

HERITAGE STATEMENT

CHANGE OF USE APPLICATION FROM
OFFICE (CLASS E) TO CLASS C1

at

80 London Street
Reading
Berkshire
RG1 4SJ

80, London Street

A Grade II Listed Building in Katesgrove, Reading





Map of site.

1. Policy Context

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out national planning policy relating to the conservation of the historic environment. It advises that in determining planning applications “local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made to their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance (paragraph 128).

Annex 2 of the NPPF defines a Heritage Asset as being “a building, monument, site, place area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions.” Heritage assets are the valued components of the historic environment. They include designated heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets.

In determining planning applications, the NPPF advises that local planning authorities should take account of (paragraph 131):

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Specific guidance on the treatment of designated heritage assets (listed buildings) emphasises the need to understand the significance of a heritage asset in order to determine impacts on the historic environment (paragraph 132). It advises that ‘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. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm should require clear and convincing justification’.

The Reading Borough Local Plan was adopted in November 2019. The relevant historic environment policy for the proposed development is as follows:

- Policy EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

Reading Core Strategy Adopted in January 2008 and altered in 2015 gives the relevant historic environment policy contained within the Reading Core Strategy is as follows:

- Policy CS33: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment.

Policy CS33 states that: Historic features and areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their settings, will be protected and where appropriate enhanced. This will include: -

- Listed Buildings;
- Conservation Areas;
- Other features with local or national designation, such as sites and features of archaeological importance, and historic parks and gardens.

Planning permission will only be granted where development has no adverse impact on historic assets and their settings. All proposals will be expected to protect and where appropriate enhance the character and appearance of the area in which they are located.

Reading Central Area Action Plan adopted in January 2009 has Policies contained within that relate to consideration of impacts on the settings of listed buildings and conservation areas. There is a Policy (RC4j) for 25-31 London Street but no specific policy for the southern end of London Street.

Reading Sites and Detailed Policies Document adopted in 2012 refers to guidance set out in the NPPF (2012) and to Policy CS33 of the Reading Core Strategy but does not include additional policies relating to the historic environment.

2. The Heritage

80 London Street, Reading was added to the statutory List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest at Grade II on 08 November 1985 under list number 1113619. The list description reads as follows:

LONDON STREET 1 5128 3/0 NO 80 II GV 2 HOUSE AND SHOP. Dated 'w j March 25 1753' on stone tablet set in rear wall: street front remodelled mid C19. Timber-framed with brick infill; brick walls to front and rear (the former stuccoed and lined out to resemble ashlar), brick chimney stacks. Old tile roof and hanging to rear gable. Two-unit plan with transverse central stair; original entry at foot of stair, from access passage through left-hand side of building. Two storeys plus basement (to front) and attic. Front elevation of 3 storeys (at attic level a screen for the original gable). To ground floor, a 4-panel door (upper panels glazed) with overlight to left, a C20 shop window in C19 opening to right, with basement light under. Impost mouldings to piers between openings, carrying plain fascia surmounted by cornice. At first floor level, 3 windows, sashes with glazing bars to top sash only, in projecting surrounds with brackets under cills. Similar window (with C20 glazing) to centre of second floor, the cill set on a plain projecting band. Above, window, similar band, heavy projecting cornice and parapet. Above, ½ hip of original roof, and stacks to right-hand flank wall visible. Rear elevation has doorway to right at ground floor level, and single light original window openings to ground and first floors, all under ½-brick segmental arches. Lower opening partially blocked to accommodate mid C19 sash like those on front; upper has C20 steel casement. Eaves line continued across gable by two projecting brick courses, above which gable is tile hung on timber framing, with central C20 casement in earlier opening; roof ½-hipped above. The interior has been little altered, retaining the original dog-leg stair with closed strings, and column-on-vase baluster from top to bottom. The ground floor front room has a simple wooden cornice and chimney piece. The building is archaic for its date both in its plan and constructional details; the former closely resembles the usual form of terrace house in London c 1660-80 (for which see Post Medieval Archaeology, 8, (1974), pp 80-91).

Listing NGR: SU7180073027

80 London Street is located within the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area.

3. Historical Background

London Street was developed from the medieval period onwards. John Speed's map of Reading (1611) shows 'London Street'. Although the street frontage today has a strong Georgian and later appearance, older structures can be found to the rear, including curved cellars as found in 114 London Street. The side wall of Nos. 49-53 includes a timber frame with arch braces. No. 88 has a jettied first floor on Church Street.

By the late 18th century London Street had become one of the fashionable parts of town. Many of the elegant houses from the 18th and 19th centuries which lined both sides of the road still survive. The earliest mapping available which showed the footprint of No. 114 London Street is the Reading Board of Health map (1853). This shows the double depth plan of the main part of the house and a narrower wing projecting from the southern side of the rear elevation.

4. Assessment of Impacts of the Proposed Development

Due to the internal features of the property being modernized there are no impacts on any features that could be classed as a negative impact due to the change of class. Internal walls are not proposed to be removed or amended so there will also be no structural work to the property.



Internal original building



Internal original building



Rear Extension

The external features will also remain untouched, an office is proposed within the front ground floor room behind the shop front.

5. Conclusion

The proposed conversion of 80 London Street from offices to C1 involves no major alterations to the internal layout.

The proposed alterations would have no impact on significant historic fabric as there are no fabric changes only class. All sash windows on the front elevation are to remain and be repaired where required improving the quality of the property. There has been some concern that the works undertaken have caused some damage to the property but attached in Appendix 1 you will see recent photographs that show no damage has been caused.

The proposed conversion provides a future use for the building which has been redundant for a time now and will ensure the long term preservation of the listed building. It is considered that the proposed development would not have an adverse impact on the overall significance of the listed building in accordance with paragraph 132 of the NPPF and the Reading Borough Local Plan Policy EN1.