

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



*Fig. 1 Front Elevation 37 Princes Street*

## Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the construction of a rear dormer extension at 37 Princes Street, Reading. The property is located within a designated Conservation Area, though it is not a listed building. This statement assesses the potential impact of the proposed development on the significance of the heritage asset and its setting, in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and Reading Borough Council's Local Plan and SPD guidance.

## Site Description and Historical Context

37 Princes Street is a two-storey, mid-terrace Victorian dwelling, likely constructed between circa 1830 and 1870, featuring traditional red/brown clay brickwork and a pitched natural slate roof. The house retains architectural features consistent with the era, including vertically proportioned sash windows and timber details.

The Eldon Square Conservation Area is characterised by its cohesive rows of Victorian and Edwardian terraced housing, which contribute significantly to the townscape. These properties typically follow a uniform scale and rhythm, with modest frontages and rear extensions varying in form and scale. The subject property contributes positively to the historic character of the area through its original detailing and consistent appearance with the wider streetscape. Although not statutorily listed, it is considered a non-designated heritage asset due to its age and contribution to the Conservation Area.

### Assessment of Significance

The significance of 37 Princes Street and the wider Conservation Area is derived from:

- **Architectural interest:** Traditional Victorian form, scale, and detailing.
- **Historic interest:** Reflective of Reading's 19th-century urban expansion.
- **Group value:** Contribution to the uniform streetscape of similar terraced properties.

The property, while retaining some original features, has seen previous alterations such as an existing attic conversion and rear garden adaptations, which are typical across the street.

### Description of the Proposed Development

The proposal involves the construction of a modest rear dormer to expand the existing loft space, including two front-facing rooflights. The dormer will be:

- Constructed in materials to match the existing roof.
- Set back 500mm from both the eaves and party walls and eaves, in line with best practice guidance.
- Designed to remain subordinate to the main roof form, preserving the original proportions and silhouette.

The proposal does not involve any changes to the principal (front) elevation, but including the two conservation skylights, thus maintaining the property's contribution to the streetscape.

### Impact on the Heritage Asset and Conservation Area

The impact of the proposal is considered to be neutral to low-positive, for the following reasons:

- Visual impact is minimal: The rear dormer will not be visible from Princes Street and will have negligible impact on public views.
- Precedent established: Several neighbouring properties have implemented similar rear dormers without adverse impacts on the Conservation Area's character.
- Material and design sensitivity: The dormer uses materials and detailing consistent with the original roofscape, ensuring it integrates sympathetically.
- Preservation of key views and features: The principal façade remains unchanged, retaining the visual rhythm of the street and its architectural cohesion.

## Justification and Compliance

The proposal aligns with the following national and local policy considerations:

- **NPPF Paragraph 197:** The proposal sustains and enhances the significance of the non-designated heritage asset through sympathetic design.
- **Reading Borough Council Local Plan and Design Guide SPD:** The proposal respects the character and appearance of the host building and the wider Conservation Area.
- **Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 – Section 72:** The development preserves the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

## Materials Schedule

*The materials to be used on the external surfaces of the development shall be in accordance with those specified in the application unless any different materials are first agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.*

### Roof Slates Existing and Proposed

The roof at 37 Princes Street likely features natural Welsh slate, the most common roofing material for Victorian terraces across Reading and the wider South-East.

- Typical characteristics: Welsh slates are thin, finely riven, and feature colours ranging from deep blue-grey to subtle purple hues. They're normally cut into standard sizes (e.g., Countess or Duchess), like  $\sim 50 \times 25$  cm or  $\sim 61 \times 30$  cm  
[bricksandbrass.co.uk](http://bricksandbrass.co.uk).
- These slates were cut to consistent rectangular formats and traditionally laid in the broken-bond pattern.
- In areas like Reading with less extreme weather, larger slates were used—commonly around  $500 \times 250$  mm—ensuring both aesthetic and functional resilience [bricksandbrass.co.ukcdn.cupapizarras.com](http://bricksandbrass.co.ukcdn.cupapizarras.com).



## Existing Materials

### External Walls



- Warm orange-red hue, with some natural weathering—typical of London stock bricks from the second half of the 19th century.
- Uniform, stretcher bond bricklaying—common in mid-Victorian terraced housing.
- Simple red-brick facades, occasionally combined with painted stone or stucco window/door surrounds, fitting the style of many Reading terraces built 1870–1900

### Windows



According to local sash window specialists in Reading area, sash windows generally fit into three categories: Georgian (6-over-6), Victorian (2-over-2), and Edwardian (6-over-2) [sashwindowz.uk](http://sashwindowz.uk). Given the 2-over-2 divisions, these are firmly **Victorian sash windows**.

As existing and other neighbouring houses you can see the variety of all types of timber and modern uPVC mock sash windows.

- Mock sash design- The top sill and meeting rails are visible and classic of period sash windows
- Style classification – Mock Sash Georgian (6-over-6)
- Material – modern material white uPVC double glazed window

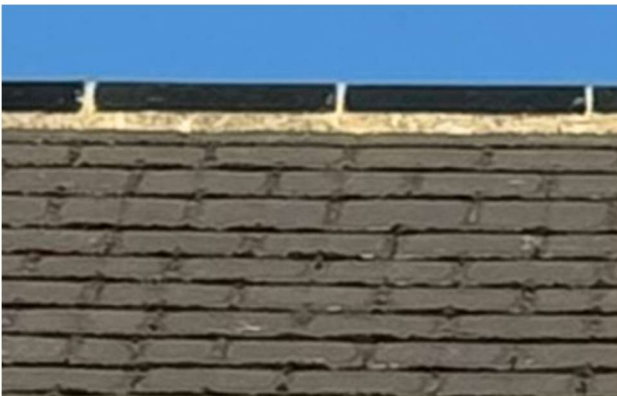
## Roof



37 Princes Street features a traditional pitched gable roof covered in Welsh natural slate, laid in a classic double-lap pattern, finished with ridge tiles and chimneys—true to its Victorian era architecture.

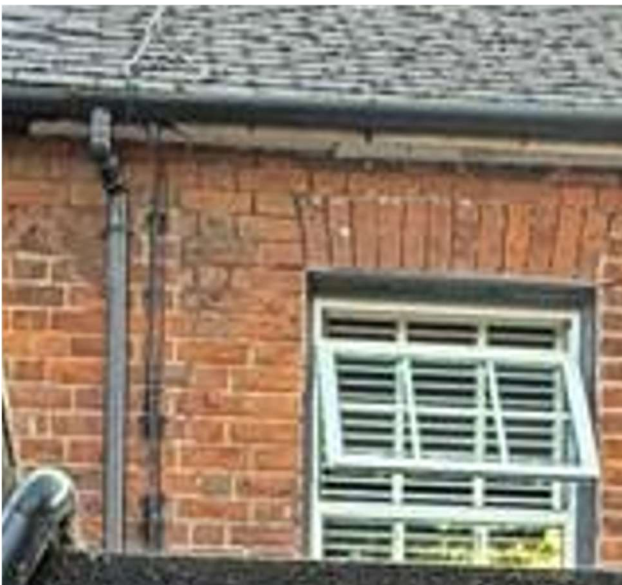
- Form: A simple gable roof, with two pitched sides meeting at a central ridge—very typical of Victorian terraces in Reading
- Pitch: Likely around 35–45°, which is ideal for slates—the traditional roofing material for mid-Victorian homes

- Material - Natural slate, most probably Welsh slate, which was the predominant material in the Victorian and Edwardian periods
- Slates are typically laid in a double-lap coursing system, giving a neat horizontal banding visible on the roof



## Ridge

The ridge is finished with ridge tiles—likely clay or slate—to seal the top.

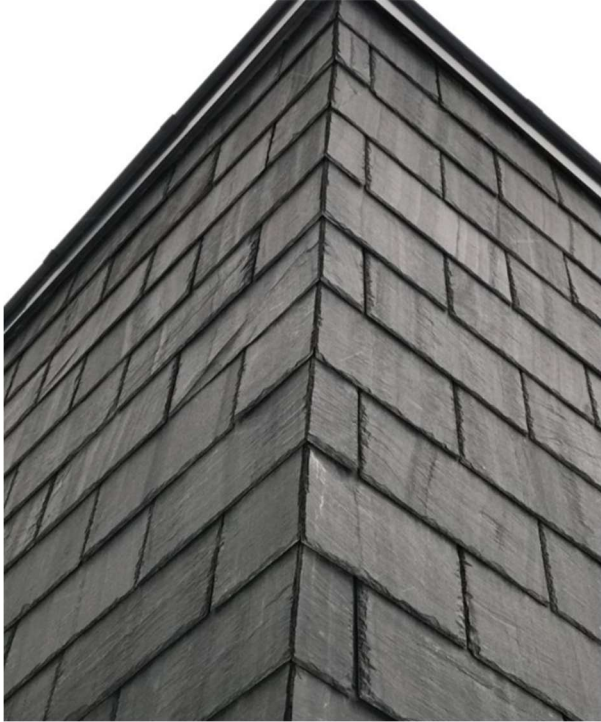


## Guttering and downpipes

- Authentic cast-iron rainwater systems, featuring ogee-profile gutters and circular downpipe
- Profile: Victorian-era ogee, often called “K-style” — characterised by its decorative double curve
- Material: Traditionally cast iron

## Proposed for the Dormer

### Proposed Dormer Wall and Roofing Material:



- Type: Ffestiniog Welsh Slate Roofing
- Ffestiniog produces a beautiful Blue Grey slate with a smooth riven texture.
- Sizes: 500 x 250 mm (matching existing)
- Thickness grades: County (7 mm), and Celtic (9mm) – to be confirmed

The house built in the mid-1800s, likely originally used County (7 mm) or Celtic (9 mm) grade slates, both of which were commonly installed on Victorian-era terraces.



### Proposed Skylights:



Clement  
Conservation  
Rooflights installed  
into existing Welsh  
slate roof

Modern  
reproductions of  
Victorian originals,  
Clement  
Conservation  
Rooflights in black  
frame

### Proposed Guttering and downpipes



Traditional  
Victorian Ogee  
- Completely  
interchangeable  
with cast iron  
- Flow rate of  
up to 1.7 l/s and  
80m<sup>2</sup> per downpipe  
- Compatible  
with 63mm and  
76mm circular, 72 x  
72mm square, and  
102 x 76mm  
rectangular  
downpipes

### Proposed Dormer Window



- uPVC Mock Sash Windows with Georgian Bar (matching existing)
- Colour – White (matching existing)
- Style Georgian 6 over 6

### Conclusion

The proposed dormer has been carefully designed to respect the architectural character and historic value of 37 Princes Street and the Eldon Square Conservation Area. The development is sympathetic in scale, appearance, and material, and does not result in harm to the significance of the heritage asset. On this basis, it is considered that the proposal is appropriate and compliant with local and national heritage policy, and planning permission should be granted.