

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Abbey

App Ref: 221390/LBC

Address: 156 Castle Hill, Reading, RG1 7RP

Proposals: Replacement of an existing rear timber lean to as a result of the underpinning works. Repair work to the rear elevation including doors and windows following building movement.

Reinstatement of landscaping following underpinning works.

Case Officer: David Brett

Applicant: Mrs Alison Hartigan

Date received (valid from): 17 September 2022 **Target Decision date:** 12 November 2022

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The proposal site is a Grade II* listed building (list entry number 1113431) located at 156 Castle Hill, Reading, RG1 7RP. The listing describes “NOS 154 TO 160 (EVEN) AND RAILINGS TO STREET, 154-160, CASTLE STREET” as:

“CASTLE STREET 1. 5128 (North Side) Castle Hill Nos 154 to 160 (even) and railings to street SU 7073 12/41 SU 7072 13/41 22.3.57. II* GV 2. Former King's Arms Inn. A group of buildings with C18 fronts on 3 sides of a court. 2 storey centre block, stucco with moulded cornice, parapet and mansard slate roof with brick chimneys. 2 fluted conical lead rainwater heads. 11 windows on 1st floor, 6 on ground floor, glazing bar sashes mostly. 2 doors with small Doric porches (No 156: columns replaced by plain uprights). 6 panel doors. No 156 now half-glazed. No 158, upper 2 panels glazed. A further side door to left with trellis porch. Left hand wing (No 160): 2 storeys and attic. Stucco. Old tile roof, partly mansard. End facing street has 2 storey bow with 3 cross glazed sash windows and balcony to terrace in front of attic window. Arched door to right with fanlight and reeded pilaster surround. Right hand wing (no 154): Similar to No 160 (a later addition however) of colour- washed brick with stone balustrade at 2nd floor level. Tarred tile hipped mansard roof. Plate glass sash windows. Entered from left hand in tented triangular headed porch. C18 spearhead rails with urns on standards facing street, the gates have braced upper rail, dog-rails and box-panels standards. Interior of No 154: late C18 staircase, the 1st floor bow window room is circa 1790s, has marble fireplace surround, some good cornices and fine doorcases with Adam-type friezes. Interior of No 158 very interesting with a good coved ceiling and panelled room on the 1st floor and an C18 stair with turned balusters and straight string. The building was an 'L' block (Nos 158 and 160) in 1734 and had developed by 1796, when it was occupied by 200 exiled French priests quartered in Reading, (1) into its present plan with covered colonnades to north and west sides of the court, the west side with a corridor above the colonnade. (1) (Sources: Catholic Record Society Vol LXXXVI (1932)).”

Site visit date: 26/10/2022

Site visit photos:



Fig 1. Rear of 156 Castle Hill. Site photo taken by Case Officer on 26/10/2022

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Replacement of an existing rear timber lean to as a result of the underpinning works. Repair work to the rear elevation including doors and windows following building movement. Reinstatement of landscaping following underpinning works.

Plans considered:

- Site and Location Plan - 2002PL01 Rev A
- ~~- Ground Floor Plan - 2002PL02 Rev B~~
- Proposed Rear and Side Elevation - 2002PL03 Rev B
- Pin width adjusted & RWP added - S19-7805 01 Rev A
- ~~- Heritage Statement - 2002~~

Received on 17/09/2022

- Structural Report prepared by Heritage Consultants Ltd

Received on 26/10/2022

- Heritage Statement - 2002 Rev01

Received on 30/10/2022

- Ground Floor Plan - 2002PL02 Rev C

Received on 01/11/2022

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

980725/LBC - Repair the cracks on the external face of the front elevation, prepare and paint. - Application Permitted on 15/02/1999.

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following addresses were consulted by letter.

156 Castle Hill, Reading, RG1 7RP - No response received.

29 Epping Close, Reading, RG1 7YD - No response received.
154a Castle Hill, Reading, RG1 7RP - No response received.
Flat 4, 154 Castle Hill, Reading, RG1 7RP - No response received.
Flat 5, 154 Castle Hill, Reading, RG1 7RP - No response received.
Flat 1, 154 Castle Hill, Reading, RG1 7RP - No response received.
Flat 2, 154 Castle Hill, Reading, RG1 7RP - No response received.
Flat 3, 154 Castle Hill, Reading, RG1 7RP - No response received.
Flat 6, 154 Castle Hill, Reading, RG1 7RP - No response received.
158 Castle Hill, Reading, RG1 7RP - Response received on 19/10/2022

- *It refers to underpinning of a Grade 2* listed building, but to our knowledge no detailed LBC application has been made for the underpinning itself, assessing the impact of underpinning on the building as a whole or on the adjacent buildings (154-160 Castle Hill are all Grade 2* listed). Nor is there a structural report by a structural engineer with experience of historic buildings.*
- *We have been professionally advised that partial underpinning of historic structures such as this risks differential movement and damage at junctions within the building and with adjacent buildings.*
- *For a historic building there may be alternative approaches to underpinning which should be considered before underpinning - there is no evidence here that any alternative approaches have been considered or attempted.*
- *Partial underpinning, as indicated here, risks damage to two of Reading's most historic houses.*

Reading Borough Council, Conservation & Urban Design Officer - First response received on 26/10/2022

- Any repairs should be done with compatible second-hand bricks sand, be laid or bedded with lime mortar. Any underpinning works should use sulphate resistant mortar type C (marine cement) or equivalent.
- Further details are required regarding Heritage Consultants Ltd and other projects that they've worked on.

Officer Note: The above raised by the Conservation & Urban Design Officer was duly addressed by the agent. There are no objections to this application from the Conservation & Urban Design Officer.

The site notice was displayed from Thursday 6th October 2022, expiring on Thursday 27th October 2022. A press notice was published on Thursday 13th October 2022, expiring on Thursday 3rd November 2022. No responses have been received.

Equality Act 2010:

In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7 Design and the Public Realm

CC8 Safeguarding Amenity

EN1 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

EN3 Enhancement of Conservation Areas

SPG/SPD

Russell Street/Castle Hill/Oxford Road Conservation Area Appraisal (2020)

6. APPRAISAL

Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

In accordance with policy EN1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan, all proposals will be expected to protect and where possible enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings, the historic character and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located. Proposals should seek to avoid harm in the first instance. Any harm to or loss of a heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification, usually in the form of public benefits. In addition, applications affecting Listed Buildings will not have an adverse impact on those elements which contribute to their special architectural or historic interest including, where appropriate, their setting.

To understand why the proposed development is required, it is considered important to first understand the history of the site. In brief, the proposal site has been suffering from subsidence for an extensive period of time, with insurance claims made over the course of 30 years. The underpinning of the rear of 156 Castle Hill has been proposed as a permanent solution to the longstanding problem. This solution has been identified by a qualified structural engineer at Heritage Consultants Ltd.

It is proposed that the existing lean-to to the rear of 156 Castle Hill be removed and replaced with like for like materials. Upon visiting the site it was evident to officers that the existing lean-to is in need of repair and restoration. The existing lean-to is not considered integral to the historic fabric of the heritage asset, the replacement of which is considered an enhancement. The materials to the proposed replacement lean-to consist of timber (glazed) doors, painted timber panelling, and leaded roof. The materials proposed are considered acceptable.

The development also proposes the like-for-like replacement of windows and doors. Windows are to be repaired as required and reset with new perimeter sealant and weather sealing. This aspect of the proposed development is considered maintenance, and necessary to repair windows and openings that have suffered due to ground movement.

The proposed development is considered in accordance with Policies EN1 and EN3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

Residential Amenity

Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan states that; “Development will not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties or unacceptable living conditions for new residential properties, in terms of:

- Privacy and overlooking;
- Access to sunlight and daylight;
- Visual dominance and overbearing effects of a development;
- Harm to outlook;
- Noise and disturbance;
- Artificial lighting;
- Vibration;
- Dust and fumes;
- Smell;
- Crime and safety;

The proposed development has been considered against the requirements of Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan. It is considered that there would not be harm to residential amenity for neighbouring residents or future occupants of 156 Castle Hill. The proposed development is considered necessary to address the structural integrity of the heritage asset. Therefore, the proposed development is considered in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan.

7. CONCLUSION

The development has been assessed and the works are considered to be in accordance with the above relevant policies and Listed Building Consent can be granted.

8. RECOMMENDATION

Application Permitted

Recommended Conditions:

LB1: Time Limit Listed Building (Works)

The works hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this consent.

REASON: In accordance with Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

LB2: Listed Building (Works Specification)

The works to the Listed Building hereby permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the following approved plans or specifications:

- Site and Location Plan - 2002PL01 Rev A
- Proposed Rear and Side Elevation - 2002PL03 Rev B
- Pin width adjusted & RWP added - S19-7805 01 Rev A

Received on 17/09/2022

- Structural Report prepared by Heritage Consultants Ltd

Received on 26/10/2022

- Heritage Statement - 2002 Rev01

Received on 30/10/2022

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the Listed Building Consent hereby approved Policy EN1 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

MLB: Listed Building Materials (To Match)

All new external and internal works and finishes, and any works of making good, shall match the existing original fabric in respect of using materials of a matching form, composition and consistency, detailed execution and finished appearance, except where indicated otherwise on the drawings hereby approved.

REASON: In order that the special architectural and historic interest of this Listed Building is safeguarded in accordance with Policy EN1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Recommended Informatives

IF1: Positive and Proactive Working - approval

The Local Planning Authority has worked positively and proactively with the applicant to resolve relevant matters to allow consent to be granted within the statutory timescales for the decision to be issued.

IF5: Terms

Your attention is drawn to the terms and conditions of this permission. Any development which is carried out but which differs materially from the approved plans and details, or does not comply with any condition(s) or planning obligation(s) attached to the permission may result in the Council taking action to remedy the breach of planning control. If you are in any doubt please contact the Council.

IF6: Building Control

Your attention is drawn to the requirement for submission of a Building Regulations application for the proposed development. Please contact Building Control on 0118 937 2449 for advice.

IF7: Complaints about construction

Complaints are commonly received about noise and dust caused by construction and demolition works, particularly working outside reasonable hours and smoke from bonfires associated with the burning of waste on site. The developer is reminded that construction and demolition associated with the approved development will be subject to environmental health law.

IF8: Encroachment

During the course of construction, the developer should take care to ensure that no part of this development (foundations, eaves, guttering, etc.) would encroach on, under or across the boundary line with the adjoining property, as the requisite Notice has not been served on the owner of that property. This permission does not confer any right of access onto land that is not under the developer's control. The developer should also be mindful of the obligations and requirements of the Party Wall Act (1996) details of which can be found at: www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/partywall

Listed Building Consent

For the avoidance of doubt, no other works are approved except those as authorised by this Consent. Any other works required to the Listed Building may require a separate application for Listed Building Consent and/or an application for Permitted Works to a Listed Building.