

Planning Statement January 29, 2025

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Date: 18 September 2024

Dear Sir/Madam

This large Victorian end of terrace home located in one of the most sought after town centre addresses in the Russell Street Castle Hill conservation area. With a current total floor area in excess of 4500 sq ft (including the loft) this really is a once in a lifetime opportunity to own a piece of Readings history within the Jesse estate. The first floor will be converted to 5 bed room flat. Externally there is a pleasant character and elements.

Externally there is a pleasant and private rear garden laid mainly to lawn and off road parking for at least two cars.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The application site is located on the west side of Jesse Terrace and contains a three-storey Victorian era mid terrace dwelling dating from circa. 1850-1860. The terrace of buildings displays a white render/stucco finish at ground floor level ,first and second floor level, slate roofs and front projecting veranda at ground floor level covering the entrance doors and ground floor windows to the dwellings.

1.2 The site is located within the Russell Street, Castle Hill and Oxford Road Conservation Area which is characterised by Georgian and Victorian terraces. The Russell Street, Castle Hill and

Oxford Road Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) identifies the terraces of buildings on either side of Jesse Terrace, of which the application site forms part of, as being buildings of Townscape Merit.

1.3 The CAA sets out that Buildings of Townscape Merit are buildings within conservation areas that contribute significantly to the character of the area and are important to retain and enhance, but are not Listed Buildings. (There are no Locally Listed buildings within conservation areas and buildings are either Listed Buildings, Buildings of Townscape Merit or undesignated within a conservation area within the Borough). It is the uniformity and well-proportioned red brick terraces, with decorative ground floor front verandas, retention of many original features (windows, doors and chimneys) and small front gardens which contribute to the character and significance of the Conservation Area.

1.4 Jesse Terrace has strong historical connections to the Jesse Family who were prominent developers in this part of Reading between 1850 and 1880. The Jesse family's contribution to the development of Victorian housing in Reading was considerable. Three generations of the Jesse family lived at 154-160 Castle Hill and while they developed sites throughout Reading, they figured most notably in the development of the Conservation Area. All three generations included developers, each generation passing the business down from an uncle to a nephew. The family-built Jesse Terrace in groups of approximately four at a time, with only the earliest group (Nos. 1-13) being in place prior to 1853. The Terrace was largely completed by the mid-1870s and there are subtle differences in each of the groups that are notable to this day. The large single-family homes have a trademark concave metal-roofed veranda, a look repeated on nearby Heritage Court and at 162-164 Castle Hill, properties along Castle Hill which the Jesse family also developed.

1.5 The terraces of dwellings on side of Jesse Terrace have since 2004 also been covered by an Article 4 Direction which removes some of the normal development rights that are available to property owners. The Article 4 direction for Jesse Terrace removes all permitted development rights including those relating to extensions and alterations to the properties which would front on to the highway (Jesse Terrace). The aim of the Article 4 Direction is to conserve key locally distinctive buildings that contribute to the sense of place in Reading and in the case of Jesse Terrace, the aim is to preserve the architectural features of the buildings. The Article 4 direction to the properties within Jesse Terrace also removes the ability to change use from C3 dwelling house use to C4 small houses in multiple occupation use using permitted development rights.

1.6 whilst an Article 4 direction does not prevent development taking place it does mean that planning permission is required.

2. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY None.

1.7 PROPOSALS

The application seeks planning permission for replacement of timber sash windows with timber effect uPVC sash windows (basement, first and second floor level front windows).removal of a tree in the rear garden with a replacement tree to add 2 more extra car space, retrospective permission is required to convert 5 bed flat to accommodate guests from a 3 bedroom apartment, New external appearance with a new painting to walls and doors. Logo on the main door and a small ramp at rear side. As discussed above, planning permission is required because the site is covered by an Article 4 direction which has removed permitted development rights.

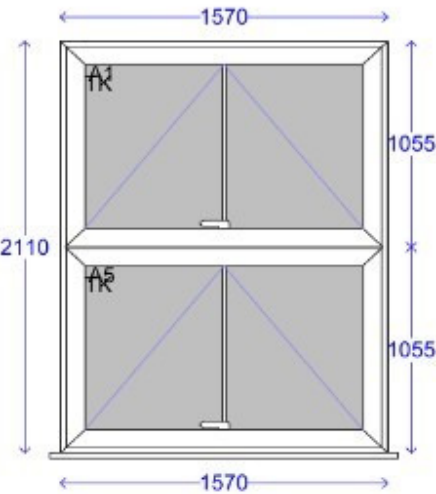
the Article 4 direction relates to works fronting the highway only and therefore whilst replacement UPVC windows if installed to the rear of the property these do not require planning permission.



3.2 Under Class A (Enlargement, Improvement or Other Alteration of a Dwellinghouse) of Part 1 Schedule 2 of the General Permitted Development Order 2015 (as amended) (the GPDO) replacement windows within a conservation area would not normally require planning permission as long as the materials used in any exterior work (other than materials used in the construction of a conservatory) are of a similar appearance to those used in the construction of the exterior of the existing dwellinghouse. Therefore, if the site was not located within the Article 4 area, the replacement windows would not require planning permission given they are of a similar appearance to the original windows.

3.3. This application is mainly to seek a planning permission for an external appearance with new painting to the walls and doors plus replacement of the windows with UPVC windows which will be almost similar to the existing windows .(Refer windows as attachments in the main bundle) to increase Thermal and energy efficiency. removal of a tree in the rear garden with a replacement tree to add 2 more extra car space, retrospective permission is required to convert 5 bed flat to accommodate guests from a 3 bedroom apartment, New external appearance with a new painting to walls and doors. Logo on the main door and a small ramp at rear side. As discussed above,

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KURDISH HOUSE - READING



The guidance and advice from Historic England and other LPAs vary. Generally, the guidance for existing heritage windows is very simple: if the original windows are in place, then repairs should be carried out or new timber replacements should be made as per our pre app advise and UPVC is generally not supported for heritage buildings or conservation areas.

The main point, which needs to be considered in relation to material consideration is do the new windows match or enhance existing joinery. UPVC windows have improved in style and appearance with thinner frames. They are a much better fit than the older style UPVC fat frames, as well as being a reasonable fit, visually and there are some planning case studies where UPVC has been considered acceptable. Guidelines on what is acceptable for conservation areas is not as stringent as that for Listed buildings. sills and header detailing of the windows and other architectural features of the building will be retained.

4.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making.

4.2 Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

4.3 Accordingly, the National Planning Policy Framework and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

4.4 Reading Local Plan 2019 CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CC2: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION CC3: ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM EN1: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT EN3: ENHANCEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS

4.5 Other Russell Street, Castle Hill and Oxford Road Conservation Area Appraisal (2020)

5 APPRAISAL

5.1 Paragraph 199 of the NPPF (2021) refers to considering the impacts of proposed development upon designated heritage assets and states 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 (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. In this case the designated heritage asset is the Russell Street, Castle Hill and Oxford Road Conservation Area.

5.2 Paragraph 203 of the NPPF (2021) refers to considering the impacts of proposed development upon non-designated heritage assets and states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. In this case the non-designated heritage assets are the terraces of buildings within Jesse Terrace which the Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) identifies as being buildings of Townscape Merit.

5.3 Policy EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment) requires that all proposals should protect and where possible enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings, the historic character and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located and that any harm to or loss of a heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification.

5.4 Policy EN3 (Enhancement of Conservation Areas) states that special interest, character and architecture of Conservation Areas will be conserved and enhanced.

5.5 Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) sets out that all development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located, and that developments should 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.

5.6 The Jesse Terrace is located within the 'Russell Street and Streets East' character area of the Russell Street, Castle Hill and Oxford Road Conservation Area and that the significance of this part

of the Conservation Area is created by the wide range of Georgian and Victorian residential architecture in a mix of modest and grand properties.

5.7 The many of the buildings in the area are in a poor state or repair and collectively create an overall air of neglect despite some well maintained exceptions. However, the CAA does go on to state that the area's architectural planform remains intact and identifies the uniform and well maintained character of Jesse Terrace as amongst the Conservation Area's finest streetscapes.

5.9 The special contribution of the buildings within Jesse Terrace as buildings of Townscape Merit to the character and significance of the Conservation Area is by way of the uniformity and well-proportioned appearance

5.10 The Article 4 directions placed in Jesse Terrace (protecting the façades in July 2004 and controlling small HMOs in January 2016) have had a positive effect on protecting the character and balance of the street. As such, this has had the effect of creating a notable dichotomy between that street and Waylen Street lying just the opposite side of Baker Street which has no Article 4 Direction put in place to protect external features.

5.14 In the context of the significance of the conservation area as a designated heritage asset such a low level of identified harm is considered to be 'less than substantial harm'. Paragraph 202 of the NPPF sets out that less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Conclusion

However, in accordance with paragraph 202 of the NPPF the public benefits of the replacement windows and external appearance with a new colour plus other minor objectives in terms of facilitating the continued occupation and wider upkeep of the building as a dwelling within the conservation area are considered to outweigh the very minor level of harm identified.