

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Caversham Ward

App Ref: PL/26/0053 Listed building consent (Alt/Ext)

Address: 6 CHURCH STREET, CAVERSHAM, READING, RG4 8AT

Proposal: Part-retrospective application for the installation of new M&E services, installation of a new kitchen and bathroom, construction of sump and pump behind the front door to remove water after surface water flood events, installation of a raised floor structure over the historic brick sett snug floor and installation of new fixtures, fittings and finishes.

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Rothwell

Received date: 19/01/2026

Target Decision date: 15/05/2026 (EXT)

Case Officer: Huimin Chen

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is a Grade II listed two storey building. The national listing reads as follows:

CHURCH STREET 1. 5128 (North Side) Caversham Nos 6 and 8 SU 7174 11/267 19.3.75. II GV 2. Altered C17 cottage raw. 2 storeys. Colourwashed brick and plaster. Small low 2 storey link block with No 4 with 2 light mullion window on 1st floor. Old tile roof with catslide to rear. 3 windows on 1st floor, outer 3 light, centre 2 light. 3 similar windows on ground floor, blocked, and one with shutters. 2 doors. Ground floor openings segmental headed. String at 1st floor level and corbelled brick eaves cornice, original window frames on 1st floor.

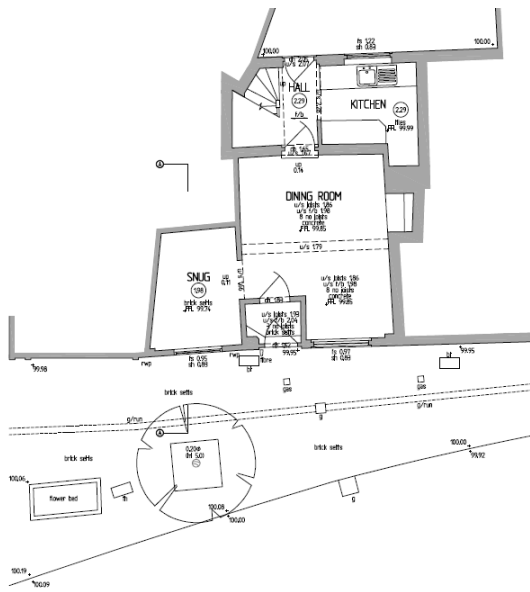
The property is located within St Peter's Conservation Area, and it also falls within Flood Zone 2.



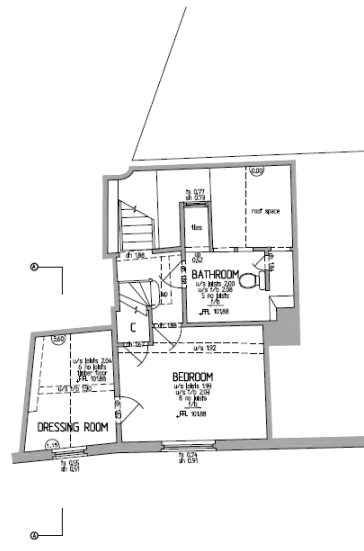
View from the front of 6 Church Street, taken 08/07/2025.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

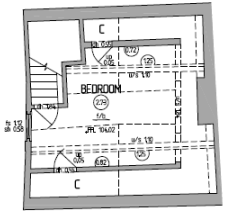
The application is seeking permission for the partial retrospective work and new development for the installation of new M&E services, installation of a new kitchen and bathroom, construction of a sump and pump behind the front door to remove water after surface water flood events, installation of a raised floor structure over the historic brick sett Snug floor and installation of new fixtures, fittings and finishes.



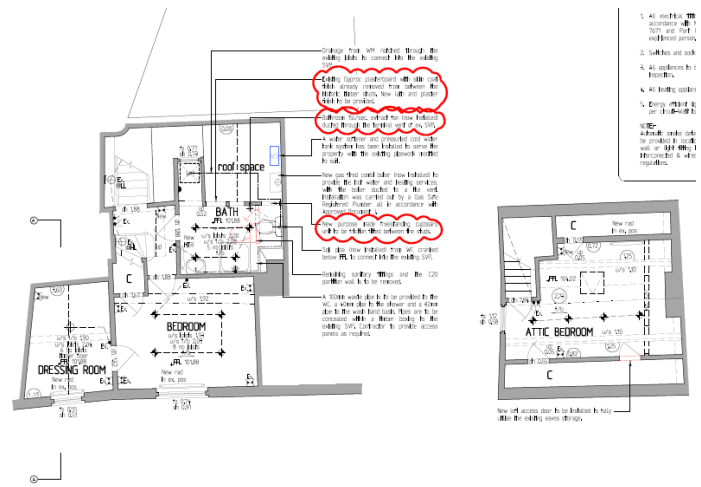
Ground Floor Plan - 150



First Floor Plan - 150



Second Floor Plan - 150



First Floor Plan - 150

Second Floor Plan - 150

Existing and proposed floor plans

Plans/Information considered:

- 25.005.07v - 2026.01.19 - LBC App Cover Letter, received 19/01/2026.
- Location Plan received 19/01/2026.
- 25-005-02 - As Existing - Roof Plan Section and Elevations, received 04/02/2026.
- 25-005-01 - As Existing - Floor Layout Plans, received 04/02/2026.
- 25.005 - Heritage Impact Assessment, received 05/02/2026.
- front wall build-up, received 17/04/2026.
- 25-005-22A - Scheme Proposals - Construction Details, received 22/04/2026.
- 25-005-23A - Scheme Proposals - Ventilation Extract Fan Details, received 22/04/2026.
- 25-005-21B - Scheme Proposals - Floor Layout Plans with finishes, received 22/04/2026.
- 25-005-20B - Scheme Proposals - Floor Layout Plans with M&E positions, received 22/04/2026.
- 1327_aquatank-specification-sheet-compressed, received 22/04/2026.
- 2134_aquatank190s-data-sheet, received 22/04/2026.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

PL/25/0841 HOU & PL/25/0845 LBC: Partial re-roofing to the front elevation, insertion of a conservation rooflight to the rear elevation and installation of a new water supply. Approved 07/10/2025.

4. CONSULTATIONS

RBC Conservation Consultations – further details would be required. Summarised as follows:

Entrance Lobby:

- Subject to the details of the proposed sump pump, including the new drainage pipe
- Subject to the details of the new suspended floor (section drawing)
- Subject to details of the new timber studwork, including elements such as airbricks and material specifications for the front wall, is required (section drawing)

Sitting Room (comments above apply)

- Subject to details (section drawing) of the ceiling treatment in the sitting room are required – is this reversible, and how are the historic timbers proposed to not be harmed? The clarification is required on how the plasterboard will be fixed and what the visual impacts will be, whether a more breathable material could be considered instead of gypsum plaster

Snug (comments above apply)

- Subject to the details of the new timber floor to be put on the historic brick setts – a section drawing with material specs and transition between the two floor systems would be helpful. Please provide visual information/photographs of the original bricks so that they are recorded.
- For the ceiling, 'to improve the aesthetics' is not by itself a heritage justification. The Council looks for an introduction of less harmful fixings and a more compatible approach with the original structural elements.

Kitchen

- In addition to the details provided for the sump pump, details of the extractor and a section elevation for the new serving opening between the kitchen and sitting room are required

Dressing room

- Subject to the details of new oak floorboards, including how to be fixed over the existing floor joists, is required.

Bathroom

- Details of the removable shelving, tile vent/extractor system are required,

Attic

- Further information and clarification are required for the second paragraph about the works to the party wall that includes modern materials again.

Planning Officer note: Following the provision of further information received on 22/04/2026 (outlined in "Plans/Information considered" section above), the Conservation Officer confirmed that no further objection, subject to conditions.

One site notice was displayed on 10/02/2026 in front of the application site. The 21-day consultation period ended on 03/03/2026. No letters of representation have been received.



Site Notice

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.

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

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

EN1: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

EN3: ENHANCEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS

EN18: FLOODING AND SUSTAINABLE DRAINAGE SYSTEMS

Other

St Peters Conservation Area Appraisal 2018

Local Plan Update

The current version of the Local Plan (adopted in November 2019) turned five years old on Tuesday 5th November 2024. The Local Plan was reviewed in March 2023 and around half of the policies in the plan are considered still up to date. However, the rest need to be considered for updating to reflect changing circumstances and national policy. A pre-submission draft was submitted to the Secretary of State on the 9th of May 2025 and is currently at examination.

Although there is a five-year period for carrying out a review of a plan after it is adopted, nothing in the NPPF or elsewhere says that policies automatically become “out of date” when they are five years old. It is a matter of planning judgement rather than legal fact whether a plan or policies within it are out-of-date. This will depend on whether they have been overtaken by things that have happened since the plan was adopted, either on the ground or through changes in national policy, for example.

Officer advice in respect of the Local Plan policies pertinent to this application listed above is that they remain in accordance with national policy and that the objectives of those policies remains very similar in the draft updated Local Plan. Therefore, they can continue to be afforded weight in the appraisal below and are not considered to be ‘out of date’.

6. APPRAISAL

Protection and Enhancement of the Listed Building

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 similarly requires development to enhance the appearance and significance of conservation areas. Policy EN 18 states that where development in areas at risk of flooding is necessary, it will not reduce the capacity of the flood plain to store floodwater, impede the flow of floodwater or in any way increase the risks to life and property arising from flooding. Wherever possible, development should be designed to reduce flood risk, both on- and off-site.

Since the site is located within Flood Zone 2 and the internal floor level is lower than the street level, the property is vulnerable to frequent flooding. According to the submitted Heritage Impact Statement, most of the existing suspended timber floor structure and the gypsum plaster finishes at the ground floor level have already been removed due to their poor condition, resulting from age and repeated flooding.

The proposed works include new suspended timber floors throughout the ground floor, with an oak floor finish, except for the hall, where a linoleum finish is proposed. Most walls would be replastered. The front walls of the snug and sitting room would be lined with timber studwork and Gyproc plasterboard, finished with a gypsum plaster skim coat and paint. The front wall of the entrance lobby would be replastered in lime plaster to allow for a breathable paint finish. In addition, the proposed installation of a sump and pump beneath is intended to remove surface water following future flood events.

Given the site’s location within Flood Zone 2 and its susceptibility to frequent flooding, the replacement of floor materials and replastering of the walls are considered acceptable. Furthermore, the installation of a sump and pump is considered a positive intervention, as it would help protect the listed building fabric from significant damage arising from future flooding.

The remainder of the proposed works, including new floor finishes and wall plaster at the first floor level, as well as the repainting of ceilings at both floor levels, are considered to be sensitively designed and would have minimal impact on the historic fabric and significance of the listed building.

Overall, the proposed development is considered to comply with Policies EN1, EN3 and EN18 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

7. CONCLUSION

The proposal has been assessed in relation to national and locally adopted policies and is considered in accordance with those policies.

8. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

Recommended conditions:

1. The works hereby permitted shall begin no later than three years from the date of this consent.
REASON: In accordance with Section 18 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended by section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
2. The works to the Listed Building hereby permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the following approved plans or specifications:
 - front wall build-up, received 17/04/2026.
 - 25-005-22A - Scheme Proposals - Construction Details, received 22/04/2026.
 - 25-005-23A - Scheme Proposals - Ventilation Extract Fan Details, received 22/04/2026.
 - 25-005-21B - Scheme Proposals - Floor Layout Plans with finishes, received 22/04/2026.
 - 25-005-20B - Scheme Proposals - Floor Layout Plans with M&E positions, received 22/04/2026.
 - 1327_aquatank-specification-sheet-compressed, received 22/04/2026.
 - 2134_aquatank190s-data-sheet, received 22/04/2026.REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the Listed Building Consent hereby approved Policy EN1 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.
3. All external and internal works of making good, including brick repointing, to the retained fabric shall match the existing adjacent work with regard to the methods used and to material, colour, texture and profile. All such works and finishes shall be maintained as such thereafter.
REASON: In order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building in accordance with Policy EN1 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.