



DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT revA

146 Southampton Street, Reading, RG1 2RD

Prepared for: Mr Ezechukwu

The purpose of this report is to accompany a planning or Listed Building application. A DAS provides a framework for applicants to explain how a proposed development is a suitable response to the site and its setting, and demonstrate that it can be adequately accessed by prospective users

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Job number: 2138
146 Southampton Street, Reading, RG1 2RD

1. INTRODUCTION

Project Address: 146 Southampton Street, Reading, RG1 2RD

Local Authority: Reading Borough Council

Conservation Area: None

Current Building Use: Residential – single dwelling - Derelict

Proposed Building Use: Residential – Single dwelling

Listing Status: Grade II List entry no. 1113587

Project Overview:

The extension and refurbishment of an existing derelict Listed house. New off street parking and external landscaping.



View of front elevation (northeast elevation)

2. SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The site sits half a mile south of the town of Reading along the A327 Southampton Street. It is set back from the road in an elevated position behind a long garden on the western side, halfway between West Hill and Chesterman Street.

It is part of a group of Listed Buildings (142, 144, 146), all set back from the road and similar in architectural detailing. The front has a grey brick with red brick detailing around the windows and entrance. The second entrance doors appear to be a later additions evidenced on the external brickwork detailing. The timber sliding sash windows are a mix of Victorian and Georgian in style. The roof has a parapet edge detail with a pitched slate roof. The property is two storey plus loft accommodation.

The rear of the building has a traditional gutter detail and is a red brick. There is a sloping side roof over the existing entrance hall which has failed and is covered in tarpaulin. The rear windows vary in age, some Georgian and some Victorian and are traditional timber sashes. There is evidence of past single storey extensions to the property. There is a single storey WC projection and a single storey kitchen projection to the rear, both of brick construction.

The rear garden is terraced in nature and contains a well and a number of small fruit trees. It is surrounded on all sides by residential properties.

The property is currently derelict and uninhabitable. It is the subject of anti social behaviour.



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Images taken from Google Earth to illustrate context

3. PLANNING HISTORY

None Available

4. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Use and Amount:

The building doesn't currently have purpose and appears to have been uninhabitable for a considerable period of time. Its last known use was as a single residential dwelling. Despite the best efforts to secure the property it is currently subject to frequent break ins and antisocial behaviour. The proposals bring it back into functional use as a single family home as was its original design intent. The proposed home has a gross internal area of 236m² across 2 storeys and loft space, 56m² more than the existing property.

This has been reduced from the previous application as the second floor extension is reduced to set it back from the front elevation. Roof dormers have been omitted from the proposals also, as has the proposed garden room.

Layout and Scale:

At present the internal spaces fail to function efficiently with bedrooms leading off other rooms. This appears to have been from a historic use as a lodging house and not its historic layout. Many of the internal spaces seem to have been adjusted between 1911 and 1939 when the property seemed to change from a single family home to a lodging house. It is likely that the additional front door was added at this time. There is also a lack of proper kitchen and bathroom provision which is rectified in the scheme. We would like to revert the functionality back to a single family home.

The switching of the front door and window on the front elevation improve the functionality and accessibility of the dwelling without loss of historic material. We believe that their set back nature means that this can be achieved without negative impact upon the building character.

At the rear, the 28m² single storey extension covers an area that is evidenced as having been covered in the past. It provides an open plan kitchen diner with a positive relationship to the garden. This can be a lightweight glass link to ensure that visibility to the original building façade can be maintained.

The first floor layout is resolved by converting the front two rooms into one bedroom suite with dressing room and ensuite accessed through a good sized double bedroom. This solution allows the existing stairwell to be retained. The other 2 double bedrooms are provided with similar dressing rooms/walk-in wardrobes and ensembles in the new proposed side extension (28m² new floor space). We had looked at omitting the second floor extension entirely but that reduces the property bedrooms by 1no. and drops the property below a value that makes it viable for development, given its poor condition, as well as below a functional purpose for the family that are looking to live there.

The extension is designed to sit subserviently below the existing ridge line and substantially set back behind the existing front parapet retaining the front appearance of the dwelling. It is set back 2.5m from the front elevation of the house and designed to operate around the neighbours rather unusual side window which is possibly unofficial. The glazing closest to the adjoining property will be obscured glass so not to cause privacy issues. This space, in combination with existing provide room 4 double bedrooms with the option of the ground floor study acting as a guest overflow bedroom.

Scale Height and Mass:

There is no proposed increase in the existing ridge height of the host dwelling and the new extension sits well below the existing level. The new roof will sit beside the existing chimney structure.

The new extensions are designed to be subservient to the host dwelling whilst enhancing its functionality. The extensions are proportional to the host dwelling creating a sympathetic design.

Landscaping:

To the front, alongside lawned garden areas, a new parking area is proposed and positioned to minimise impact on category B trees. The parking space is set behind planted areas so not to have a visual impact from the street. To the back renewed landscaping to the derelict back garden is provided. All of the properties boundary walls will be repaired as they are in a poor condition at present.

Although trees are need to be removed in order to facilitate the new parking area replacement this is kept to a minimum and preserves the silver birch at the front of the property which was the subject of much discussion during the last application. There is a no dig approach to the driveway. Refer to separate tree consultant reporting.

Appearance:

The proposals seek to preserve and repair the existing derelict building elevations allowing it to again contribute positively to the streetscene. The new proposed rooflights are to be conservation rooflights and are visually set behind the front parapet. The materials chosen are reflective of those found on the existing property.

Access and Parking:

Because the property is situated on a main road through Reading, the new parking area is necessary to improve functionality to a family dwelling and avoid the home becoming a HMO like many others in the immediate local area including its neighbour. This can be done whilst retaining a front boundary wall which acts as part of the building character setting. By providing sufficient space for a car to be turned within the property boundary, the functionality is further improved by allowing cars to both enter and leave in a forward gear. The space also allows electric vehicle car charging to be provided, improving the sustainability of the site.

There is a bus lane running to the front of the property and therefore the parking of a single car with car charging is a basic requirement for both the viability of the construction works for access and skips and the accessibility of the dwelling long term. The family have a child that cannot walk a substantial distance if parked on a neighbouring road and there is no pull in opportunity at the property due to the bus lane being present. A single accessible parking space with turning allows its functionality as a family dwelling, a positive for the building long term.

After much discussion at the last application the proposed drawings were considered to be acceptable by the Highways officer allowing entering and egress in a forward gear, Reserving out onto a buss lane with limited visibility is not an acceptable approach.

Sustainable Development:

The proposal aims to bring this currently uninhabitable property back into use and ensure the sustainable conservation of a Listed property. The proposals enhance the green credentials of the existing property by proposing vapour permeable insulation to the existing roof and insulated lime plaster to the interior of the external walls. Secondary glazing and draught proofing to the existing windows will also enhance the thermal properties without heritage harm.

Green technologies to meet some of the properties energy demands are proposed to be included including an ASHP and solar panels to the flat roof. Both have been located sympathetically so not to cause heritage harm.

Character and Appearance of the Area:

The proposals seek to preserve and repair the front elevation allowing it to continue to contribute positively to the streetscene. At present the building is derelict, subject to anti social behaviour and having a negative impact upon the character of the local area as a result. The refurbishment of the property and high quality investment in its fabric as a single family dwelling will seek to ensure positive high quality investment in the property for future years and an enhancement to the character and appearance of the area.

Amenity – Impact on Neighbours:

The new extensions are designed so not to cause overlooking or overshadowing issues for the neighbouring properties. The side extension is set back from the rear elevation of the house and designed to operate around the neighbours rather unusual, and possibly unofficial side window. New windows in this location will be obscured in nature.

The existing derelict house is having a detrimental impact upon the neighbouring properties.

Cycle Provision:

The Proposal includes a bike store with space for 2 Electric bikes to comply with Reading Council cycle parking guidance. This is delicately screened with planting to ensure that it does not cause visual harm to the heritage setting.

Refuse Provision:

A bin store with space for 3 wheelie bins is provided in the front garden. This is delicately screened with planting to ensure that it does not cause visual harm to the heritage setting.

Archaeology:

The site is known to have been developed between 1802 and 1840 as Reading expanded. The area is understood to have been agricultural land prior to development however it is a short distance from the historic core of Reading so there is some archaeological potential for the site.

The proposals largely disturb previously developed ground and are unlikely to have an impact on below ground archaeology. The exception is any minor excavation for a front parking area which may require archaeological monitoring due to the proximity to Reading historic core. This we feel can be covered by a planning condition. Refer to the Heritage Statement.

Ecology:

A PEA and follow up survey is submitted as apart of this application.

The following habitat creation and enhancement opportunities can be incorporated into the proposed development to provide additional foraging and commuting habitat for hedgehogs:

- Native wildflowers could be planted within the bare ground along the southeastern site boundary
- Additional native hedgerow could be planted along site boundaries
- Native shrubs could be planted within designated flower beds on site

5. CONCLUSION

The proposals have been reduced and adjusted following the refusal of PL/25/1263 and PL/25/1265. The parking and front landscaping was considered to be acceptable in the last application after much discussion and is included again. The second floor extension is substantially cut back from the front elevation to the minimum possible to ensure that a bedroom is not lost to the scheme which then would threaten its core viability. This extension now has a much lower ridge and a 2.5m set back to ensure that it is not visible from the street.

Overall the proposals bring a derelict Listed Building back into a high quality use as a single family dwelling extending the viable lifespan of the property. They provide a clear public benefit of bringing an existing derelict residential property back into use again from being non functional adding to the much needed family housing provision in a sustainable location. They also restore a derelict Listed building within a prominent residential area that is currently the subject of antisocial behaviour and visually harmful to the character of the area. The restoration of non functional built heritage is also a public benefit.

The proposed extensions are designed to be sympathetic and compliment the host building in regards to their siting, scale, materiality and detailing to ensure that functionality is maximised whilst ensuring that we achieve a positive heritage balance. The original building form remains legible and the extensions are not overbearing sitting below existing ridgelines. The extensions retain key features like the existing chimneys and external parapets in place. They respond sensitively to the built form in the local area.

The existing roof will be repaired and new sympathetically designed dormers installed retaining the existing eaves details. Any rooflights will be conservation rooflights with a low profile. There is little change to the building from the streetscene apart from positive building restoration and the existing front boundary wall will be repaired.

There is no risk of loss of light or overshadowing from the proposals and the proposals are not considered to be overbearing to neighbours.

The extensions and proposed landscaping enhance the quality of the amenity space available to the property. Often detrimental features such as cycle storage and bin storage have also been carefully considered to ensure they sit well within the heritage setting.

New accessible parking for one car with electric charging is proposed to tip the balance from the option of an HMO to a sustainable family dwelling and ensure the visibility of the construction which isn't feasible without it due to the presence of the bus lane. This have been done by balancing the needs of the heritage setting, the highways standards for turning and the needs of the trees on the site. The silver birch to the front of the property, subject of a TPO, is proposed for retention.

Designs overall have been adjusted from the past refusal with the historic fabric in mind and evolved through a pre app consultation with the local authority with the needs of the Listed building sitting centrally to discussions.

Overall we feel that the designs meet with both the requirements of the local planning authority and the NPPF and should be supported.