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PROPOSED SINGLE STOREY REAR EXTENSION AND ROOF EXTENSION
PV PANELS
TERRACED PATIO AND FRONTAGE RAILINGS

AT

65 RUSSELL STREET
READING
RG1 7XG

for
KATHERINE LEWIS

DESIGN, PLANNING AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

20-1932 05jun2020

10 HIGH STREET PANGBOURNE READING BERKSHIRE RG8 7AB

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LOCATION and site.

The property is near the top end on the east side of Russell Street, a wide residential road on an incline within central Reading running between Bath Road/Tilehurst Road and Oxford Road. The street has been developed in stages over a period of about 180 years, having a variety of building styles and scales, including three storey Georgian brick or rendered terraced houses, early Victorian stone villas, three storey brick built Victorian semi-detached houses, and less distinguished examples of two and three storey 20th century and 21st century styles. The frontages are designed to be seen; the backs are generally less considered.

Many of the properties in the road have been converted to multiple occupancy; some properties have suffered unfortunate alterations and neglect.

No.67 adjoining is in a poor state of repair and unoccupied.

THE PROPERTY

The property has been the Applicant's family home for about 32 years.

It is a two storey semi-detached house, probably built at the end of the 1920's as part of a small development of three pairs, occupying previously orchard or garden land. Opposite is a 1960's development of two storey semi-detached properties, which replaced a large 19th C house (Aldworth Rise). Immediately to the rear is Epping Close a large plain three storey infill development of flats built in the 1980's which used up the last open land in the street.

The land slopes down to the north along Russell Street and to the east towards Epping Close.

The house has four bedrooms, two being small singles, a dining room, sitting room and kitchen.

The house is brick built, Flemish bond, with cream rendered first floor, a feature two storey bay front window with steep gabled roof, low pitched main roof, and gabled two storey rear outshoot; the roofs are slated. Windows are a mixture of casements and sashes with black woodwork.

Due to the sloping plot, there is a terraced patio stepping down the garden.

The rear gardens are long, with good tree and hedge screening.

Vehicle access is available from Epping Close, to a parking area within the curtilage, between the Close and a garden shed/studio, which screens the garden from Epping Close.

The house seems to be in reasonably good repair, however there is subsidence to the rear gabled two storey projection, probably requiring much re-construction of the rear projection. The original black framed windows, at first floor and in the bay, have been retained, in contrast to neighbouring properties which have adopted white upvc windows in the past. Similarly, other original features such as the porch and staircase balustrade have been retained.

PLANNING HISTORY of the property

None.

POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework 2019 applies

- The NPPF underlines the presumption in favour of sustainable design and gives increasing emphasis and weight to addressing sustainability.
- The NPPF notes that Conservation is about managing change;
- The NPPF notes that enabling development can secure the future of the heritage asset.

Reading Borough Local Plan (adopted November 2019) applies; the following Policies are relevant:

EN3 Enhancement Of Conservation Areas

EN 4 Locally important Heritage Assets

EN6: New Development In A Historic Context

CC1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CC2 Sustainable Design and Construction

CC3 Adaptation to Climate Change

The street is within the Russell Street/Castle Hill Conservation Area (Appraisal adopted in March 2020).

The Conservation Area has recently been re-appraised, and notes its history and the wide variety of buildings in the area, citing examples of good and bad contributions. The property and its group are not mentioned at all.

The street is within Character Area 6.3

Para 6.3.6 notes the poor condition of properties at the north end of Russell Street, and the poor definition of frontages to the pavement, including the removal of front railings and brick walls in several streets

Para 6.3.7 notes Epping Close (to the east of the site) and 52 Russell Street (to the west of the site) as being buildings with opportunities for improvement.

Paras 7.2-7.4 refer to problems with frontages, bins, anti-social behaviour and security.

Para 7.6 notes the loss of traditional boundary railings.

The Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (adopted December 2019) is a material consideration.

The RBC Design Guide for House Extensions applies.

PROPOSAL and DESIGN

The Applicant, who has lived and worked in the area for many decades, wishes to ensure that the house can remain a desirable family home, and therefore needs to match modern expectations of accommodation, whilst contributing to the area, and all in a sustainable way.

The proposal will help support the necessary re-construction of the rear projection, the general refurbishment of original features, upgrading of services and the provision of "green energy" sources, and the replacement of windows in a matching style and material. Together these and the proposed extensions are intended to create that desirable modern family home.

Apart from the proposed pellet burner and electric car charger, a principal feature of the overall proposals is Photo Voltaic panels, to generate electricity. To get maximum benefit these need to face south and not be overshadowed, so are to be placed on the roof; as the roof faces east/west, a hidden flat roofed area needs to be created.

The proposal therefore makes best use of the existing structure, with judicious additions to create larger light airy rooms. The loft is converted to provide a third double bedroom with ensuite, in lieu of an existing small bedroom, and a single storey rear extension is added to integrate the kitchen and sitting room with large east facing windows and roof light, to maximise daylight. The roof extension is set very well back from the roof eaves and verge so the original roof is easily read, and it steps forward over the existing rear projection so that the three floor levels are visually connected when seen from the garden. The new parts are staggered on plan on each floor, and stepped in section to create a characterful collection of volumes, the new kitchen wall extends to form part of the terrace, which has steps and a path winding through planters; all together connecting the house with the garden, and taking architectural advantage of the sloping site.

The rear extensions are limited, to 4 metres adjoining the other half of the pair (No.67), in deference to the Authority's guidance on extensions, and 3 metres beyond the existing rear projection, as if Permitted Development, minimally beyond the rear extension of No.63.

The extension proposals will not be visible from the public realm, except from Epping Close, and then with only limited views from secondary windows. From that direction the proposals will be set within the treed views of the house and will make an attractive and positive addition to the very varied character and quality of the rear elevations of Russell Street.

The brick wall on the road frontage, at a comfortable sitting height, may have been lowered at one time, and has no fence or hedge to create "defensible space" between the pavement and house, so that all is completely exposed to passing traffic. It is proposed to install railings to 1.8m above ground (similar to those which were a feature of the area) which will help define and defend this space, whilst not obscuring the house, its proportions and details. The wall will be raised only to screen the quantity of wheely bins required.

FLOOR AREAS - All areas Gross Internal

Proposed	Ground Floor extension	19 sqm (including 6sqm that is Permitted Development)
	Roof extension	6 sqm (increase in floor area above 1500 headroom)
Increase		25 sqm (including 6sqm that is Permitted Development)

SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

PV panels are a key element of the proposals. 7 panels of 1m x 1.7m dimension could generate about 2200 kWh, which could be a high proportion of the house's requirement.

An electric car charger is proposed.

A wood pellet burner, to replace the gas boiler, is proposed

The retention of a family home within the town centre reduces pressure on transport, supporting sustainable travel.

The large garden provides opportunity for a sustainable drainage solution.

Replacement of the single glazed windows with timber, double glazed, will reduce energy use without use of deleterious materials such as upvc. The windows will be made to match the existing.

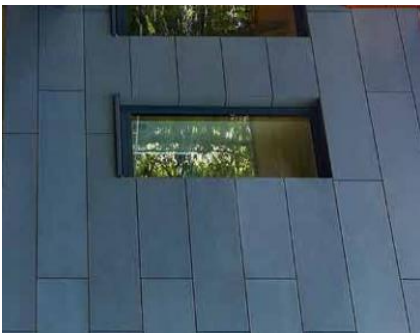
Extension of the house vertically makes efficient use of the urban plot.

MATERIALS:

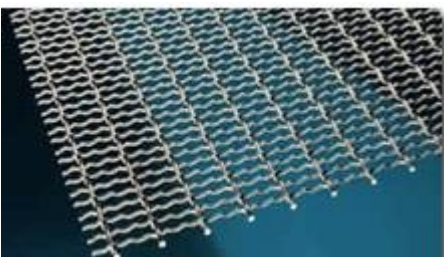
Existing materials and decorative details are matched to tie the old and new extensions together.

The ground floor brickwork, projecting brick string course and rendered first floor are extended into the new, with parapet details to match.

The roof extension is clad with rainscreen cladding using large size slate effect cement board, (eg Cembrit Patina, which has natural variation board to board) vertically orientated, to create a distinguished façade that still relates well to the slate roof it sits on. The flat roof has a sharp well defined top edge, with no overhang or eaves fascia or gutter.



The solar panels are screened by a stainless steel mesh upstand.



PARKING

There is no increase in bedroom numbers, and therefore no change to parking requirements.

NEIGHBOUR CONSULTATION

The owners and occupiers of No.63, to the north, have been consulted and shown the scheme drawings, and are supportive of the whole proposal.

No.67 is currently empty and it is understood that it may be sold soon.

CONCLUSION

The proposal seeks to ensure the continued use of the house as a family home, with the accommodation expected today, with sustainability to the fore, conserving the existing whilst providing a new attractive and positive contribution to the Conservation Area.

The proposed extensions can be considered enabling development, contributing to securing the future of the heritage asset (the Conservation Area as a whole) by underwriting the refurbishment and retention of the frontage of this property, giving encouragement to the adjoining properties, kick starting a greater general improvement at this end of the street which has been noted as being in a poor state.



SKETCH PERSPECTIVE VIEW -AS PROPOSED FROM SOUTH EAST

PHOTOS



View from west



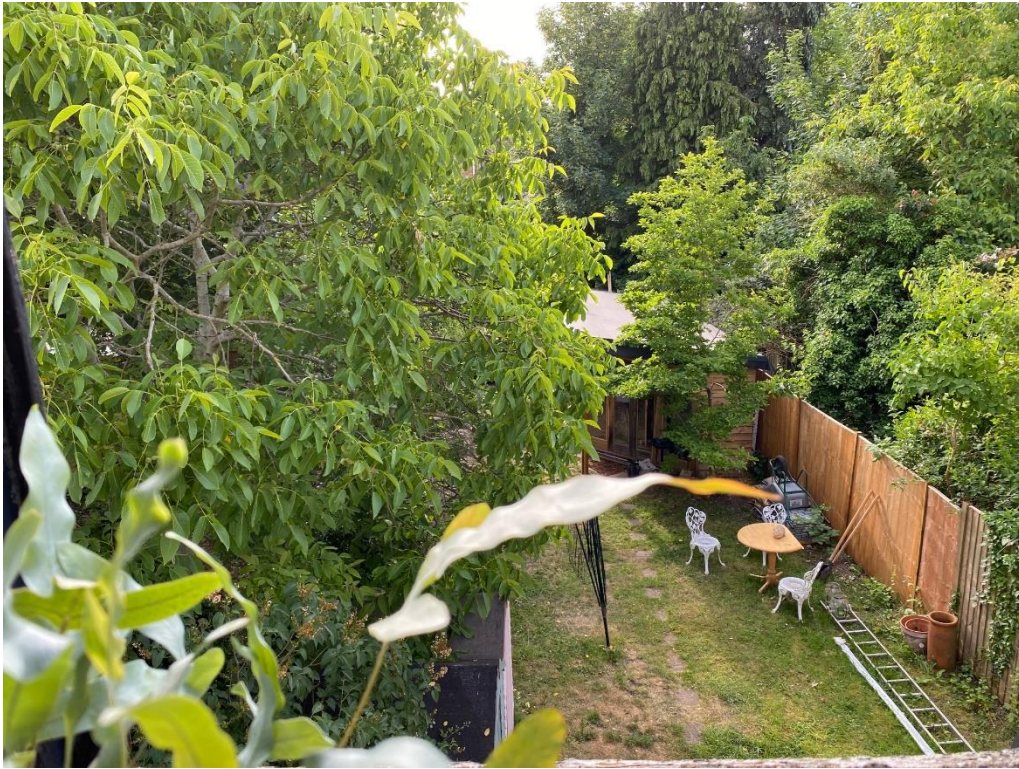
View from east



View from No.63, (behind No.63 projection)



Front garden wall and bins



View towards Epping Close from Bed 3



View of Epping Close from Bed 1