



Flat D, 6 Bath Road
Reading, RG1 6NB
Design & Access Statement

Retrospective listed building consent
For unauthorised internal works and layout
changes

Rev A – Jan 2018

This design statement has been prepared generally in the format (where applicable) as set out in the CABE publication: "Design & Access Statements", to accompany the listed building submission documents and scheme drawings.

1. INTRODUCTION

Colony Architects were appointed by Craig Pearson (Applicant) in Dec 2017. The appointment was to prepare the documentation needed to submit a retrospective listed building consent application for unauthorised works carried out at the property.

Flat D is one of 12 apartments within 4-6 Bath Road which is a grade II listed property. It is recognised as an important heritage asset within Reading Town centre.

The current property custodian recently purchased the property which was in very poor condition. Following this purchase works commenced to repair, modernise and alter the layout. The current custodian was aware of the listed building status but did not appreciate that this status covered the entire building, notable the interior, which has been principally affected by the unauthorised works.

Prior to the purchase, the previous custodians did not maintain the apartment and as a result the overall quality and condition was very poor and why such extensive work was instructed.

The objective of this application is to seek authorisation for the works and layout changes to the apartment.

2. SITE LOCATION AND CONTEXT

The property is located to the western side of Reading town centre, just North of the Bath Road (A4).



The local context is that of a medium density town centre. The immediate area is characterised by large older buildings (large terraces/house & apartment blocks), facing onto the Bath Road.



The site is within the Russel Street and Castle Hill Conservation area.



The listed building curtilage is approximately 0.058Ha of which the building occupies a footprint of about 150sqm, over the 4 storeys, the total area is circa 600sqm. No.4-6 Bath Road is a semi-detached style apartment block, where each building is split into 6 apartments, these then share a main front door.

Apartment D is on the second floor and has an internal area of about 35sqm. The works only concern apartment D and no other areas of the building have or intend to be altered by the applicant.

3. SITE ACCESS

The property is accessed off Bath Road, through a shared front garden, front door and communal staircase. These areas remain unaffected by the works.

4. USE

The apartment building of 12 dwellings is C3 Residential.

5. DESIGNATIONS

No. 4-6 Bath Road are grade II listed, the description reads as follows:

Early C19. 3 storeys and basement. A symmetrical front with central block of 4 bays and single bay side blocks with doors to ground floor. 4 panel doors with rectangular overlights, panelled pilasters and bracketed cornices (defaced No 6). Red brick, stuccoed ground floor and string at 1st floor level. Moulded stucco cornice; blocking course; slate roof, hidden, with tall central stack. Glazing bar sash windows, upper ones with architrave surrounds. 1st floor windows have cornices and railed balconies (contemporary). Cast iron rails to street with standards crowned with small urns; dog rails.

List entry Number: 1154509

Date of listing - 22nd March 1957

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY

In 2012 the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) came into effect. It is the latest legislation in governing the conservation of the Historic Environment.

The more relevant NPPF policy from Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment states:

- Paragraph 128: *'In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance'*
- Paragraph 129: *'Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.'*
- Paragraph 130: *'Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of or damage to a heritage asset the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision'.*
- Paragraph 140: *'Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the dis-benefits of departing from those policies'.*

Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5), together with the supplementary Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide, was published in March 2010 to provide planning guidance relating to the conservation of the historic environment. It replaced the previous PPG15 and PPG16. PPS5 was superseded by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2012, but the PPS5 Practice Guide is still valid for the time being. It will be replaced in the autumn

of 2014 by good practice advice developed by English Heritage in conjunction with the Historic Environment Forum, and the subject of a public consultation running until September 5th.

Consultation for the English Heritage Good Practice Advice (GPA) has now closed and the final documents. The guidance from the *GPA note 2: Decision taking in the historic environment* and *GPA note 3: The setting of Heritage assets* are relevant when considering this application has been considered in the preparation of this application.

The references in the existing document to PPS5 policies are obviously now redundant, but because the policies in the NPPF are very similar and the intent is the same, the PPS5 Practice Guide remains very useful in the application of the NPPF and have therefore been made reference to in this instance.

PPS5 documents emphasise the value of the historic environment and its contribution to our cultural, social and economic life. National policies are set out to which local planning authorities are expected to adhere in their plan making and development management functions, ranging from collecting information and protecting heritage assets in local plans to detailed policies and principles to be followed when determining applications for development involving or affecting such heritage assets.

PPS5 states that among the governments objectives for planning for the historic environment are:

- *'To recognise that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term.'*
- *To ensure that the positive contribution of such heritage assets to local character and sense of place is recognised and valued'*

Policy HE9 explains the policy principles regarding designated sites, whilst Policy HE12 discusses the impacts on archaeology.

- Policy HE9 states:
 - o *HE9.1 there should be a presumption in favour of the conservation of designated heritage assets and the more significant the designated heritage asset, the greater the presumption in favour of*

its conservation should be. Once lost, heritage assets cannot be replaced and their loss has a cultural, environmental, economic and social impact. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Loss affecting any designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm or loss of a grade II listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, including scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings and grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

- HE9.4: where a proposal has a harmful impact on the significance of a designated heritage asset, which is less than substantial harm' planning authorities should:
 - o weigh the public benefit of the proposal (for example, that it helps to secure the optimum viable use of the heritage asset in the interests of its long-term conservation) against the harm; and
 - o Recognise that the greater the harm to the significance of the heritage asset the greater the justification will be needed for any loss.
- Policy HE12 states:
 - o HE12.1 A documentary record of our past is not as valuable as retaining the heritage asset, and therefore the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether a proposal that would result in a heritage asset's destruction should be given consent.
 - o HE12.2 The process of investigating the significance of the historic environment, as part of plan-making or development management, should add to the evidence base for future planning and further the understanding of our past. Local planning authorities should make this information publicly available, including through the relevant historic environment record.

- o *HE12.3 Where the loss of the whole or a material part of a heritage asset's significance is justified, local planning authorities should require the developer to record and advance understanding of the significance of the heritage asset before it is lost, using planning conditions or obligations as appropriate. The extent of the requirement should be proportionate to the nature and level of the asset's significance. Developers should publish this evidence and deposit copies of the reports with the relevant historic environment record. Local planning authorities should require any archive generated to be deposited with a local museum or other public depository willing to receive it. Local planning authorities should impose planning conditions or obligations to ensure such work is carried out in a timely manner and that the completion of the exercise is properly secured.*

Local planning Policy CS33: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment from the Reading Core Strategy states:

- Historic features and areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their settings, will be protected and where appropriate enhanced. This will include: -
 - o Listed Buildings;
 - o Conservation Areas;
 - o Other features with local or national designation, such as sites and features of archaeological importance, and historic parks and gardens.

Planning permission will only be granted where development has no adverse impact on historic assets and their settings. All proposals will be expected to protect and where appropriate enhance the character and appearance of the area in which they are located.

7. SCALE

Not applicable to this application.

8. LANDSCAPE

Landscape proposals do not fall under the remit of this application.

9. APPEARANCE

All repairs carried out to the property will be carried out on a 'like for like' basis.

The only intended work that will affect the external appearance of the building is the removal and repair or replacement (in the event of repairs not being possible) of the sash window Wi-Ex02. The impact of this work will have no impact on the appearance as the window will be the same or match the existing.

10. SCOPE OF WORK

This application is to support the listed building application for the repair works itemised below:

Schedule of unauthorised work/activity

see dwg 389-03-10 & appendix B which illustrates the current property condition:

- o Removal of wall and ceiling plaster, evidence to suggest that this is lath and lime plaster
- o Partial removal of studwork walls that form lobby/kitchen/bathroom
- o Partial removal (salvaged and stored) of some joinery such as skirting, picture rail and architrave
- o Removal of doors and fanlights (Dr-Re03, Dr-Re02, Dr-Re01)
- o Removal (for repair or like for like replacement) of Sash window Wi-Ex02
- o Removal and disposal of modern kitchen
- o Removal and disposal of some services and fittings such as lights, switches, boiler etc..
- o Removal and dispose of Sink
- o Removal of floor finishes to expose timber floor

General repairs to property

see dwg 389-03-01 (existing layout prior to works)
& appendix B which illustrates the current property condition:

- o Overall decoration and condition of the property is poor, but structurally sound
- o Evidence of damp on walls and cracks in wall
- o Window Wi-Ex02 is in poor state
- o Repair, prepare and re-paint existing joinery/panelling

Proposed schedule of work to correct Un-authorised work

see dwg 389-03-20

- o Re-plaster the retained studwork walls, using modern plasterboard and plastering methods. (an obvious modern intervention to contrast the retained/repaired historic fabric)
- o Existing and retained lime plaster walls made good with lime plaster
- o Salvaged joinery (skirting, architrave, picture rail and panelling to be re-installed on existing and new walls
- o Removed Wi-Ex02, repaired in workshop. If un-repairable then a like for like replacement will be installed
- o Modern fitted kitchen and bathroom suite discarded, new fitting kitchen shower room installed, albeit in a different as set out on the plans.
- o Damp in walls, modern heating system and improved ventilation will help to remove damp patches, spoor residue to be brushed off, walls painted with breathable paint.
- o General condition of walls and building structure to be inspected
- o New paint and floor finishes laid over existing and retained floor boards

Proposed schedule of work to alter existing dwelling layout

see dwg 389-03-20

- o New wall layout, relocation of shower room, kitchen and creation of dedicated bedroom space.
- o New studwork walls to be Softwood and plasterboard with skim finish.
- o Mineral insulation added to cavities and loft space to improve sound/thermal properties
- o Window Wi-Ex03 (Metal / Crital windows)

Appendix A

Photos of current property condition



Fig 1 - Front door, studwork wall that separates living and kitchen area

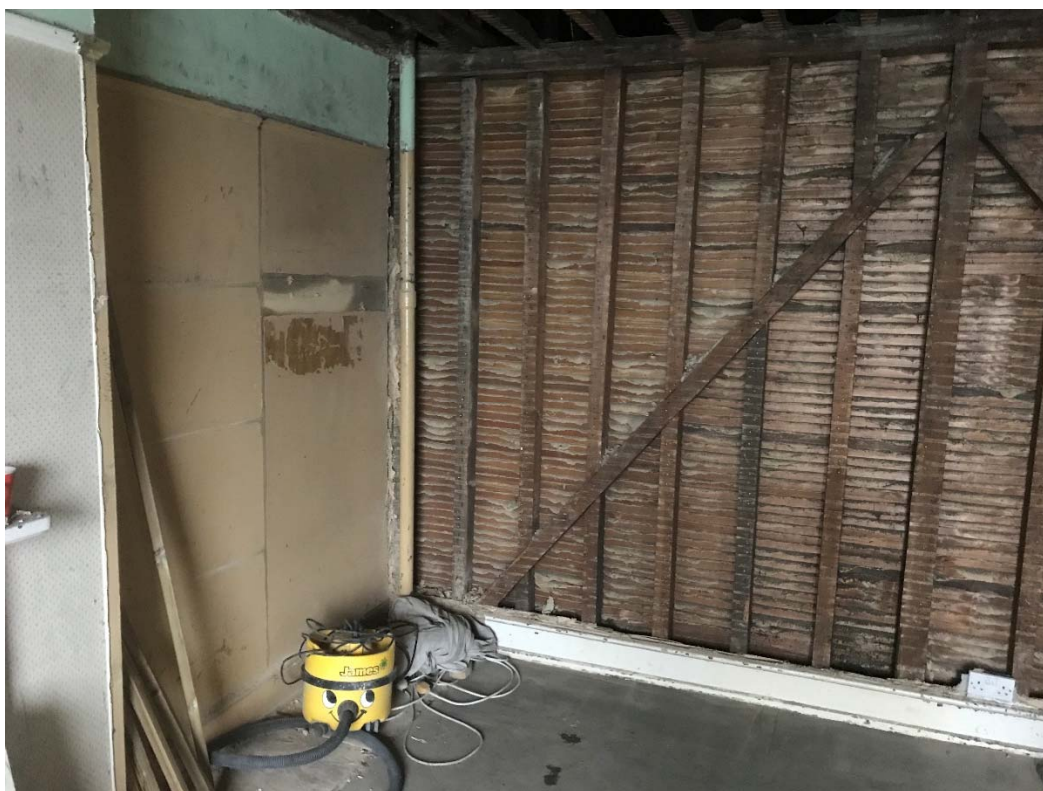


Fig 2 - Lath and Plaster removed from studwork party-wall



Fig 3 – Area of apartment generally unaffected, save the removed roof



Fig 4 – Studwork removed from studwork wall between rooms



Fig 5 - Removal Lath and Plaster ceiling to expose joist



Fig 6 - Retained fan light over existing door



Fig 7 - Panelling beneath windows



Fig 8 - Softwood drylining to bathroom, removed



Fig 9 - Retain radiator



Fig 10 - Removed sink and bathroom furniture

Appendix B

Photos of property prior to unauthorised works



Fig A – Existing bathroom, damp on walls, peeling paintwork



Fig B - Existing sink in front of Wi-Ex02



Fig C – Wall to bathroom behind WC



Fig D - Corner of bathroom



Fig E - Existing kitchen and Wi-Ex03