

owens galliver architects

PROPOSED CONVERSION OF GARAGE
AND
ASSOCIATED WORK

AT

CASTLEFORD HOUSE
121 CASTLE HILL
READING
RG1 7SY

for
MR and MRS SEFTON JENKINS

DESIGN, ACCESS, PLANNING AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

17-1796 nov.18

10 HIGH STREET PANGBOURNE READING BERKSHIRE RG8 7AB

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LOCATION and site.

Castleford House, 121 Castle Hill, is one of a collection of houses of 18th and 19th Century origins on the road out of historic Reading to the west. The property is about half way up the hill itself, on the south side, set well back. At this point the historic houses line the road on both sides, some on the road edge, some set back with front gardens. The houses are varied in character, form and age, some being late 19th C, many of them being terraced, and for the most part 3 or four storeys in height.

OWNERSHIP AND USE

The property is as it always has been, a house, and the Applicants are the existing owners and residents. There is no change to the use proposed.



Castleford House, from the garden



Castleford House, from the road

THE PROPERTY

Castleford House itself is part of a terrace of similar scale properties, possibly built at the same time, in the early 19th C according to the Listing. It appears to have been built in two stages, having two distinct halves, of slightly different character and windows, with floor to ceiling levels differing significantly from half to half. It appears that the left hand eastern part could have been one with the adjoining 117, 119, being flush with it, having similar windows at second floor and a shared roof structure. The western right hand half is set back, and had until recently a different roof, and has different windows. It is possible that the western half replaced a smaller element with a side entrance to the stairs which are on the centre line of the western half -the adjoining building 123 was apparently built before the western half of 121, as 121 has a chamfered recess to avoid covering over windows in the side of 123. The two halves of 121 are unified by a parapet and cornice, in contrast to 117,119.

The house was extended at the rear on two storeys by way of an eccentric stylized projecting bay; a bay is shown on Ordnance Survey maps in 1879.

It was further extended in the 20th Century by a single storey wc and back hall being added using lightweight construction and a felt covered flat roof directly abutting a semicircular fanlight window above the back door.

At some stage a dividing wall between ground floor front and rear rooms of the western half has been removed creating one large dining room.

In the third quarter of the 20th Century the basement was converted and extended forwards to provide a large garage, involving significant structural works to form the new garage door opening in the old basement external wall, new concrete slab and drainage,

and a new flat concrete deck over the extension, forming a balcony at ground floor level. The floor above the garage appears to have been replaced to provide the requisite fire protection between the garage and the front room (kitchen) above. The basement walls appear to have been damp proofed. The necessary access ramp from the road was carved out of the garden, with retaining walls.

The rear garden is long and bounded by high brick walls of some age. By inspection the walls on both sides belong to Castleford House, both running as they do into the rear walls of the building. The ground level at 123 is significantly higher than at 121.

The front of the property is in common with many in Castle Hill finished in stucco; the rear of the property stands out, being finished stucco and painted brick, whereas the adjoining properties are all red brick finished. 121 stands out further in that it has a relatively composed arrangement, projecting towards the garden, whereas the adjoining properties on the west are set back, and on the east set back and of a variety of volumes, extensions to the originals.

The house has seven bedrooms.

PLANNING HISTORY

Prior to 1988 there were two schemes implemented:

Single storey rear extension for wc.

Conversion of the basement to a garage with structural alterations, front extension, and ramped drive in the front garden, with crossover.

As recorded on RBC website:

940848, 849	June 1994	Single storey rear extension to form conservatory (this appears not to have been implemented)
041074, 75	November 2004	widen drive...replace railings around garage roof (implemented)
111339/LBC, 111501	October 2011	roof extension (to add pitched roof to flat roofed half, implemented)
181182/LBC, 181181	July 2018	single storey rear extension, conversion of basement from garage to room (withdrawn)

POLICY

The property is Listed as a group with 117 and 119 Castle Hill.

“CASTLE STREET 1. 5128 (South Side) Castle Hill Nos 117 to 121 (odd) SU 7072 13/36 II GV 2. After 1823. 3 storeys and basement. Stucco. Slate roof with brick chimneys. Nos 117 and 119: bands over ground floor and as 2nd floor cill band. Brick block eaves cornice. Glazing bar sash windows except 1st floor of No 119. 2 windows each on 2nd floor, 1 on 1st and ground floors. Contemporary wrought iron balcony to 1st floor with later wooden bracketed supports. Outer 6 panel doors with radiating and wreathed fanlights. No 121: cornice and parapet, 2 right hand bays set back. 3 ranges of glazing bar sash windows, the 2 on the ground floor arched and central 6 panel door with radiating fanlight.”

It was Listed in 1978. Note the Listing is describing two different kinds of frontage (117 with 119, and 121) within one paragraph.

The property is within the Russell Street/Castle Hill Conservation Area, lasted Appraised in 2004.

The Design Guide for House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document would apply.

PROPOSAL and DESIGN

This proposal is to make better use of the basement, whilst improving the frontage.

The conversion of the front basement to a garage prior to 1988 introduced an alien concept on to the two centuries old structure, with a highly visible large scale lower storey element. The existing basement is nonetheless not being used effectively, whilst there is a need for a children's room and a proper utility space. The proposal is to reverse the change so that the space once again relates better to the domestic activities within the house. The large garage door format is replaced with appropriately scaled door and windows. The drive will be raised into steps, allowing planting and a much softer foreground to the four storey frontage, lowering the scale, and going someway, along with a green roof over the former garage roof, to re-instate the front garden.

Modern railings will be removed.

As the floor slab is modern and well made, with drainage immediately below it, removal is not possible, and it will be necessary to add a floating insulated floor. It is NOT proposed to raise the existing modernized floor above; headroom resulting is below normal, but usable. This will not affect the existing room above at all.

To open up the space inside the basement a modern door is to be removed and a minor structural wall pierced to bring the stair case into the space; the historic plan form, the wall and its purpose, will still be evident.

The back basement space is easily adapted to form a proper utility space, and "downstairs" wc, removing modern enclosures revealing old storage supports.

The existing gas boiler is to be replaced in a technically better location, allowing the removal of a non-compliant flue and intake on the main rear elevation, replaced by a discrete low level balanced flue terminal.

MATERIALS:

Existing

Walls painted brick and painted render

Roof: concrete

Garage door painted metal

Proposal

Walls painted render and fairfaced stock bricks

Roof: waterproofing and landscaping

Roof edges concrete (existing)

Windows and door white painted timber

ACCESS

There is no change to the accessibility of the house.

TREES

There are no trees affected by the proposals.

PARKING

The house has the benefit of a good driveway, of about 9m length, enough for one car, possibly two in a domestic drive, as well as the modern garage carved out of the house basement. Cars must however either reverse into or out of the drive direct on to Bath Road, often at peak times.

The house also has the benefit of two parking permits for Zone 09R.

As a house with more than 4 bedrooms, in Parking Zone 2 as defined in the Supplementary Planning Document "Revised Parking Standards and Design" parking provision requirements are currently 2 spaces. The proposals will convert the modern garage back to habitable accommodation, so the parking provision attached to the house will be a minimum of 3 spaces, which still accords with current policy.

This has been confirmed acceptable by the RBC Transport Development Control, reference Application 181181, on 31 July 2018.

CONCLUSION

The removal of modern interventions that are unsympathetic to the frontage takes that back closer to its original form and relationship to the front garden and the road, and the resulting positive re-use of the space for domestic activities allied to the house is to be welcomed.

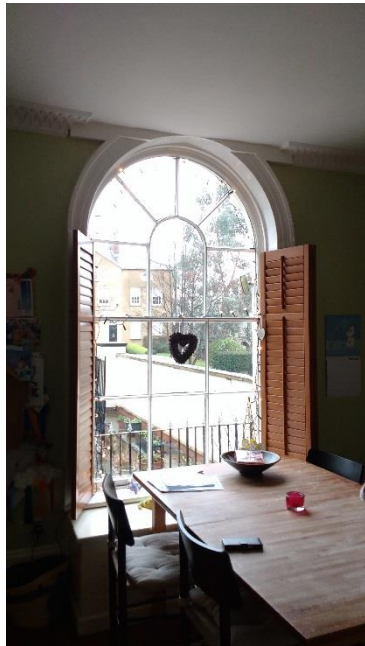
PHOTOS



Castleford House from Castle Hill



Castleford House frontage



Balcony over old garage extension with existing kitchen window; the window remains unchanged



Existing garage semi basement frontage



Modern balcony and railings



Semi basement garage



Modern garage ceiling and floor over.

Basement store with modern cupboards to be removed

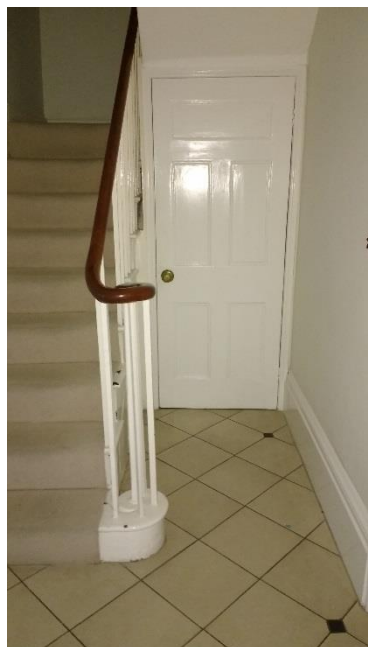




Basement hall; store to left, garage to right



stairs in basement



Stairs at ground floor level
with door from hall to
basement to be
unchanged



Existing kitchen (to be relocated)

Door into existing kitchen (to be unchanged)