

CASTLE CRESCENT READING DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT



OCTOBER 2015

**BARTON
WILLMORE**

**1-3 CASTLE CRESCENT, READING
DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT**

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1 Introduction

This Design and Access Statement is intended to accompany the planning and listed building consent application for 1-3 Castle Crescent, Reading. This application is submitted on behalf of Mr.R.Brown to obtain listed building consent and planning permission for the following development:

- The refurbishment and reconfiguration of the Grade II listed house into 5 residential units comprising 4 no. 1 bed residential units and 1 no. 2 bed unit; and
- Construction of a new apartment block of 8 residential units comprising of 2 no. 1 bed apartments, 4 no. 2 bed apartments and 2 no. 3 bed apartments.

The enclosed document has been prepared in accordance with the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) published March 2014. This provides guidance and information required for validation and what should be included in Design & Access Statements. In particular a Design & Access Statement must:

- Explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the proposed development, and
- Demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the proposed development, and how the design of the development takes context into account.

This Statement sets out the design procedures relating to how the development parameters will be achieved e.g. details of the landscaping, layout and individual plots, scale, character and external appearance of the development. The Planning History for the site is referenced within the supporting Planning Statement, prepared by Barton Willmore. The design and planning policy context for this site has been taken into consideration as well as detailed pre-application advice provided by officers.

The approach to the proposals has been to deliver a high quality residential development that is respectful of its heritage context whilst providing an appropriate mix of dwellings which meet the Council's objectives.

The regeneration of this dilapidated and underused site will aim to positively enhance the local area through high quality architecture and urban design and contribute to the Russell Street/Castle Hill Conservation Area.

The proposals have been designed to be appropriate for the surrounding area and fit within the adopted planning strategy produced by Reading Borough Council and the enclosed document should be read alongside the application drawings and the following reports submitted to support the applications:

- Heritage Assessment prepared by Barton Willmore;
- Planning Statement by Barton Willmore;
- Ecology Assessments Phase 1 and 2 by EPR;
- Structural Report by Glanville Consultants;
- Arboriculture Assessment prepared by Aspect Tree Consultancy;
- Drainage Report by Abley Letchford Partnership Ltd;
- Sustainable Report by Carbon Green Consulting;
- Viability Assessment prepared by FW Surveyors.

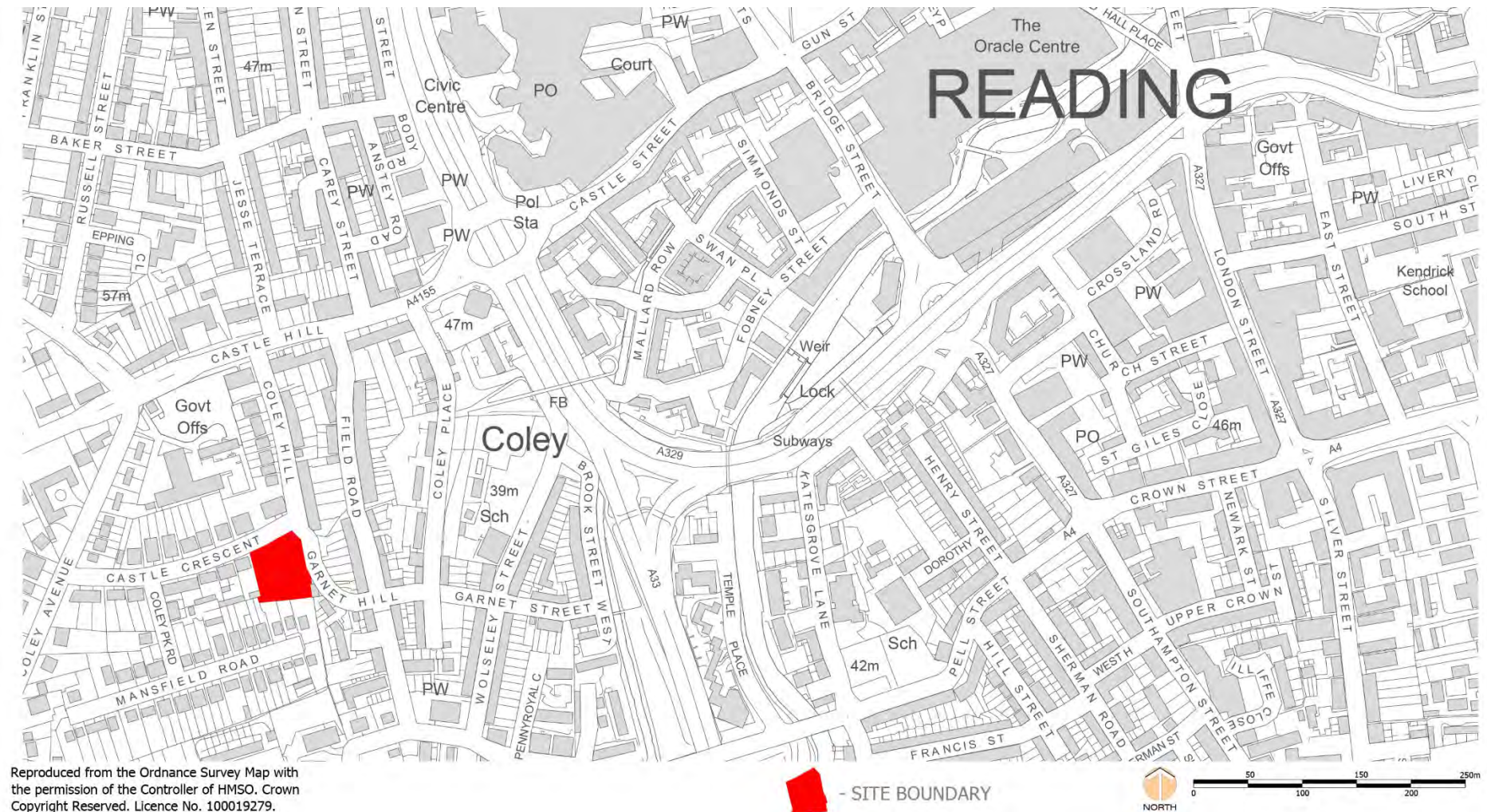
2 Site Location and Context

The site lies within the administrative boundary of Reading Borough Council (RBC) approximately 0.7km to the south-west of Reading Town Centre. The site is located on a prominent corner of Castle Crescent and Garnet Hill as indicated in red on the plan below.

The site is located and accessed via 2 entrances from the southern side of Castle Crescent, relatively square and on a level plateau, with some small variations within the site sloping off towards the south.

The site is within walking distance of the town centre being approximately 0.7km from Reading station. The town centre has excellent public transport infrastructure, connecting to the local towns of Newbury & Wokingham, and is directly accessible to the national rail network via Reading railway station. In addition, there are excellent road links to the A329 (M), A4 and M4 for destinations further afield.

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The site is situated in an area of Reading known as the Russell Street/Castle Hill Conservation Area and comprises of four existing buildings on a site of 0.26 hectares. Existing access to the site can be achieved by vehicles and pedestrians from Castle Crescent via 2 entrances as indicated below.

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To the north of the site sits 27, 29 and 31-35 Coley Hill and Yeomanry House all of which are Grade II Listed.

The site is surrounded by a brick boundary wall along Castle Crescent and Garnet Hill with residential developments on all sides. The western boundary of the site is also heavily screened by existing mature trees, which are covered by an area TPO.



Existing Building

The existing site consists of 3 Castle Crescent sitting centrally on the site with an existing outbuilding situated on the eastern boundary and two rows of garaging to the rear. The grounds of the site are split between existing hard standing to the front and east and landscaping to the west and rear.

The current condition of the site is poor. The existing outbuilding is in a very poor state with evidence of fire damage and is unsafe to access. The garages are also in a poor state of repair with many of the garage doors and roofs removed or severely damaged. With the condition of both the garages and outbuildings being so poor it is our proposal for these to be removed to make way for the proposed apartment block in a similar location.

The landscaped areas to the rear of the main house are considerably overgrown and in places preventing access to the south west of the site.

The main house itself also is in a poor state of repair with evidence of unauthorised access which has resulted in broken windows and damage to the main front access door. As a result all the windows have been boarded up to prevent further access. Please refer to the Condition Survey drawings ECS-01 to ECS-04 and accompanying Condition Survey Photo Document which is included within this application.

Photos of the current site conditions can be seen in the images below.



Castle Crescent front elevation (north)



Existing boundary trees (west)



Existing out Buildings (East)



Existing garages (South)



View of main house from North West corner

Existing Layout of 1-3 Castle Crescent

The current layout of the existing house consist of several small bedsits. Stud partitions have been added internally to divide corridor areas and split the bedsits to include kitchens/washrooms etc. creating a cramped environment. The existing layout is in an extremely high level of disrepair with the condition and damage outlined in the condition surveys of the building.

The house is split over a number of mezzanine and main floors which are access independently by two separate staircases. The house includes a basement which is accessed internally from the ground floor

Surrounding Area

Surrounding the site there is a strong architectural style with red brickwork and render/stucco, hipped pitched roofs and brick chimneys with most of the houses around the area being built in the early 19th century. This is particularly apparent when looking along Coley Hill and the majority of buildings along the eastern side of the road being listed at Grade II and being nationally important buildings of special importance.



Grade II Listed Buildings along Coley Hill

3 Site Analysis

The Site Analysis is an analytical stage to assess the site's opportunities and constraints to assist in identifying the most appropriate design solution. The principle consideration has been understanding the heritage context of the site and embracing opportunity to preserve and enhance the Grade II Listed building. Further to this, an assessment of the character of the site and surrounding area has informed the layout process and the approach to the external appearance of the new build element of the proposals.

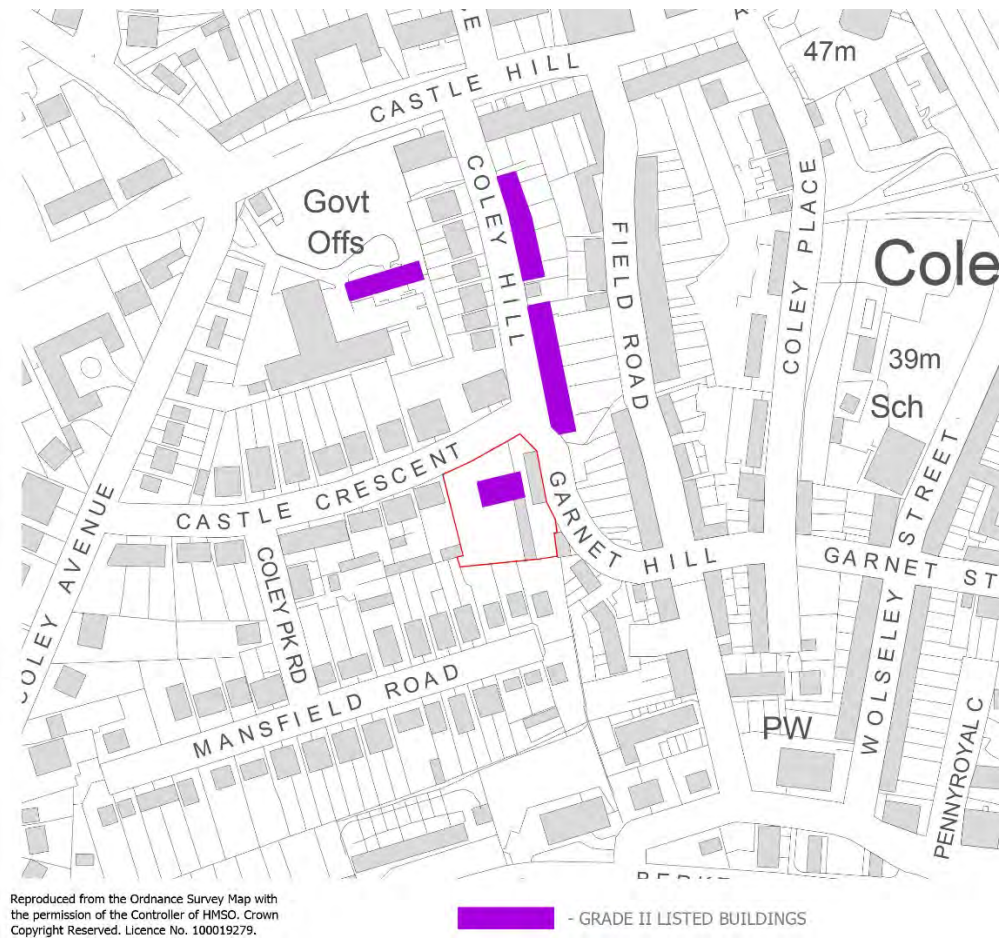
The key findings are as follows:

1. The opportunity to regenerate a site on a prominent corner within the Russell Street/Castle Hill Conservation Area through refurbishing the Listed building and providing additional residential accommodation that respects and responds to the setting of the Listed building.
2. The proximity of the Grade II Listed Coley Hill residential properties situated approximately 15m north-east of the site boundary. The character and exterior material finishes of the proposed apartment block have been designed in such a way as to reflect these Listed buildings.
3. The proximity of the adjacent property to the western boundary. Currently most of the western boundary is screened by extensive existing mature trees preventing views of the property. Some small areas along the boundary may require additional landscaping to help strengthen the landscape screen.
4. The proximity of the adjacent properties to the southern boundary especially with regard to overlooking the site. The inclusion of dormer windows rather and additional landscaping is proposed in this location.
5. The tree root protection areas along the western boundary will have minimal impact on the proposed works as the new apartment block sits along the eastern boundary. An arboriculture survey was undertaken by Aspect Tree Consultancy.
6. Access into the site is currently via the two existing entrances off Castle Crescent. Both entrances are large enough to allow vehicular access. The principal access to the site will be via the existing north-west access for entering and leaving the site. Due to the scale of the site, the entrance to the north-eastern boundary will become a proposed pedestrian access into the site.

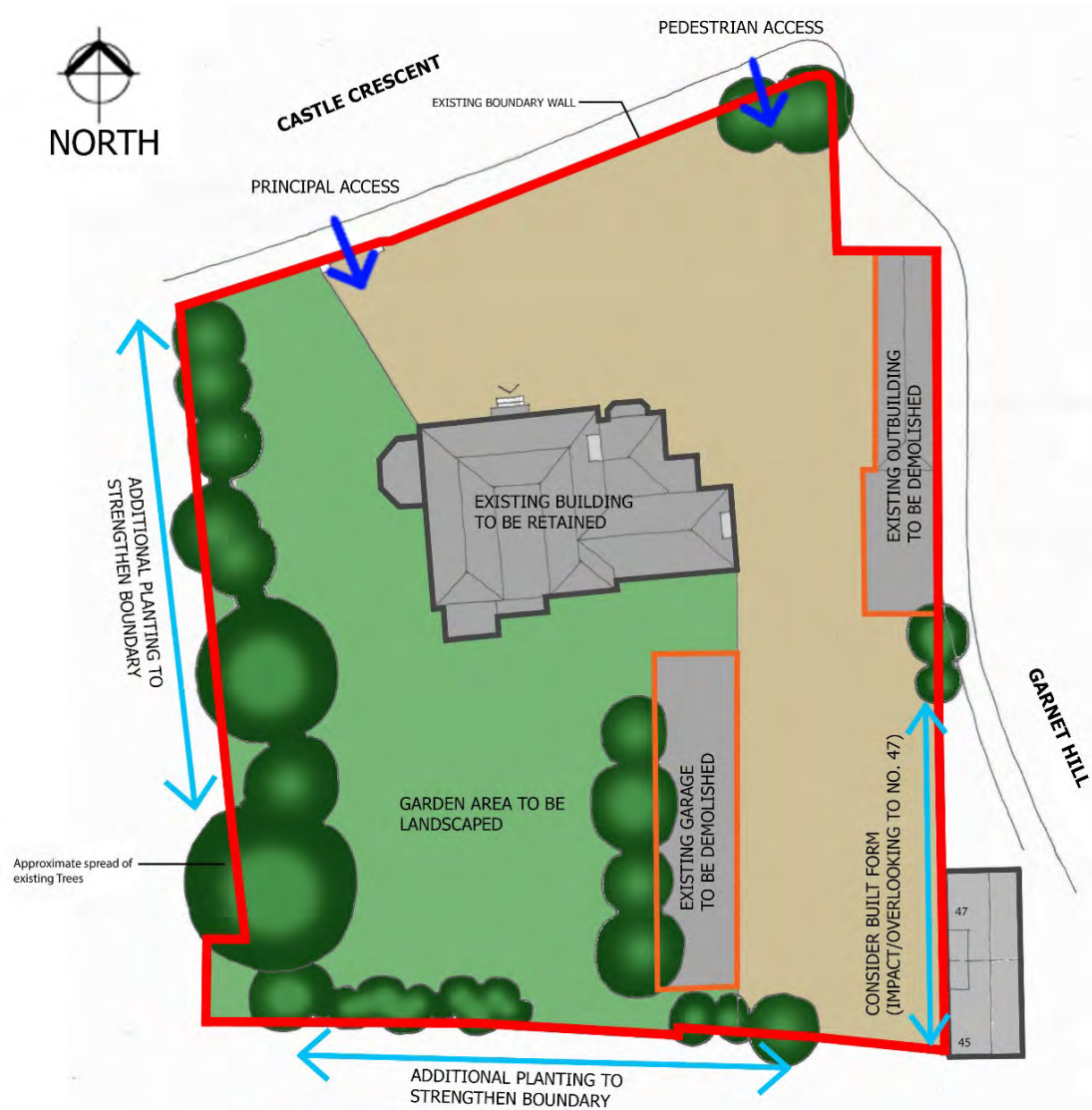
7. The existing Castle Crescent House is sited approximately just north of the centre of the site and is to be retained as part of this scheme. This is a major consideration for the proposals of the development and has ultimately informed the final design approach to the scheme. A Heritage Assessment has been carried out which addresses the heritage implications arising from the proposed redevelopment of the site.
8. The existing garages and outbuildings are sited along the eastern boundary and to the south of the site and are to be demolished. The garages and outbuildings have sustained heavy damage due to fire damage and falling into disrepair over many years and will be replaced by the new proposed apartment block and courtyard.
9. The proximity of the adjacent property to the south-eastern boundary. Currently this property has a garden that abuts the site along Garnet Hill and would be subject to over-looking from the new apartment block. This has driven the design approach to the new apartment building with a lower roof line, with rooflights rather than windows in the east elevation and stepping the block back to maximise the amount of light into the garden.

In summary, 1-3 Castle Crescent is a prominent site on the corner of Castle Crescent and Garnet Hill and through regeneration can provide a high quality development that respects both the amenity of neighbouring properties and restores the currently dilapidated Listed building and redevelop the wider site. The existing building and the wider site cannot be occupied in its current state and is failing the local area especially with how it contributes to the Conservation Area in terms of architectural quality, social contribution and much-needed residential accommodation.

Listed Building Location Plan



Constraints and Opportunities Plan



4 Planning Policy Context

The Planning Statement provides detailed commentary on the planning policy context for the site. Below, we provide a summary of the key design-related policies and guidance that have influenced the final scheme for this site.

National Context

At a national level, relevant policy and guidance is set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in 2012 and the associated NPPG. At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 14), which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.

In light of the above, the following extracts from the NPPF are considered of relevance to the design and layout of the proposed development:

- Paragraph 34 requires ‘developments that generate significant movements are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised’;
- In respect to Design, Paragraph 58 advises that the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:
 - will function well and add to the overall quality of the area;
 - establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit;
 - optimise the potential of the site to accommodate development;
 - respond to local character and history;
 - create safe and accessible environments; and
 - are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

- Paragraph 60 discusses that planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms or styles.
- Paragraph 94 requires that local planning authorities are advised to adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change, taking full account of flood risk, coastal change and water supply and demand considerations.
- Paragraph 100 aims at minimising pollution and other adverse effects on the local and natural environment.
- In relation to the historic environment, Paragraph 126 requires that, local planning authorities should take account of the following:
 - the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
 - the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
 - opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

Local Context

At the Local level, the Development Plan for Reading Borough Council comprises:

- The Core Strategy Development Plan Document (January 2015) 'the CS';
- The Reading Central Area Action Plan (January 2009); and
- The Sites and Detailed Policies Document (January 2015).

The adopted Proposals Map shows that the site falls within the settlement boundary of Reading.

Core Strategy Policies ('the CS')

Delivering sustainable development and setting out how planning and development will achieve the Reading 2020 Vision for the town is the overarching objective of the CS. Policy CS1 (Sustainable Construction and Design) advises that development will be permitted in instances where proposals use energy, water, minerals, materials and other natural resources appropriately, efficiently and with care and take account of the effects of climate change.

The design objectives for new development are set out in CS7 (Design). The policy states that development proposals will be permitted where proposals demonstrate the following:

- Build on the urban local character, a place with its own identity and sense of place;
- Respond positively to their local context and create or reinforce local character and distinctiveness, including protecting and enhancing the historic environment of the Borough and providing value to the public realm;
- Create safe and accessible environments;
- Addresses the needs of all in society;
- Are visually attractive as a result of good high quality built forms and spaces;
- Continuity and enclosure;
- Quality of the public realm;
- Ease of movement and permeability;
- Legibility, clear image and easy to understand;
- Adaptability, capable of adaptation over time; and
- Diversity, meets a wide range of needs.

Policy CS1 (Sustainable Construction and Design) discusses that development proposals for more than ten net additional dwellings or 1000m² of floor space must meet 50% of the provisions set by the most up to date Eco-Homes and BREEAM 'Excellent' standards.

Policy CS15 (Location, Accessibility, Density and Housing Mix) seeks to ensure that new developments deliver a range of housing types, tenures and sizes and densities, whilst meeting the those with mobility needs.

The Sites and Detailed Policies Documents

Policy DM5 (Housing Mix) states that providing a range of housing that matches the needs of the population in the Borough is essential, and helps to ensure that there is a range of dwelling types in Reading to meet requirements for different groups, and for people at different stages of life. Planning decisions will ensure that all new-build dwellings in any location will be built to 'Lifetime Homes' standards, having regard to all other material considerations.

Under policy DM8 (Residential Conversions) proposals to convert properties into self-contained flats or for multiple occupation under Core Strategy Policy CS18 will only be acceptable where:

- The proposal respects the physical character of the area and additionally would not, either individually or cumulatively, unduly dilute or harm an existing mixed and sustainable community through the significant loss of single family housing.
- There are no unacceptable adverse impacts to other residential properties arising from noise and disturbance in terms of the number and layout of units proposed and the proximity to other properties
- There is appropriate sound insulation between proposed and neighbouring units and layouts avoid inappropriate stacking and location of rooms between units.
- Bin and cycle storage is of an appropriate size and standard for the units proposed and should be located at ground floor level with easy access.

Policy DM10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space) states that dwellings will be provided with functional private or communal open space that allows for suitable sitting-out areas, children's play areas, home food production, green waste composting, refuse storage, general outdoor storage and drying space. Houses will be provided with private outdoor space whereas flats may be provided with communal outdoor space, balconies and/or roof gardens. The design of outdoor areas will respect the size and character of other similar spaces in the vicinity, clearly identify whether they are private or communal spaces, ensure that they are appropriately related to main entrances, enhance safety and the perception of safety for future residents and the general public, and not be compromised by the relationship of other buildings which may be detrimental in terms of overlooking, overbearing or overshadowing.

Policy DM18 (Tree Planting) states new development shall make provision for tree planting within the application site, or off-site in appropriate situations, to improve the level of tree coverage within the Borough, to maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the area in which a site is located, to provide for biodiversity and to contribute to measures to reduce carbon and adapt to climate change.

5 Design Evolution

1-3 Castle Crescent represents a rare opportunity to regenerate a prominent corner within the urban context and create a high quality development through appropriate architecture that will regenerate an undervalued site in Reading and improve the streetscape. The consultant team began the design process in January 2014 leading to the proposals which are the subject of this planning application. The images below were the pre-application drawings that were subject of comments from Reading Borough Council and a public consultation as discussed further below.



Perspective of scheme with partial demolition of eastern wing

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Scheme with the partial demolition of the eastern wing

Pre-application considerations

Having considered the constraints and opportunities, the site layout and design approach have evolved in light of the context of the site and surrounding area. Various design solutions were put forward and discussed with the consultant team to ensure that all technical considerations were taken into account. In addition, early pre-application engagement with both the Planning Officer and Conservation Officer at Reading Borough Council has taken place to develop the design in accordance with the Council's recommendations.

A joint site visit was undertaken on 5 March 2015 with representatives of Reading Borough Council's Planning and Conservation Officer's and Barton Willmore's Planning, Design and Heritage services. Through these discussions, Reading Borough Council were supportive of the regeneration of the site for residential and the delivering of a high quality residential environment that reinforced the character of the Listed Building and Conservation Area.

The pre-application discussions allowed for more consideration to be given to the heritage significance of particular parts of the Listed building and the relationship of the Listed building with the wider site proposals. Barton Willmore's Heritage Services engaged with the Conservation Officer at Reading Borough Council to further understand the most appropriate opportunities for regenerating the building through additional research into the early history of the site and its development. It was concluded that the original house was built between 1842 and 1853 with a large almost square main house with the smaller eastern extension. The two-storey projection to the southeast was a later addition being added by 1899. It was also suggested that a replicated stable building or mews structure would attend to the architectural vocabulary of the site to replace the existing outhouses.

In addition comments were raised relating to parking provision and landscaping all of which have been taken into account when finalising the proposals.

Following the pre-application meeting and a review of the historic map information, the Design Team proceeded to propose a scheme which included the demolition of the two-storey southeast element given its incongruous relationship to the main house and provided a more efficient use of the wider site to deliver an appropriate quantum of new residential development. It was considered this would allow for a more comprehensive and positive scheme to come forward, which was a point acknowledged by officers.

Public Consultation

Through the design process, the team have been focussed on ensuring that the design would be a welcomed addition to the local area which was reflective of local opinions. As such, a public consultation was held on 25 April 2015, which sought to gain views from local residents on the draft proposals and ensure that the proposals were sensitive to the concerns of neighbouring residents in particular. The feedback was extremely positive with local residents welcoming the redevelopment of the site and the sympathetic restoration of the site given the character of the immediate area. There were a few comments raised which have informed the final design for the site which include:

- Ensure that there is no overlooking to neighbouring properties;
- Additional landscaping is required along the southern boundary with the existing trees retained;
- More parking spaces are required on site;
- Developer contributions to local facilities will be required.

6 The Proposed Scheme

Following the design process, the final proposed scheme will provide 13 new units comprising of 8 new apartments and 5 refurbished apartments in the existing building (see table below), with associated car parking and associated landscaping. The site approach is devised from the combination of a contextual response ensuring financial viability whilst ensuring that the urban architectural response is of a high quality and respective of the setting of the listed building.

The aim of the proposal has been to maximise the retention of the existing landscape features of the site especially with regard to the existing trees along the western and southern boundaries which reinforced the verdant nature of the site. In addition, the positioning of the new build accommodation respects the setting of the Listed building and contributes to the character and identity of the Conservation Area. The proposed density of the scheme is 50dph (based on a total site area of 0.26 ha). This is considered appropriate bearing in mind the evolving character of the wider area and densities achieved on other nearby sites within Reading town. The proposed development is considered to be an appropriate compromise between the quantum of development on the site and efficient use of land against preserving and enhancing the setting of the Listed building.

A shared open space has been provided in the open area occupying the southern and western boundaries of the site which will be the subject of a landscape strategy submitted as part of this application and will reinforce the creation of a high quality residential environment.

Unit Type	Quantity
3 bedroom Apartments	2
2 bedroom Apartments	5
1 bedroom Apartments	6
Total	13

All units have their own dedicated refuse storage area in the form of a refuse store for the site close to the main vehicle entrance to the site. The refuse storage does not achieve the required distance from dwellings to the bin storage area although is considered appropriate given the unique nature of the site and the constraints of delivering a new development adjacent a Grade II Listed Building.

Each apartment has allocated parking spaces to reflect the number of beds in each unit and a private bike store to allow for the secure storage of up to 14 bicycles. 5 of the apartments have off- street parking in the form of a single garage delivered through a mews type design.

The site layout below clearly addresses the comments received both through the consultation process and reflects the design rationale discussed above.

Site Layout



With the retention of 3 Castle Crescent, the development has a central focal building which the remainder of the development addresses. This was achieved with careful consideration of the mass and elevational design of the units along with new hard and soft landscape features.

With the reconfiguration of the units along the boundary with Garnet Hill the development now addresses the road to create a continuation of the street scene which ended abruptly and was screened heavily by the rear of the outbuildings.

Careful consideration has been taken in the design of the proposed built form so that it is both in keeping with the local built environment as well as not impacting on the neighbouring Listed buildings. With the decision to keep houses at a maximum of two-storey with them dropping to 1½ storey along the southeast boundary and with landscape screening we feel the development has as minimal impact as possible on the neighbouring properties on Garnet Hill.

The Wider Site

With the retention of the main house at 1-3 Castle Crescent as described above, the development has a central focal building which the remainder of the development addresses to ensure its setting is both preserved and enhanced. This was achieved with careful consideration of the mass and elevational design of the units along with new hard and soft landscape features.

With the reconfiguration of the units along the boundary with Garnet Hill the development now addresses the road to create a continuation of the street scene which ended abruptly and was screened heavily by the rear of the outbuildings. This also allows the development to front onto a part of Garnet Hill that with the current development has turned its back too, creating an area that has poor surveillance and little architectural interest. With the proposed apartments fronting onto Garnet Hill we have created a continuation of the street scene improving this area of Garnet Hill.

As stated above it was suggested that a replicated stable building or mews structure would attend to the architectural vocabulary of the site to replace the existing outhouses. Careful consideration has been taken in the design of the proposed built form so that it is both in keeping with the local built environment as well as not impacting on the neighbouring Listed buildings. With the decision to keep houses at a maximum of 2 storey closest to Castle Crescent this is the most appropriate design solution and will not detract from the setting of the listed building.

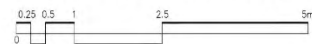
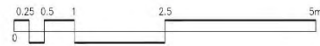
The new build development will reduce in height to 1½ storey along the southeast boundary with the inclusion of dormer windows to reduce any impact on the amenity of the residential garden along Garnet Hill. In addition, dormer windows are proposed along the southern boundary of the site with additional landscape screening to minimise any overlooking from the new development on the rear gardens of neighbouring properties.

7 Appearance

In assessing the character of the Russell Street/Castle Hill Conservation Area it is clear that there is a strong architectural style with red brickwork and render/stucco, hipped pitched roofs and brick chimneys with most of the houses around the area being built in the early 19th Century. The retained building has a strong Georgian architectural style with deep sash windows typical of the style that will be restored and retained to maintain the character of the building. This style of windows will be continued across the mews buildings which was brought up in discussions with Reading Borough Council Officers. It was recognised that a more traditional building form reflecting a mews or courtyard was desired. As such, the proposed scheme provides an appropriate scale and massing to the proposed units, while responding sympathetically to the focal building of Castle Crescent House. Reference has been taken from the wider context as well as from Castle Crescent House itself.

A traditional approach has been proposed with high quality materials, coupled with robust detailing, providing homes of longevity. The designs are sympathetic, traditional, and are intended to sit comfortably within the Russell Street/Castle Hill Conservation Area. The distribution of materials are shown on the perspectives and street scenes shown below.





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ABOVE: VIEW ALONG GARNET HILL

BELOW: INTERNAL VIEW LOOKING SOUTH TOWARDS MEWS COURTYARD



External elevations will comprise a mix of red brick with key elements introducing white render. Roof finishes will be grey/slate plain tiles to match the existing house. Some additional detailing will be present, and this will be formed by window surrounds, chimneys and contrasting band detailing.

Due to the importance of the Main House and its focal point on the site and the local area it is important that the architectural style and detailing is not damaged or removed in any way. It is the intention therefore that considerable efforts should be made to restore and retain key elements of the facades like doors and windows. Referring to the condition survey information it is apparent that the majority of the windows and doors have some level of damage especially from damp ingress. However effort should be made to retain these elements and bring them up to a good standard.

Where it is not possible to repair any of the elements they should be replaced with units of similar materials and styles of those of the remaining windows and doors.

8 Access Analysis and Movement

The access and movement strategy for the Scheme is underpinned by a set of key principles:

- To integrate the development within the existing community;
- To minimise the dominance and influence of car parking on the urban form.

The site is within walking distance of the town centre being 1km from Reading station. The town centre has excellent public transport infrastructure, connecting to the local towns of Newbury & Wokingham, and is directly accessible to the national rail network via Reading railway station. In addition, there are excellent road links to the A329 (M), A4 and M4 for destinations further afield.

Reading has a wide variety of larger shops, bars and restaurants which can be found approximately 0.7km walking distance away northeast of the site.

The application site is accessed from the south side of Castle Crescent, with a central shared surface driveway running through the middle of the site connecting to the apartments and the associated parking areas. In addition, a pedestrian and cycle access route is provided through the existing access on the south side of Castle Crescent on the northern boundary of the site.

The proposals make allowance for 16no. parking spaces as well as secure lockable cycle store suitable for up to 14no. cycles.

Collection of refuse will be from Castle Crescent from a dedicated refuse store close to the northern boundary of the site.

All areas of the site have been considered to allow for the accessibility of disabled people, with the inclusion of level threshold approaches and access to all units.

The applications are supported by a Transport Statement prepared by Glanville's which forms part of the suite of application documents.

9 Landscaping

The site boundaries are formed by existing mature trees, brick walls and existing buildings. Tree screening is prominent to the western boundary of the site and areas of reduced screening will be reinforced across the site with carefully selected suitable planting as a continuation of the existing tree screen. An Arboriculture Assessment has been undertaken by Aspect Tree Consultancy and has informed this scheme.

Soft landscaping proposals and specification have been prepared by Barton Willmore and form part of the submitted information.

The careful choice of tree and plant species will seek to provide adequate screening along the other site boundaries as well as provide a retreat and communal gardens. The proposed landscape features will be implemented and maintained following approval by the Local Planning Authority.

Low level hedges and planting will be used as a buffer between hard and soft landscaped areas of the development, creating an area of semi-privacy as well as softening the impact of larger areas of hard landscaping and built form.

10 Sustainability

One of the principal objectives for sustainable energy use throughout the development will be to minimise carbon dioxide emissions by improving the energy efficiency of heat producing appliances, using higher quality building materials, and minimising longer term energy demand. This will be achieved, for example, by placing emphasis on natural lighting, heating, cooling and ventilation and choosing A or A+ rated materials to provide excellent insulation and heat storage.

Energy

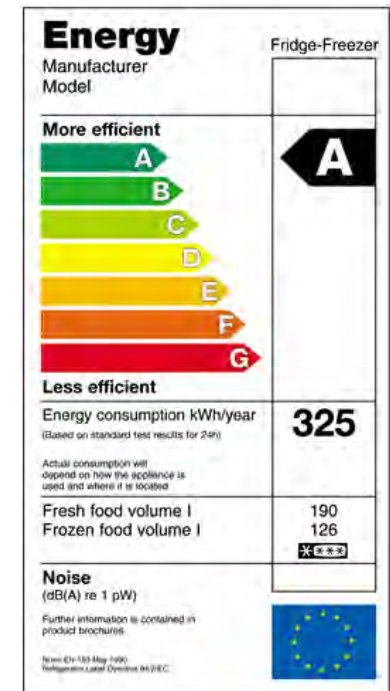
Energy usage is a key issue for sustainability which will be addressed as follows:

- Walls and roofs will be heavily insulated to reduce heat loss along with high quality construction to reduce air leakage (and thereby heated air);
- High specification windows will be installed providing excellent thermal performance. The scale, positioning and orientation of the fenestration will result in high levels of natural day-lighting, which will enhance the health and well-being of the occupants of the dwelling;
- Increasing natural day-lighting will also reduce the amount of artificial lighting required, promoting energy efficiency and incorporation of solar gains; and
- The specification of all light fittings and electrical appliances will be selected to ensure high levels of energy efficiency.

Materials

Material choices and material sourcing is another important issue for sustainable construction and has inherently been an essential consideration from the beginning of the design development process for this scheme and has been addressed in the following ways:

- Sourcing of all materials for construction will be carefully considered in terms of sustainability. For example, all timber will be sourced from validated sustainably managed forests;



- Where viable preference will be given to the use of local materials and suppliers to reduce the transport distances and to support the local economy
- Wherever possible 'A or A+ Rated' materials will be used
- Where appropriate construction materials will be recycled; and
- Building components will be specified with reference to the Green Guide to Specification.

Water Consumption

Measure will be taken to minimise water usage with a target set out in the sustainability statement of 105 litres a day per person. This will be achieved through low flow taps, showers and aerators, dual flush toilets and low volume baths.

In addition to SuDS, water conservation methods to the site will include:

- The use of water butts.
- The use of water efficient technologies in bathrooms and kitchens.



Health and Wellbeing

The proposed development will be designed to maximise the ecological value of the site. The sites proposed landscaping will provide green corridors linking to existing green areas further afield. Native species will be retained and/or planted across the site.

The site will design in foot and cycle paths to link to the existing infrastructure as well as public transport links to discourage residents to use their cars and turn towards walking, cycling and the use of local bus services that are located on Coley Avenue and Bath Road.

11 Conclusion

This Design & Access Statement demonstrates how the design principles of development have been achieved by a study of the local context and character, which will ensure that a unique sense of place is created whilst fitting in with the surrounding area. The proposed scheme has carefully considered the surrounding properties to ensure they will not be negatively affected, including the Grade II Listed properties.

The scheme positively addresses the prevailing character of the area, in terms of its sustainable and high quality inclusive design, scale, mass and appearance, whilst also considering its relationship with the adjacent existing buildings and the prevailing character in the surrounding area.

The proposed development provides for a wide variety of family accommodation by providing a mixture of 1-3 bedroom apartments. This development has been designed to create a sympathetic setting that provides for a residential development which is in keeping with the character of the Russell Street/Castle Hill Conservation Area. The layout avoids overlooking existing neighbouring properties and looks to retain as many of the natural features on site as possible, which in turn provides for a high quality residential development that sits comfortably within its context.

Access to the site for all has been carefully considered with separate provisions for pedestrians, wherever possible.

This proposal will provide a sustainable and high quality scheme encompassing energy, efficiency and sustainability measures, whilst providing much needed residential accommodation in the borough.