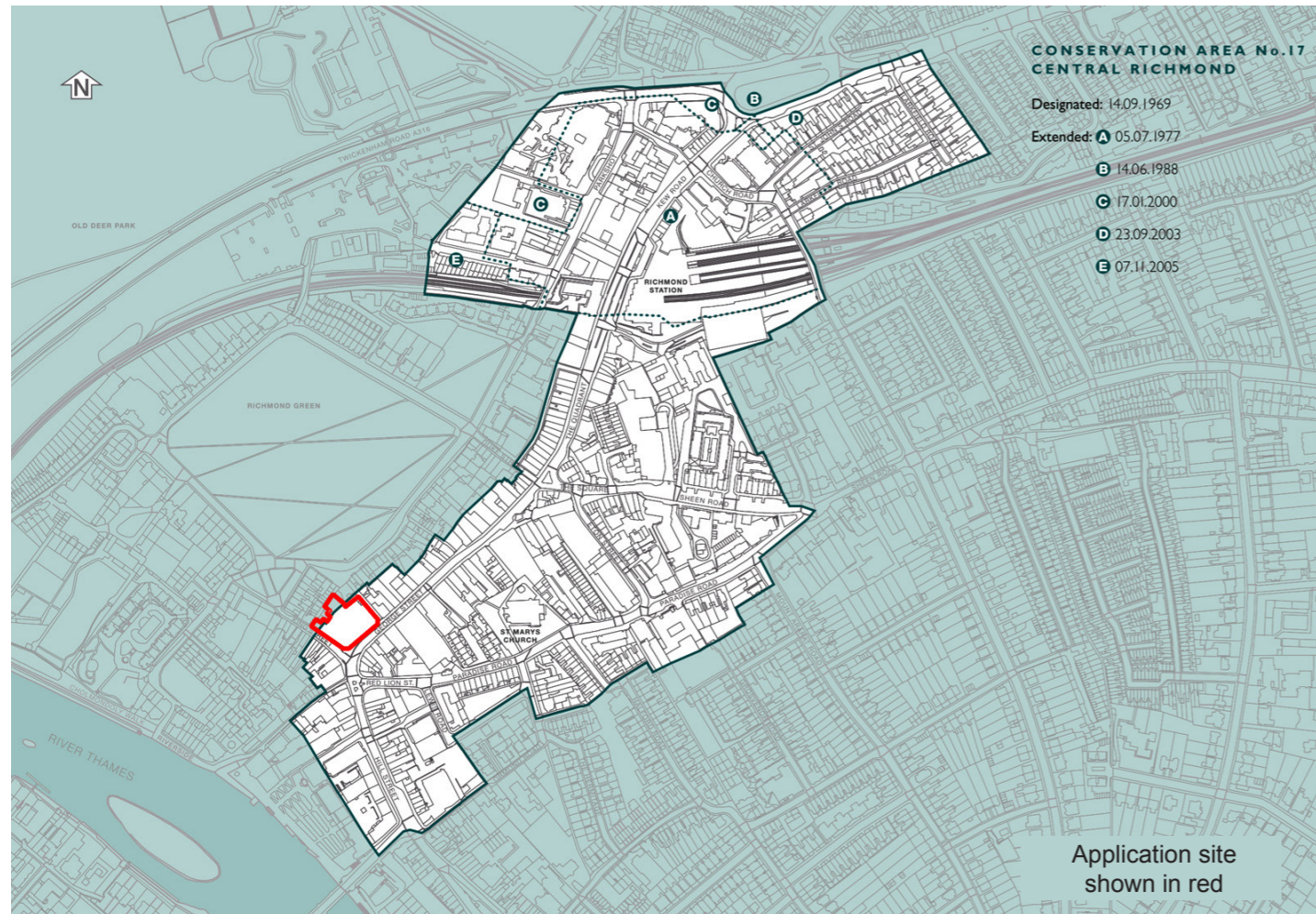
2.2.3 With a population of over 21,000, Richmond is a significant commercial and retail centre with a developed day and evening economy. It has the largest commercial centre in the borough and is classified as a "major centre" according to the London Plan.

2.2.4 Richmond is an established up-market shopping destination. Its compact town-centre has approximately 50,000m2 of retail floor-space that is largely focused on The Quadrant, Hill Street and George Street where the application site is situated. The retail offer comprises many high street chains with the current House of Fraser store being amongst the largest stores. Other major retailers include Boots, Tesco Metro, Waitrose, Whole Foods Market and Marks & Spencer (at 13 George Street, opposite the site).

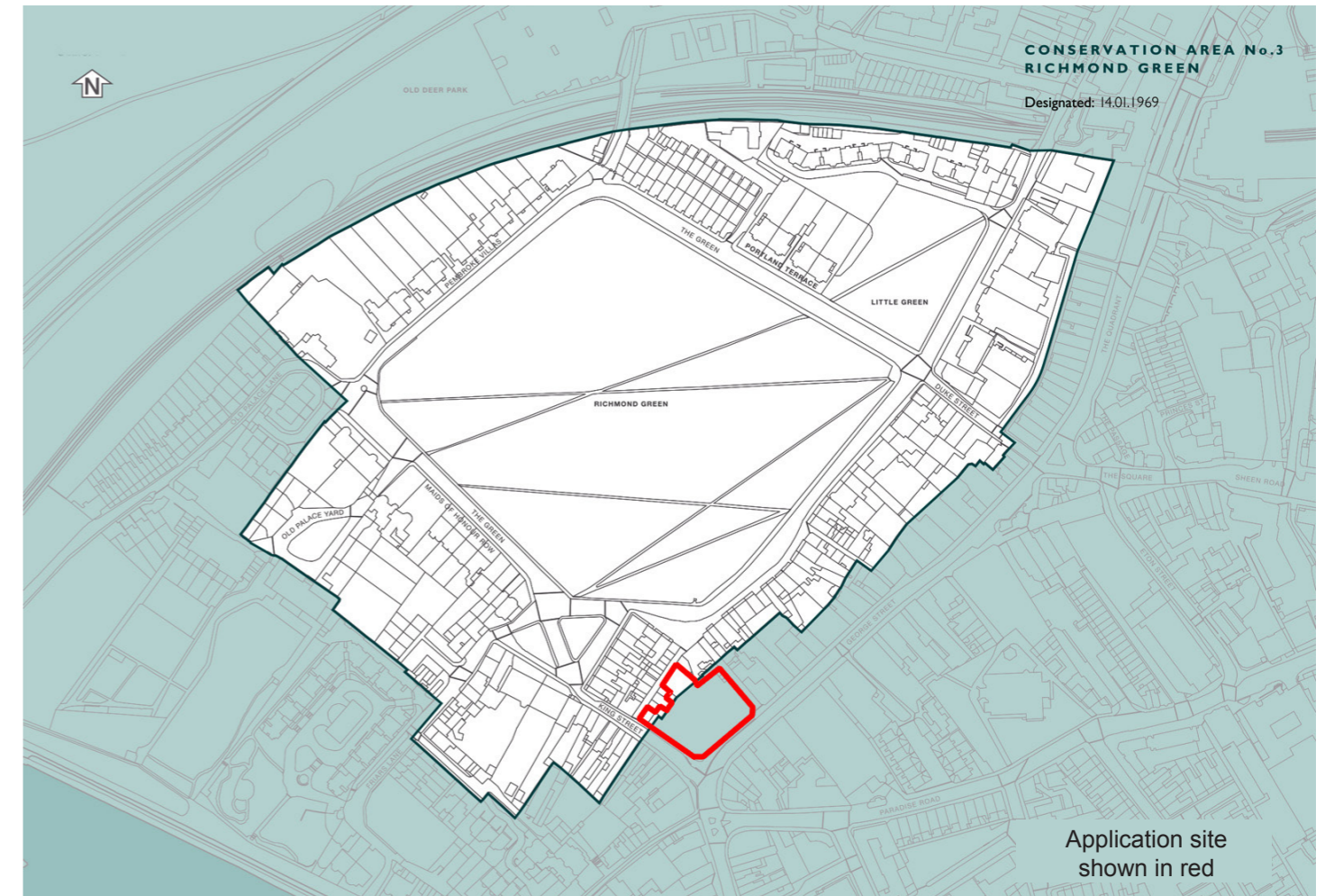
2.2.5 George Street is situated in the Central Richmond Conservation area, located on the site of the former village centre and on what was historically an important coaching route into London. It has been repeatedly re-developed and most of the 18th-century buildings of George Street were replaced piecemeal by mid-to-late 19th and early 20th-century commercial architecture. This has provided shops for the needs of the expanded local community after the arrival of the railway.

2.2.6 Along George Street and around the site building heights vary from two to five storeys with a wide variety of different facade and roof treatments - a virtue of the central Richmond townscape noted in the Conservation Area Statement. Down the street and visible from the site is the former Owen Owen store, no. 39 George Street, a distinctive late Victorian building which makes a valuable contribution to the character of the immediate town centre.

2.2.7 Most of the Application Site resides in the Central Richmond Conservation Area but because it stretches back to encompass some of the properties on Paved Court some of it actually falls within the neighbouring Richmond Green Conservation Area. This is illustrated on the two location plans below.



Application Site in Relation to the Central Richmond Conservation Area



Application Site in Relation to the Richmond Green Conservation Area

2.2.8 Mostly independent small businesses line the narrow alleyways running off George Street towards Richmond Green and up Richmond Hill. Golden Court, to the northeast of the application site, is one of these historic pedestrianised lanes and is anchored by the Princes Head public house and Moooca café as it emerges toward the Green. Another lane, Paved Court, runs to the northwest of the site and contains a number of cafés, restaurants and small shops. House of Fraser currently has a small frontage at numbers 4-8 Paved Court which is used as the footwear section. This also functions as a secondary entrance and emergency exit to the store.

2.2.9 Central Richmond offers a wide variety of office accommodation and is the UK/European headquarters of several multi-national companies including eBay and The Securitas Group, as well as head office to a number of national, regional and local businesses. Nearby the application site, on Whittaker Avenue, PayPal occupies a large and impressive building “Whittaker House” opposite the Old Town Hall. The presence of such companies has led London’s Evening Standard to describe Richmond as “the beating heart of London’s growing technology industry”.

2.3 History and Current Uses

2.3.1 This purpose-built building has traded as a department store since 1968. In 1975 the two basements were redeveloped to convert the lower ground area into a sales floor for household goods.

2.3.2 The basement opened in 1976, coinciding with a full refurbishment of the ground floor. Canadian and Arcadia have owned the property since 2002, at which time it was occupied by the well-known department store chain Dickins & Jones Ltd, before the store was re-branded as House of Fraser in 2007. Canadian & Arcadia also bought most of East side of Paved Court at the same time and completed its holding with the purchase of 12 Paved Court a year later.

2.3.3 House of Fraser’s lack of investment in the property since Canadian & Arcadia aquired it has been a source of frustration to the owner. A refit agreed in principle in 2014 was never pursued by House of Fraser and neither was a subsequent proposal to build a roof-top restaurant.

2.3.4 On 6th June 2018 HOF entered a company voluntary arrangement (CVA) as part of a rescue deal that was to see 31 out of its 59 stores close by early 2019. Although the Richmond store was one of those kept open when the chain was bought by Mike Ashley’s retail group, its future has been uncertain.

2.3.5 There are concerns amongst both landlords and consumers about the type of retail offer that Sports Direct will present in the former House of Fraser stores. There is a risk that a more discount-focused product could be offered and it is expected the new form of department store will be a smaller format over two or three floors. At 80 George Street, such a store would leave the upper floors vacant.



House of Fraser - View from Hill Street



George Street - Main Shopping Thoroughfare



Richmond Green, Looking Towards Golden Court



Paved Court - Historic Pedestrianised Lane

3. Uses

3.0.1 75-81 George Street currently comprises 79,000 sq ft of A1 retail floorspace on five floors (i.e. four plus basement). A purpose-built property completed in 1968, this store was sized to accommodate a single traditional department store typical for the period. In recent times, department stores of this type and size are fading from the UK High Street and shopping centres. This is attributed to factors such as the rise of online shopping, changing retail environments and a lack of investment in physical stores. The customer shopping experience has changed and there is no longer a desire to shop four floors of retail in one store. Indeed, the property became too large for the existing House of Fraser department store operation and HOF had actively been exploring the opportunity of splitting the property to secure income by way of subleases.

3.0.2 The applicant has been in numerous discussions with potential new retail operators and all want to trade from a smaller store occupying only a maximum of two storeys. George Street remains prime retail space and a key anchor to the retail environment in Richmond upon Thames so it is important to retain the retail use for the lower levels that can present an active frontage to the street. To ensure upper levels are not left vacant, which for such a notable building would be damaging to the wider town centre as well as the landlord, Canadian & Arcadia seeks to divide the store into A1 and B1 uses by introducing new office space to the upper storeys. Together with a proposed new roof extension, configuring the property in this way will provide 45,000sq.ft of office space, complete with an atrium and external terraces for amenity areas, whilst retaining 22,000sq.ft retail space at ground and basement levels.

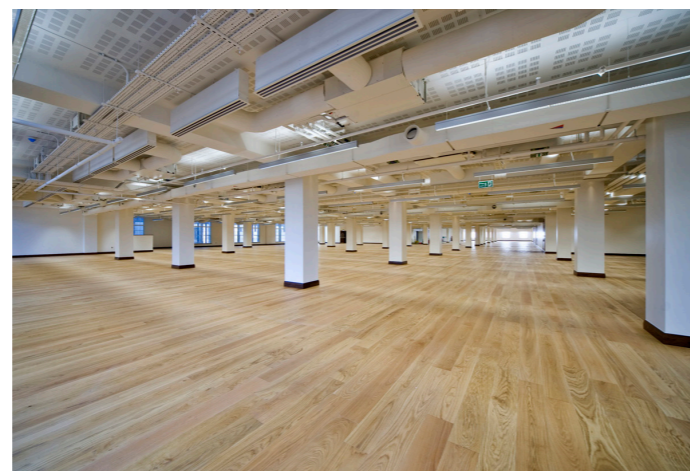
3.0.3 For flexibility, and to ensure the building can respond to market requirements, this application also allows for an alternative D2 leisure use for the basement area. Should prospective retailer(s) insist on occupying Ground and First-Floor space then the basement can easily be made into a stand-alone unit with access from King Street.

3.0.4 A gym operator is considered to be an ideal tenant for the basement, responding to the current poor choice of health clubs in the centre of Richmond. It would also compliment the proposed office use by providing the workforce with such a convenient high-quality facility on the premises. In addition to a potential gym, there is also a growing trend for “non-traditional” leisure operators (such as Fight Clubs, Laser Tag, Ping Pong, Darts, Golf, Escape Rooms etc) and these can also be considered where they can be suitably accommodated in the proposed basement unit.

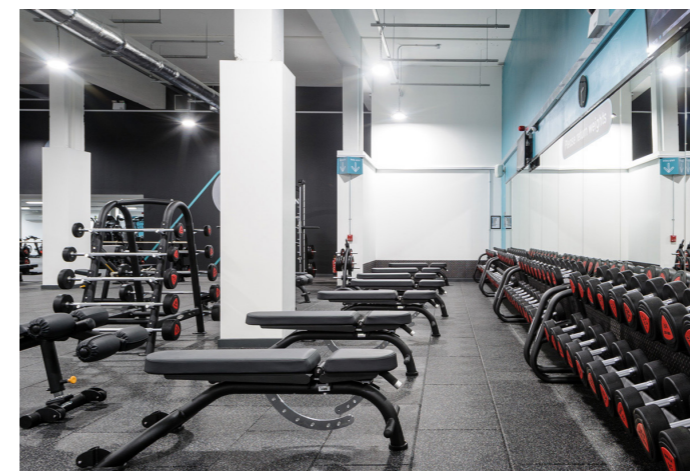
3.05 Richmond has become the home of numerous multi-national companies, particularly in the technology sector, but there is currently a shortage of high-quality office space that meets the BCO standards that big-name companies are likely to demand. There has also been a trend for converting existing office space into residential units under Permitted Development rights. 80 George Street can provide sufficient floor-space to accommodate large multi-national companies, and has generous floor-to-ceiling heights allowing light to penetrate into the floor plans and the integration of mechanical/electrical services and raised floors.



A1 Retail in a Reduced Size Unit



B1 Offices - “Category A” fit out



Alternative D2 Leisure Use - Gym



Alternative D2 Leisure Use - Social Leisure

4. Amount

4.1 Scope of Development

4.1.1 The proposed development comprises the following elements:

- Dividing the building into two separate uses by removing the escalators from all levels, and infilling apertures in the first-floor slab to complete the party floor between the retail areas and offices.
- A complete strip-out of all existing levels back to the building shell.
- The reconfiguration of the existing vertical means of escape with the addition of another escape staircase and the adjustment and relocation of another.
- The formation of cycle parking and changing rooms for the offices and retail staff at basement level by the relocation or removal of existing plant space.

4.1.2 Retail Space

- The reconfiguration of existing retail space, plant rooms and vertical circulation at basement and ground floor levels (and first floor for the D2 basement option).
- 6-8 Paved Court is divided from the main building to form a separate, autonomous small retail unit.
- Work to the shopfronts including enlarging the windows, installing new glazing, re-cladding the intermediate pilasters in Portland Stone and removing the projecting canopy at first-floor level.
- New glazing installed throughout to replace the dated original windows with modern replacement glazing to current standards and Building Regulations requirements.
- The removal of all existing “House of Fraser” signage and its replacement with new landlord’s branding & coordinated signage.
- New glass canopies to the entrances to the store.

4.1.3 Office Space

- The removal of existing roof plant rooms and equipment to facilitate the construction of a new single-storey extension forming the top level of the new offices
- New roof finishes including a semi-intensive green roof area and perimeter terraces around the new office levels.
- A “Category A” landlord’s fit-out to all office levels complete with all required new services and equipment.
- The addition of a new central core to the office levels with new lifts, toilets, staircase and service risers.
- The creation of a new entrance and reception for the offices, accessed off Golden Court, with new vertical circulation to all levels.
- The formation of a new atrium for the offices to provide amenity space and enhanced access between ground & first-floor levels and a link through to Paved Court.
- The creation of a small stand-alone office space at 16 Paved Court occupying the two floors above the existing Alianti Cafe. This will comprise the strip-out and redecoration of the space and the provision of the required WC and kitchenette facilities.
- An extension will be constructed at the rear of 75-81 George Street to provide an extra 650 square feet of extra floorspace at that level. This will be in masonry and render construction to match the existing facade and will include a small balcony terrace on its roof to be accessed from the third floor offices above.

4.2 Gross Areas of Development

SCHEDULE OF AREAS

Existing Areas

Floors / Area	75-81 George Street (GIA)		16 Paved Court (GIA)		6-8 Paved Court (GIA)		4 Paved Court (GIA)		Total sqm	Total sqft
	A1		A1		A1		A1			
	sqm	sqft	sqm	sqft	sqm	sqft	sqm	sqft		
Basement	1,514	16,290	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Ground floor	1,677	18,050	4	30	49	520	25	260		
1st Floor	1,450	15,600	41	440	47	500	27	290		
2nd Floor	1,149	12,360	41	440	0	0	0	0		
3rd Floor	1,135	12,210	0	0	0	0	0	0		
4th Floor/Plant Rooms	153	1,640	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Total	7,078	76,150	86	910	96	1,020	52	550	7,312	78,630

Proposed Areas

Floors / Area	75-81 George Street (GIA)				16 Paved Court (GIA)		6-8 Paved Court (GIA)		4 Paved Court (GIA)			
	A1		B1		B1		A1		A1		B1	
	sqm	sqft	sqm	sqft	sqm	sqft	sqm	sqft	sqm	sqft	sqm	sqft
Basement	1,090	11,730	400	4,300	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ground floor	1,161	12,490	475	5,110	4	30	49	520	0	0	25	260
1st Floor	0	0	1,431	15,400	41	440	47	500	27	290	0	0
2nd Floor	0	0	1,213	13,050	41	440	0	0	0	0	0	0
3rd Floor	0	0	1,121	12,060	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4th Floor	0	0	900	9,680	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5th Floor/Roof	0	0	126	1,350	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	2,251	24,220	5,666	60,950	86	910	96	1,020	27	290	25	260

Leisure Use

75-81 George Street (GIA)	
D2 (alternative)	
sqm	sqft
1,144	12,310
53	570
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
1,197	12,880

Terraces/Balconies

75-81 George Street (GIA)	
B1	
sqm	sqft
0	0
0	0
0	0
80	860
39	410
173	1,860
0	0
292	3,130

Proposed Area Totals

	A1 Retail		B1 Offices		16 Paved Court (GIA)		6-8 Paved Court (GIA)		4 Paved Court (GIA)		Total sqm	Total sqft
A1 Retail	2,251	-	-	-	-	-	96	-	27	-	2,374	25,550
B1 Offices	-	-	5,666	-	86	-	-	-	-	-	5,777	62,170
Total											8,151	87,720

5. Layout

5.1 Site Constraints

5.1.1 The existing building was designed as a single department store. It is bounded by George Street, the main shopping thoroughfare, King Street and the two historical lanes, Paved Court and Golden Court. It breaks through onto Paved Court to the rear at Nos. 4-8, currently used as the department store's footwear section. The building has become outdated and is in need of significant investment in order to bring it up to the standards expected by modern occupiers.

5.2 Overall design strategy

5.2.1 The design strategy is based on taking the opportunity to significantly improve the building and secure its role as a town centre anchor for the present and future. This scheme seeks to breathe new life into this outdated building and improve the high street experience in this part of Richmond Town Centre.

5.2.2 Featured opportunities:

- Modernise the existing building and significantly enhance its appearance
- Improve the existing relationship with Paved Court and Golden Court
- Attract new retailers and commercial occupiers to Richmond
- Deliver a net increase in employment opportunities
- Support the vitality of Richmond Town Centre by helping to increase footfall
- Significantly improve the environmental sustainability of the building
- Improve the relationship with Central Richmond Conservation Area and Richmond Green Conservation Area
- Reduce the overall construction period by retaining the majority of the existing building structure and façade (therefore avoiding the need for long-term works).

5.3 Office Space Layout

5.3.1 Three or four floors of office space are proposed across the existing first, second and third floors along with the additional fourth floor. This will provide 3700m² of new office space with the opportunity to support up to 460 employment opportunities. Owing to the excellent floor to ceiling heights and significant levels of glazing

within the building, the new office space would benefit from high levels of natural light and create an attractive workplace environment.

5.3.2 The office space is arranged around a new core located in the centre of the footprint and adjacent to the proposed atrium between the office block and the rear of the Paved Court properties. This core is supplemented by two escape stairs, the first is an existing staircase which will provide a secondary entrance to the offices from King Street and the second discharges onto Golden Court at the other side of the building.

5.3.3 The primary public entrance will be formed by extending the existing entrance from Golden Court. It will be completely redesigned to improve its appearance and provide a high quality and welcoming access to the offices with direct links to the rest of the floors, whilst respecting its setting within Richmond's historic lanes and the Richmond Central Conservation Area. This public entrance is connected to the staff entrance from Paved Court via the new atrium. At the rear of the new Office Reception are the main customer lifts to all levels

5.3.4 The 4-8 Paved Court frontage is currently used as the footwear section of the department store and also provides an emergency exit. In the new scheme, it will still provide an emergency exit but it will also be a staff entrance which will lead to an internal atrium. This atrium is connected with the office space and with the courtyard. The proposals seek to sensitively refurbish this frontage keeping within the size of other shops or cafes facades on Paved Court. These arrangements should increase the footfall along Paved Court and Golden Court and consequently help to support local businesses.

5.3.4 16 Paved Court will become a small autonomous office suite at 1st and 2nd floors over the Alianti cafe at 18-20 King Street. The existing entrance door off Paved Court and the access staircase up to this unit will be retained and refurbished.

5.4 Retail Space Layout

5.4.1 The new retail space will be consolidated onto the basement and ground floor (or ground and first if a leisure unit is accommodated in the basement). The existing escalators between the ground and first-floor will be removed and the apertures in the first-floor slab will be infilled. The existing customer entrances from George Street at the corners of the unit will be retained and improved. The existing delivery bay on King Street at the rear of the unit will also be retained.

5.4.2 Plant areas will be confined to the basement floor and first-floor roof areas. This level will also accommodate retail and office staff cycle facilities, WCs, showers and changing facilities. This will ensure that the potential retail sales area at ground floor is maximised.

5.4.3 6-8 Paved Court will become a stand-alone retail unit separate from the main space and accessed from the historical lane.

5.5 Proposed Floor Plans



Proposed Basement Level

- Reconfigured retail space (blue)
- Cycle parking, changing rooms & staff facilities (green)
- Substation (and potential extra plant area)
- Reconfigured vertical & horizontal circulation (red/yellow)



Proposed Ground Floor Plan

- Reconfigured retail space (blue)
- Loading retained as existing (yellow)
- Primary office entrance & reception off Golden Court (light green)
- Secondary office entrance off King Street (light green)
- New atrium (green)
- Reconfigured vertical & horizontal circulation (red/yellow)
- 4-8 Paved Court autonomous retail unit (pink)



Proposed First Floor Plan

- New office space (green)
- New central office core (light green)
- Void over Golden Court office entrance
- Reconfigured vertical circulation (red/yellow)
- 4-8 Paved retail unit (pink)
- Retail plant on