

Design Heritage and Access Statement

Proposed Advertising Consent, 52 London Street, Reading RG1 4SQ

Introduction

The Grade II Listed premises at the address above has been acquired by London Women's Clinic, one of Britain's leading private fertility clinics. London Women's Clinic are keen to make their presence known in the area by using traditional commercial shop signage.

The Applicant

London Women's Clinic is a well-established clinic offering private fertility services to the public. LWC have a nationwide network of satellite clinics centred on their headquarters in London, where they occupy two fine mid-Georgian town houses on Harley Street.

Where possible the clinic prefers to occupy and repurpose Georgian buildings which reflect their approachability and established credentials.

The Site

52 London Street is located on the west side of London Street. It is Grade II listed and sited within the London Street/Market Place Conservation Area in Reading. Numbers 48-52 were first listed on the 14th December 1978.

Although the house itself appears much altered, it was carried out in a sensitive and sympathetic style and discreetly forms part of a terrace of varied and lively 18th century and early 19th century buildings forming a townscape of commercial premises. Typical of ribbon developments witnessing the expansion of an increasingly wealthy, burgeoning market and manufacturing town in a period of great change.

The redbrick built house comprises two storeys with a traditional style shopfront. The First Floor above has a tripartite window and a single sash window. There is a dormer window set into the tiled roof. Brick block eaves cornicing continues across linking the houses from 48 to 52.

The roof of number 52 is set at a lower pitch to the adjacent roofs.

The rear of the premises has been rebuilt and extended. There is ramped access from the rear overlooking Crossland Road.

The façade facing London Street is of unpainted, smooth red brick using a lazy, common or garden brick bond which further hints at a recent rebuild.

Proposal

Reflecting the traditional aspect of the shopfront and building, it is intended to re-use the existing shopfront and fascia, together with an existing hanging blade sign.

The shopfront and fascia will be redecorated. It will be illuminated by three number traditional type brass swan-necked light fittings and the hanging blade sign, rehung using the reinstated armature securely fixed to the existing brickwork.

The Ground Floor glazing will be partially obscured with opaque film with insert roundels featuring further brands and services delivered by London Women's Clinic, providing privacy and discretion for staff and visitors alike.

This contribution will enhance the ambience and aspect of the shop unit and contribute positively to the townscape of London Street and Reading, while discreetly alerting and attracting potential clients and existing patients to the presence of the clinic.