

Heritage Statement

Rebuilding of present roof to create 1No flat

63 London Street, Reading RG1 4PS

14 St Georges Business Centre - St Georges Square - Portsmouth - PO1 3EZ

023 9252 3352 - help@tpexpert.org - www.tpexpert.org

Jonathan McDermott, Keith Oliver, Helen Morris-Ruffle and Tim Perkins are Chartered Town Planners regulated by the Royal Town Planning Institute

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REG 197 6095 56



RTPI

Chartered Town Planners

Site Information

Consultant	Keith Oliver
Client	Mr Ganga Bhusal
Site Address	63 London Street, Reading RG1 4PS
LA	Reading Borough Council
Description of Development	Rebuilding of present roof to create 1No flat (Class AB)
Pathway (PD/Application/Appeal)	Application

Report Date

17 October 2021



Site Photograph

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2. Site Context

- 2.1. 63 London Street is a modern, 3-storey, office building on the corner of London Street and South Street.
- 2.2. The main entrance is on London Street. The property has use of a shared car park to the rear accessed from South Street.
- 2.3. London Street consists of a mix of old and new properties with a mix of commercial and residential uses reflecting its edge of centre location. Buildings are generally three storeys in height.
- 2.4. South Street is more residential in character with two and three storey properties.
- 2.5. The property lies to the south of Reading town centre, within easy walking distance of shops and services. There are regular bus services along London Street.

3. Local Development Framework

National Planning Policy Framework

3.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is the primary national planning policy guidance and was most recently updated in July 2021

3.2. The Framework seeks to conserve and enhance the country's historic heritage. It states

Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations

3.3. It advises in Paragraph 199:

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Local Policy

3.4. The Reading Borough Local Plan adopted in 2019 is the principal document in the Local Development Framework. It sets out the planning policies for development in Reading up to 2036, and is the main consideration in deciding planning applications.

3.5. Policy EN1 indicates that areas of historic importance will be protected and where possible enhanced.

3.6. Policy EN3 advises that the special interest, character and architecture of Conservation Areas will be conserved and enhanced. Development proposals within Conservation Areas must make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

- 3.7. Policy EN6 with regard to new development in an historic context indicates that in areas characterised by heritage assets, the historic environment will inform and shape new development. New development will make a contribution to the historic character of the area by respecting and enhancing its architectural and visual qualities and considering how heritage considerations can influence the design of new development.

4. Heritage Considerations

- 4.1. 63 London Street lies within the London Street/Market Place Conservation Area designated in 1972 and extended in 1982.
- 4.2. A Conservation Appraisal was prepared which seeks to record and analyse the various features which give the London Street/Market Place Conservation Area its special architectural and historic interest.
- 4.3. The Market Place/London Street Conservation Area is located in central Reading. The northern half of this linear conservation area contains the site of the town's medieval market place, now formally known as 'Market Place', and the 19th century Town Hall within which are the Museum of Reading and the Reading Concert Hall.
- 4.4. The southern half of the conservation area, comprising London Street and Church Street, lies on the south side of the River Kennet which flows eastward under High Bridge, shortly to join the Thames. The southern half is severed from the town centre by the Inner Distribution Road (IDR).
- 4.5. The spine of this linear conservation area is formed by the course of a planned 12th century southern approach road to a market place deliberately located outside the western gates of Reading Abbey's grounds. The route to the heart of the medieval town followed today's London Street, Duke Street and High Street. Though no longer a significant north-south route, the linear course of the old route and the triangular-shaped open space of the former market place remain.
- 4.6. London Street is noticeably wider than streets closer to the town centre and, generally speaking, development to the rear, east and west, of London Street is less dense than the tight urban form found in the conservation area north of the River Kennet.
- 4.7. Storey heights range from 2 to 4 storeys, the higher buildings being located close to the town centre in Market Place and Blagrove Street. A few prestigious buildings in London Street also rise to four storeys.
- 4.8. The Appraisal identifies four character areas one of which is London Street, south of the IDR.

- 4.9. London Street has medieval origins, though many of London Street's buildings have a distinctively Georgian, and later, appearance.
- 4.10. In the late 18th and 19th century, London Street was one of the fashionable parts of town and many of the elegant houses which lined either side of the road still survive. Though altered, no longer in residential use and devoid of their spacious rear gardens, these are the properties which today add grandeur to the streetscene. Then, as now, the street was unusually wide. Development at the 'top' and 'bottom' of the street, beside the London Road and IDR junctions respectively, is modern.
- 4.11. South Street contains a row of brick-built terraced houses but its south side, and the west side of East Street, is predominantly modern in character and appearance.
- 4.12. Features making a positive contribution relate to the width of London Street and the mix of architectural styles and periods.
- 4.13. Features making a negative contribution relate largely to traffic issues but also

"Modern development at north and south extremities of London Street, adjacent to road junctions, spoils the overall historic appearance of the area."

- 4.14. The proposal is to replace an existing roof with a mansard roof to accommodate a 1-bedroom flat.
- 4.15. The roof will be no higher than exists and finished in slate as existing.
- 4.16. The roof will be set in from the edge of the building so its impact from street level will be minimal.
- 4.17. The addition of a residential unit should have little significance given the mix of uses in the area, although encouraging residential uses into the town centre should assist in maintaining the vitality and viability of the area.