

Heritage Statement¹

Date: 23rd April 2023
Applicant: Martin Townsend
Application Number: Application 230461/LBC and PP12063017

1.0 Introduction

This statement forms part of a planning & listed building application for a replacement drainpipe & header. It is not a standalone document. It must be read with the plans constituting the principal information (submitted on 07/04/2023). This statement has been produced to support planning applications 230461/LBC and PP12063017 for the property of ²30, The Mount, a grade II listed building in “The Mount Conservation area³”.

2.0 Related Guidance

- (1) Validation requirements for Planning Applications - November 2021
- (2) Reading Borough Council Local Plan – November 2019.

In producing this statement, the relevant policies of the Local Plan have been referenced to support the planning authority in deciding this application.

3.0 Proposal

Retrospective Listed building consent is required to replace an existing uPVC, black plastic rainwater drainpipe that had split into several places and was allowing water to ingress into the building and replace it with a black painted metal (copper⁴) drainpipe. Although the drainpipe will use the existing soak away, at the base of the downpipe, an additional take-off has been incorporated to allow water to irrigate the front garden. Such a policy aligns with local plan policy CC2 (Sustainable Design and Construction), i.e., Rainwater Harvesting.

These works have already been completed, as informed to Bhupinder Manz (Your ref: E22143, correspondence contained on the planning file for this matter), as they were deemed to be

¹ As required in Reading Borough Local Plan Policy EN1 (Paragraph 4.2.13)

² It should be noted that the applicant, in line with Local Plan Policy EN3, has looked to continue to restore original features of the property during his occupancy, including but not limited to Railings and windows, which are original examples of the craftsmanship of the period when constructed.

³ An area not seen to be at Heritage as identified in Local Plan Policy Paragraph 4.2.16

⁴ The use of copper over the use of like-for-like material, i.e. UVPC of the existing drainpipe, was considered more sustainable and deemed to be in line with Policy EN3, CC2, CC1 policies of the Local Plan. The assessment of the impact of copper over UVPC was decided upon by using the BRE Green Guide, which is considered to be the leading LCA methodology for the comparison of materials.

urgent works and considered necessary to keep the building weather-proof, with the steps taken should be consistent with achieving this objective. Apart from replacing the downpipe and header, no other work has been undertaken on this property. The approach and action which has been taken here are consistent with Local Plan policy EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment)

4.0 Identifying the Heritage asset

Introduction

The statement is produced in line with the guidance produced by Reading Borough Council and has been produced by the applicant without professional support, but takes account of all relevant information and guidance provided by appropriate Reading Borough Council planning team members, i.e. Beatrice Malama and Bhupinder Manz

Description

The area's buildings and spaces are noted, described, and marked on the Townscape Appraisal Map (**Appendix 1** – The copyright of Reading Borough Council), along with listed buildings, buildings of townscape merit, significant trees and spaces, and critical views into and out of the conservation area. There is a presumption that all of these features should be “preserved or enhanced”, as legislation requires; this is reinforced in the Reading Borough Local Plan adopted of November 2019.

The Mount Conservation Area lies less than 2km southeast of the Reading town centre. It is centred on The Mount, which lies immediately north of the west-east aligned Christchurch Road, part of the busy main A327, leading to Shenfield Road and points south out of Reading. Immediately to the north is Alcroft Road, which runs parallel to Christchurch Road. Christchurch Road and Alcroft Road were once linked by The Mount (and the Lower Mount to the north of the Mount), but this through route was closed off as part of a conservation area enhancement scheme implemented shortly after the formal designation of The Mount Conservation Area on 24 April 1987.

The Mount comprises two parallel streets running south to north, linked by two shorter streets of the same name running west-east at the northern end and middle of the south-north “arms”. It comprises a close-knit street block of listed houses originally built for Huntley & Palmer's employees. These houses are particularly distinctive and unique, constructed of gault bricks with paler brick banding and detailing. They retain much of their original character and appearance, including frontage walls and railings. Nearby properties fronting Christchurch Road are of a similar age but of a different style, more typical of this area of Reading, and retaining original walls and railings again.

The area's boundaries are indicated on the Appraisal Map appended to this report, Appendix 1.

It was formally designated on 24 April 1987 following a period of public consultation. Most of the buildings in The Mount comprise a unique and distinctive group of buildings of both architectural and local historical value. They form the core of the conservation area. They are listed as Grade II. These buildings dated from c.1876 and were built for Huntley and Palmer's clerks, foremen and managers. They comprise a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced houses with standard designs and decorative features. All the properties were constructed of gault bricks with paler detailing, banding, and slate roofs. The property in which is the subject of this application is a two-story terrace which was built for clerks of Huntley and Palmer. These terraced houses have paired doorways with bracketed arch entrances and jointed gables. Windows have bracketed cills and cast-iron flower guards.⁵

This area includes the Progress Theatre, which is at the end of the road of the applicant for this application. The progress theatre dates from the 1930s have been used as a theatre since 1951. It was included in the originally designated conservation not for its own intrinsic value, but "to reasonably round off the area". The majority of the area surrounding the designated conservation area comprises inter-war and 1960s-70s housing, ranging from bungalows along the east side of The Mount to 1970s terraced housing in Sutton Walk and a range of large-scale detached housing in Allcroft Road (including, more recently, Lancaster Close). The south side of Christchurch Road opposite the conservation area shows large houses on the 1877 map, except for number 40 (much altered and extended) and The Queens Head public house (numbers 52 and 54) to the east, little remains from this period.

5.0 Assessment of Impact and Mitigation

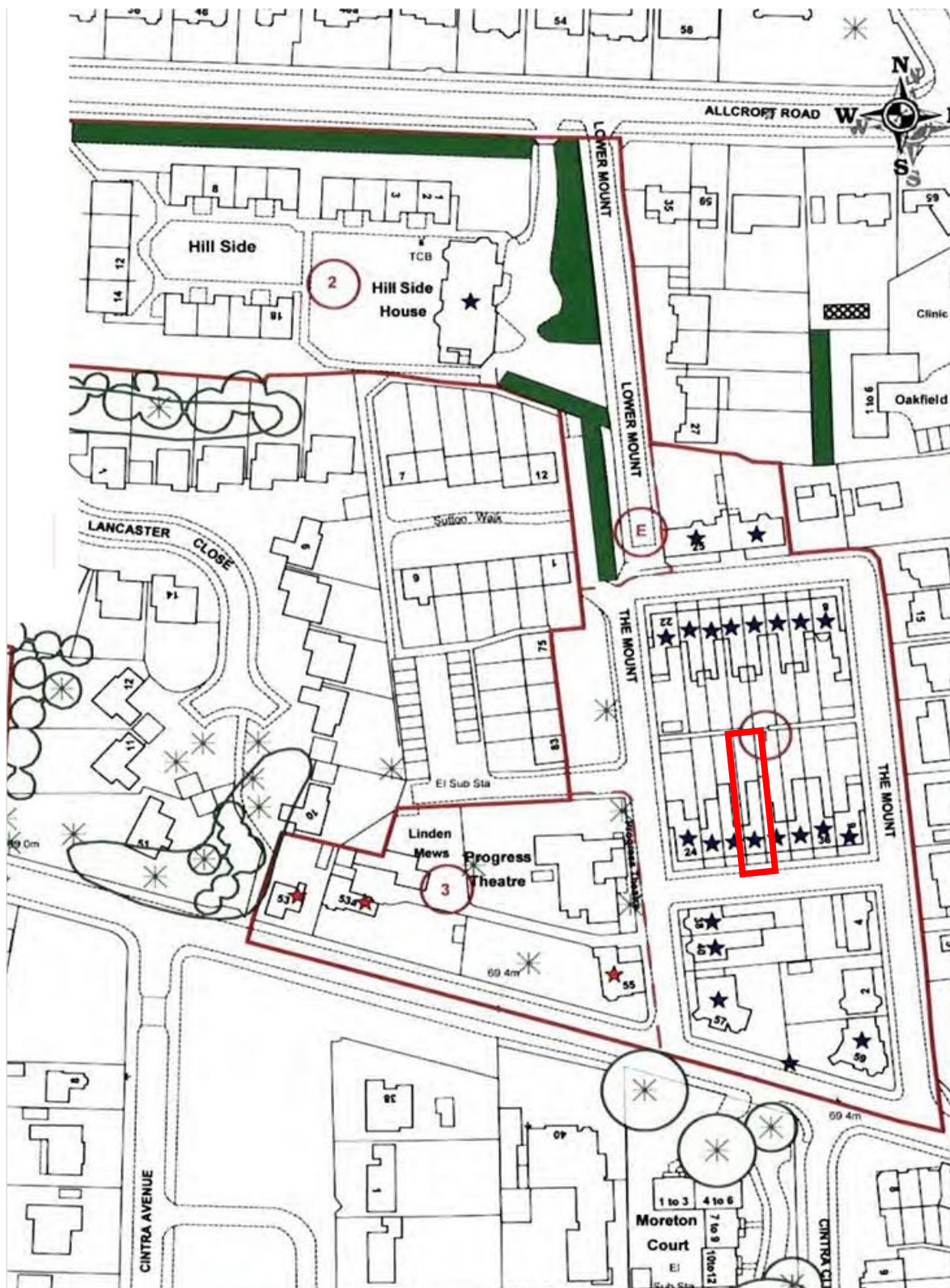
Removing a uPVC drainpipe and replacing it with a black-painted copper drainpipe will not impact or change the visual appearance of the existing building or its listed features. The added feature of rainwater harvesting will allow for more effective water use and is consistent with local plan policies that support it.

6.0 Conclusion

It is considered that the replacement drainpipe is sensibly designed and consistent with all other original features and respects the setting, character and appearance of the listed building. The use of a more sustainable (and recyclable material) and use of rainwater harvesting further enhance this application's sustainability, and I hope as a result, it should be approved.

⁵ The Applicant's house is one of the few houses where these remain untouched and in their original condition

Appendix A – Conservation Area designation (Copyright Reading Borough Council)



Applicant property is listed in **Red**