



HERITAGE STATEMENT rev01

146 Southampton Street, Reading, RG1 2RD

Prepared for: Mr Ezechukwu

The purpose of this report is to accompany a planning and LBC application . A heritage statement sets out the details of the history and development of the asset using photographic, map, archival and fabric evidence. It includes an assessment of the evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal value of the heritage asset and the impact of the proposed works upon that significance. In addition to desk based research a site visit was carried out as part of this assessment and a non intrusive survey took place.

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

Heritage Asset and its Setting:

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

Local Authority: Reading Borough Council

Conservation Area: None

Archaeological Notification Area: None

Building Use: Residential

Listing Status: Grade II List entry no. 1113587

Designated Heritage Asset:

Scheduled Monument?	N
Listed Building?	Y
Registered Park and Garden	N
Historic Battlefield	N
Conservation Area	N
World Heritage Site	N

Non Designated Heritage Asset	N
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Project Overview:

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



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Photo 1 – View of front elevation (northeast elevation)



Photo 2-4 – View of front elevation

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Photo 5-8 – Close-up view of entrance ways and windows on front elevation

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Photo 9 -14 – View of interior on first floor (?)

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Photo 15 and 16 – View of the interior on the second floor (?)



Photo 17-19 – View of the interior on the ground floor

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Photo 20-26 – View of the rear elevation (southwest elevation)

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Photo 27-30 – View of the rear elevation and current extension



Photo 31 – View the rear exit (?)



Photo 32 – View of an old well (?)

Project background and reason for the project:

The house was purchased at auction in a derelict uninhabitable condition. It has no functioning kitchens or bathrooms. There are large holes in the main roof and the side roof is currently constructed of sheets of plastic at the rear. A condition report has been provided for the property as part of this application.

It appears that internally someone has started extensive building work including rewiring but then stopped. It is not believed this stoppage was the result of enforcement action or finance. There is no known searchable planning history on the property but it is understood to have been previously owned by a council planning officer. It is not clear if the building was previously a mixed use of commercial and residential use as there are two entrance doors but the evidence available seems to illustrate that it was once a single dwelling, then converted into a lodging house before returning back into use as a single dwelling. The pre app with the council cast no additional light on this.

There is a wish to bring the building back into functional use as a single family dwelling and restore the buildings fabric, making it watertight again. We would like to build a single storey rear extension as an open plan kitchen dining space and provide a replacement two storey side extension, set substantially back behind the existing parapet to improve the functionality of the upper floors whilst preserving the street scene.

The client has cleared vegetation from the front and rear garden allowing good access to all areas but no building work has taken place.

We opened a dialogue about the potential project with the council covering issues such as parking and the potential extensions. This planning submission has been revised reducing the second floor extension and removing the dormers after a refusal under application PL/25/1265 Lbc & PL/25/1263 Full. These addressed any heritage concerns raised. Design developments that were supported during the application in relation to the driveway and trees and been retained. It should be noted that the heritage officer considered that the heritage officer determined the previous designs to cause 'Less than Substantial harm' but considered that the public benefits were not defined sufficiently enough. We believe that the buildings current poor state to be substantially harmful as is its non functioning nature. We believe this building to be 'heritage at risk' and without restoration works to make it watertight and functional again that it will be lost as a heritage asset. This in itself is a substantial heritage benefit.

Schedule of Intervention:

In order to achieve the works, the following alterations/ interventions will be required:

New finishes, sanitaryware and services throughout. New kitchen.
New pocket underfloor heating system between existing joists.
New insulating lime plaster to interior of external walls.
New secondary glazing to existing windows. Existing windows refurbished and draught exclusion strips fitted.
Repair existing external sills like for like.
Like for like repair and redecoration of existing render to front porch area.
Repair and insulate existing roof.
Renew existing lead flashings throughout.
Renew perished lime render band to existing front parapet.
Renew existing rainwater goods with powder coated aluminium heritage goods.
Small scale repairs to external brickwork and existing pointing with like for like lime mortar.
Repair existing timber floors like for like.

Front Garden area:

- New off street parking area (permeable) for one car with EV charging point. Turning space to be able to enter and exit the site in a forward gear.
- Bin and bike storage.
- Repair front boundary wall.
- Retain from Silver Birch with TPO

Rear Garden Area:

- Relandscaping including new patio area.
- Repair single storey greenhouse.
- Repair of the existing side garden walls.

Ground Floor:

- Switching of the existing front door (LHS) and window (appears to have been switched in the past)
- New entrance hall with coat storage and GF WC.
- Reception rooms with reinstatement of fireplaces.
- Conversion of the existing rear kitchen projection into a larder and utility room.
- Removal of projecting wc extension.
- Single storey rear extension to provide an open plan kitchen diner.
- New balustrade to existing staircase
- Widen existing doorway to provide an alcove desk area within the GF Study/ Spare bedroom.
- Sealing up of the existing side door but retention visually from the exterior.
- Refurbishment of existing front windows.
- Replace missing timber ground floor.

First Floor:

- New master bedroom with dressing room and ensuite linked by new door opening.
- Creation of new dressing room and ensuite to existing bedroom.
- Refurbishment of existing windows.

Second floor:

- Set back minimal extension. New ensembles to serve the two bedrooms.
- New conservation rooflights hidden behind the front parapet.
- Refurbishment of the existing windows.

Setting Overview/ Context:

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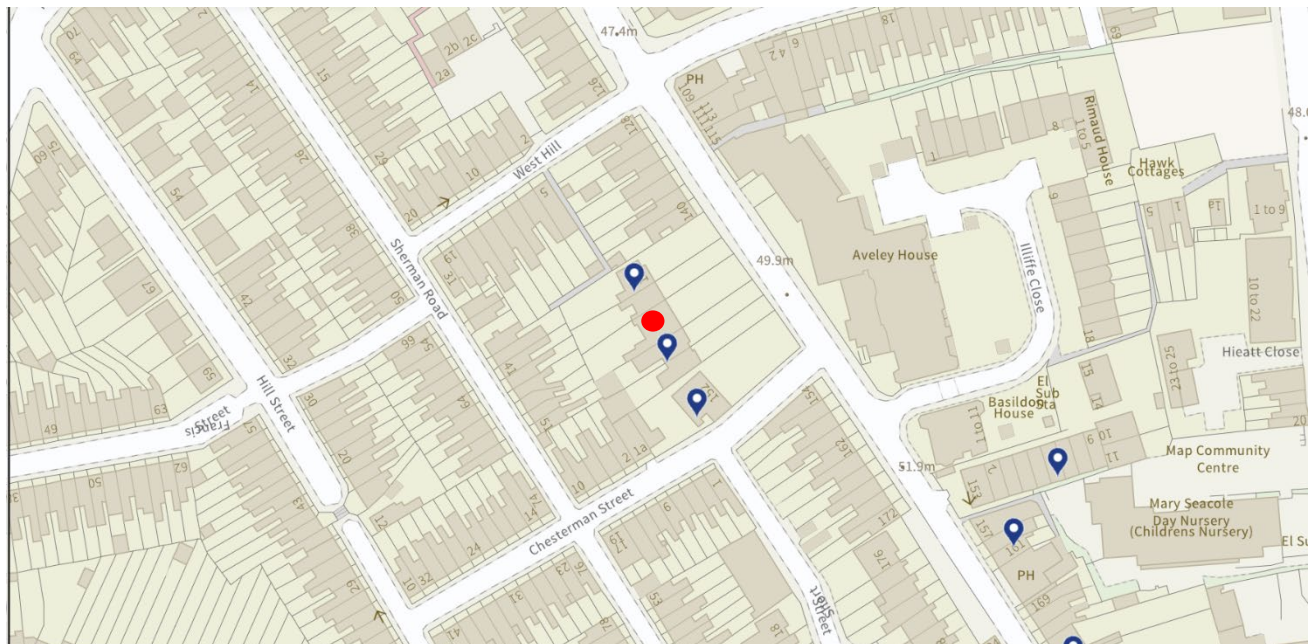
The site sits half a mile south of the town of Reading along the A327 Southampton Street. It is set back from the road in an elevated position behind a long garden on the western side, halfway between West Hill and Chesterman Street.

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 trees. It is surrounded on all sides by residential properties.

Setting: Urban Area



Map taken from Historic England Listing Database. Property shown with a red dot.

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Site Planning History:

None Available

Impacted Heritage Assets:

The building sits neither within nor just outside a Conservation Area.

The building is Grade II Listed.

Official list entry

Heritage Category: Listed Building Grade: II List Entry Number: 1113587
Date first listed: 14-Dec-1978
List Entry Name: 142-146, SOUTHAMPTON STREET
Statutory Address 1: 142-146, SOUTHAMPTON STREET

Location

Statutory Address: 142-146, SOUTHAMPTON STREET
District: Reading (Unitary Authority)
Parish: Non Civil Parish
National Grid Reference: SU 71741 72675

Details

SOUTHAMPTON STREET 1. 5128 (West Side) Nos 142 to 146 (even) SU 7172 NE 4/250 II GV 2. Mid C19. 2 storeys, Nos 144 and 146 with attic. Stucco cornice. Parapets. Slate roofs, part hipped. Long front gardens to street. No 142, 2 modern casements, former datestone removed, lower extension to right. Nos 144 and 146 a 3 window pair, grey brick headers with red dressings and paired doors in centre. No 144 has glazing bar sashes. 2 course band over first floor. 1 window wing to left with chequered parapet and a 2 arch loggia with rubbed brick arches on ground floor and set back door to left, round headed window to right.
Listing NGR: SU7174172675

The building is within the context of several Listed Buildings (see above and below).

Official list entry

Heritage Category: Listed Building Grade: II List Entry Number: 1277768
Date first listed: 14-Dec-1978
List Entry Name: 148 AND 150, SOUTHAMPTON STREET
Statutory Address 1: 148 AND 150, SOUTHAMPTON STREET

Location

Statutory Address: 148 AND 150, SOUTHAMPTON STREET
District: Reading (Unitary Authority)
Parish: Non Civil Parish
National Grid Reference: SU 71750 72656

Details

SOUTHAMPTON STREET 1. 5128 (West Side) Nos 148 and 150 SU 7172 NE 4/577 II GV 2. Mid C19 pair continued from Nos 142-146 (even). 2½ storeys. Red brick with stucco cornice and parapet. Slate roof. 3 bays. Set back centre. Side breaks have (No 148) gabled attic and (No 150) ½ hipped attic. Glazing bar sash windows. Paired doors in centre filling recess with plain porches. No 148 has spearhead rails with ornamental bars to gate.
Listing NGR: SU7175072656

Assessment of Significance:

Heritage has cultural, social, economic and environmental values. The attributes that combine to define the significance of a historic building can relate to its physical properties or to its context. – BS 7913:2013.

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance – NPPF

We have used the following levels and definitions within this report to grade 'Significance':

Level	Meaning
Exceptional	National or international importance
High	Strong regional or national value
Moderate	Local importance with some wider interest
Low	Limited heritage value but still contributes
Neutral/Negative	No heritage value or detracts from significance

Archeological: *As defined in the Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework, there will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.*

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 area of ground proposed for extension is however extensively disturbed and unlikely to be of high archaeological value.

The area of ground to the front of the property may be of a higher archaeological value however is likely to be of made up ground.

Level Assigned: Low

Historic: *An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.*

Reading appears to have not expanded on the mapping as far south as the site in 1660 and was illustrated as being historically agricultural land.

The property does not appear to be on the mapping in 1802.

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The group of buildings in the local area first appear on the mapping in the 1840s and has market gardens recorded behind. There was also a large brick kiln, Katesgrove Kiln, located between the site and the River Kennet. At this point there are buildings on the plot by they don't appear to be in the current location.

They first appear in their current location on maps in 1855 and appear to be a single house. The row of houses including no 146 Southampton St also appear on the 1879 mapping, again showing as a single house with an extension to the rear which now no longer exists. The boundary lines appear as they exist now. The paths seem to illustrate the route to 2 different doors on the front at this point.

By 1881 the census records the property as being the home of Ann Pinfold and her son. It was Listed as a Lodging House. It is likely by this point that the staircase that exists now was put in and the additional GF door existed.

By 1891 the property was no longer a lodging house and was occupied by a gardener and his wife and daughters who were all dressmakers seemingly a single house again.

By 1911 it was known as The Limes and was still a family home.

By 1939 in the census it was recorded to be occupied by 9 adults (2 married couples and 6 individuals), all with low status jobs, so is presumed to be used again as rented/ lodging accommodation.

The property is currently vacant and derelict and appears to have been so for a considerable but unknown period of time.

The original layout is very difficult to work out particularly since there has been numerous switches between a single home and a lodging house over its history. The split window on the front elevation and pair of doors below seems to indicate that it was once a larger property with 144, now split in two and that possibly the two doors were once a central entrance with a much larger staircase in this area. The chimney positioning externally also seems to support this theory, visually sitting on the gable ends of the potential original property.

There is little in the mapping available however that supports this theory which is where the puzzle lies. What is clear however is the original layout was lost likely by 1879 and each of the properties evolved separately after that under separate owners both subject to substantial change. What is also clear from the census records is that this wasn't a wealthy part of town and many of the adaptations may not have been official in their nature.

Level: Moderate

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Architectural or Artistic: *These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.*

The building has an interesting and characterful appearance from the streetscene once contributing positively from an architectural perspective to the local area. It is however derelict and no longer a positive contributor as a result. The building is not in a Conservation Area. The property has clearly been substantially altered over time, and a substantial time ago. It is currently in a poor state of repair which reduces its significance and visual contribution to the streetscene.

Someone in the past has stripped out internal finishes so there is little remaining of decorative fabric.

The buildings materiality and detailing is reflective of the local Reading vernacular and has group architectural value with its neighbours.

The rear elevation is also in a very poor condition and has also undergone much alteration and a series of poor quality of repairs. Many of the older windows and details however remain in place. It is of a lower significance visually than the front elevation and shows signs of previously having had an extension at the rear.

Level assigned: Moderate.

Communal Value: *derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. Communal values are closely bound up with historical (particularly associative) and aesthetic values, but tend to have additional and specific aspects. The building or site may have a social or cultural importance to a community, a spiritual or symbolic meaning or a role in collective memory or identity:*

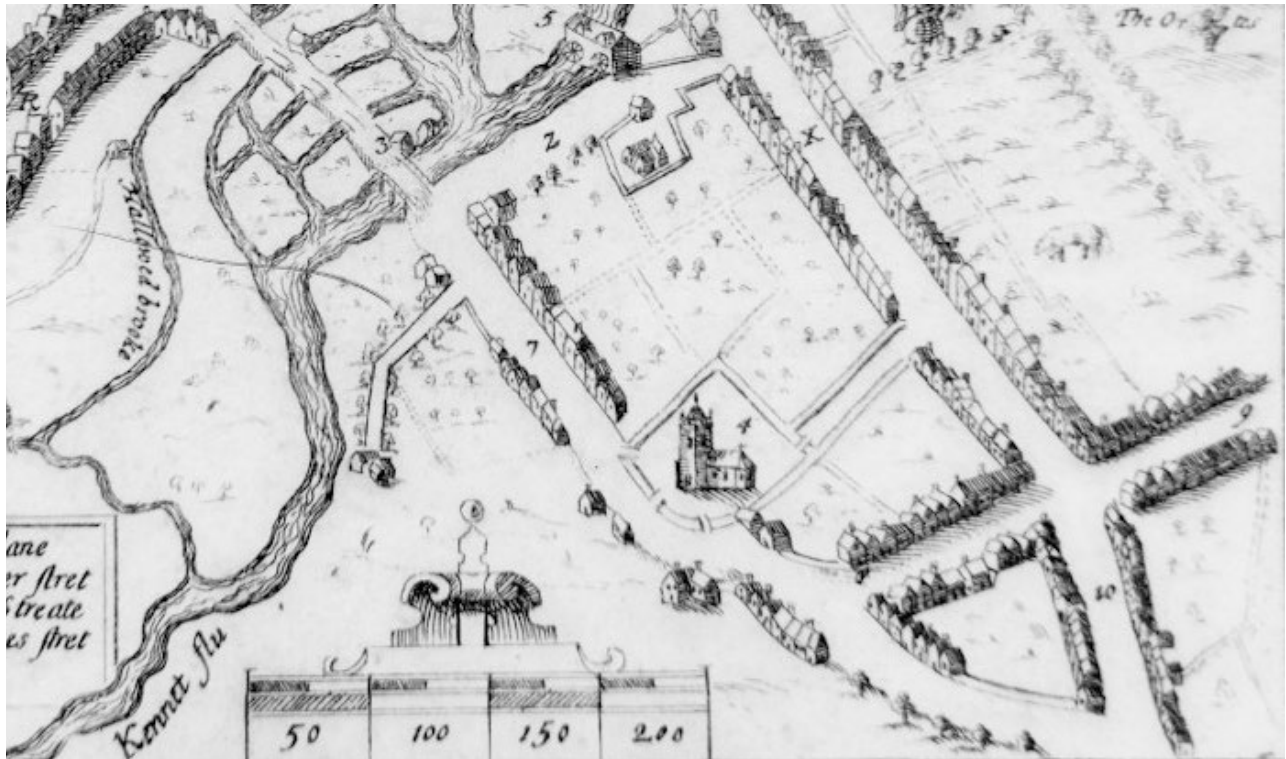
The building has little communal value however visually contributes to the group value of its neighbors.

Level Assigned: Low

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Historic Mapping – For reference dating only, not for reproduction



Extract from Reading in 1660 John Speed – Reading Records Office



Extract from Map of Reading 1802

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Extract from New Plan of Reading 1840



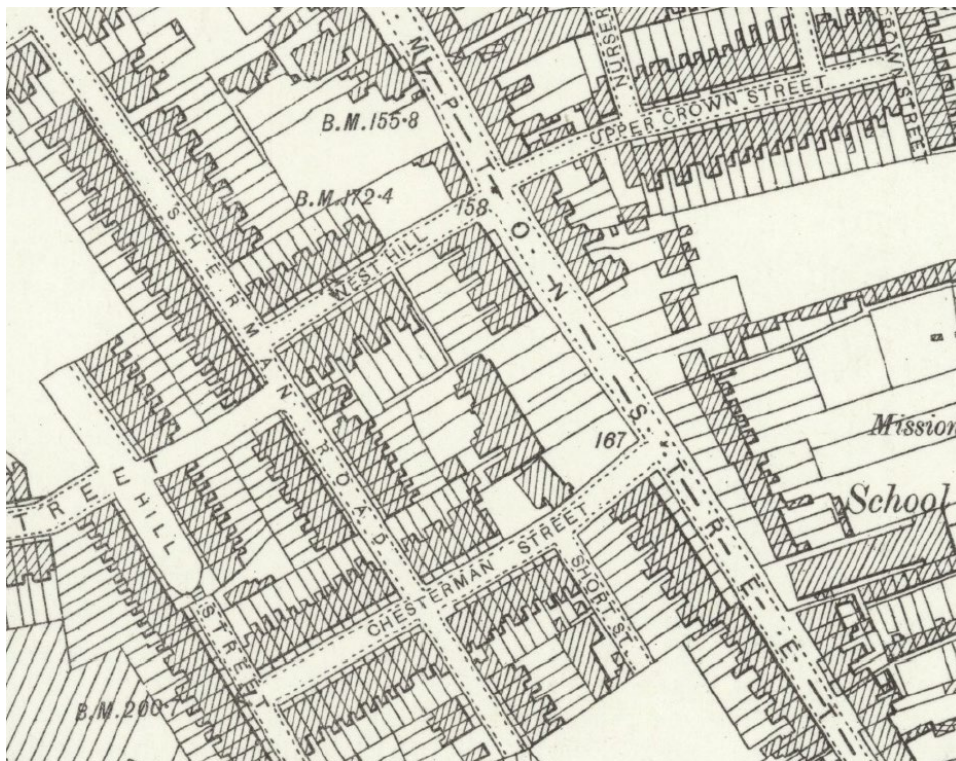
Extract from Reading Survey Sheet 27 1857

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Extract from Reading Berkshire XXXVII.3.24 1879



Extract from Berkshire XXXVII.3 1900

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Extract from Berkshire XXXVII.3 1912



Extract from Berkshire XXXVII.3 1934

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Extract from SU712NE-A 1957



Extract from SU712NE-A 1961

Development Impact on the Historical Asset:

An assessment of how the proposed works will affect the significance of the heritage asset and the justification for that impact.

Proposals should and do:

- 1 - Avoid, minimise and mitigate negative impact, in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF.*
- 2 - Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance.*

The level of impact is assessed as follows within this report as per the following definition:

Impact Level	Meaning
Major	Fundamental change to significance (loss or major enhancement)
Moderate	Noticeable change affecting key aspects
Minor	Small change with limited effect
Negligible	Barely perceptible change
Neutral	No effect on significance

1. Archeaology:

The intervention disturb little historic fabric and is likely to have little impact upon archaeological potential due to the location of the proposed rear extension which has been extensively disturbed in the past.

Impact: Negligible

2. Historical:

The proposals do not obscure the understanding of the asset's story. They seek to preserve room layouts with minimal intervention. The proposals seek to ensure that the existing building remains visually dominant.

Impact: Minor

3. Architectural/ Aesthetic/Artistic:

The proposals do not alter key views, the character, materiality, or the craftsmanship of the existing property.

Building Elevations and Setting: The proposals seek to preserve and repair the front elevation allowing it to once again contribute positively to the streetscene and to the architectural cluster of historic buildings along the road. The new proposed rooflights are to be conservation rooflights and are visually set behind the front parapet.

The new parking with car charging improves functionality and accessibility and is needed if it is going to avoid becoming an HMO as many of the others in the immediate local area. It is also a base need for the viability of the build for access due to the presence of the bus lane to the front of the site. Closure or diversion of this for

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skips or construction access makes the project financially unviable. This can be done whilst retaining a front boundary wall and tree. Electric vehicle car charging can be provided to improve the sustainability credentials.

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. The openings appear to match and it may actually be reverting back a historic situation.

At the rear the single storey extension covers an area that is evidenced as having been covered by extension 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 new proposed side extension is designed to sit subserviently in terms of ridge height and substantially set back behind the existing front parapet by 2.5m retaining the front appearance of the dwelling but giving logic to the functionality of each of the floors. It is set back from the rear elevation of the house and designed to operate around the neighbours rather unusual and possibly unofficial side window. The glazing to the glazed set back will be obscured glass so not to cause privacy issues.

The new extensions are designed so not to cause overlooking or overshadowing issues for the neighbouring properties.

All of the properties boundary walls will be repaired as they are in a poor condition at present which will enhance the Listed Building setting and restore some of its character.

Internally: At present the internal spaces fail to function efficiently with bedrooms leading off other rooms. Many of the internal spaces seem to have been adjusted by 1871 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 as part of this function. We would like to revert the functionality back to a single family home whilst retaining the Victorian staircase so that the rooms can be logically accessed.

There is also a lack of proper kitchen and bathroom provision which is rectified in the scheme.

The side extension is a base requirement for functionality otherwise the number of bedrooms reduces by 1 and due to the poor state of the property and large refurbishment costs the project becomes unviable as the investment far exceeds the return on value, which we suspect is why it has been sat empty for so long.

Scale and Massing: The new extensions are designed to be subservient to the host dwelling whilst enhancing its functionality. The extensions are proportional to the host dwelling and still allow the original form to be read. The extended ridge sits below that of the original one and the extension is set by 2.5m from the front elevation so that it is unseen at street level.

Impact: Minor

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4. Communal:

The proposals positively affect how people use, remember, or value the building and area by restoring a derelict building currently the subject of antisocial behavior.

Use: The building doesn't currently have purpose and appears to have been uninhabitable for a considerable period of time. The proposals bring it back into functional use as a single family home as was its original design intent in a sustainable location within an existing residential area.

The property has also been used as a lodging style accommodation historically and appears to have been altered internally for this purpose, what would now be called an HMO. Internal changes are required again to use it again as a family home. We believe that the heritage benefits of these interventions bringing it back as a useable dwelling in high quality manner substantially outweigh any minimal heritage harm by ensuring its long term conservation.

Impact: Minor

Relevant Policy:

The Government has set out its planning policies framework for the historic environment in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) outlining the framework within which local authorities should consider the importance of conserving, or enhancing aspects of the historic environment within the planning process. This was published in March 2012 and replaced in 2018, 2019, 2021, 2023 and 2024.

Conservation as defined by the NPPF is an active process of maintenance and managing change. It requires a flexible and thoughtful approach to get the best out of assets as diverse as listed buildings in every day use and as yet undiscovered, undesignated buried remains of archaeological interest.

In the case of buildings, generally the risks of neglect and decay of heritage assets are best addressed through ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation. Ensuring such heritage assets remain used and valued is likely to require sympathetic changes to be made from time to time. In the case of archaeological sites, many have no active use, and so for those kinds of sites, periodic changes may not be necessary, though on-going management remains important.

Where changes are proposed, the National Planning Policy Framework sets out a clear framework for both plan-making and decision-making in respect of applications for planning permission and Listed Building consent to ensure that heritage assets are conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner that is consistent with their significance and thereby achieving sustainable development. The National Planning Policy Framework defines a heritage asset as, 'a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets are either designated heritage assets or non-designated heritage assets.

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. 'Significance' in terms of heritage-related planning policy is defined in the Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework as the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not. The setting of a heritage asset and the asset's curtilage may not have the same extent.

The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to the visual relationship between the asset and the proposed development and associated visual/physical considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part in the assessment of impacts on setting, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust, smell and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each.

The contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights of way or an ability to otherwise access or experience that setting. The contribution may vary over time.

When assessing any application which may affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities may need to consider the implications of cumulative change. They may also need to consider the fact that developments which materially detract from the asset's significance may also damage its economic viability now, or in the future, thereby threatening its ongoing conservation.

Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of: (a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; (b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and (c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Historic England 'Conservation Principles' deem new work or alteration to be normally acceptable where the proposals do not materially harm the value of the place. They consider the setting of the heritage asset to contribute greatly to its significance. They accept that a heritage setting changes over time.

The local authority may have location specific guidance also which includes policies which seek to ensure the protection of the historic environment and that development is of a high quality and seeks to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Heritage Asset. In assessing the impact of these proposals local guidance has also been considered.

Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 196) requires that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing the optimum viable use of that asset. Where a heritage asset is capable of having a use, then securing its optimum viable use should be taken into account in assessing the public benefits of a proposed development. Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits, for example, works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit. Examples of heritage benefits may include: sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting, reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset, securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation.

Changes to the setting of historic buildings / Conservation Areas are to be sympathetic in terms of siting, proportion, scale, form, height, materials and detailing. All design work and procedures should follow guidance outlined in BS 7913:2013 Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings.

Conclusion:

The following summarises the level of Harm caused to the Significance of the heritage asset by the proposed interventions, the public benefit of those interventions and any proposed mitigation methods that can be applied to minimize or reduce harm:

	Significance Value (Exceptional, High, Moderate, Low, Neutral/Negative)	Level of Impact (Major, Moderate, Minor, Negligible/Neutral)	Mitigation of harm/ comments
Evidential/ Archaeological	Low	Negligible	
Historical	Moderate	Minor	
Architectural, Aesthetic, Artistic	Moderate	Minor	
Communal	Low	Minor	

The test of heritage harm is a critical aspect of planning decisions involving heritage assets. It involves assessing the potential impact of proposed development on the significance of a heritage asset. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) outlines three levels of harm: substantial harm, total loss, or less than substantial harm.

Substantial harm is defined as harm that would severely damage the heritage asset's significance, such as demolishing or causing long term damage to significant heritage fabric or features. Less than substantial harm is harm that falls short of being substantial, with minor or moderate impacts on an asset's significance.

We believe that the proposals are sympathetic to the existing building and its setting and cause less than substantial harm to the Listed Buildings significance, as the heritage officer agreed with in the previous application also. As such the decisionmaker must weigh the public benefits of the proposals against the harm to the heritage asset. If the public benefits significantly outweigh the harm, the proposal may be justified. This process requires careful consideration of the asset's significance and the potential impact of the proposals on its setting and features. In this instance the clear public benefit is the proactive maintenance and repair of well designed and architecturally significant Listed public building, in a prominent town centre location, preserving its architectural significance and visual contribution to the streetscene. This aligns with the councils regeneration priorities and wider planning objective.

These public benefits fall into four main categories:

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Townscape Enhancement: Repairing a derelict, particularly a Listed building removes visual blight, reinstates architectural coherence, and strengthens the established residential streetscape. The proposals restore the buildings local distinctiveness using its traditional material palette. The building is currently the subject of antisocial behavior which threatens perceived safety and the overall environmental quality for visitors. The proposals creates an enhancement to the public realm in terms of safety and wellbeing.

Housing and Social Value: The proposals bring a home back into functional use. Reoccupation of a previously derelict dwelling contributes to Reading's housing stock at a time of sustained demand in a sustainable residential area.

The proposals enhance the functionality of the property supporting its long term occupation.

Environmental Gains: the proposals reuse the existing derelict building supporting the sustainable re-use of an abandoned building. The proposals incorporate energy efficiency upgrades such as solar panels and an ASHP reducing carbon emmissions. Reviving an existing plot avoids the need for new development on greenfield land, supporting Reading's compact urban form.

Economic uplift: the restoration of a derelict building into an occupied and well-maintained home reduces opportunities for vandalism, squatting, and fly-tipping. Visible investment encourages neighbouring owners to maintain or improve their own properties, supporting wider area uplift.

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 subservient and are not overbearing. 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 rooflights 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 and tree will be retained.

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 parking for one car with electric charging is proposed to make the construction viable and affordable and the accessibility of the property viable for the occupants. 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. This is feasible using a no dig approach as confirmed by the tree consultant.

Designs overall have been produced 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.

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Overall we feel that the designs meet with the heritage requirements of the local planning authority and provides tangible public benefit to both the Listed building and its wider neighborhood setting supporting generation priorities. They follow the guidelines set by Historic England and the NPPF and should be supported by the local authority. We believe this is the last opportunity to save what we perceive to be heritage at risk.

Assessor Details:

Surveyor: Michelle Purnell BA(hons) BArch RIBA MSc Building Conservation IHBC

A site visit was undertaken as part of the site investigation in order to understand important relationships in the area surrounding the site. Weather conditions at time of visit: Dry