

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Katesgrove

App Ref: PL/25/0525 LBC

Address: 86 London Street, Reading, RG1 4SJ

Proposal: Change of Use from Office (E) to Residential (C3) & Change of Use from Office (E) to Residential (C3) comprising alterations to basement layout, new flooring to basement and ground floor, redecoration and new bike and bin store in rear garden.

Applicant: Mr Philip Lee

Received date: 03/04/2025

Target Decision date: 27/08/2025 (extension of time)

Case Officer: Marcelina Rejwerska

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a Grade II listed mid-terrace building on the west side of London Street. The building is also known as Albion House. The national listing reads as follows:

86 London Street is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

Architectural interest:

as an early to mid-C18 townhouse which contributes to the character of an architecturally varied historic streetscape.

Historic interest:

as part of the urban development of Reading's ancient core.

Group value:

the building is in close proximity to a large number of listed buildings and forms part of a strong historic grouping.

Built in the early to mid-C18 with later alterations.

MATERIALS: *tuck-pointed red brick laid in Flemish bond with timber and stucco dressings and clay tile roof coverings.*

PLAN: *a former terraced house of three storeys, now containing a shop (letting agents) on the ground floor and apartments above.*

EXTERIOR: *the main, east elevation faces the street and is three bays wide and three storeys high. The ground floor comprises, from left to right: two six-over-six sash windows with heavily moulded frames and an entrance doorway which has a moulded doorcase with two console brackets and a cornice. It contains a six-panelled door with brass door furniture beneath an elaborate, rococo-style transom light. A timber cornice separates the ground floor from that above. The first floor has four large Doric pilasters supporting a broad stucco entablature with metopes and a dentilled cornice. Between the pilasters are three six-over-six sash windows with moulded frames and keystones; simple geometric keystones to the outer sashes and a larger console keystone to the central sash. The second floor, or attic storey, has squat six-over-six segmental-headed sash windows with exposed sash boxes and a brick parapet with a stone coping. Behind the parapet is a tile-covered M roof. All of the sash windows to this elevation are flush with the brickwork. The basement has been painted white and contains two hopper windows behind iron railings.*

The rear, west elevation is three bays wide with the ground and first floor painted white while the second

floor is exposed red brick. On the first floor, there is a large 36-pane uPVC window to the northernmost bay and two eight-over-twelve timber sash windows to the other bays. The second floor is similar with a 36-pane uPVC window and two eight-over-eight sash windows.

The full listing can be found on the Historic England register under list entry number 1113527.

The site is also within the Market Place/London Street Conservation Area. The building is presently vacant and was last occupied as a lettings agency. The surrounding area comprises a mix of commercial and residential uses.



Table 1 Image taken from the submitted Design and Access Statement

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Listed building consent is sought for internal changes associated with a separate full planning application for the change of use of the property from offices (Class E) to a single-occupancy residential dwelling (Class C3). The works to facilitate the change of use include internal alterations within the basement (which was previously used as a data server room and toilets) to create a kitchen and bathroom. The flooring on the basement and ground floors is also proposed to be replaced due to the presence of asbestos in the existing flooring materials. Finally, redecoration works are proposed to comprise repainting of walls and surfaces.

The proposal initially included additional works such as an outbuilding within the rear garden and ensuites to all bedrooms. These were not considered sympathetic to the heritage asset by the RBC conservation officer and were subsequently removed from the proposed plans by the applicant.

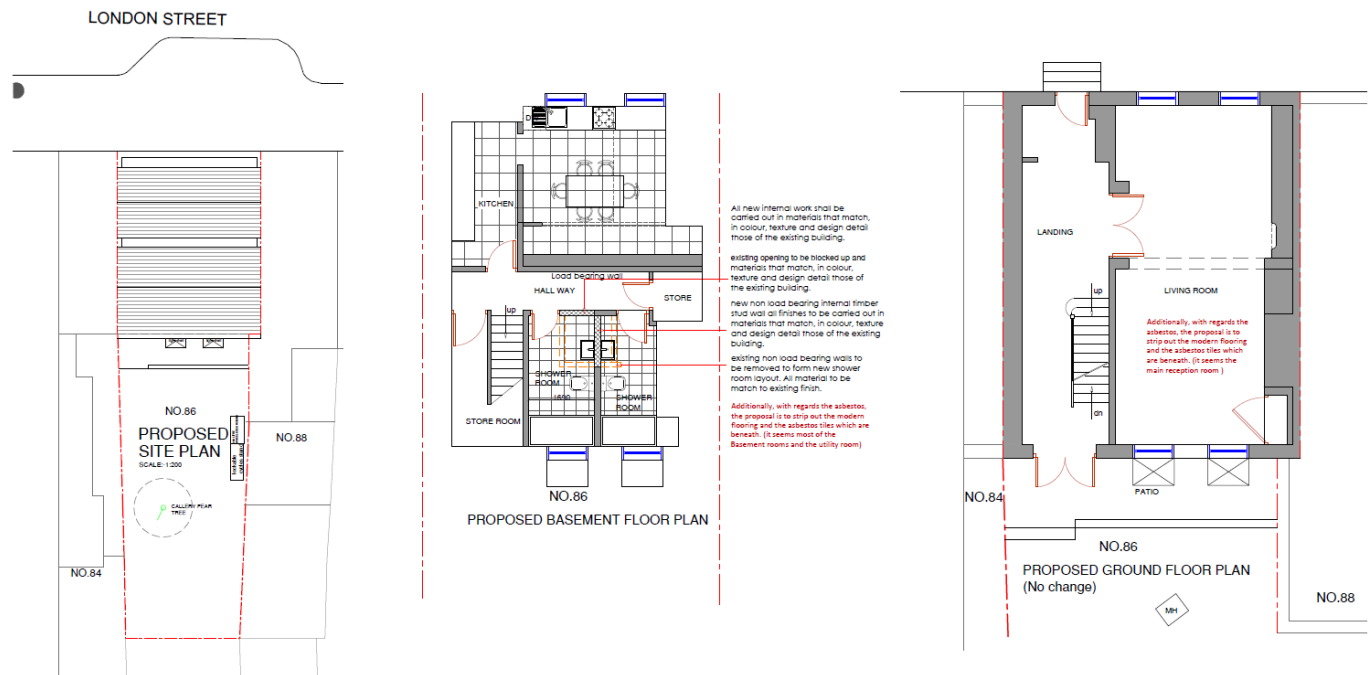


Table 2 Proposed Plans

2.1. Information submitted:

Rev. Design and Access Statement, received on 29 July 2025
Heritage Statement, Ref. 1347-HR-A-HS-XX-01 Rev 01, Heritage Revival, dated 29 July 2025, received on 29 July 2025
Flood Map, received on 3 April 2025
01 LOCATION PLAN, received on 3 April 2025
02 EXISTING SITE BASEMENT AND GROUND FLOOR PLANS, received on 3 April 2025
03 EXISTING FIRST SECOND FLOOR AND FLOOR PLANS, received on 3 April 2025
04B PROPOSED SITE BASEMENT AND GROUND FLOOR PLANS, received on 29 July 2025
05B PROPOSED FIRST AND SECOND FLOOR PLANS, received on 19 August 2025
06 EXISTING AND PROPOSED ELEVATIONS, received on 8 May 2025
07 BLOCK PLAN, received on 8 May 2025
Scope of Works, received 18 August 2025

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- PL/89/0151- Single storey rear extension for office space. Application refused.
- PL/89/0199- Single storey rear extension. Application refused.
- PL/91/0892- Demolition of existing outbuilding and single storey rear extension to provide additional office accommodation. Application refused.
- PL/91/0893- Single storey rear extension to be used as a Boardroom. Materials - slates to roof and brickwork to walls to match existing. Application refused.
- PL/05/1277- Advertising banners. Application refused.

- PL/05/1311- Advertising banners on first floor level (0.68m X 1.5m). Application refused.
- PL/06/0090- Formation of a walkway between 86 and 88 London Street. Application permitted.
- PL/06/0095- Formation of hardstanding for use as a car park at rear. Application refused and dismissed at appeal.
- PL/06/0262- Retrospective application: Installation of 3 CCTV cameras to the front of the building. Application permitted.
- PL/07/1269- Alterations to boundaries and current access to rear of 86 and 88 London Street. Application refused.
- PL/07/1302- Landscaping proposal to rear of properties: including hardstanding for parking, new access arrangements, additional foliage and alterations to boundaries. Application refused.
- PL/10/0073- Projecting sign on front elevation of building (resubmission of 10/00584/ADV). Application permitted.
- PL/10/1572- Projecting sign on front elevation of building. Application permitted.
- PL/13/1561- Blocking up of interconnecting door between premises. Application permitted.
- PL/25/0524 – Change of use from office (E) to residential (C3). – Recommended for permission subject to S106.

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following were consulted:

- RBC Conservation Officer – Initial objection due to insufficient heritage information to justify proposed works. No objections to revised plans, subject to conditions.
- RCAAC – No comments received.

RBC Environmental Health Standing Advice Note C also applies:

- A noise assessment should be submitted in support of applications for new residential proposed in noisy areas.
- The noise assessment will be assessed against the recommendations for internal noise levels within dwellings and external noise levels within gardens / balconies in accordance with BS 8233:2014 and WHO guidelines for Community Noise. The report should identify any mitigation measures that are necessary to ensure that the recommended standard is met.
- Where appropriate, the noise assessment data should also include noise events (LAMax) and the design should aim to prevent noise levels from noise events exceeding 45dB within bedrooms at night. Noise levels above 45dB are linked with sleep disturbance.
- Where the new residential use may be affected by noise from commercial premises, the assessment should also include consideration of the impact of the commercial noise sources using BS4142:2014 A 2019 methodology and/or other relevant guidance for particular noise sources such as music noise, as penalties may need to be applied to the acceptable internal noise levels to take into account non anonymous noise sources.

Site notices for each application were displayed on 13th May 2025. No letters of representation were received.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

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.

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the LPA to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

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 (NPPF paragraph 12).

National Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance

Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance, Historic England 2008

HEAG125 Listed Buildings and Curtilage

HEAG304 Listed Building Consent

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM

CC8: SAFEGUARDING AMENITY

EN1: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

EN3: ENHANCEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS

Other documents

Market Place/London Street Conservation Area Appraisal 2007

Equality Act 2010:

In determining this application, the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore, in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

6. APPRAISAL

Land use matters

Policy H1 states "*Provision will be made for at least an additional 15,847 homes (averaging 689 homes per annum) in Reading Borough for the period 2013 to 2036.*" This policy is proposed to be updated with the latest housing data in the Local Plan Partial Update which was submitted for examination on 9th May 2025; however, this is not considered to have a significant impact in relation to this proposal. There are no specific requirements set out in the Local Plan in relation to change of use from offices to residential units, and requirements relating to new residential development will apply to an extent.

The property has originally and historically been in residential use, with the change of use to offices first occurring sometime in the 20th century. As such, the return to the original use of the property is considered acceptable, as per paragraph 210 of the NPPF (Dec. 2024) which encourages the optimum viable use of heritage assets. As such, the change of use is considered a positive impact to the historic significance of the property, and is acceptable in principle, notwithstanding other aspects relating to the design, materials, residential amenity and other matters discussed further in this appraisal.

Design and character

Policy EN1 requires proposals to protect and, where possible, enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings, as well as the historic character and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located. Policy EN3 requires development in conservation areas to enhance the significance of the conservation area in which they are located. Policy CC7 also sets out relevant design considerations.

The proposed development, as revised, comprises entirely internal works. As such, there is no impact to the external appearance of the property, and therefore on the conservation area.

The submitted revised heritage statement concludes that *“The Basement has been fully boarded-out and it is possible to view part of the rear of the east elevation via the kitchen, and a partial vault behind boarding within the southern-most WC enclosure. In summary: the original plan form has been largely lost to the east side of the house, while the west side retains its original proportions. The Basement structure has been largely concealed by C20 installations and currently there appears to be no evidence available to suggest the original layout, or where a door may have been located between the Ground and Basement floors.”*

The internal works to the basement include realignment of modern internal walls and redecoration to enable the creation of a kitchen and bathroom. This is considered acceptable as the basement is the most altered area of the property, with modern finishes.

An asbestos survey carried out on site has also identified that there is asbestos in the vinyl tiles below the modern floor finishes in the basement and ground floor reception room. The floor finishes are proposed to be renewed to allow the removal of the vinyl tiles. The existing flooring and tiles have no historical significance, and their removal is considered acceptable.

Overall, the minor works proposed internally to accommodate the change of use of the property are considered to have either a positive or no impact on the heritage asset and are therefore considered acceptable.

Other matters

Related matters regarding residential amenity, transport and refuse storage and collection are covered under the separate full planning application, which is recommended for approval subject to completion of a S106 agreement to secure contributions towards affordable housing.

7. CONCLUSION

The application has been assessed against national and locally adopted policies and is considered acceptable.

8. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

Subject to the following conditions:

1. Time Limit Standard
2. Approved Plans
3. Materials to be submitted prior to commencement (internal finishes, new flooring)
4. Record of original fabric in the basement to be submitted once revealing works have commencement and prior to first occupation of the dwelling.