

34 South Street, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 1EL

## **DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**

Planning application for a roof access window

This Design & Access Statement is to support the installation of a roof access window at 34 Sout Street, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 9EL. The property comprises one half of 34-35 South Street which is a two storey building probably constructed in the 1960s of modern design and appearance located within a Conservation Area.

The building is concrete-framed with concrete floor slabs at ground and first floor levels, red clay brick-faced external cavity walls with timber and aluminium framed windows and a pitched clay-tiled roof comprising four hipped sections separated by valley gutters and drained by parapet gutters running the length of the building. 34 and 35 South Street are currently in the same freehold ownership but each unit is a separate self-contained two-storey property with retail on the ground floor and ancillary storage/office/staff facilities on the first floor. 34 South Street is currently vacant.

Obstruction of the valley gutters between the hipped roof sections has caused rainwater to overflow into the accommodation in the past. Access to the roof valleys and parapets is needed for safe routine maintenance to ensure the rainwater drainage is unobstructed by the build-up of debris over time. Adjoining properties directly abut on both sides restricting access to the roof and rear elevation. There is currently no permanent safe roof access. Access for external roof maintenance is currently taken by ladder or scaffold tower from the pavement of South Street obstructing pedestrian flow in this busy city centre retail location.

Despite being only two storeys high, internal ceiling heights of 3.7 metres on the ground floor and 3.2 metres on the first floor mean the external roof parapet is 7.6 metres above the pavement. This increases the health and safety risk to maintenance operatives and increases the area of pavement affected by ladder access. The installation of an access/egress rooflight will enable safe roof access from within the roof space of 34 South Street, via the internal accommodation.

The location for the rooflight has been chosen to minimise the impact on the external appearance of the building, minimise interference with structural roof elements and minimise the risk and difficulty for maintenance operatives accessing the roof. The rooflight is to be set in the middle of the roof minimising external roof travel distances and away from the unprotected roof edges at the front and rear elevations. The rooflight is to be mounted between existing cut rafters close to the hip, avoiding closely spaced trussed rafters in the middle parts of the four roof sections. The rooflight is to be set on an inner facing roof slope so that it is not visible from public areas or other buildings. It is to be set close to the valley to further reduce visibility and ease access through the rooflight onto the roof for maintenance operatives. It is to be located close to the internal staircase minimising travel by maintenance operatives through the internal accommodation.

A Conservation Rooflight has been chosen, manufactured by The Rooflight Company ([www.therooflightcompany.co.uk](http://www.therooflightcompany.co.uk)), suited to Conservation Areas by virtue of its design, materials, small size and low profile.

Due to its limited size, the proposed rooflight will only provide safe roof access for minor maintenance tasks of short duration. It will not provide sufficient access for multiple operatives or large building materials. The rooflight will not replace the need for scaffolded access for infrequent, planned, large scale repairs to the roof. The roof access is designed for use by maintenance operatives only: the external roof environment is not considered a safe environment for ambulant disabled persons.

The only part of the roof over 34 South Street that is visible from a public area is the front roof slope. Parts of the rear roof slope may be visible from the adjoining private garden to the rear of 34 South Street which is understood to comprise ecclesiastical property belonging to the Diocese of Chichester. However, the middle sections of the roof over 34 South Street are not believed to be visible externally. The proposed rooflight is not considered, therefore, to detract from its historical environment or impact others.

29/09/2023