

Wantage Hall

**HERITAGE, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT FOR
PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO WANTAGE HALL**

January 2018



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Introduction

This heritage, design and access statement has been prepared in support of an application for permission to install window restrictors to perimeter opening casement windows, both external and courtyard elevations to Wantage Hall, Old Court. The property is a Grade II listed building that lies within the 1 Upper Redlands Road and 17 – 19 Redlands Road of the Redlands Conservation Area – see Appendix 1. Wantage Hall is the building, hatched in red to the north of the plan.

Building Description

Wantage Hall was the first hall of residence at the University of Reading opening in 1908, arranged over four levels. The premise is located on the junction of Redlands Road and Upper Redlands Road within Reading.

Existing Installation

The existing metal framed windows do not have any restrictors, allowing the opening casement window to fully open, creating a hazard to the building occupants.

Health & Safety Requirement

The service agreement between the building operator and the University requires that all windows that are capable of being opened, shall be fitted with a working restrictor stay so that they cannot be opened more than 150mm.

The assessment identifies that students are at risk from falling from windows at a height likely to cause harm (eg above ground floor level), suitable precautions must be taken. Windows that are large enough to allow people to fall out should be restrained sufficiently to prevent such falls. The opening should be restricted to 150 mm or less. Window restrictors should only be able to be disengaged using a special tool or key.

Heritage

Historical Context

Wantage Hall was the first hall of residence at the University of Reading opening in 1908. It is recommended for designation at Grade II for the following principal reasons: * A handsome and intact hall of residence in a Tudor style with an interesting quadrangle plan-form, quality materials and detailing. * A very early hall of residence which drew on the historic Oxbridge college tradition but was a pioneer of C20 university collegiate accommodation and which was to become the model for subsequent university colleges and halls of residence.

(English Heritage)

Property

History and Development

934/0/10065 UPPER REDLANDS ROAD 02-APR-08 Wantage Hall

II Wantage Hall, 1908. Hall of residence at the University of Reading. Neo-Tudor design by Charles Steward Smith, architect, commissioned and endowed by Lady Wantage. Addition of New Court to the north in 1970, by Peter Ednie & Partners is not of special interest.

Materials

Red brick in English Bond with stone dressings and tiled roofs.

Plan

A quadrangle, known as 'Old Court': largely of two storeys but with an additional basement level in the northern half given the sloping site. Roof is largely double pitched with a central concealed valley. Main entrance gate through a three storey clock tower in the south elevation. Dining Hall range, housing student common room on the ground floor and the dining hall above, on the north side of the quadrangle. Student accommodation mainly in the west and east ranges over two floors. Warden's study and offices in the south-east corner, formerly the Principal's residence. Service rooms largely confined to basement level. Red brick 1970s addition, known as 'New Court', forms a further quadrangle to the north but is not of special interest.

Exterior

Main façade to the south on Upper Redlands Road. Of two storeys under a pitched tiled roof with pairs of gabled bays at the south-west and south-east corners. Windows are leaded casements with stone surrounds and moulded drip-moulds; those to the ground floor are conjoined to form a narrow string course. Rainwater hoppers decorated with a 'W' for 'Wantage'. Central, three-storey crenellated clock tower, again in red brick with stone dressings: there are stone string courses between floors and gargoyles to the machicolation. Polygonal stair towers at each corner. Handsome canted oriel window to the first floor. Entrance is through a large Tudor arched gateway in stone with carved spandrels; paired solid panelled gates.

Similar features are employed in the quadrangle although it is more decorative. West and east ranges have a series of prominent projecting chimney stacks, with clustered pots, stone dressings and diaper work decoration, dividing up the elevations. Entrance bays have Flemish gables with carved stone coats of arms and banded diaper work detailing. Two-storey dining room range to the north dominates both given its axis opposite the entrance but also for its greater height: symmetrical range of three bays, all with gables, decorated with diaper work. Large mullion and transom windows with leaded lights and some coloured glass. Central bay has a decorative canted oriel with a Flemish gable topped with a carved stone finial. Foundation stone

beneath this window. Carved sundial added to the oriel in the 1980s inscribed to the memory of Sydney Taylor.

Interior

Interiors differ dependent upon function with the principal spaces more decorative than the student accommodation, service accommodation or circulation spaces. Student accommodation is in small study bedrooms largely in the west and east ranges where they are arranged either side of a central corridor on the ground and first floors. Each has a fireplace (some now blocked) with a wooden mantle and original picture rails. Elongated doors to the student rooms are replicas of the originals given fire prevention requirements. Corridors and staircases have exposed red brick walls. Main staircase, leading up to the Dining Hall, has a solid brick balustrade topped with a moulded stone banister and terminating in a carved stone newel. Tudor arches with stone mouldings are also employed internally. Interiors of particular note are the former Principal's lodgings and the Dining Hall. The former contains stone fireplaces decorated with the shell motif of the University and original panelling. Present Warden's study, originally the parlour of the Principal's lodgings, retains its original fireplace which has a timber surround, decorative mantle, and glazed green tiles. Wallpaper in a green leaf design may be original Morris & Co. Most impressive Dining Hall with solid timber hammer-beam roof and attractive curved braces. Original wooden and metal chandeliers. Panelling to picture rail level and carved door surround. Windows with coloured glass shields and crests. Large open fireplace with stone Tudor surround and carved spandrels. Substantial decorative carved timber fire surround and overmantle including carved human heads, shells and a Latin inscription.

Ancillary Features

Red brick walls and railings to Redlands Road and Upper Redlands Road.

History

Although a School of Art was established at Reading in 1860 with a School of Science following in 1870, it was not until 1892 that Reading was founded as a University Extension College under the patronage of the University of Oxford. It became a University in its own right in 1926 by Royal Charter. Wantage Hall was built relatively early in the life of the university; it was designed in 1906 and opened in 1908. It is believed to have been the first purpose-built hall of residence built after the Oxford and Cambridge colleges. It was the gift of Harriet, Lady Wantage (1837-1920) a wealthy local benefactress. Lady and Baron Wantage owned Lockinge House, near Wantage, as well as considerable land holdings in Berkshire. They were artistic connoisseurs and patrons and were heavily involved with the British Red Cross Society. Lady Wantage was closely associated with her husband's work at Reading University College of which he was the first president and after his death in 1901 she was appointed vice-president and live governor. She donated nearly £150,000 to the

University including the building and endowment of Wantage Hall as a men's hall of residence and £50,000 to an endowment fund in 1911. She was also a benefactor of the Royal Berkshire Hospital and was the first woman to receive the freedom of the Borough of Reading. Charles Steward Smith (1858-1923), who designed the building, was a local Reading based architect.

During the First World War Wantage Hall was used by the Royal Flying Corps School of Instruction, training instructors to, in turn, train the increasing numbers of RFC squadrons required. Classes were held in the building and practical training took place along Upper Redlands Road where old fuselages were suspended in the trees for this purpose.

The hall of residence expanded in 1970 with additional accommodation provided by New Court, an extension added to the north of the original building (now known as 'Old Court'). New Court was designed by the architectural firm Peter Ednie & Partners but is not considered of special interest.

Wantage Hall remains in use as a fully catered residential hall which accommodates approximately 245 students.

(English Heritage)

Pictorial Review

Annex D to this document provide photos of the elevations, street schemes of the perimeter elevations.

Assessment of Heritage Significance

Design Proposals

The aim of the proposal is to adapt the existing window opening casements, internally, with a permanent device to provide 150mm width restriction.

All perimeter and courtyard opening windows are to be fitted with a mechanical lockable cable installation. The open stay and peg will be fitted with a cleat fixing and jack lock mechanism, mounted to a timber block fixed to the window reveal, see Annex C.

The proposal does not require any fixing or adaption to the metal framed window. The perimeter stone reveal will remain untouched.

Externally, the adaptations would not be noticed.

To secure the casement in a specific open position, the holes to the existing stays are greater than the 150mm clear opening.

To maintain the 150mm clear opening, the existing window stay will require a further aperture, positioned to allow the window to be securely fixed with the new restrictor. Not allowing the further aperture, the opening casement would swing freely.

Technical Requirements

All works are to be undertaken in accordance with Building Regulations and British Standards.

Use / Layout

The building's use will remain as existing.

Landscaping

There are no landscaping proposals within this application.

Vehicular & Transportation Links

The vehicular and transport links to the building will not be affected by the proposed works

Access

The existing access arrangements into the building will not be affected by the proposed works.

Conclusions

The proposals do not alter the internal appearance of this prominent building with a design maintaining its original finishes.

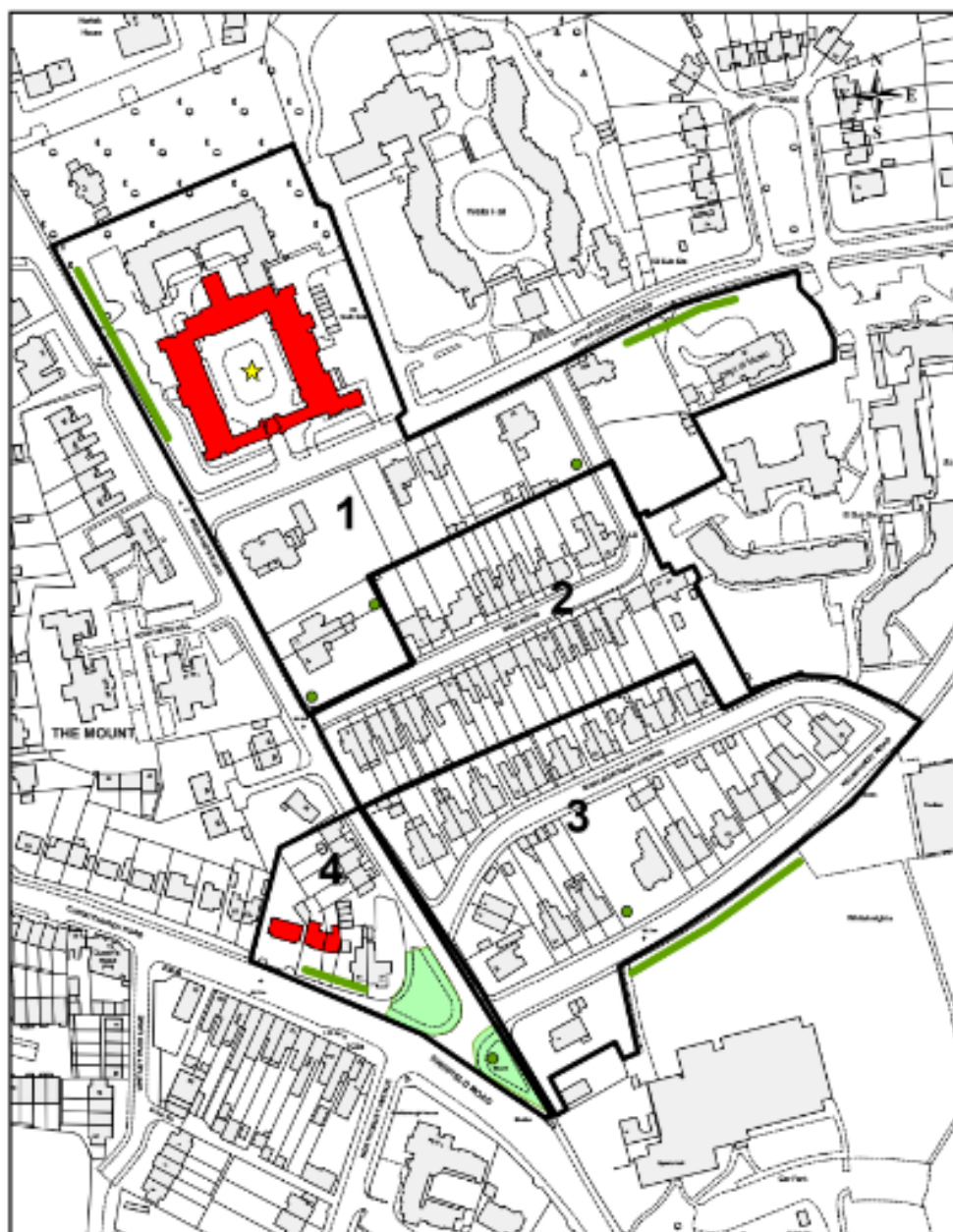
The proposals are sympathetic to the age and construction of the property.

The proposals will not alter the elements of the building which provide its special quality.

Annex A

Conservation Area

Redlands Conservation Area



Title: Redlands Conservation Area

Dwg no:

Produced by Planning Section

Date: 31/07/2008

File: LAP332291/

Scale at A4 : 1:2000



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Annex B

Principal Design

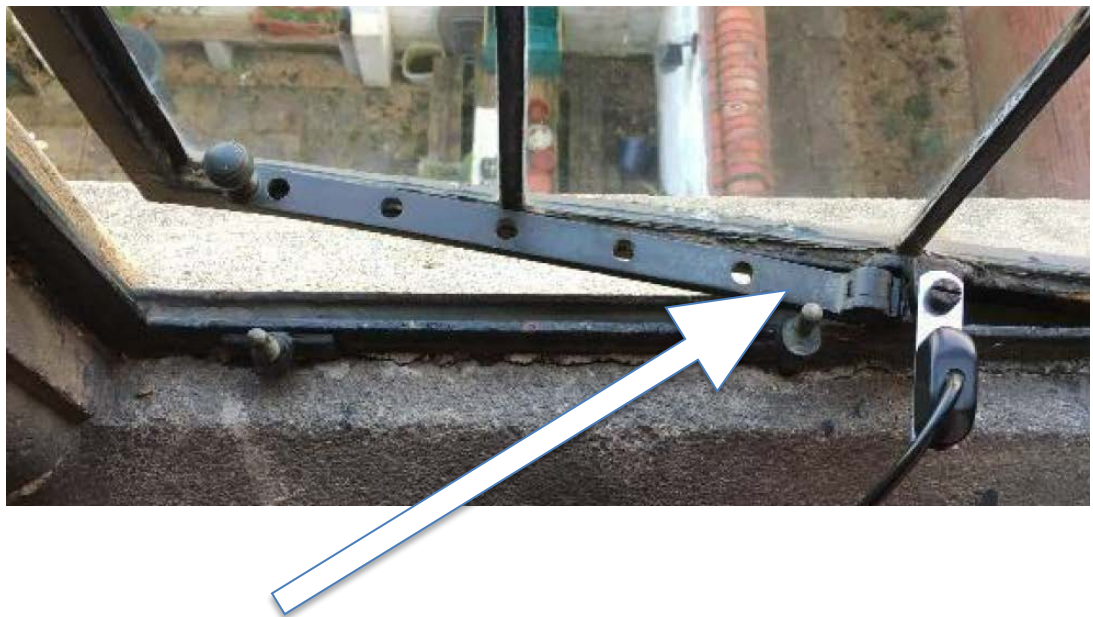
A mock-up of the Jack lock arrangement has been procured to demonstrate the localised adaption of the existing window opening. A metal bracket is secured utilising existing mounting screw position to the opening casement with a clean / fixing to maintain the required opening width. This base mount is fixed to adjoining timber/plaster surface, away from the decorative stone surround.



Additional Stay Adjustment

The openings to the existing stay are wide and positioned with the window in the open position.

To provide a secure installation, it will be necessary to form an adaption to the metal stay with an additional opening. To maintain the maximum 150mm ventilation gap, a further adjustment is required.



Location of minor adaption to window stay
with further aperture

Annex C

Accompany Plans

- Site Location Plan
- Site block Plan
- Lower Ground Floor Plan
- Ground Floor Plan
- First and Second Floor Plan

This drawing should not be scaled.

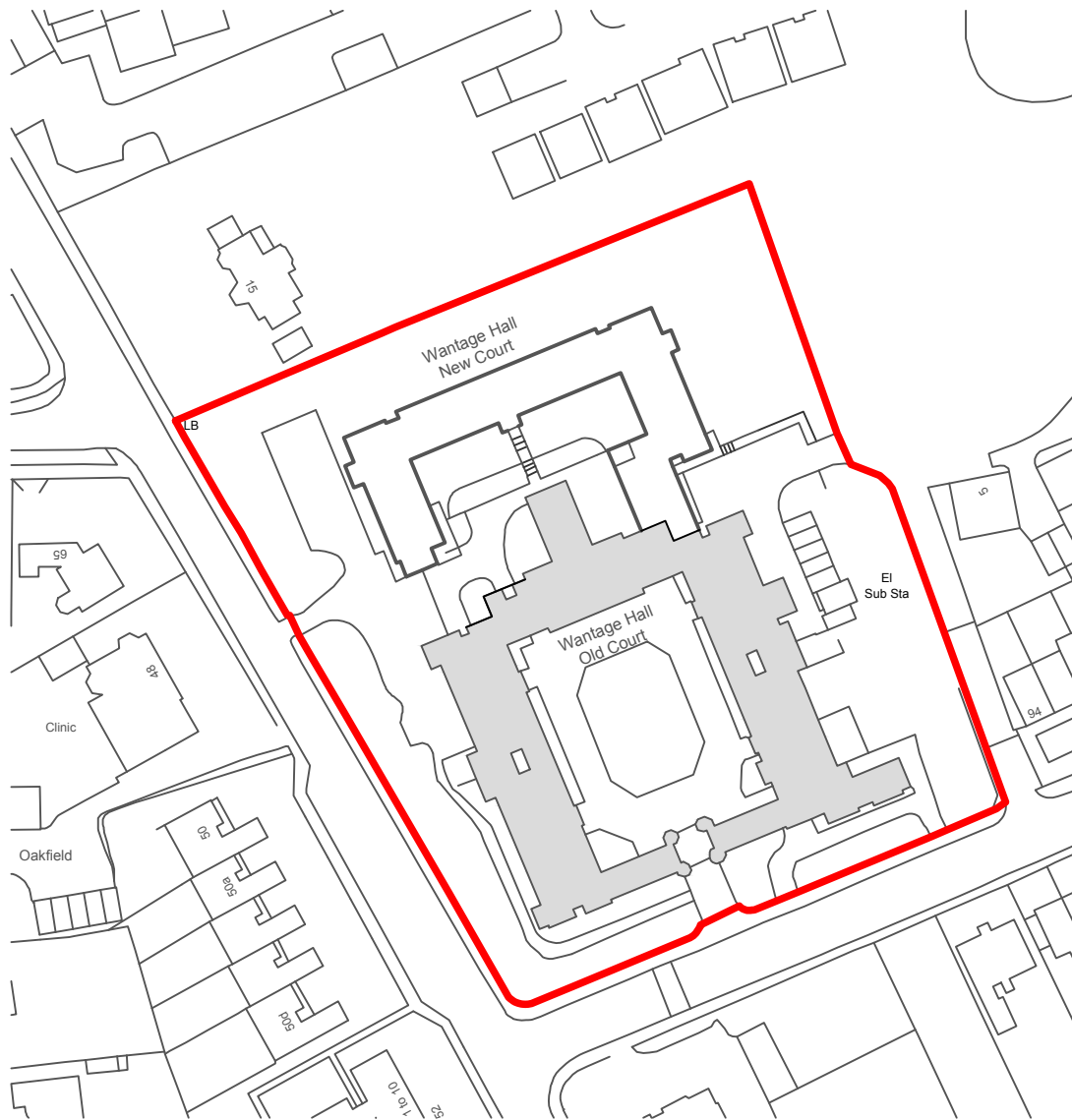
The contractor is to check all dimensions on site and inform the contract administrator/project manager of any discrepancies.

All work is to comply in every aspect with the Building Regulations, Codes of Practice and British Standards.

This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all other contract drawings and specifications.

rev date details

by



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client

UPP Reading Limited

project

Wantage Hall - Old Court

drawing

Site Location Plan

date

Jan' 18

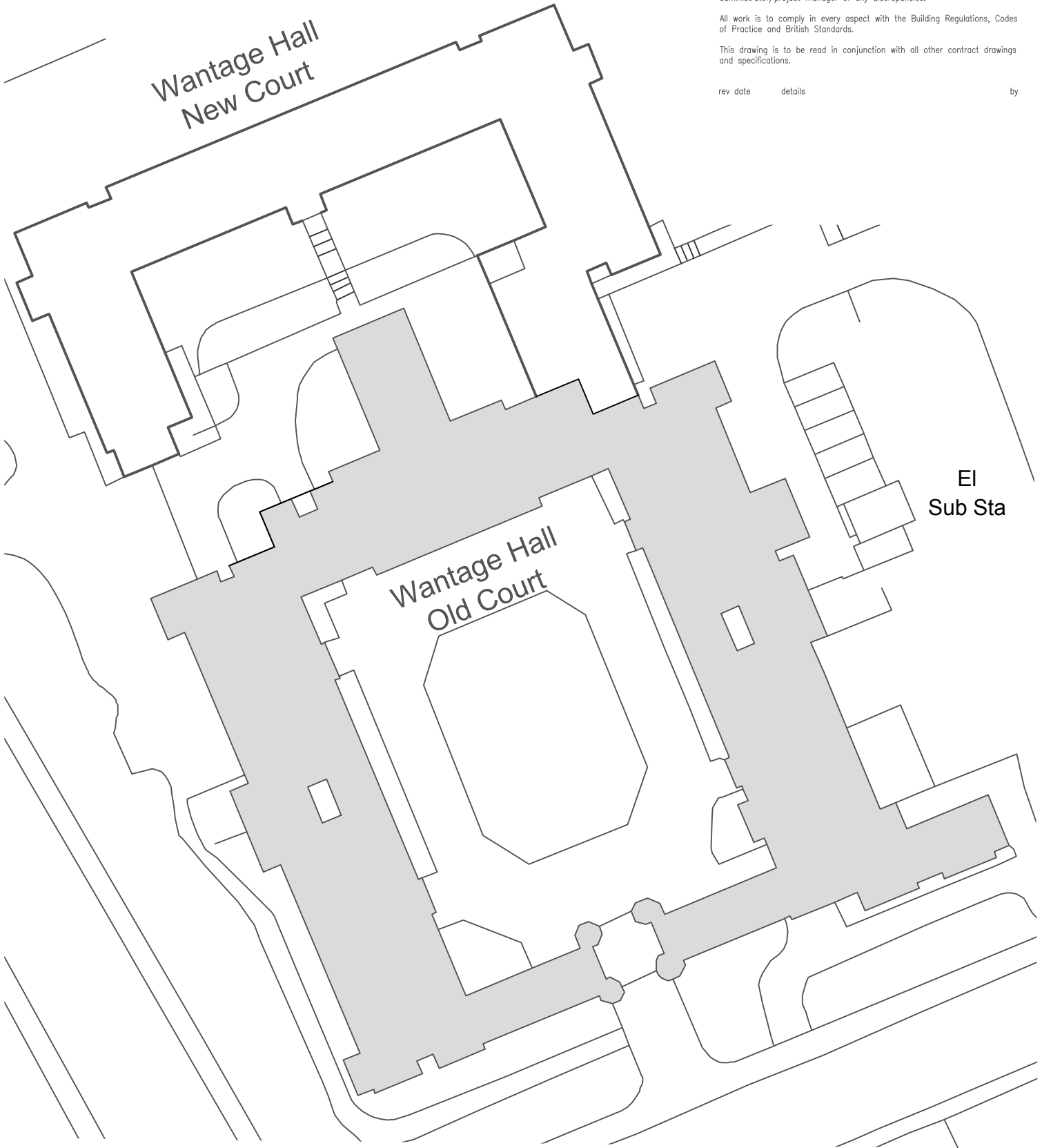
proj./drawing no.

402/WanOC-18/000

rev.

scale at A3

1:1250



This drawing should not be scaled.

The contractor is to check all dimensions on site and inform the contract administrator/project manager of any discrepancies.

All work is to comply in every aspect with the Building Regulations, Codes of Practice and British Standards.

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rev	date	details	by
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client
UPP Reading Limited
project
Wantage Hall - Old Court

drawing
Site Block Plan

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Jan' 18	402/WanOC-18/001	
scale at A3		
1:500		

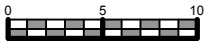
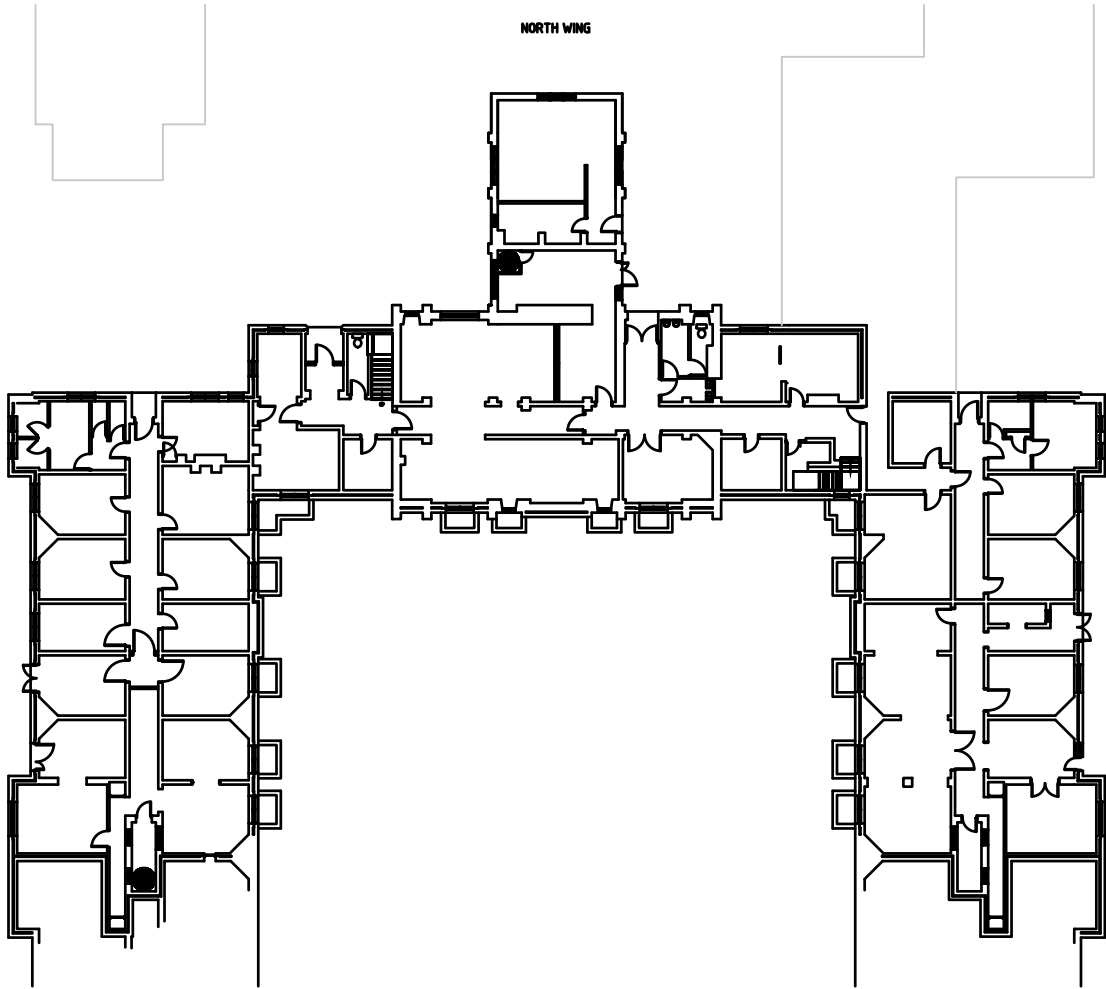
This drawing should not be scaled.

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This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all other contract drawings and specifications.

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client		
UPP Reading Limited		
project		
Wantage Hall - Old Court		
drawing		
Lower Ground Floor Plan		
date	proj./drawing no.	rev.
Jan' 18	402/WanOC-18/101	
scale at A3		
1:400		

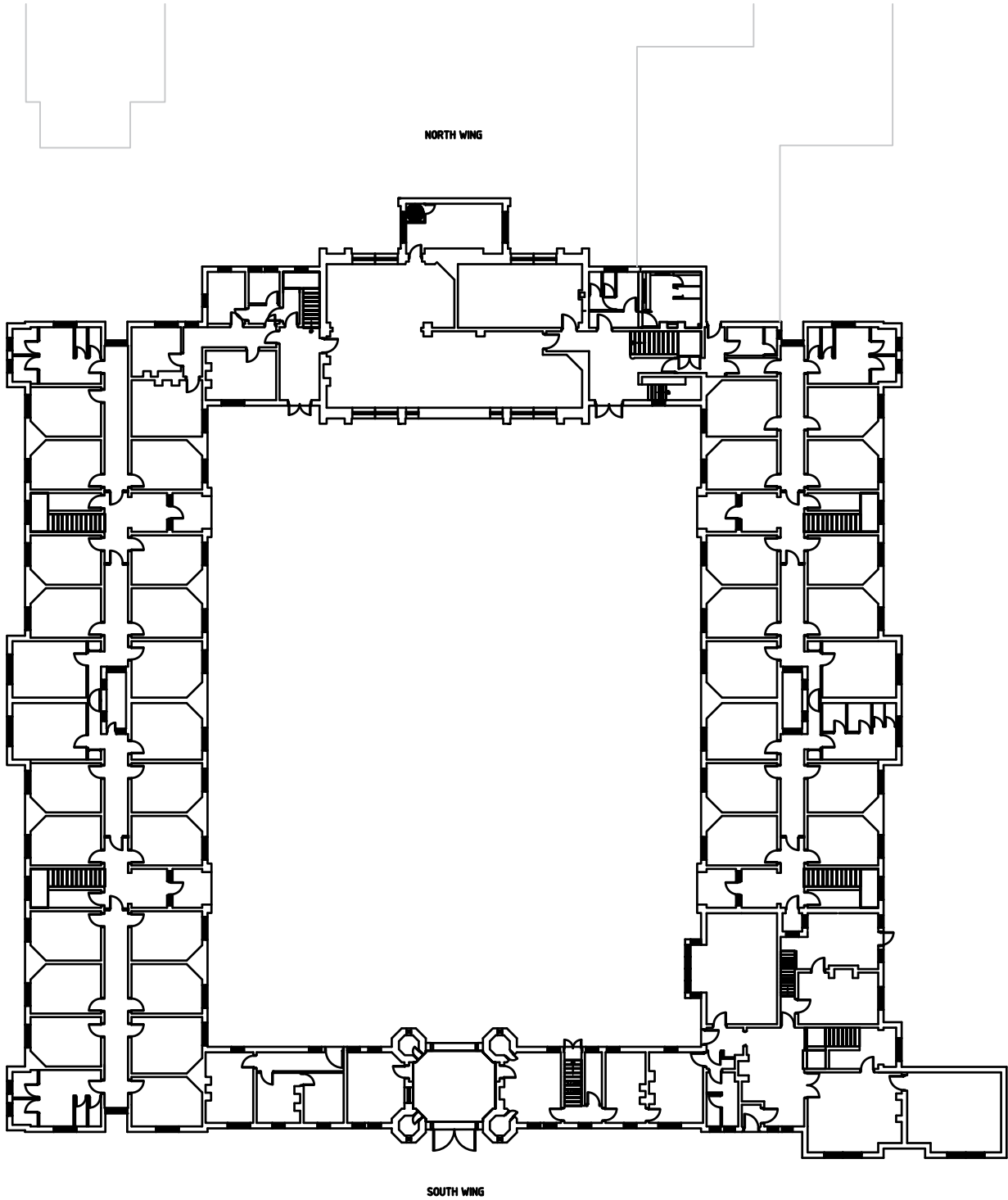
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This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all other contract drawings and specifications.

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client		
UPP Reading Limited		
project		
Wantage Hall - Old Court		
drawing		
Ground Floor Plan		
date	proj./drawing no.	rev.
Jan' 18	402/WanOC-18/102	
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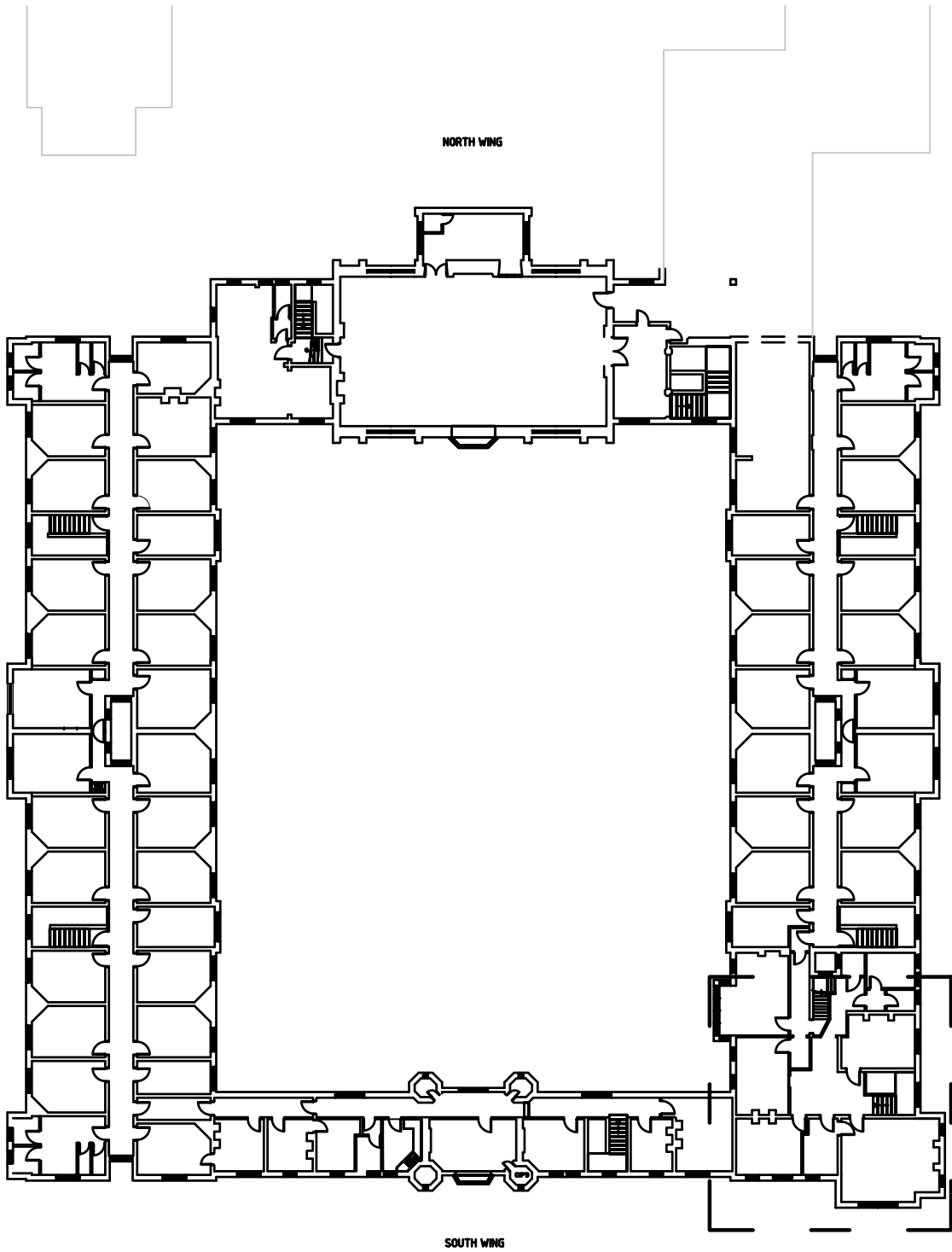
This drawing should not be scaled.

The contractor is to check all dimensions on site and inform the contract administrator/project manager of any discrepancies.

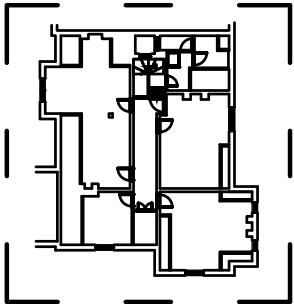
All work is to comply in every aspect with the Building Regulations, Codes of Practice and British Standards.

This drawing is to be read in conjunction with all other contract drawings and specifications.

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First Floor Level



Second Floor Level

client		
JPP Reading Limited		
project		
Wantage Hall - Old Court		
drawing		
First & Second Floor Levels		
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Jan' 18	402/WanOC-18/103	
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Annex D

Photos



Fig 1 - Upper Redlands Road Elevation



Fig 2- Corner of Redlands Road and Upper Redlands Road Elevation



Fig 3 - Upper Redlands Road Elevation



Fig 4 - Courtyard Elevation



Fig 5 - Courtyard Elevation



Fig 6 - Courtyard Elevation



Fig 7 - Courtyard Elevation