

RIDGE

PROPERTY & CONSTRUCTION CONSULTANTS



University of
Reading

**ACACIAS BUILDING, READING
ROOF REPLACEMENT AND STONEMWORK REPAIRS -
DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**

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Prepared for

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Project Name	Acacias – Roof Replacement and Stonework Repairs
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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 Grade II listed Acacias building on the London Road Campus Site.

This application relates to important repair works to the Grade II listed building, inducing the full replacement of deteriorated pitched and flat roof coverings, rainwater goods and localised repairs to loose and spalled stonework cladding. Thermal insulation upgrades are proposed in conjunction with roof replacement to improve the thermal performance and comfort of occupiers.

External repair works are proposed to Bath stone cladding, a key part of the building's listing. The condition of cladding panels has been in decline for several years, with piecemeal repairs having been undertaken. Recent investigations have highlighted several areas of loose, cracked and spalling to stone facings, presenting a significant safety hazard. Repair works are considered necessary to secure areas of loose cladding, preserve building fabric and reduce the risk of future moisture ingress.

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 University Whiteknights Campus on Shinfield Road. The London Road Campus is bounded 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 deteriorated roof coverings to reduce the risk of water penetration. We also propose to improve thermal insulation to increase the thermal comfort of residents. Stonework cladding repairs are necessary to ensure the safety of staff and students, to conserve the appearance and improve water-tightness of the building. We consider that no changes of significance are proposed to the appearance of the building as part of this application.

The proposed roof replacement will use materials to match the adjacent Greenbanks building, including Penrhyn slates and traditional rolled leadwork. Proposals also include the repair and replacement of damaged timber members as indicated by proposal drawings. Further localised repairs may be identified as works progress. Additional timber repairs and replacements will be confirmed with the appointed conservation officer.

Rainwater goods are subject to heavy rusting, corrosion and blockages. These factors have resulted in water ingress and damage to stonework cladding panels. Proposed replacements are for beaded half round aluminium gutters with socketed circular aluminium downpipes. Aluminium is to be powder coated to match the colour of the existing rainwater goods and installed to match the appearance of the adjacent Greenbanks building.

Stonework repairs include the replacement of deteriorated panels, repointing, cleaning and local spot repairs as identified by proposal drawings. Repair works are considered essential in the short term, with loose areas of stonework presenting a risk of falling. Where there is evidence of ongoing damage, ferrous fixings are to be removed and replaced with stainless steel alternatives.

Stonework repairs are to be carried out by a specialist masonry repairs contractor with replacements, repointing and local repairs to match the appearance of existing cladding. The proposal anticipates a requirement to demonstrate trial areas and example repairs, subject to the approval of the appointed Conservation Officer.

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.

5. JUSTIFICATION

The proposed roof replacement is necessary to reduce risk of continued damage to the building fabric and reduce moisture penetration through the deteriorated external envelope. Thermal upgrades will improve thermal comfort for residents and reduce energy usage.

Careful consideration has been paid to the design and material of roof replacements 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 building fabric, reduced ongoing maintenance costs, improved thermal performance and a more comfortable internal environment.

