

Design & Access Statement

**Conversion of an existing 3 storey office
building to 8 one & two bed flats**

At

**Addington House
73 London Street, Reading RG1 4QA**

2695-009 P2

28th August 2018

Design & Access Statement

INTRODUCTION

Our client proposes to convert an existing 3 storey office building that is known as Addington House to 8 flats.

The building is a Grade II listed building that was constructed in 1748 as a dwelling. The building was named after “Dr Addington, physician to George III, father of the later Prime Minister”¹.

Addington House is located on London Street (red square on the map). As this is a listed building, there is no permitted development right to convert to flats. Conversion needs to be done sensitively to minimise impact on the historic fabric.



Figure 1: Addington House, 73 London Street, Reading.

SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The site is located approximately 0.5 mile from Reading Train Station. The Oracle is even closer, with a walking distance of 0.3 mile.

The site lies south east of The Oracle & River Kennet in the London Street conservation area. Other properties on this section of London Street are similar to number 73 in terms of design, type and date.

The site is located just outside of Zone 1 boundary line. Reading Town Centre is a mere 5 minutes walk from the site. The main train station is approximately 10-15 minutes walk from the site.

¹ www.historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1156168

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

A statement of significance is attached.

EXTERNAL APPEARANCE



Figure 2: Street view of Addington House.

Historic England describes Addington House as an “imposing 3 storey building with basement”. The external features and materials of the building are as follows: stucco plinth, red brick, header bond. Painted stone string at 1st floor level, and painted stone cills to 1st and 2nd floor windows. Moulded and painted stone cornice, plain brick parapet with stone coping. Old tile roof, taller hipped part to left with shaped chimney and glazing bar sash windows.

No 73 has 6 panelled door with radiating fanlight over deep plain painted wood architrave with ovolo moulding. Moulded open pediment on half scroll fluted brackets with acanthus ornament, repeated at right angles on wall face. Another original external feature is a pair of sphinx footscrapers as seen in figure 2.

No alteration to the London Street façade is proposed. The rear façade is much altered and some boiler flues are proposed here. All ventilation terminals, and most flues will exit in hidden areas of roof. The remainder will exit on the short return façade above the black car in Figure 3; they will not be visible from this viewpoint.



Figure 3: Rear view of Addington House.

INTERNAL LAYOUTS & ARRANGEMENTS

Please refer to floor and block plans for details (drawings 002-005).

Also, to drawing 15 which shows the reasoning behind the way the building is divided. The aim is to minimise the amount of additional fire compartmentation by using the existing fire compartmentation where it exists, and avoiding the use of lobbies. This has become more and more successful in response to consultations.

The main feature of the house appears to be the original staircase with fluted balusters. Also the house enjoys the original plaster panelling in principal rooms, hall and staircase.

The existing entrance and hall will stay as existing (see drawing 003). As this is a listed building, we are looking to introduce as little alteration as possible. As each floor plan shows, the current layout with walls that need to be removed are as few as possible, and not original features.

In order to respect the character and integrity of the existing building, the new layouts are arranged in a way to use the existing doors and openings on all floors for entrances to new flats. Where original doors are not needed for the flats, they will be locked shut, sealed in a reversible way, and any acoustic and fire protection fixed to the side away from the staircase.



Figure 4: Original internal decoration.

The first floor is accessed via the main existing grand staircase leading from the ground floor hall to the first floor level.

From the first floor, another smaller staircase links the first floor to the second floor. This staircase also stays as existing. Penetrations through floors are carefully considered and often use existing holes.

Post Pre-Application Amendments

All advice/recommendations from the Pre-Application response, including those by the Heritage Officer were implemented and they are as follows.

- Flat 2 changed to a one bed flat, this is to retain all original features of this room at the front of the building as Heritage Officer suggested.

- Vertical floor penetrations are moved towards the back of the building to avoid areas where there maybe original floors.

- Ground & first floor boiler flues are moved as per Heritage officer's suggestion

- Kitchen & bathrooms of flats 4&5 moved to the back of the building as Heritage Officer suggestion (see floor plans).

- Kitchen & bathrooms of flats 7&8 moved to the back of the building as Heritage Officer suggested

None of these amendments have been lost subsequent to the further amendments made during the planning process. The advice of the conservation officer and of Historic England are complementary, and the P8 design addresses the concerns of both.

Post Application Amendments

All recommendations from the Historic England visit were implemented and the changes made in the revised drawings are as follows:

Ground Floor (003P8, replaces P6)

Hall – All doors to be retained; further notes to show this.

Flat 1 – Internal door retained between living room and corridor.

Flat 2 – Internal door retained between bedroom and living room. External – semi-private areas outside flats marked on plan.

First Floor (004P8, replaces P6)

Hall – All new partitions omitted: the upper landing as now proposed is the same as existing. The entrance to Flat 5 has been adjusted to fall in the position of a former door opening, in an existing partition wall.

Flat 3 – Entrance door retained, unused door to staircase retained, internal door between living room and corridor retained.

Flat 4 – Door between bedroom and lobby retained (rehung), boiler relocated away from fireplace.

Flat 5 – Existing partition and former doorway retained and re-used; no interference with the secondary stair is now required, which was previously an issue to Historic England.

Second Floor (005P8, replaces P6)

Flat 6 – Existing wall to living room retained.

Flat 7 – Existing wall to living room and door retained.

Flat 8 – No change.

Basement (007 P5) – Bicycle storage added.

The advice received from Historic England is attached as Appendix C with our notes in red explaining the ways that the present proposal address the concerns raised.

IMPACT ON CHARACTER OF THE AREA

Alteration is internal, there will be no impact on the character of the area in terms of street scene. As mentioned before, Addington House was originally designed for dwelling, and converting it back from offices to flats will not harm the character of the area in any way.

CLIMATE CHANGE: POLICY DM1

The adaptability of the proposal to deal with climate change has been considered and addressed where possible. Living rooms and bedrooms are arranged to have excellent natural day lighting.

If possible we would like to propose a naturally ventilated building.

The flats that are on the east side of the building will achieve solar gains from east facing windows, which is ideal, and this will reduce the heating requirement of the property in the colder months of the year.

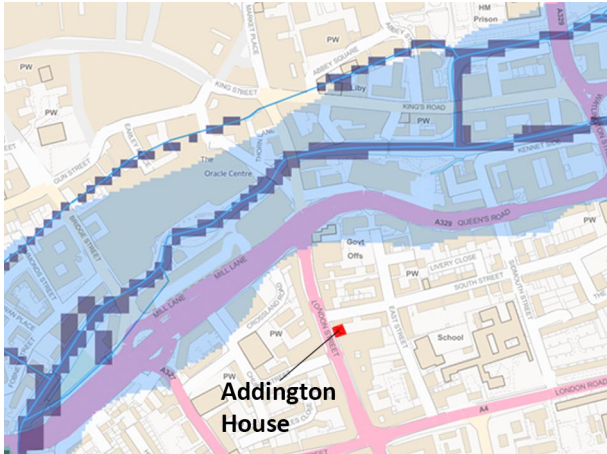


Figure 5: Red square represents the site.

IMPACT ON NEIGHBOURS

There will be no overlooking from any of the 3 floors to the neighbouring gardens or properties. This is due to the orientation and location of the building. To the north and south of the building are adjoining neighbouring buildings. To the east is an open car park and to the west is London Street (see drawing 002).

ACCESS

All proposed flats are to be accessed through London Street, the main existing entrance. This is a historic stepped entrance, and cannot be adapted for wheelchairs.

Vehicular access will be via South Street. The three existing parking spaces will be used.

AMENITY SPACE

There is sufficient space around the windows to the rear of the ground floor flats to ensure privacy to the occupants, but no dedicated amenity space.

As Addington House is extremely close to the centre of town it makes the need to have amenity spaces for flats less relevant. Also, the Forbury Gardens is only 8 minutes walk from Addington House.

PARKING

Addington House currently has three parking spaces (see drawing 002).

RBC Parking Standards states that 1-2 bed flats should have 0.5 parking spaces in Zone 1. As Addington House is just outside the boundary line of Zone 1, we would like to think that excellent public transport links to the city centre from London Street and the current three parking spaces will satisfy the 8 flats.

A combination of close proximity of the site to the centre of town, excellent public transport links and the current 3 parking spaces would make it acceptable. This is also in line with RBC's desire to reduce reliance on car transport.

BICYCLE STORAGE

There are two bicycle hoops at the back, but these are not covered and to do so would adversely affect the setting of the Listed Building. At the suggestion of Historic England, secure storage space for up to 16 bicycles has been provided in the basement, which has been found to be accessible as it has a wide door and brick steps.

REFUSE & BICYCLE STORAGE

Refuse could be accommodated at the back of the building. Refuse from the office is currently collected in bags from the front and it is assumed that collections will continue from here.

LANDSCAPING

No changes are proposed.

DOCUMENTS RELATED TO THE APPLICATION

2695 001 P2	site location plan
2695 002 P2	block plan
2695 003 P8	ground floor plans
2695 004 P8	first floor plans
2695 005 P8	second floor plans
2695 006 P6	roof plan
2695 007 P8	basement plans
2695 008 P2	Existing elevations
2695 009 P2	design & access statement
2695 010 P4	statement of significance/heritage statement
Appendix A	Statement on Present Use
Appendix B	Haslams Statement on Viability
Appendix C	Historic England Comments and Responses