



UNIVERSITY OF READING – THE GREAT HALL

SASH WINDOW REFURBISHMENT

May 2023

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- It has been identified by the University of Reading that the sash windows in the Great Hall are in poor condition and require refurbishment. It is proposed that the windows will be refurbished off site.
- The windows will be removed in phases and temporary windows installed to minimise the impact on the appearance and continued use of the building.
- The specification has been produced from a survey taken at ground level whereby visual defects have been noted. An allowance has been made for the further repairs to be identified once the windows are removed and closely inspected in the workshop.
- The philosophy is to repair the windows to maintain as much of the original material as possible.
- We propose that the solution put forward for consideration in this Listed Building Consent application balances the need to mitigate risk to people using the facility against the risk of further deterioration to the existing windows. The proposed solution will allow control over the budget and repairs necessary for the windows to be maintained.
- Due to the location and usage of the building it is felt necessary to issue a pre-application planning advice with Reading Borough Council.
- The proposed works should take approximately 20 weeks.
- The application fee for a listed building under 200 square meters is £178.30.
- A site meeting can be arranged for £111.60.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Reasons for the Study and Scope

This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared by MACE group on behalf of Reading University to support the Listed Building Consent application for proposals to refurbish the sash windows in The Great Hall on the London Road Campus. The Great Hall is a Grade II listed Victorian building located on the London Campus. The Great Hall is situated in a conservation area.

Buildings are listed when they are of special architectural or historic interest, and that it is important to the local community and the cultural heritage of England. Listed buildings are part of the historic environment which should be protected for future generations.

The Great Hall was originally listed on 12TH February 1987.

The core objective of the project is the refurbishment of fourteen existing sash windows. The windows have been subject to the elements and need an overhaul to maintain the original windows and to prevent further deterioration. This refurbishment should be the start of an ongoing maintenance plan of the building. It is noted that if the windows are left untreated then there is a risk of them deteriorating further and having to be replaced for new. No requirement for Building Regulations.

The Great Hall is used on a regular basis by the students at the University and the public for events. This is an important building as is used for Graduation Ceremonies. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the University to ensure that the windows are well maintained, of good appearance, able to be used and be secure and safe. The University must mitigate any risks to the people using this building and undertake maintenance to upkeep its assets.

1.2 Background to the Proposals

The University have asked MACE to manage the removal of fourteen existing sash windows to be fully refurbished off site before being reinstated.

1.3 Approach and Methodology

This Heritage Impact Assessment have been produced to assess the impact of the proposals on this listed building. It has been formulated using the assessment methodology contained within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Regulations 2017.

A desk-based study was undertaken to provide baseline information for this assessment.

Assessment of the site was undertaken on 20th March 2023 when all photographs of the existing windows were taken that are contained in this report. The weather was dry and cold. We recently experienced a very wet spell of weather.

Due to the usage of this listed building the windows will be removed in stages and temporary windows installed (of similar appearance) as to cause minimum disruption whilst repairs are undertaken.

Due to the Great Hall being in constant use it is imperative that the works are conducted in a structured way to minimise any disruption.

Therefore, we intend to carry out the works in a phased manner. The project will require 7 phases as removing only two of the existing windows at one time and replacing with two temporary glazed windows with dummy glazing bars.

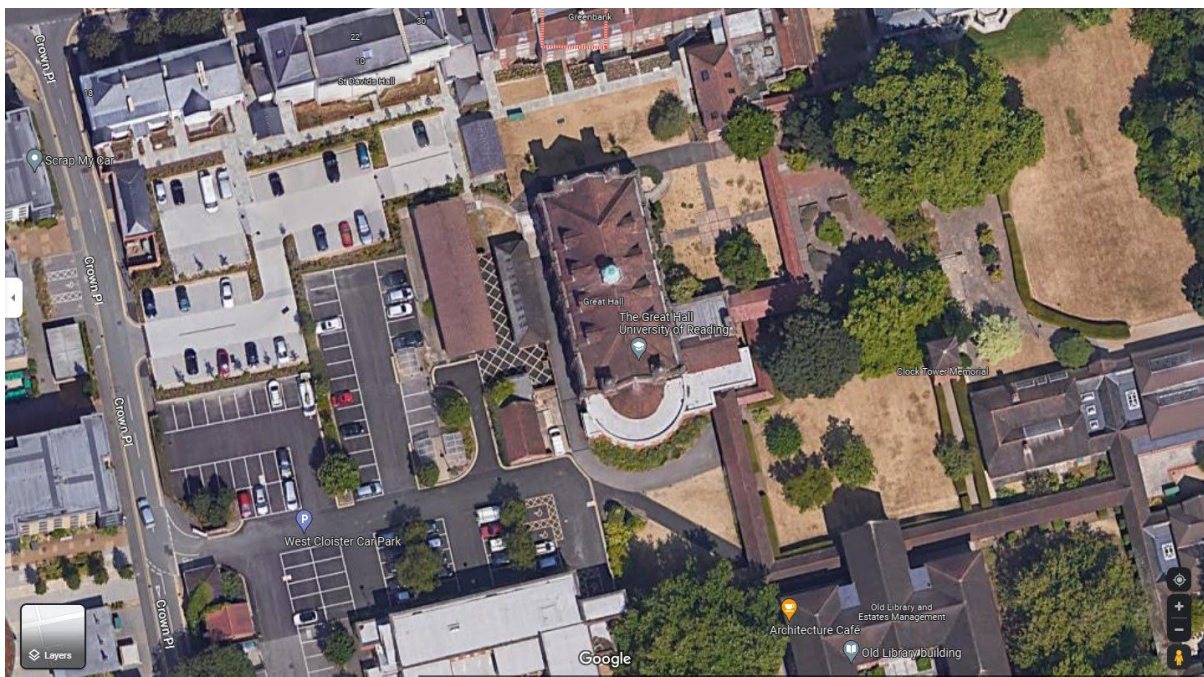
The windows will be removed to a workshop off site to be assessed for repair work.

The priority is to preserve as much as the original window where possible. The assessment will determine whether the windows require a resin repair, splice repair or renewal.

All the original glazing will be removed and refitted. Any cracked glazing will be replaced.

The windows will be decorated and adjusted accordingly.

2.0 Understanding the Site



2.1 Location and Setting

London Road Campus of Reading University is in the centre of Reading. The Campus is in a Conservation Area and comprises a number of Victorian brick-built buildings. The Great Hall is located on the side of the campus next to the Whitegate Car Park off Crown Place.

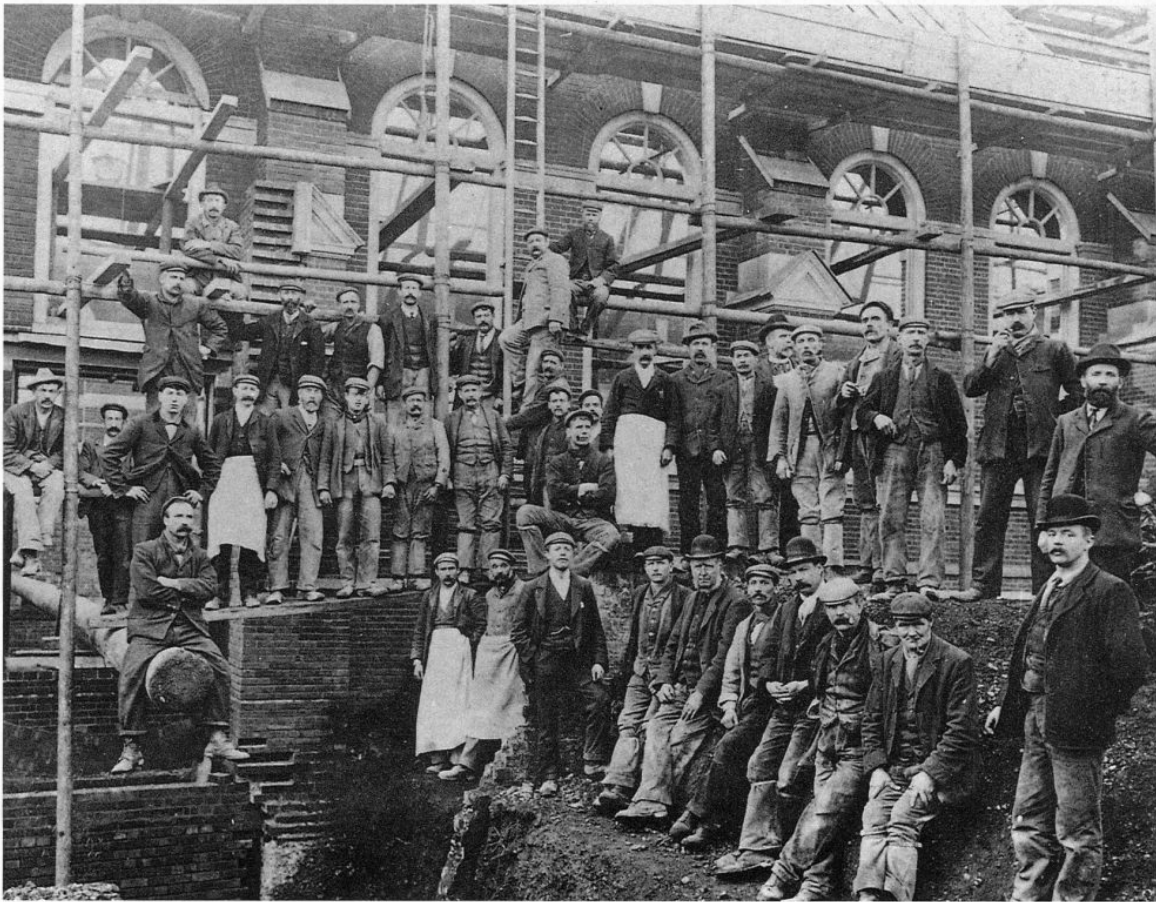
2.2 Heritage Assets

2.2.1 Listed Buildings are buildings of special architectural and historic interest which make up England's historic environment. They are protected under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The Great Hall is a Grade II Listed Building.

2.3 Site Description

The Great Hall



The original building was constructed in 1905 by C Ravenscroft and CS Smith. The red brick building with orange brick window dressings and all other dressing of Portland stone. Plain tiled roofs with four pediment – gabled dormers to each side and parapet – gables at each end containing keyed oculi and flanked by towers with rusticated corner piers with arched intradoses, cornices and squared stone cupolas. North end: very large Venetian window with stone surround and prominent keystone. Datestone below reading: THIS STONE WAS LAID/BY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE/VISCOOUNT GOSCHEN DCL FRS/CHANCELLOR/OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD/VII JUNE MCMV. Side Front Divided into six bays by brick buttresses rising to pedimented weathering's over brick panels and carrying on as shallower pilaster – buttresses after the main-wing with volute brackets to stone cornice carrying parapet ramped up to pedestals with lunette motifs. The paired arched windows between the buttresses with stone-imposed blocks and keystones, gauged heads and very tall sash windows with glazing bars. North ends of both sides have entrances with panelled doors topped by over-lights with stained glass, and stone surrounds with double orders of Doric pilasters, triglyph friezes and half-open triangular pediments over. Interior: Barrell vaulted hall with Neo-Georgian plaster decoration. The University of Reading was originally opened as an Extension-College of the University of Oxford and received its charter as a university in 1927 (British Listed Buildings).

The Great Hall today is used frequently and boasts a beautiful interior with ornate plasterwork and decorative panelling. The windows have received repairs over the years as resin repairs on the cills and splice repairs to other timbers are evident.

2.4 Management and Use

The Great Hall is managed by Rob Boreham-Fish r.d.boreham-fish@reading.ac.uk.

Tel: 0118 378 5657.

The Hall is in constant use for Graduation ceremonies and public events.

3.0 Legislation, Planning Policy, and Guidance

The legislation, policy, and guidance most relevant to this application are outlined below.

3.1 Legislation and Planning Policy

3.1.1 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The 1990 Act as amended by the Historic Environment Act 2016 designates Listed Buildings for their special architectural or historic interest. Listing gives them protection as alterations, additions or demolitions require Listed Building Consent from the local planning authority before they can proceed. Conservation Areas are also protected under Section 69 of the same act.

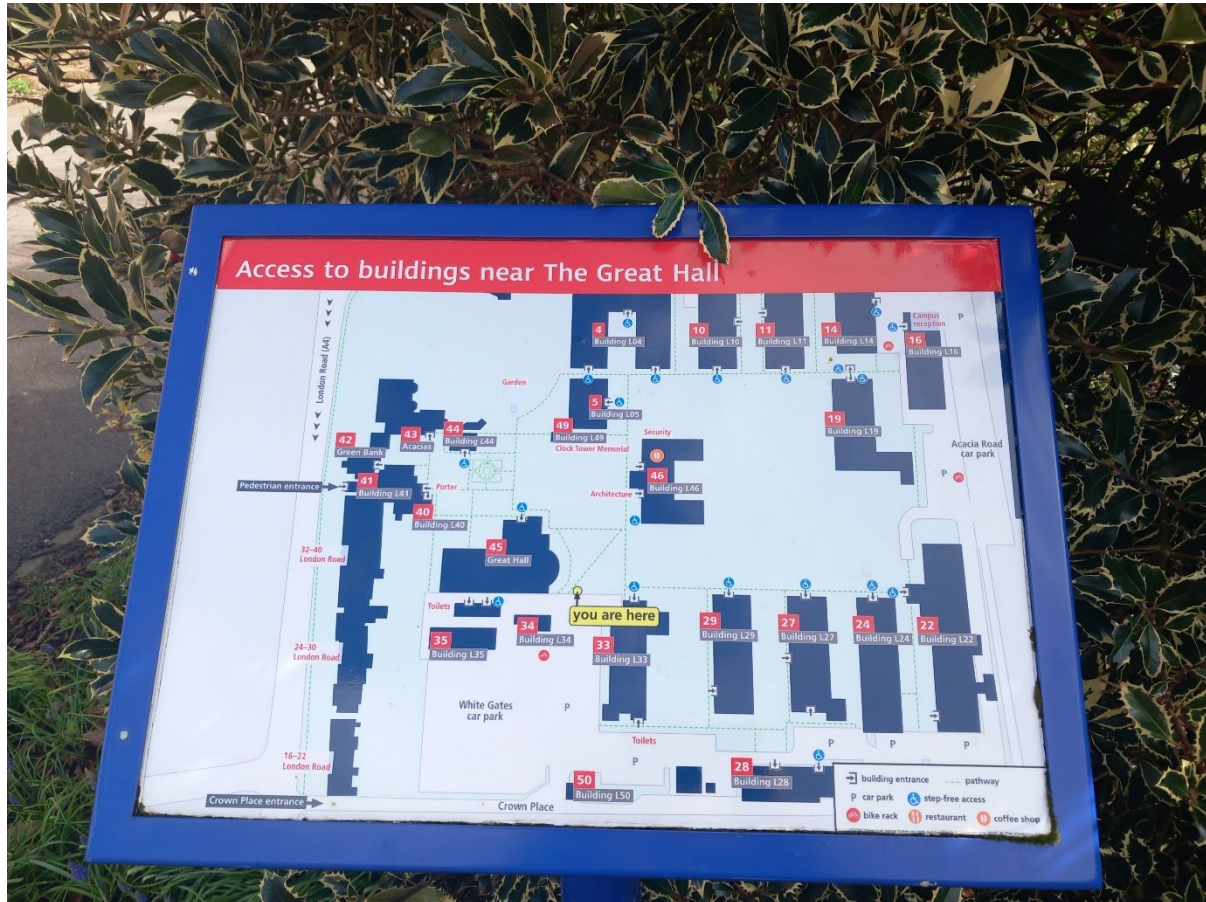
3.1.2 Planning Policy

The primary objective of Planning Policy is to ensure that the planning system contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development and improves the social, economic, environmental, and cultural well-being.

Planning Policy provides the national planning policy framework for the protection and sustainable management of the historic environment as required by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

4.0 Access

The Great Hall is accessed via a public car park, 'Whitegates Car Park from Crown Place. There are various areas that could be used to provide welfare facilities and a compound. Many of these could be cordoned off from the public to provide a safe area.



There are toilets on the West Elevation which provide disabled access and must always remain accessible. The windows are to be removed in phases and therefore this will be managed into the programme to ensure that no disruption is caused and that our duties under the Equality Act 2010 are always met.

On the East elevation are shrubs and conifer trees that should be protected while the works are carried out.

The works will primarily be undertaken externally.

The Great Hall will be accessed internally to remove the windows and reinstate them. This shouldn't impact on the facilities with the building including WC provision, circulation within units and accessibility standards through all public parts of the building.

An assessment of means of escape will be undertaken in the risk assessment.

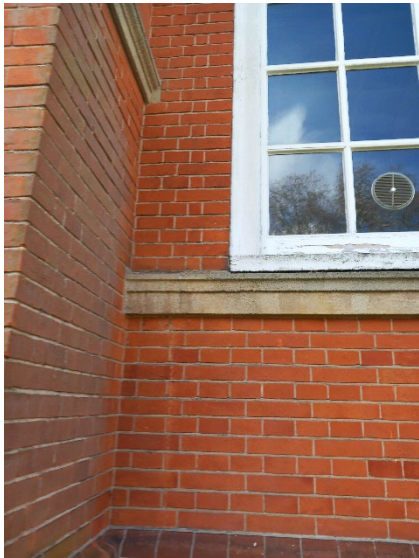
All relevant signage will be used.



Disabled Toilet – Access must be always clear.

APPENDIX 1: PHOTOGRAPHS

	
W1	W2
	
W3	W4

		
W5		W6
		
W7		W8

		
W9		W10
		
W11		W12



W13



W14



Paint flaking on window



General view of the West Elevation