

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Abbey Ward

App Ref: PL/25/1762 Listed building consent (Alt/Ext)

Address: 59, Castle Street, Reading, RG1 7SN

Proposal: Drill hole through wall for the purposes of Broadband wiring

Applicant: Craig Hopkins

Received date: 08/12/2025

Target Decision date: 03/02/2026

Case Officer: Nathalie Weekes

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site relates to a three storey and basement listed building and a rear amenity yard, located within a terrace of three office buildings on the southern side of Castle Street within the Central Core of Reading Town centre. The building is grade 2 listed and falls within the St Marys Butts/Castle Street Conservation area, in flood zone 1.

The listing building record states:

The statutory list description for 59 and 61 Castle Street sets out:

CASTLE STREET 1. 5128 (South Side) Nos 59 and 61 SU 7173 SW 2/421 II GV 2. Early C19. 3 storeys and basement. Gault brick terraced pair, slate roof. Cornice and blocking course. 3 ranges of glazing bar sash windows, No 61 only has 2 on 2nd floor; plate glass sashes on ground floor. Outer round headed doorways with radiating fanlights; No 59 retains 6 panel door. Steps to door, lower steps have curved ends in plan. Interior of No 59 has contemporary ramped stair with rail curled at bottom.

The site is set back from the highway in front of a service road with parking area for police vehicles and the area is commercial in character, incorporating an array of offices, public houses, shops and residential units, with the Thames Valley Police station to the north of the site. It is in an area of archaeological potential, within the central core of Reading Town Centre and within the Reading Central Area.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposal is to drill a single 6mm diameter hole through principle elevation wall for the purposes of Broadband wiring. The Design and Access and Heritage statement states *'The significance will be maintained by ensuring any intervention is minimal, confined to a discrete area and does not compromise the structural integrity or visual coherence of the wall fabric.'*

Proposed location of works



Plans/documents considered

Location plan

Photo of location of proposed works

Design and access heritage statement for the installation of broadband cable, 8 December 2025

As received 8 December 2025

Planning History

170928 Replace existing back door Closed 27/07/2017

231202 Erection of three office pods within the rear courtyards of 59-61 Castle Street Refused

19/01/2024

3. CONSULTATIONS

A site notice was displayed at the site on 16 December 2025 for the required consultation period and an advert was placed in local newspaper. No public responses were received.

The following were consulted:

- RBC Conservation Officer - No objection subject to conditions.
- Conservation Area Advisory Committee/ Reading Civic Society Consultations – no comment was provided at the time of writing the report.

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.

4. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority 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 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.

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (Dec 2023) Chapter 16, Paragraph 203 and Paragraph 205-208

National Planning Practice Guidance

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

EN1 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

Other

Historic England Advice Note 7 – Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage

Historic England Advice Note 2 – Making changes to Heritage Assets

English Heritage's "Conservation Principles"

St Marys Butts/Castle Street Conservation Area Appraisal

5. APPRAISAL

Any development should respond positively to its 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, in accordance with Policy EN1 and CC7.

The application is for Listed Building Consent to drill a hole through wall for the purposes of Broadband wiring. The works are assessed in terms of impact on the fabric of a listed building.

Heritage Impact

A site visit was undertaken by the case officer on 16 December 2025.

The small scale proposal is not considered harmful to the original fabric of the Listed Building.

In light of the above, it is considered that the proposed works do not have detrimental impact on the setting or character of the listed building as the impact would be minimal and could be considered negligible, the proposal therefore complies with the requirements of Section 66 and 72 of the Town and Country (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the statutory duties of the Council in this regard have been discharged.

6. CONCLUSION

The works to the listed property have been assessed and found to be acceptable as they comply with the identified policies and guidelines and therefore Listed Building Consent can be granted.

7. RECOMMENDATION

Approve with conditions

Recommended Conditions:

Time limit

Approved plans & documents

Make good

Informatives

Terms