

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT



PROPOSED EXTERNAL STAIRCASE

READING WEST SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
WINDRUSH HOUSE, 24 PORTMAN ROAD,
READING RG30 1EA

1.00 INTRODUCTION

- 1.01 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared by Allen Associates Architects Limited to accompany and explain the planning application to construct an external staircase at the rear of the building.
- 1.02 In January 2009 planning permission was granted for the use of the ground and first floors of Windrush House to include D1 (Place of Worship).
- 1.03 In August 2016 planning permission was subsequently granted for change of use of the second floor to D1 use.

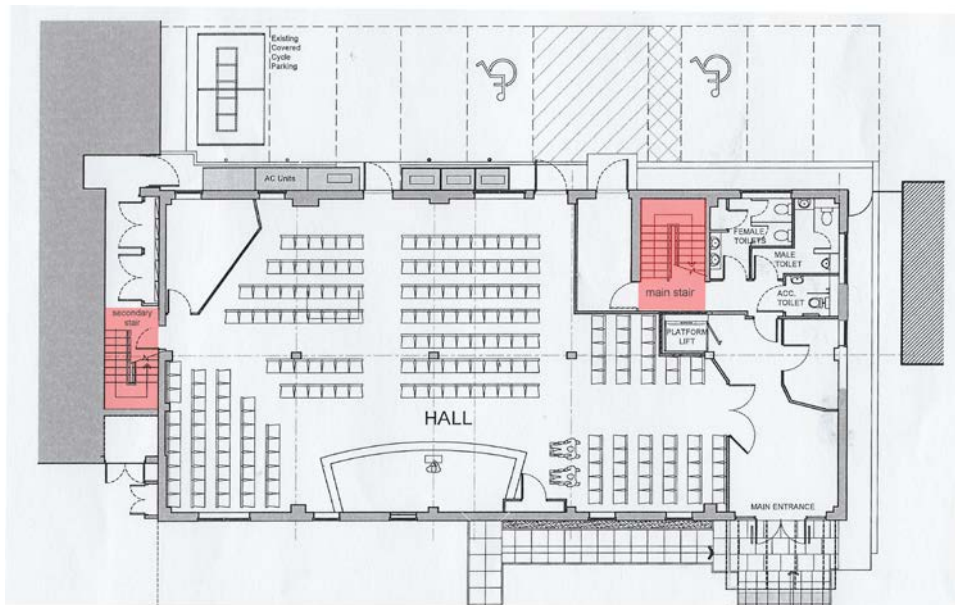


Fig. 1 Existing Ground Floor Plan Indicating Location of Staircase

- 1.04 The main staircase serving the building is quite wide, however the secondary staircase is much narrower
- 1.05 The narrow width of the secondary staircase, which is primarily a means of escape in case of fire, dictates and severely restricts the number of people that can use the first and second floors of the building, hence the need for a wider staircase.

2.00 USE

- 2.01 The ground floor forms the main auditorium space and all other ancillary facilities have to be provided on the first and second floors.
- 2.02 A secondary hall is required at first floor level together with a range of meeting rooms and church offices on the second floor.
- 2.03 The required width of any staircase is defined in the Building Regulations. The width of the main stairs is 970mm, whereas the secondary staircase is only 765mm wide. The main stairs can safely accommodate 110 people however the capacity of the secondary staircase is such that the upper floors are limited to a total of 60 people spread over the two upper floors. At present the first floor is limited to 45 people and the second floor to 15.
- 2.04 The possibility of increasing the width of the existing secondary staircase has been carefully considered, however this is impractical because of the location of the staircase and the structure of the building. We have therefore concluded that the only way of satisfactorily utilising the upper floors is therefore to treat the existing secondary stairs as an 'amenity stair' and construct a new external staircase at the rear of the building for escape purposes.

3.00 DEVELOPMENT

- 3.01 A steel framed staircase enclosure with powder coated metal cladding is proposed to reflect the nature of the surrounding buildings.
- 3.02 The size of the staircase enclosure is defined by the staircase width dictated in the Building Regulations.

4.00 LAYOUT

- 4.01 The new staircase needs to be located as far away from the main staircase as possible, so that in the event of a fire, escape is possible at each end of the building.
- 4.02 External escape routes are much easier at the rear of the building via the large car park area.
- 4.03 The staircase needs to connect in a logical manner to the existing building layout at first and second floor levels.
- 4.04 These criteria dictate the location of the new staircase.

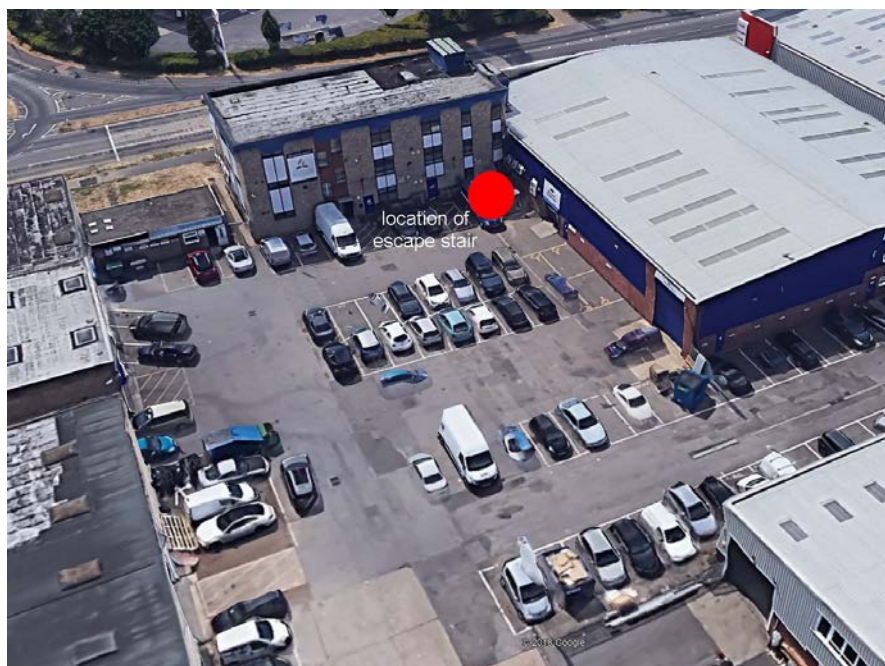


Fig. 2 Photograph of Rear of Building Indicating Proposed Staircase Location

5.00 ACCESS

- 5.01 The approach to the new staircase at first and second floor level will incorporate a 'place of safety' for any person using a wheelchair.
- 5.02 The footprint of the staircase requires the relocation of the existing covered bicycle area which in turn results in the loss of one car parking space.

The church are confident that this will still result in sufficient parking being available for the church, as the maximum use of the building is at weekends, when the demand on the car park by the surrounding commercial activities is limited.

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