



DESIGN, ACCESS, AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

FOR THE:

INTERNAL REFURBISHMENT AND REDECORATION, TO
INCLUDE: FIRE SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS AND STRUCTURAL
REPAIRS REQUIRED TO STAIRCASES

AT:

ALBION TERRACE, LONDON ROAD, READING RG1 5BG

FOR:

ENCORE ESTATES

Date: 15/09/22

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

This Design, Access and Heritage Statement has been prepared by Harris Associates to accompany the application for Listed Building Consent for the internal refurbishment and redecoration across common areas within Albion Terrace, London Road, Reading RG1 5BG.

1.2 Scope

The proposed work comprises internal redecoration, repairs required to stabilise individual slumped staircases, and improvements to address fire safety shortcomings identified during the most recently completed fire risk assessment. These include repairs and upgrades to the retained main entrance doors, the replacement of apartment entry doors and the introduction of fire-safety signage throughout the common-areas.

Figure 1 within Appendix A illustrates the extent and location of relevant internal communal areas where works are proposed.

2.0 SITE CONTEXT

2.1 Location

Albion Terrace is situated within the borough of Reading. The principal elevation of the property faces south towards London Road. The property faces Sidmouth St to the west, which provides access to shared vehicular parking via the connected Greys Ct. The later Greys Court development is positioned to the north of Albion Terrace, and there are various neighbouring properties to the east.

2.2 Current Use

Albion Terrace solely comprises residential accommodation, in the form of leaseholder apartments. The building is currently divided into 6 blocks which contain, in total, approximately 60no. units.

The proposed work will not change the current use of the building.

3.0 DESIGN PRINCIPLES

3.1 Proposed Work

The proposed work comprises the refurbishment and redecoration of the internal common parts of Albion Terrace, throughout the 6no. apartment blocks within.

- Block 1: 4-10 Albion Terrace
- Block 2: 14-20 Albion Terrace
- Block 3: 24-30 Albion Terrace
- Block 4: 33&35-40 Albion Terrace
- Block 5: 43&45-50 Albion Terrace
- Block 6: 53&55-60 Albion Terrace

As part of these works, fire safety improvements are proposed which include:

- The installation of an intumescent letter-box unit within the retained existing timber main entrance door.
- The installation of a new fire-rated opening to riser cupboards on all levels to each block.
- The installation of fire-safety signage throughout the property, which comprises:
 - Fire Alarm Zone Charts
 - Manual Call Point Signage
 - Emergency Exit Signs
- The supply and installation of new entrance fire-doors to each leaseholder apartment. The installed doors will be fully compliant (with rebated smoke and intumescent fire seals, new door linings, hinges, intumescent hinge pads, door closers, door viewers, intumescent liners, handles, locks and latches). All installed door furniture are to be fire-resistant equivalents to match the existing in terms of appearance, colour and finish but which meet current fire safety standards.

Additionally, structural repairs are proposed to stabilise the 2no. timber cantilevered staircases which have dropped (serving the communal areas within Block 2 and Block 4).

Images are included which illustrate the existing finishes throughout the property at Attachment A. The extent and nature of proposed alterations within refurbishment plans are as detailed within this document.

3.2 Appearance

- The existing six-panelled timber main entrance doors to each block are to be retained. The installation of an intumescent letter-box unit will be using the original aperture within the existing door and match the existing with an aged bronze finish. The existing units have, in many cases, fallen or been damaged. The nature of the new installation within the retained fabric will

therefore not have an adverse effect on the appearance of the door or the historic importance of the building, rather improving its current condition.

- The proposed internal refurbishment and redecoration throughout the common areas consists of superficial changes: the replacement of existing coir entrance matting and carpeted floor-coverings with new, and the painting of wall and ceiling surfaces. These surfaces comprise plasterboard assumed introduced during the historic conversion of the property into individual apartments. There will be no changes made to the internal layout or architectural design within the common areas. The relief of walls will not be altered, and all joinery details are to be retained.
- All the existing apartment entry doorsets are identical across the blocks within the terrace. The new apartment entry doorsets and door furniture will match the visual appearance of the existing doorsets as closely as possible. They will therefore have no adverse aesthetic impact and continue to contribute towards the historic significance of the building.
- Structural repairs to individual dropped staircases will not be visible and will therefore have no impact on their appearance or significance.
- There will be no alterations or impact on the exterior of the building.

3.3 Assessment of the Proposed Work

In carrying out the proposed works, efforts have been made to retain and extend the lifespan of original fabric wherever possible. The main entrance door is to be overhauled so as to include recommended fire upgrades whilst maintaining the original material and design, and the main timber cantilevered staircases are to receive necessary repairs so as to maintain safe use of the structures.

Refurbishment and the installation of fire-safety signage throughout the blocks is to be sympathetic and consistent with the age of construction. The proposed colour scheme is shown within the attached schedule of proposed finishes and is not far removed from the existing. Fire-safety signage is to be housed within aged brass enclosures which assists with visual placement against adjacent finishes and maintains uniformity of finish throughout each block. Paint finishes and new installations are largely to be affixed to existing non-original plasterboard throughout, and are therefore reversible in nature should future works be undertaken.

When assessing the current door sets to leaseholder apartments, it was concluded that the alteration of existing door sets was not feasible, and that comprehensive replacement was required in order to attain current fire safety standards. However, records are to be taken of the existing doors which will assist when matching the visual appearance of the door sets introduced.

3.4 Structure

There are no structural alterations to the property proposed, with the exception of stabilising works necessary to address current safety concerns where the 2no. individual timber cantilevered staircases have dropped.

4.0 ACCESS

The building can be accessed from both its principal south elevation which faces London Road, and its rear north elevation which faces the main leaseholder parking.

The proposed work will not affect or change current access to the building.

5.0 HERITAGE ASSETS

Albion Place was first listed as Grade II* on 22nd March 1957 by English Heritage (now known as Historic England), under list no. 1113506.

The property was listed for its architectural interest and historic interest with original construction circa 1825-1835. The listing details in length the property's stucco fronted principal elevation and external architectural features. Primarily the symmetrical nature of the terrace, semi-circular headed dormers, glazing bar sash windows and six-panelled doors within entrance porticos featuring Greek Doric fluted columns. The substantial and complete list entry is available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1113506?section=official-list-entry>

The original list entry does not refer to any internal structures within the property. All exterior elevations will remain unaffected by the proposed works.

In carrying out the proposed work, no existing original historic building fabric will be lost. The Terrace has historically been converted into a series of apartment blocks. Refurbishment will not alter the character of the building or such structures. The planned redecoration is sympathetic throughout according to the nature and age of construction. A schedule of proposed finishes has been provided as an appendix to this document. Current wallpaper furnishings to be replaced afront non-original plasterboard finishings, previously installed as part of the historic conversion of the building. The lifespan of the timber cantilevered staircases will be increased as a consequence of necessary structural repairs. The proposed changes, to include necessary repairs and the installation of fire safety signage, will provide conditions contributing to the sustainable occupancy of this heritage asset.

6.0 CONCLUSION

With all the above carefully considered we are confident that our proposal is acceptable and necessary. The proposed refurbishment remedies defects present in current finishes, and in our opinion enhances the character of the internal common spaces – maintaining a uniform finish which addresses current user-needs and is sympathetic to the history of the building. The proposed works further ensures safety in the use of communal staircases and meets current fire legislation to protect the life safety of residents at Albion Terrace.



APPENDIX A

SELECTED PHOTOGRAPHS



Photograph 1: Main entrance door unit. Note existing unit and fabric is to be retained. There is no proposed alteration in style as part of refurbishment and redecoration. The current poorly fitted letterbox is to be replaced with an intumescent unit and internal door furniture only is to be replaced to maintain a uniform aged brass finish.



Photograph 2: Main entrance hallway. Note there are to be no alterations to the existing wall or ceiling relief, and no changes to timber joinery detailing such as skirting and architraves.



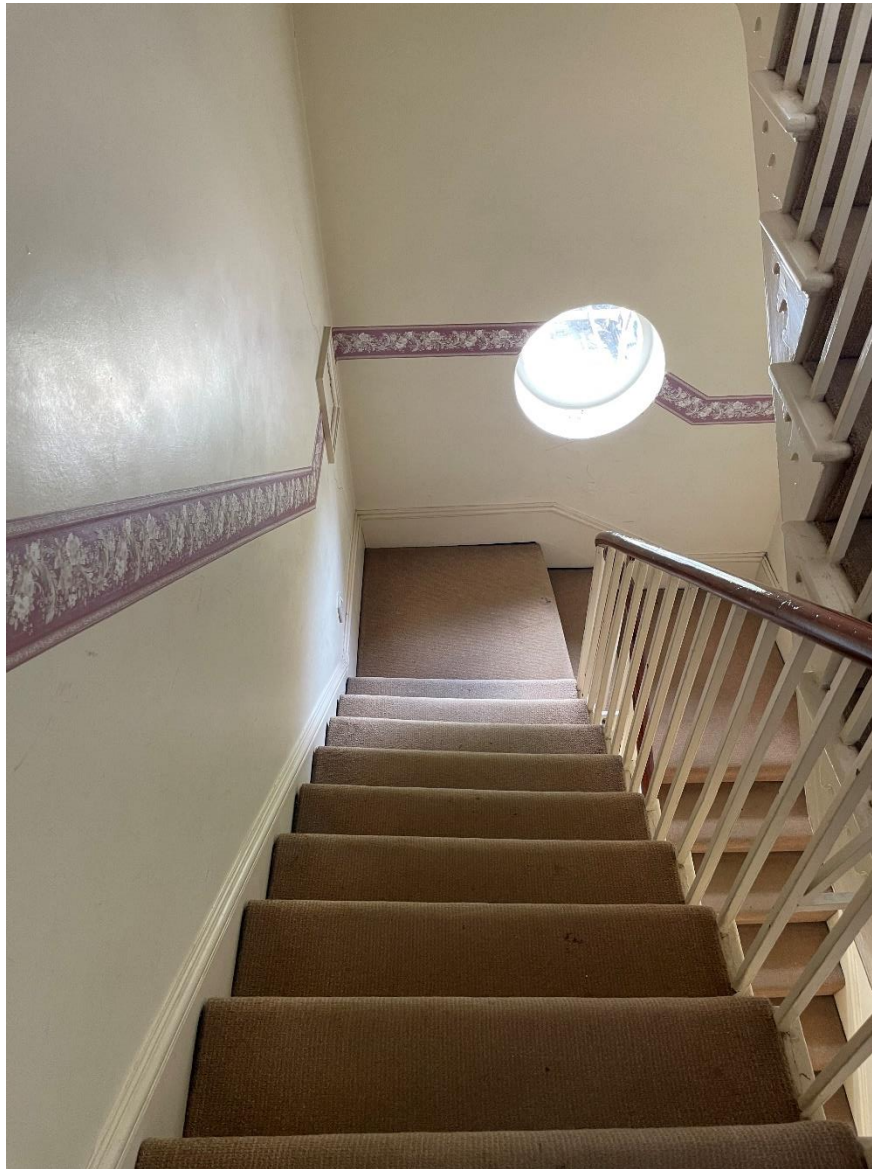
Photograph 3: Rear access door and hallway area. Existing door unit and furniture to be retained. Light fitting to be cleaned and retained. Key cupboard to be replaced with aged brass equivalent to maintain consistent internal finishes.



Photograph 4: Riser cupboard access hatch, current wall fixtures and alarm without emergency use signage. Proposed works comprise the replacement of the riser cupboard access door with a fire-rated replacement flush with the adjacent plasterboard finishes. The existing key-cupboard and electrical cover are to be replaced with aged brass fixtures to maintain uniformity in finish.



Photograph 5: Showing existing form of riser cupboard access hatch and exposed void.



Photograph 6: Dropped timber cantilever staircase. Structural repair proposed to stabilise fallen elements and slumped treads. There will be no visible change in the appearance of the staircase.



Photograph 7: Missing balustrade spindle to staircase. Repair to match existing adjacent.



Photograph 8: Riser cupboard access hatch and existing cracking defect within adjacent plasterboard finishes. Proposed works are to remove the access hatch unit and install fire-rated replacement flush with wall finishes, and to replace localise plasterboard finishes only where failed or de-bonded.



Photograph 9: Existing cracking across current plasterboard finishes and staining as a result of historic water ingress. External defects have been previously rectified. Localised replacement of plasterboard finishes is proposed where de-bonded or failed.

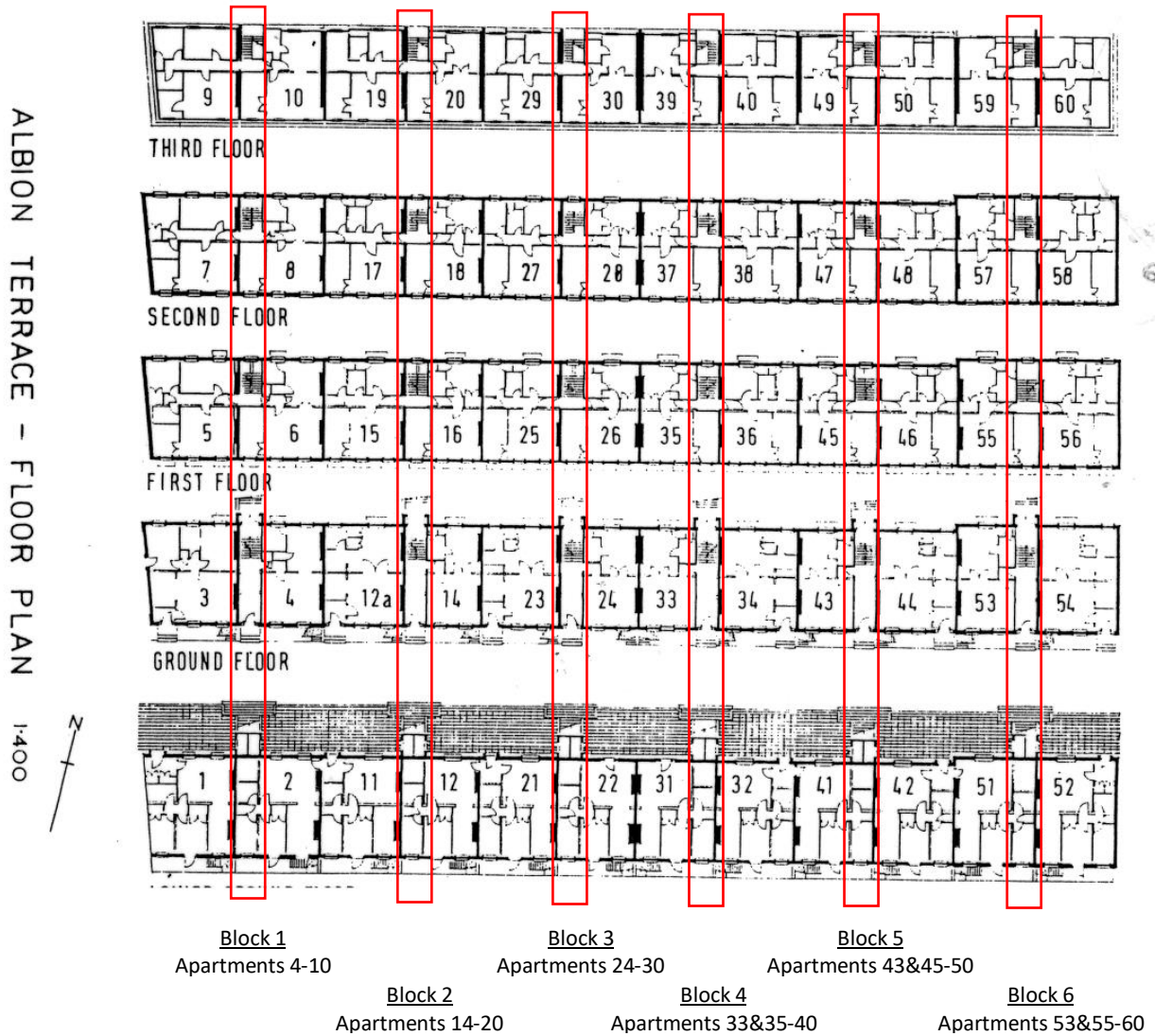


Figure 1: Showing distribution and layout of internal common areas.