

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward:

App Ref: PL/25/1539 Listed building consent

Address: FLAT 2, 12 ABBOTS WALK, READING, RG1 3HW

Proposal: Full replacement of existing timber fascia boards to the roofline.

Applicant: Andrew Whisker

Received date: 28/10/2025

Target Decision date: 05/01/2026

Case Officer: Nathalie Weekes

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application property is a top floor flat in a Grade II listed building located on the south side of Abbots Walk facing onto Forbury Gardens and St James's Church. It is one of the end properties which make up a three property terrace of listed buildings.

The property is surrounded by a number of other listed buildings, whilst the property is also sited adjacent to the Abbey Ruins scheduled monument site and in an area of archaeological potential. The listing for the property is as follows:

ABBOT'S WALK 1. 5128 Nos 11 and 12 SU 7173 NE 1/3 II GV 2. Early C19. 3 storeys and basement. Bath stone. Strings at 1st floor impost level of arched windows and at 2nd floor cill level. Wide flat eaves. Slate roof. Glazing bar sash windows. 2 ranges of windows each, arched recesses for 1st floor windows. 6 panel doors with fanlights also recessed. Mid C19 cast-iron balcony across both houses with bowed section. Cast-iron fleur-de-lys railings in front. Listing NGR: SU7197273567

Site visit date 3 December 2025

Site visit photos



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposal is for a 'like for like' repair comprising the removal of the existing rotten timber fascia boards and guttering, replacement of new white timber fascia boards and reinstatement of the existing

guttering system to the new fascia on the Grade II listed building. The Heritage statement states that 'New fascia boards will replicate the original in profile and finish, painted to match the existing colour'.

Scaffolding will be required due to the weight of the fascia boards to be replaced, with to be placed above ground on base plates. Urgent works are required due to damage to the existing fascia boards.

No changes are proposed to the existing downpipes roof or stonework.

Plans and documents submitted

Location plan

Heritage statement – gutter and fascia repair

Abbots Walk – frontage with indication of scaffolding in red grid outline

Design and Access statement - Suitability and access for essential maintenance works

RAMs Scaffolding Risk assessment and method statement

As received 28 October 2025

Relevant Planning history

PI99-1810 /LBC Erection of Automated Security Gates Set Back 1.5m From Car Park Entrance - Approved

PI99/2315 /FUL Erect Automatic Security Gates - Approved

3. CONSULTATIONS

The following were consulted:

- Historic England Consultations: No objections, subject to a scaffolding risk assessment and method statement to be submitted for approval prior to commencement of works *'The buildings of Abbots Walk are excluded from the Scheduled Monument of Reading Abbey, although the ground beneath them is included. Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) will not therefore be required for the roof repairs – nor the scaffolding, provided this is not anchored to the ground or fixed in any way to the Abbey ruins alongside the building, and it will only be in place for a short duration.'*
'The resident at No 12 Abbots Walk consulted us earlier in the year, in relation to the scaffolding for both the gutter repairs and for the removal of a bee's nest within the chimney stack. Essentially, he was able to confirm that in both cases, the scaffolding would not be anchored to the ground, nor fixed to the Abbey ruins, and provided RAMS from the contractors which cover the need for care to avoid damage to the monument. However, if the current proposals differ from the previous plan, then I would be grateful for a Method Statement and RAMS which explain the measures that will be put in place to prevent damage to the Abbey ruins and below-ground remains; a scaffold specification and an illustration to show the location of footings in relation to the ruins. The Method Statement and RAMS should include confirmation that the scaffolding will not be tied to the Abbey ruins and no ground anchors will be used to secure the scaffolding. Otherwise, SMC will be required, and they will need to engage in pre-app with us, prior to submitting an application.'
- RBC Conservation Officer: No objections subject to a condition relating to a scheme of works, material specifications for the fascia and soffit and making good conditions.
- Transport Development Control: - No objections. A highway informative is recommended.
- Reading Civic Society Consultations: *Case officer - No response at the time of writing the report.*

A site notice was displayed on site on 19 November 2025 and an advert was placed in a local newspaper.

No letters of representation have been received.

Communications with the applicant

The applicant has agreed to a pre-commencement condition to provide scaffolding details for discharge once a contractor has been commissioned. All residents within the building have been notified of the required works.

4. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the LPA to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.

Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF paragraph 12).

National Policy and Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Practice Guidance

Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance 2008

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC1: PRESUMPTION IN FAVOUR OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

CC7: DESIGN AND THE PUBLIC REALM

EN1: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Equality Act 2010:

In determining this application, the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore, in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

5. APPRAISAL

Policy EN1 states “Applications which affect Listed Buildings will not have an adverse impact on those elements which contribute to their special architectural or historic interest including, where appropriate, their settings.”

Details of proposed works have been submitted to outline the proposed works to replace the damaged fascia boards. The RBC Conservation Officer considered the works would result in less than substantial harm to the listed building and raised no objections to the proposal, subject to conditions requiring materials specifications for the fascia and soffit and appropriate making good. Historic England raised no objections to the current proposal, but requested that any updated information, including the RAMs (risk assessment and method statement) scaffolding statement should be submitted for approval. This is to ensure that the scaffolding remains above ground, does not require ground anchors, and is not fixed to the Abbey ruins, therefore avoiding any damage to the monument.

As such, the proposal is considered acceptable subject to a pre-commencement condition, in accordance with planning policy EN1 and is recommended for approval

6. CONCLUSION

The application for the 'like-for-like' replacement of fascia boards is considered to have a negligible impact on the fabric of the listed building or on the Abbey Ruins monument. The proposal has been assessed against adopted national and local planning policies, as outlined above, and is considered to be in accordance with those policies.

7. RECOMMENDATION

GRANT LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

Recommended Conditions:

1. Time
2. Approved Documents
3. Schedule of works and scaffolding RAMs
4. Materials/finishes

Informatives:

1. Terms
2. Highways
3. Positive and Proactive - Approval
4. Pre-commencement
5. Historic England