

RIDGE

PROPERTY & CONSTRUCTION CONSULTANTS



**University of
Reading**

**ACACIAS BUILDING, READING
FRONT PORCH REFURBISHMENT - DESIGN AND ACCESS
STATEMENT**

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Prepared for

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Project Name	Acacias – Front Porch Refurbishment
Project No.	5006984

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1. INTRODUCTION

Ridge & Partners LLP, acting on behalf of the University of Reading, have prepared design proposals for external repairs to the main entrance porch to the Acacias Building on the London Road Campus Site.

This Design and Access Statement relates to important repair works to the main entrance porch.

The proposed repair works to the porch are proposed to match the existing timbers exactly. The condition of the timber structure and glazing panels has been in decline for several years, with piecemeal repairs and additions having been undertaken. Recent investigations have highlighted that the majority of timbers to the roof structure and glazing supports have decayed and a number of glazing panels have become loose and damaged, presenting a significant safety concern. Repair works are considered necessary to secure areas of loose glazing panels, preserve building fabric and reduce the risk of further damage.

The purpose of this Design and Access statement is to inform the reader of the design principals influencing the design process and to provide valid justification for the proposed works.

2. SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

The University of Reading London Road site lies south of Reading town centre and approximately 0.9 miles to the north of the main Whiteknights Campus on Shinfield Road. The London Road Campus is encircled by London Road, Redlands Road, Acacia Road & Crown Place. The site sits within the Kendrick Road Conservation Area which was designated in 2005.

In addition to local designation the building is subject to statutory protection, having obtained Grade II listed status in 1978. A number of other listed buildings and 'Buildings of Townscape Merit' are situated within the boundary of the campus. Listed buildings include Greenbanks, The Great Hall and The War Memorial Clock Tower.

The Acacias building (L043) is located to the North East of the site. The building currently provides residential accommodation on first and second floors. Meeting and assembly rooms are situated at ground and basement and lower stories. The University's Senior Common Room also occupy a lounge located on the ground floor and wine cellars at basement level.

3. DESIGN AND APPEARANCE

The proposal includes to renew damaged glazed roofing panels and timber structures to remove the risk of water penetration and the health and safety hazards due to the loose glazing panes. We consider that no changes of significance are proposed to the appearance of the building as part of this application.

The proposed porch refurbishment will use materials matching those that have been removed due to significant damage. This will include treated timber, decorated to match the existing colour. Proposals also include the repair and replacement of damaged timber members as indicated on the proposed drawings. Further localised repairs may be identified as works progress. These will be undertaken in the same materials as the existing. All subsequent timber repairs and replacements will be confirmed with the Local Authorities conservation

officer. A small section of previously added plywood is to be removed from the structure and replaced with cast iron railings to match the existing located around the building. The porch is then to be reinstated to its original design.

Rainwater goods located to the left-hand side are to remain and cleared out. This is to be installed to its new location as shown within the drawings. Newly fitted uPVC downpipes will be installed, these are to match the existing colour of the decorated timber.

A metal plant room door with side panel is to be installed in the existing opening at basement level. This will provide secure access to the existing plant room. The handrail and stairs are to remain as existing.

4. ACCESS

No alterations are proposed to change access to or within the building. Vehicular access to the site will be via a gated entrance located on London Road as existing.

5. JUSTIFICATION

The proposed porch refurbishment is necessary to reduce risk of continued damage to the building fabric and prevent any health and safety risk to the users and occupants of the building.

Careful consideration has been paid to the design and material of the porch refurbishment to maintain the existing appearance, minimise the impact of development and prolong the usable life of the building.

We consider the proposed works align with council policy, including appropriate use of materials and seeking to maintain the character and appearance of the building. Subject to approval, the proposed works will result in extended lifetime of the timber porch, reduced ongoing maintenance costs and reduce risk of injury from damaged glazing panels falling from their fixings.

