

Date: **Tuesday, 24 June 2025**
 Project Title: **Proposed Single Dormer to the existing Loft to the rear**



Fig. 1 Front Elevation 37 Princes Street

This Design and Access Statement supports a planning application for the construction of a rear dormer to facilitate a loft enlargement at 37 Princes Street, Reading, RG1 4EG. The proposal aims to increase habitable space within the property while maintaining the residential character of the area and adhering to local planning policy and design guidelines.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the following documents submitted with the Planning Application listed below:

- Architectural drawings by Haus Frame, which includes: Existing drawing – Proposed drawings and Block Plan - CN_001-CN_013 – 37 Princes Street _ Planning Drawings
- Site Plan CN_006 – Proposed Site Plan
- Heritage Statement

Site Background and Surroundings

History

37 Princes Street is a mid-to-late Victorian terraced dwelling, constructed circa 1830-1870. It features traditional red/brown clay brickwork, a natural slate pitched roof, and would originally have been fitted with timber sash windows. These materials are characteristic of Reading's 19th-century residential expansion, providing consistent street character and historic integrity.

Current Site Surroundings

37 Princes Street is a two-storey mid-terraced dwelling situated in a residential street near Reading town centre. The area is made up primarily of Victorian and Edwardian terraced housing, with a variety of loft conversions and extensions already present on neighbouring properties.

The property is not listed but does lie within a Conservation Area. The site has good access to public transport, amenities, and community services.

Design Statement

Principally, the proposal arises as part of works to provide more amenable facilities for the family and especially to accommodate working from home. There is precedence of similar proposals approved, and already built, on Princes Street, including large full width loft dormers. The site enjoys a front and rear garden on a decent plot area within the residential neighbourhood.

Planning permission is sought for the addition of a loft dormer to the rear and two front skylights to the existing attic room already built on site, proposal matching existing and the neighbouring properties and integrating with the existing materials of the house.

Use

The proposed development will not alter the residential use (Use Class C3) of the property. It will provide additional bedroom and storage space for the existing occupants.

The proposal is sought for creating amenities for the family members and especially to accommodate working from home by creating a study/ gym, yet retaining the existing bathroom but smaller. Furthermore, the proposal is looking to allow for an additional room acting as study/ bedroom when required, yet using the existing loft room more efficiently.

The works involve the construction of a rear dormer extension across the main roof slope. No increase in the building's footprint is proposed.

Scale and Massing

The dormer is modest in scale and has been designed to remain subordinate to the original roof. It is set back by 500mm from the eaves and 500mm from the party walls on either side, reducing visual bulk and respecting neighbouring amenity.

The overall height of the building will remain unchanged, and the proposed dormer does not dominate the roof slope.

There is precedence of similar proposals approved, and already built, on Princes Street, like the immediate neighbouring property at 18 Princes Street where they have had the planning proposal approved for a full width loft dormer.

The proposed design and layout are in line with local precedents, the LPA published guidance and discretion allowances included in the Local Plan Design Guidance. Its scale and form are all in keeping with the original dwelling.

The loft room has been already renovated a very long time ago, and an additional dormer will compliment and enrage the loft room slightly, by allowing to create a study room, yet keeping the existing bathroom. In accordance with the plot size, shape of the development, location and setting of the proposal is in good aesthetic with the neighbourhood with minimal impact on the look from the street and other properties.

The proposed loft dormer, is set to complement the existing roof and neighbouring properties with no visible impact from the front of the property and minimal impact to the rear. The proposed design keeps the character of the existing dwelling and matches the existing materials and looks, making it aesthetically pleasing and complimentary to the original structure as well as vicinity neighbouring properties.

Access to Sunlight and Daylight

The proposed dormer has been designed to avoid any significant loss of sunlight or daylight to adjacent properties. Its position to the rear of the property and its limited scale, being set back from party walls and eaves, ensures minimal overshadowing. Rooflights to the front and the new rear dormer window will enhance natural daylight access to the loft space, improving internal amenity.

Noise and Disturbance

The development is of a domestic scale and is unlikely to generate notable noise beyond the temporary impact during the construction phase. Working hours during construction will follow best practices and any applicable local authority guidelines to minimise disturbance to neighbours.

Artificial Lighting

The dormer will include standard internal lighting, with no external lighting proposed that would affect neighbouring properties or contribute to light pollution. The addition will not result in any increase in artificial lighting that is out of keeping with typical domestic use.

Vibration

As the works involve only minor structural alterations to an existing roof, no significant ground or structural vibration is anticipated. All works will be carried out in accordance with building regulations and modern construction methods to ensure safety and minimal disturbance.

Dust and Fumes

Standard measures such as dust suppression during construction (e.g., damping down and containment of materials) will be implemented to mitigate any temporary airborne particles. No ongoing dust or fumes will be generated post-construction as the space is for domestic use only.

Smell

The proposed development does not involve any use that would generate odours or smells affecting the surrounding area. As a continuation of residential use, there will be no impact on local air quality or amenity in this regard.

Planning Policy

The proposal complies with the principles of the Reading Borough Council Local Plan, including policies on householder extensions, design quality, and residential amenity. It also aligns with national guidance in the NPPF supporting appropriate home improvements that respect local context.

The dormer is modest in scale, sensitively positioned, and avoids overlooking or overbearing impacts on neighbouring properties.

The proposal application is made in consideration of all the factors in this statement and in the light of published SPD Reading guidance.

The view from all perspectives shall be in keeping with the current scale, pattern and original character of the houses on Princes Street in particular.

As such the proposal is considered a “*deminimis*” category.

The original regency theme and styling of the dwelling is not only to be retained but much enhanced through provision of additional sash window matching the original house window and a continuation of the lines of the special original eaves, as well as fascia and soffit details. The roof line is proposed to be at the lower level than the main dwelling roof line in order to keep the aesthetic of the area as well as the proposals that have been previously approved and built in the area.

Therefore the designers believe the proposal is entirely in keeping with the character and appearance of the host property as well as the overall vicinity and accordingly seek approval of the scheme.



Fig. 2 Rear View

Access

No changes are proposed to the external pedestrian or vehicular access to the property. Access to the new loft accommodation will be via an internal staircase from the first floor.

Summary

Consideration has been given to ensure that the character and appearance of the existing building will not be affected, ensuring the preservation of the existing views and styling of the neighbouring properties. The proposal will be executed in line with all the relevant Reading Council policies. The following are the key design elements:

- The proposal will not have an adverse impact on the setting, appearance and special character of the building
- All original features of the building have been retained and complimented in the new dormer proposal
- The proposal will not affect the appreciation of the building and the wider surroundings, within the Princes Street
- A high level of sustainability has been considered in the proposal and designed into the scheme wherever possible

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