

**PLANNING APPLICATION FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A PURPOSE-BUILT
PITCHED ROOF BICYCLE STORAGE UNIT FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE
RESIDENTIAL APARTMENTS LOCATED ON THE SITE**

HERITAGE STATEMENT

CHARLIE PLACE, 28 CASTLE CRESCENT, READING



1. LOCATION & DESCRIPTION OF THE BUILDING

- 1.1 This heritage statement has been produced to support a full planning application for Charlie Place, 28 Castle Crescent, Reading (“the Property”) for the construction of a purpose-built bicycle storage unit for the benefit of the residential apartments located on the site.
- 1.2 The Property is located on the North side of Castle Crescent on the edge of the Russell Street / Castle Hill Conservation Area and to the West side of Reading Town Centre. The Property is one of townscape merit.
- 1.3 The Property equates to approximately 0.67 Hectares and a substantial three storey Victorian building occupies the frontage which has been tastefully converted to nine residential apartments.
- 1.4 To the rear of the Property is parking for several vehicles and a hard standing at the back, which prior to the refurbishment undertaken in 2015 was a small garage.
- 1.5 It is proposed that said hardstanding referred to in 1.4 is utilised for the construction of the bicycle storage unit, see picture below. Attractive landscaping will be installed to the green areas surrounding the unit.



2. HISTORY OF THE SURROUNDING AREA AND SITE

- 2.1 The residential houses of the Castle Crescent area are very mixed in appearance, period, massing and height with a wide range from Georgian to late Victorian and Edwardian villas dotted with some unfortunate late 20c infill.
- 2.2 The area is entirely given to residential property with the sole exception of light executive flat property use along Castle Crescent and the B&B at the corner of Castle Crescent and Coley Avenue.
- 2.3 Castle Crescent was built with several houses dotted to the South side of the street c.1840, notably 3 Castle Crescent (likely c. 1835-1840). The remaining houses along the street, and with Mansfield Road for which the area is predominantly recognised, were built largely in the last two decades of the 19c to 1900. They are notable for their size and polychrome, stone and tile embellishment. Various front gardens have given way to parking which is unfortunate, but the overall upkeep of the properties is good, and the area has a grand appearance. Many are in multiple occupation but are overall discreet.
- 2.4 The trees of Castle Crescent set off the high point of the Conversation Area. There are many lovely vantage points in the Castle Crescent character area and two views are of particular note. Of relevance to the Property is the view from Coley Avenue into the street of Castle Crescent, whereby the curve in the road affords the viewer a continuing unfolding scene of large Victorian villas down the street.
- 2.5 To the West side of the Property is one of the more unfortunate infills from the 20c, whilst similar to the applicant Property, the East side contains an attractive semi-detached home of similar quality. To the rear of the Property where the proposed development lies, this backs onto the modern registry office building.
- 2.6 The Property itself was built in the late 19c and more recently was in use for many years as a House of Multiple Occupancy containing 13 bedsits. The Property underwent several untasteful extensions and modifications including:

2.6.1 a single store extension connected to the main house at the rear



2.6.2 a newly installed window to the West side elevation of the property, along with painted brickwork; and



2.6.3 a poorly constructed garage to the rear (no photo available);

2.7 These modifications were tastefully corrected when the Applicant received planning permission in 2007 to convert the Property into nine residential apartments. As part

of this the Applicant spent considerable time on the detailing of the brickwork, restoring the chimneys and ensuring that the new additions complimented the historic features of the Property.



3. THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The Applicant is the freehold owner of the Property and is seeking to improve the facilities available to the residential occupiers by providing bicycle / storage facilities.

- 3.2 The Applicant wishes to encourage the primary method of transport for travel around the town centre to be via bicycle and public transport, as opposed to private motor vehicle. At present without any bicycle storage facilities this is not possible.
- 3.3 This in turn will make good use of the hard standing located at the rear of the Property and will significantly improve the attractiveness of the Property, especially once new landscaping is installed to the areas immediately surrounding the unit.
- 3.4 No other alterations other than the construction of the bicycle storage unit are proposed as part of this application.
- 3.5 Given that the proposal is at the rear of the Property (and adjacent to the modern registry office building), the development will, importantly not have any impact whatsoever on the street scene of Castle Crescent.
- 3.6 Furthermore, it is strongly considered that the construction will enhance the conservation area, if compared to the present position of the ugly hard standing where the garage was previously situated when the Property was used as a HMO.
- 3.7 No intrusive or negative works are proposed to the main building, the attractive restored boundary walls (undertaken by the Applicant), or any of the surrounding trees.