

Heritage Statement

9b Sidmouth Street, Reading

9b Sidmouth Street is a two bedroom flat in the former single dwelling, 9 Sidmouth Street. 9 Sidmouth Street was built in 1845 by George Lovejoy, a Bookseller of Reading. It is described in the Historic England listing as a house with – “an unusual composition forming a 2 storey end of terrace to the 3 storey Nos 54-70 (even) South Street, which if slightly later, are under the same roof line. Grey brick, stucco lintels. Stucco plinth and band over ground floor. Stucco quoins to ground floor. Curved brackets to flat eaves. Hipped slate roof. 2x3 bays, glazing bar sash windows. Arched entrance to recessed door .”

(ref.SIDMOUTH STREET 1. 5128 No 11 SU 7273 7/569 II 2.)

The exterior of the house has not changed greatly since it was built. However the house was purchased in the 1980's By Maurice Niel Webb with a view to dividing the house into three flats, A basement flat, a ground floor flat and a first floor flat. 9b Sidmouth Street is the first floor flat and a floorplan of the flat and a photograph of the south elevation have been attached to the application. The application concerns the replacement of a rather large existing boiler flue, seen in the photograph to the right of the kitchen window, with a new combi boiler flue, less than 1/3 the surface area of the existing flue.

I have held the leasehold of 9b Sidmouth Street since the 28 June 1996. I also hold a 1/6 share in the freehold of 9b Sidmouth Street and 54 South Street, formerly owned by Mr Webb the developer.

The features of the house mentioned in the 1979 Grade II listing, the stucco band over the ground floor, curved brackets to flat eaves, are far from the Flue that is the subject of this application and none of the work proposed will effect these features. However the rear of the house was built in a yellow brick with matching mortar. Given that the old boiler flue has a wider diameter than the combi flue, it is proposed to fill in the hole in the wall left when the old boiler is removed with matching bricks and mortar, placed in such a way to maintain the original bond and texture. Once this is done It is proposed to cut a smaller hole for the combi boiler flue. The final appearance will be less conspicuous than the present arrangement.

The work needs to be carried out because the existing boiler was fitted when the flat was created in 1987. The existing boiler is obsolete and grossly inefficient. The proposed works will provide a combi boiler with an efficiency up to 90%. The environmental impact will be reduced as a result of installing the modern efficient combi boiler. The structure of the flat will not be altered. The position of the boiler will not be changed from that of

the existing boiler and the existing services are already available at the proposed site of the combi boiler (see Floor Plan attached)

The historic features of the house will be maintained and the visual impact on the site of flue will be reduced given the replacement cowl being much smaller than the existing cowl. The matching of the bricks colour and texture will be conserved. I lived in the flat since 1996, and own the flat, I will ensure that the work in no way degrades the appearance of my property.