

67 and 67A Lorne Street, Reading

Planning supporting statement for deconversion of two flats into a single dwelling

1. Introduction and description of proposal

1.1. This planning statement supports the planning application to deconvert 67 and 67A Lorne Street, Reading RG1 7YW. The proposed works include the following:

- Reinstatement of an internal passageway between 67 and 67A Lorne Street
- Connecting and combining electrical, gas and water supplies between the two dwellings (planning permission not required)
- Extinguishing 67A as a dwelling once works are complete, so that the entire property becomes 67 Lorne Street.

1.2. This statement outlines the proposed works and their compatibility with the Reading Local Plan.

1.3. The application site comprises an end-terrace property, built c. 1880. Originally built as a single house, it has been converted into two properties more recently. 67 Lorne Street is the upper dwelling, comprising the first and second floors and a ground floor entrance. 67A Lorne Street comprises the entirety of the ground floor, except the space for the entranceway to 67.

1.4. The planning submission comprises:

- Full plans for works
- This supporting statement

1.5. This application is made by Oliver Robertson, who owns the leasehold to 67 Lorne St. His wife, Jessica Metherringham, owns the leasehold to 67A Lorne St, and is fully supportive of this application. They jointly own the freehold to the land comprising 67 and 67A Lorne St.

2. Reading Local Plan

2.1. The Reading Local Plan, adopted in 2019, recognises the need for a mix of housing, in particular for family homes of three or more bedrooms (section 4.4.9 and policy H3).

2.2. The Local Plan also recognises that the character of the surrounding areas is a relevant criterion when considering development.

2.3. While 67 Lorne St is not in a conservation area, it is within an area that the Local Plan identifies as having a 'particular cluster of heritage assets' (figure 7.1).

2.4. The Local Plan aims to maintain and connect biodiversity in West Reading (section 7.2.7).

3. Relevance to current plan and analysis

3.1. We believe the proposal supports the Reading Local Plan in the following ways:

3.2. Mix of housing stock

3.2.1. Of the 31 planning applications made for Lorne Street since 1991 (none of them relating to 67 or 67A Lorne St), 18 seek permission to convert into additional dwellings, change use to residential or obtain certificates of lawfulness for the same.

3.2.2. Therefore, Lorne Street has seen (and can expect to see further) an increase in the overall number of residential units, while at the same time experiencing a reduction in the number of family homes of three or more bedrooms. The proposed deconversion of 67 and 67A Lorne Street would help to reverse that trend towards smaller dwellings.

3.2.3. Deconversion would also reduce the number of refuse bins and demand for parking (both 67 and 67A have separate rights to apply for parking permits), easing pressure on these services in the area.

3.3. Sympathetic changes

3.3.1. The proposed works would reinstate an original passage between the current 67 and 67A Lorne Street (apparent from the house layout and wall mouldings).

3.3.2. Recent remedial works have been done sympathetically to the style of the building, using the same materials that were used originally (lime plaster for mortar, slates for roof tiles). It is the intention of the current owners for this approach to continue, so that the property supports the heritage assets of the area.

3.3.3. Recent changes to the garden have removed concrete and increased the amount of green space and variety of plants on the land, which is in keeping with the Local Plan's aim to maintain and connect biodiversity in West Reading.

3.4. We therefore believe that the restoration of the site to its original intended use as a single family home would benefit the character and heritage of the area, and encourage that planning permission is granted.