

Alterations to shopfront | 27 Cheap Street | Sherborne | DT9 3PU
on behalf of Matthews Property Ltd



Fig.1

Planning statement in support of an application for planning permission to remodel an historic shopfront on an unlisted building in Sherborne Conservation Area

kim sankey | architect

angel architecture | design | interiors

Angel Architecture Ltd Registered in England no 09113728 The Glass Office, Court, The Street, Charmouth, Dorset, DT6 6PE

CONTENTS

	Page
1.0 Project Overview	2
2.0 Authorship of this Statement	2
3.0 Relevant Planning History	2
4.0 Reasons cited for removing the replacement shopfront from the application	3
5.0 The Conservation Area Context	4
6.0 Planning Policy Considerations	5
7.0 Other Examples of Shopfronts of the Same Period	8
8.0 Promoting Good Design through the Planning System	9
9.0 Conclusions	12

Fig.1 Angel Architecture Ltd drawing No 1922-14 Remodelled shopfront in context.

1.0 Project Overview

1.1 This is a resubmission of an application dated December 2020 for the remodelling of the shopfront of 27 Cheap Street, Sherborne. It is not proposing demolition, the planning statement justifies the re-use of all the existing components in a very subtly different configuration to provide an improved and secure frontage. The shopfront that currently exists dates from 1930 when major changes were made to the fenestration of the shop and premises above.

1.2 It summarises the situation to date regarding three issues namely: the setting of the closest heritage asset, 25 Cheap Street, the re-design of the existing shopfront and the strategy which has resulted in the current submission. Relevant correspondence relating to the original proposals for this site in Sherborne (reference WD/D/19/000225 submitted 16 January 2019) is included as pertinent to this application for planning permission. Set out below is a review of all the National and Local Plan policies and SPD, discussion of the merits of the proposals and identification of other similar, notable shopfronts in Sherborne and elsewhere.

2.0 Authorship of this Statement

The statement has been prepared by Angel Architecture and written by Kim Sankey BA(Hons), DipArch, AADipCons, RIBA. Angel Architecture is a RIBA chartered practice which provides advice and professional services relating to the historic environment and its conservation for public sector clients, charitable trusts, and other professional bodies.

3.0 Relevant Planning History

3.1 Katrina Bowditch was the Case Officer dealing with the previous application (WD/D/19/000225) and Sally Knott provided specialist knowledge in her capacity as Conservation Officer (comments posted 15 & 18 April 2019). Mrs Bowditch prefaced these comments with "*The existing (shopfront) is far more pleasing and its loss will be of significant detriment to the Conservation Area.*" Taking this statement as the starting point for the current application, there is merit in considering the re-use of the shopfront in its entirety in a slightly different configuration which would satisfy both the Planning and Conservation Officers, and any potential end user.

3.2 The application was heard at Sherborne Town Council Planning Committee meeting on 1 April 2019 and received unanimous support from the Town Council. The applicant outlined the reasons for the change to the shopfront involving the removal of the Art Deco entrance and reinstating the original style of door and window, in keeping with the neighbouring property at No 25, which would also make it more fit for purpose, enabling increased security and better use of the space above. A decision was made to refuse the application on 15 April 2019 unless revisions were made to retain the shopfront.

3.3 The proposals were revised and submitted retaining the existing shopfront and the 'extension of shop to provide extra retail space and a store at first floor, conversion

of maisonette into two units of accommodation' was approved on 8 July 2019.

4.0 Reasons cited for removing the replacement shopfront from the first application No WD/D/000225

4.1 Correspondence with Dorset Council is reproduced below to illustrate the key points of contention between the parties. Comments in italics are the rebuttals provided to the Case Officer.

4.2 Very few early shop fronts survive, but where they do, special care is needed to ensure they are protected and restored sensitively with careful attention to detail. *Angel Architecture have taken great care in replicating the original shop front dating back to its pre-1930's appearance.*

4.3 Where the existing shop front contributes to the character of the building or area or is listed, it should be maintained in a good state of repair and refurbished rather than replaced.

Due to the complex old design (which features many projecting surfaces) we will be unable to maintain the brass frames and fragile glass particularly when subject to vandalism and break ins. The property is not listed so we are not obliged to repair the brass frames.

4.4 More recent shop fronts can also be of interest, designs incorporating Art Deco detailing are often of high quality, constructed from materials such as bronze or chrome, sometimes forming part of the design of an entire façade and these should be retained wherever possible.

When the shop tenants retire shortly and the shop becomes yet another vacant shopfront in Cheap Street, it will be unlettable as a new tenant will be unable to get plate glass or contents insurance. The current tenant has suffered considerable losses due to break ins and cannot get insurance cover. The front is not fit for purpose for today's retail environment so it will add to the list of empty shops in Cheap Street, all of which I might add are listed. If Cheap Street is to survive, both Planning and Conservation Officers need to work with the owners to ensure the shops have an economic future.

4.5 If a traditional shop front is to be fitted, it must be architecturally and historically accurate, old photographs and records from the library or archives can sometimes be very useful.

Angel Architecture have provided photographic proof from 'The known history of the shops in Cheap Street, Sherborne' by Alec Oxford. We will replicate as far as possible the original shop front. Should the conservation officer wish us to make any amendments we would be happy to do so. We would consider a protruding shop front as shown in the 1930's photograph which will entail reclaiming the strip of paving paved over by the Local Authority. If the Conservation Officer is willing to work with us to reinstate the original, we would be happy to amend the shop frontage.

The amended scheme which is the subject of this application provides for the retention of all of the existing components including: the cornice and canopy, the fascia with hand painted lettering, the fanlights over the two doors, the doors themselves and their ironmongery, the mullions and bronze vertical framework and Verde Alpi marble

stallrisers.

5.0 The Conservation Area Context

5.1 Sherborne was designated a Conservation Area in 1970 and subsequently extended three times in 1989, 1993 and 2008. There is an expectation that any proposals within its setting should incorporate good design as a key aspect of sustainable development (NPPF Para 124) and have regard to the impact of any development on the significance of designated heritage assets (Para 193). These assets comprise Grade II listed building 25 Cheap Street and the Conservation Area. In addition, the NPPF states at Para 200 that Local Planning Authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas (and World Heritage Sites), and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance, which it could be argued this application does.

5.2 In drafting the Sherborne Conservation Area Appraisal, with two public consultations in 2007 & 2008, the Area was subsequently extended to include important unlisted buildings but 27 Cheap Street (in sub-area a) does not feature as an important local building (page 27) nor is it mentioned specifically or illustrated in Shopfronts (pages 34 & 35) although the C20 Art Nouveau shopfronts at Nos 65-67 on the west side of Cheap Street and 84 Cheap Street on the east side are all mentioned.



Fig.2 Nos 65 & 67 Cheap Street Quba & Co and Joules shopfronts.



Fig.3 No 84 Cheap Street Tenovus shopfront

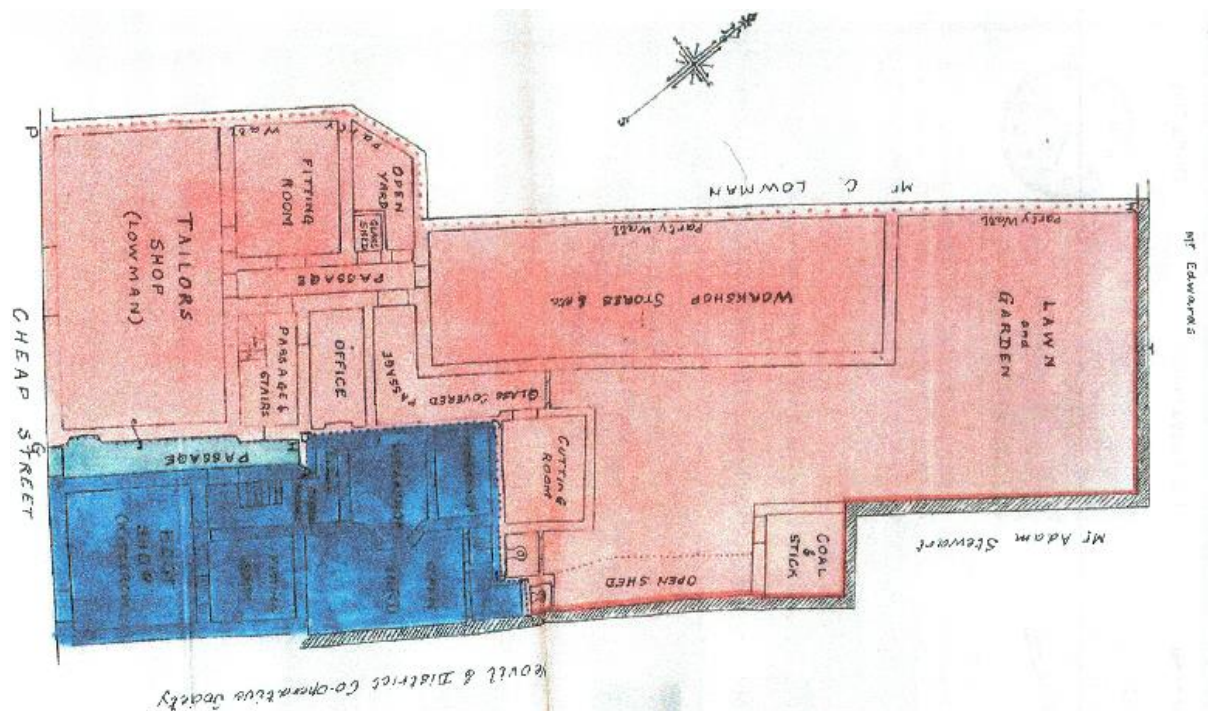


Fig.4 1897 Plan of Nos 25 & 27 Cheap Street, premises belonging to the Lowman (pink) and Kitzerow (blue) families. The pale blue passage provided both with access to living accommodation above the shops.

6.0 Planning Policy Considerations

6.1 Having dealt with the setting of the application site it is necessary to evaluate the shopfront and any constraints to its repair and reuse. The Shopfronts and Advertisements Design Guide is the key Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) dated July 2004 upon which Dorset Council rely. The principle of Shopfront Style is set out on page 1 of the SPG at para 2.1 which states: *Eighteenth and nineteenth century shopfront design was based on a set of principles which were successful in achieving a satisfactory relationship between the shopfront and the building. These principles still hold good today and relate to architectural detailing, proportion and quality of materials...*



Fig.5 Image of 27 Cheap Street from WDDC SPG 2004

Under Para 2.2 the SPG recognises various periods of shopfront design including the *Modern Movement 1918-1939, featuring the 1920's (actually 1930) Art Deco style*

shopfront in Sherborne indicated by the styling and materials such as the marble stallriser.

6.2 The General Principles of Shopfront Design included in the SPG:
(This guidance is reproduced below in italics)

The shopfront should not be designed in isolation but should be considered as part of an overall architectural composition of the property, respecting the period and style of the host building.

The remodelled shopfront, as designed, is the result of careful examination of the surviving fabric, the metal framework, the marble stallrisers, leaded lights, canopy and fascia which extend across the entrance to the shop and the first-floor accommodation.

If a traditional shopfront is to be fitted, it must be architecturally and historically accurate – old photographs and records from the library or archives can sometimes be very useful.

As already acknowledged the records whilst scarce are sufficient to provide an accurate record of what existed pre-1930 and how similar the detailing of No 27 was to 25 Cheap Street. After all the two shops had been in the same ownership for part of their history and only latterly became two separate premises.

On balance, however, there is a compelling argument for dismantling and re-constructing the existing Art Deco shopfront in a new configuration to satisfy the current issues of security and sustainability. The increased area of glazing will deliver more daylight to the deep plan form incorporate anti-sun glass and shading via the original canopy to avoid over-heating. In this way the front elevation of 27 Cheap Street can be 'fine-tuned' to reduce energy use by recycling its present shopfront.

The design of the shopfront should also take into account the adjacent building styles and shopfronts in the street, the vertical and horizontal elements, the variety and also any recurring characteristics, patterns or details.

The design of the reinstatement shopfront relies not only on re-using all the existing components but also using local craftsmen to take down, catalogue, repair, adapt and re-interpret the existing Art Deco shopfront in a form better suited to C21 retail requirements. The added benefit is the increase in retail floor area.

6.3 The SPG mentions at Para 5.0 the retention of existing shopfronts and the special care that is required to ensure that they are protected and restored sensitively. However, this assumes that there are resources to repair and restore these unlisted features and that the benefits of so doing would generate more business or increase the value of the investment.

Specialist trades for example Roger Lawrence of Stonecroft Stained Glass (Traditional Glaziers) Ltd, working closely with stonemasons, would be involved in the careful recording and analysis of the condition of each element before the shopfront was dismantled and protected prior to transportation to the workshop for cleaning and

relocation in a new configuration. The relocation of each component is identified in the series of drawings included at Figures 11-16.

6.4 At SPG para 6.0 the replacement of shopfronts is discussed and, in most cases, where a traditional shopfront needs replacing and it is not possible or desirable to repair, it will be appropriate to replace it with a traditional replica. In this instance where any particular component is either irreparable or too brittle to be re-use or remodelled, this piece would be replaced like for like with a new component matching as closely as possible the existing material in specification, size and colour.

This would not apply to the glass which would have to be replaced in its entirety with 10mm laminated rectangular sheet. Most of the vertical existing bronze sections would need to be reinforced with an independent structure of mild steel square sections concealed behind them to support the additional weight.

6.5 This application has considered the comments of both the Planning and Conservation Officers which focus on the use of historically appropriate architectural detailing, proportion and materials and the appearance of the proposed shopfront in the wider street scene adjacent to the listed Grade II building 25 Cheap Street. Taking these concerns into account, a mutually acceptable compromise has been achieved without loss of any historic fabric and neutral impact on the setting of the heritage asset.

The photograph of the two shops from the record card for the lesser secular monuments dated 1939 shows both 25 & 27 Cheap Street when they were inspected by R W McDowall for the RCHM. The awning over No 27 still survives but the original C19 shopfront has already been replaced and this would be retained in the current proposal.

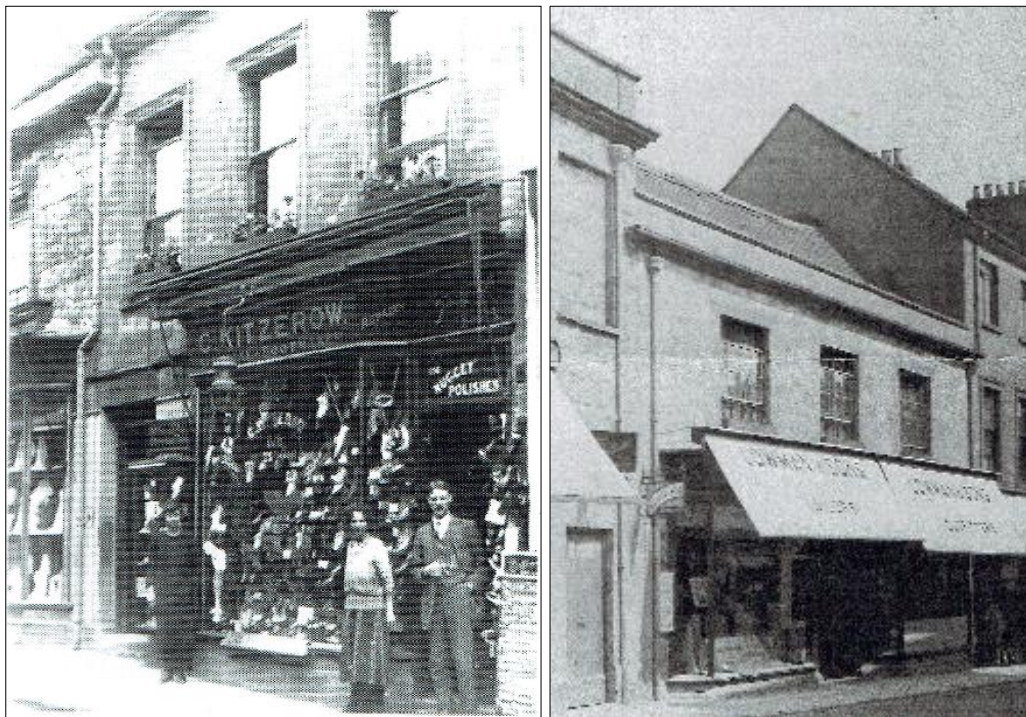


Fig.6 1911 appearance of 27 Cheap Street from Alec Oxford's book 2005 and RCHM Record Card.

The application will need to be considered in the context of the setting of Sherborne Conservation Area and the West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan Policies 2015:

Policy ENV 4 HERITAGE ASSETS,

Policy ENV12 THE DESIGN AND POSITIONING OF BUILDINGS and

Policy ENV 13 ACHIEVING HIGH LEVELS OF ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

In addition, the Sherborne Area Action Plan, although its life span was limited to 2014-2017, may also carry weight in respect of encouraging Heritage Town Status, the promotion of local retail and other business, traditional sign writing on shop fascias and raising the profile of Sherborne as a destination for tourists.

7.0 Other Examples of Shopfronts of the Same Period

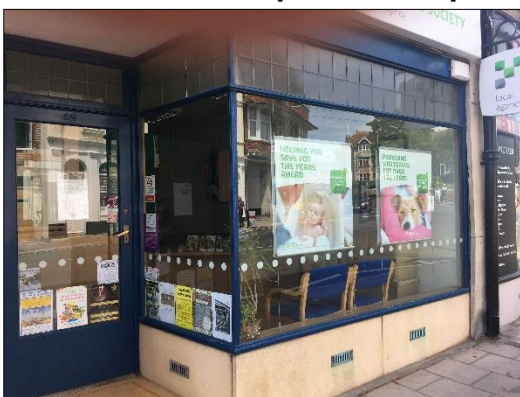


Fig. 7 Barnstaple.



Fig. 8 Poole.



Fig. 9 28 High East Street, Dorchester.



Fig. 10 Nos 30 & 28 South Street, Bridport, sharing the same green marble as 27 Cheap Street.

The only shopfront that occurs in West Dorset district as almost identical in appearance, of the same date and use of materials are a pair of shops 30 & 28 South Street, Bridport which now trades as Harvey & Anderson hairdressers and Weldmar charity shop, Figure 29 refers. Although very similar to Sherborne the Bridport example does not share the projecting bays of display windows which are shown in three dimensions at Figure 11. It is altogether a simpler approach to Art Deco design and incorporates a vast area of Green Alpi marble. The other examples which share some similarities are not as similar but are clearly of the same period.

8.0 Promoting Good Design through the Planning System

The Royal Institute of British Architects have produced a series of documents entitled Design Matters which are intended to ensure that design standards are part of the agenda for improving the quality of all development. Good design is central to delivering sustainable buildings that will last into the future. When time is invested in understanding the relationship between design and the local area, it is possible to achieve the right environment for people to thrive.

Design standards are too often seen as an impediment, where in fact, when applied correctly, they provide greater certainty for developers and support sustainable development. This guidance enables local authorities to demand higher standards of buildings in their areas, encouraging everyone who has an interest in the quality of the built environment to engage with their local politicians to drive up design quality in their area. Following the publication of the most recent revision to the NPPF, the Minister of State for Housing and Planning stated that “planning should be refused for poor design”.

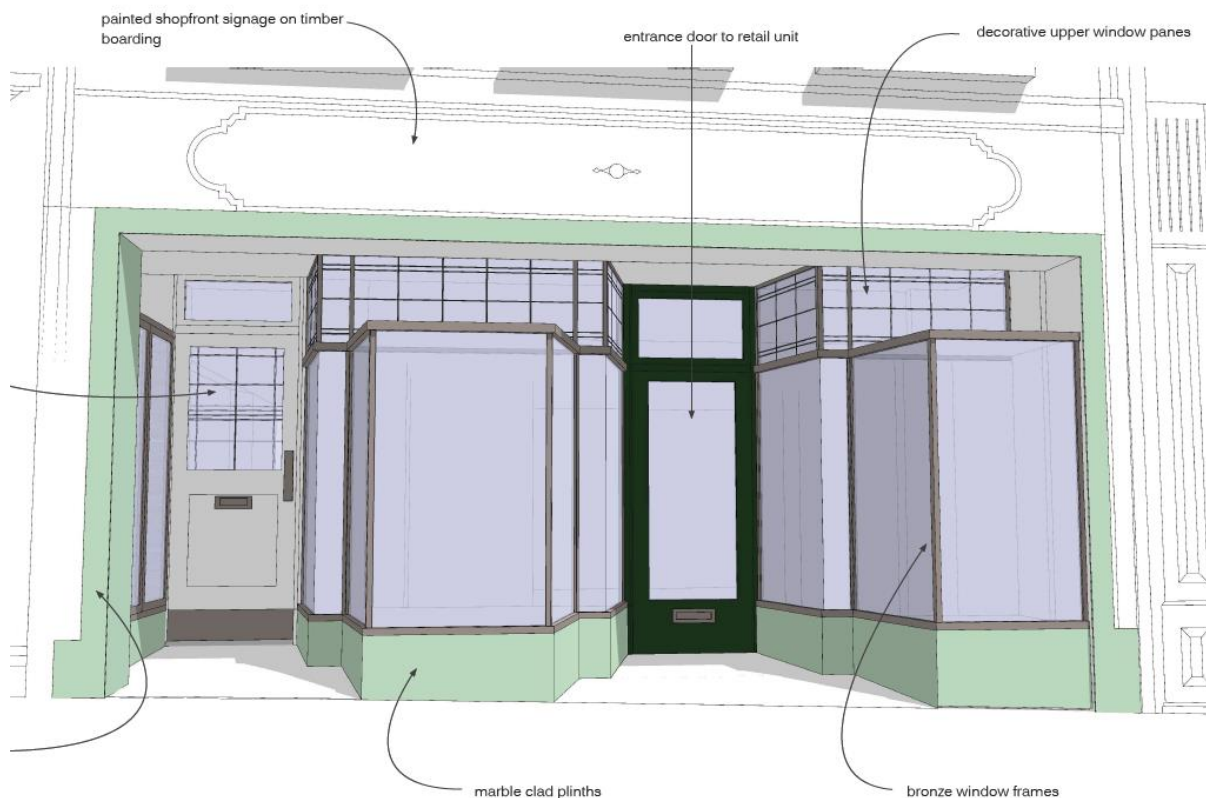


Fig.11 Angel Architecture Ltd drawing No 1922-05 Existing 3D Street View.

Planning Statement for remodelling of shopfront, 27 Cheap Street, Sherborne, October 2020

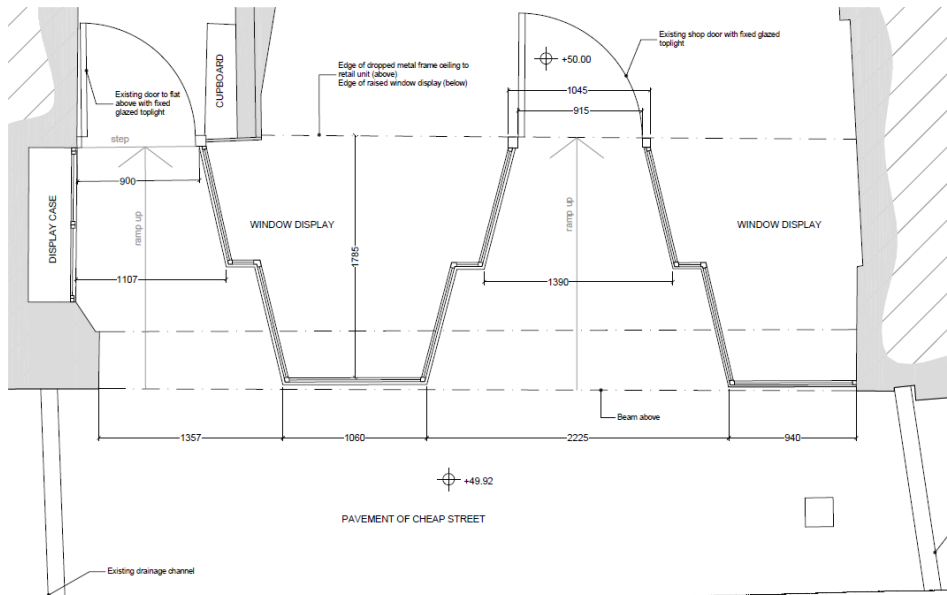


Fig.12 Angel Architecture Ltd drawing No 1922-04 Existing Ground Floor Plan.

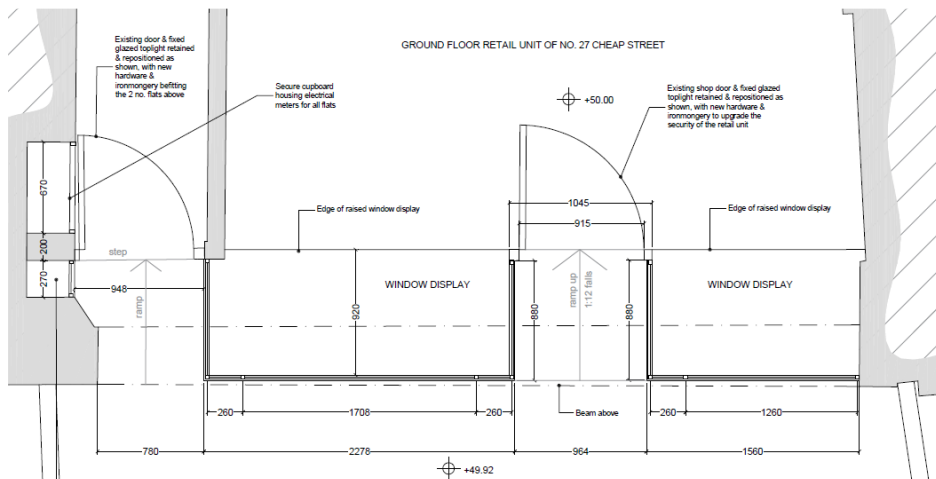


Fig.13 Angel Architecture Ltd drawing No 1922-09 Proposed Ground Floor Plan.

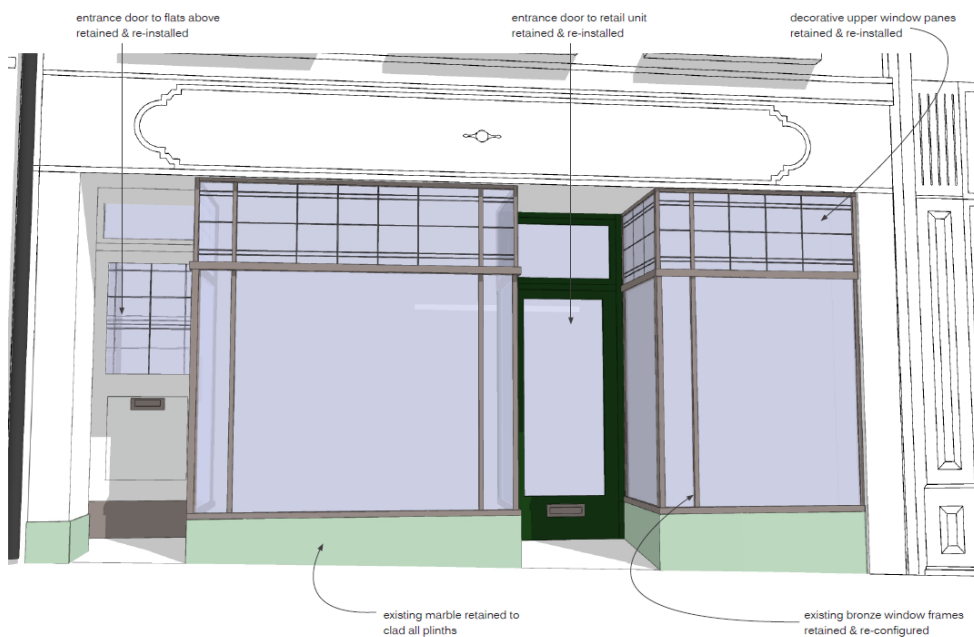


Fig.14 Angel Architecture Ltd drawing No 1922-10 Proposed 3D Street View.



Fig.15 Angel Architecture Ltd drawing No 1922-13 Proposed Front (West) Elevation.



Fig.16 Angel Architecture Ltd drawing No 1922-12 Proposed 3D Sections.

9.0 Conclusions

The reinterpretation of the existing shopfront can be justified on many levels. Evidence has been provided to demonstrate that the existing shopfront is not currently fit for purpose, due to the number of break ins and the difficulty of obtaining insurance, although the Art Deco façade has value in the street scene as an iconic example of its period. Although there is no mention of 27 Cheap Street as having any features which would render it worthy for inclusion as an important local building in Sherborne Conservation Area Appraisal, it is, nevertheless, included in the West Dorset District Council SPG dated 2004 and cited as a good example of a Modern Movement shopfront. The revised design provides the best possible outcome for the both the applicant and the Council and, as a result, will enhance the character and appearance of Sherborne Conservation Area.