



Figure 1: The frontage of Yeomanry House



Figure 2: The rear elevation of Yeomanry House



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1 Executive summary

The Proposed Development at Yeomanry House involves a change of use from its former function as a Registry Office to a residential development comprising eight units (three houses and five flats). The scheme prioritises the restoration of the building's original identity as a high-status family home, reversing the detrimental impacts of recent institutional uses.

Yeomanry House is a Grade II listed building and a "key positive building" within the Russell Street/Castle Hill/Oxford Road Conservation Area. Its significance is derived from:

- being a high-quality Georgian villa with a classic Neoclassical stuccoed frontage and symmetrical fenestration.
- representing the 19th-century expansion of Reading's wealthy merchant class away from industrial centres and its changing uses over time.
- its rare green space in the conservation area, including a wooded frontage and lawn that are intrinsic to the area's character.

This Assessment concludes that the proposed works would result in an **overall beneficial effect** on the heritage asset (see 6.11.1). The low level of 'less than substantial harm' identified is demonstrably outweighed by heritage-specific benefits. While some minor adverse impacts are unavoidable to facilitate

modern occupation, like kitchen and bathroom installations, these have been minimised through sensitive design. Pursuant to NPPF Paragraph 215 the following public and heritage benefits are secured:

- Comprehensive restoration of historic stucco, brickwork, and lime mortar repointing.
- Full refurbishment of decorative detailing, and joinery, including doors, windows, and staircases.
- Enhancement of the building's significance via the removal of intrusive modern additions (external fire escape, AC units, and redundant pipework).
- Improved architectural legibility by reinstating the floor plan's alignment with original construction phases (notably Phase 2).

These interventions are essential to secure the building's 'optimum viable use' and have been designed to be fully reversible wherever possible. The Proposed Development aligns with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) guidelines by sustaining the significance of the asset through a viable new use. It also meets Local Plan Policies EN1 and EN3 by enhancing the conservation area's character and Policy WR3e, which specifically allocates Yeomanry House for residential or office conversion.



2 Introduction

2.1 Purpose

- 2.1.1 This assessment was produced by Archway Heritage for Richard McCarthy Homes to inform a planning application and a listed building consent. The Proposed Development seeks a change of use from a Registry Office (Sui Generis) to domestic accommodation, to include repairs. It requires internal alterations to the main Listed Building to facilitate the new use, whilst seeking to preserve the historic fabric. The building is identified as a key positive building within the Russell Street/Castle Hill/Oxford Road Conservation Area (see Figures 1-2). A key consideration is to test for modern materials, particularly asbestos. This work was undertaken 2nd March 2026.

2.2 The Site

- 2.2.1 The Site is within the red line boundary, located at Yeomanry House, Castle Hill, Reading, RG1 6AF; National Grid Reference: SU 70888 72899. The overall grounds are 1.08 acres. The original plot was larger. When sold in 1880 it was described as a six-acre "Gentleman's Well-Appointed Residence".

2.3 Designation records

- 2.3.1 The designated heritage asset is Yeomanry House, 131 and 133 Castle Hill, Reading. It is a Grade II Listed Building with List Entry Number 1321962. It was first listed on 14th December 1978. The listing description notes it was originally known as Castle Hill House, built in the early 19th century with subsequent extensions. The original core is 2 storeys tall plus basement and attic rooms. It has stucco render with a moulded cornice and balustrade, and a wide central 6 panel door with a radiating fanlight. It was extended and the west wing has an additional storey while the east wing is 2 storeys. Yeomanry House is also a key building noted in the Russell Street/Castle Hill/Oxford Road Conservation Area. Additionally, the Site contains mature trees that are Tree Preservation Order (TPO) protected. The gatehouse lodge is a non-designated heritage asset situated within the curtilage of the listed building.
- 2.3.2 Curtilage-listed boundary walls form part of the Site. The Site excludes a non-designated heritage asset, the *circa* 1840s Gatehouse Lodge. It is an ornamental entrance lodge and lies beyond the red line boundary for the Site. However, the red line boundary includes mature



trees that are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).

2.4 Reference in the local Historic Environment Record

- 2.4.1 The Site is recorded in the Reading Historic Environment Record (HER) as Yeomanry House, noting its military and domestic history (see Section 3.3). The HER also likely references the archaeological potential of the seed industry on the Site.

2.5 Buried archaeological Potential

- 2.5.1 The Site is shown on Coates' map of 1802 with the potential for archaeological remains of "drying grounds" and seed industry structures. Additionally, a Desk-Based Assessment suggests the Site has archaeological potential related to the seed growing grounds that pre-dated the full residential development of the Site. Archaeological investigation identified evidence likely relating to this former seed industry, which is significant to the development of the Conservation Area.
- 2.5.2 Pre-application consultation confirmed - *The site is within an Area of Archaeological Significance which seeks to protect areas of archaeological*

potential. Although Berkshire Archaeology would be consulted on any formal proposal it is worth noting that for the permission for the nursery (ref: PL/19/0629/FUL and PL/19/0722/LBC), now lapsed, the Archaeology Officer confirmed that there would be no significant archaeological implications as a result of those proposals with no further archaeological investigation required.

2.6 Planning background

- 2.6.1 The Site of Yeomanry House has been allocated for redevelopment under Policy WR3 (WR3e) of the Reading Borough Local Plan. The property was formerly the Council's Registration for Births, Deaths and Marriages. Planning approval has been previously granted for the conversion to a nursery. The Royal Berkshire Record Office addition was set down on the footprint of the old Yeomanry riding stables in 2000.
- 2.6.2 A more detailed planning history is set out in the Design and Access Statement (Colony Architects 2026) and summarised here:
- 84/TP/1101/LBC – To provide a spiral staircase ramps and steps – Consent 12/3/1985
 - 96/00968/LBC (PL/96/0875) – Demolition of East Block in order to eradicate dry rot, remove



asbestos tiles and clear a disused building in poor repair – Consent 12/2/1997

- 97/00926/FUL (PL/97/0911)- New Record Office Building for the Royal County of Berkshire and associated staff/ public car parking following extensive demolition within grounds – Approved 10/3/1998
- 97/00927/LBC (PL/97/0912) –Alterations and demolition of rear extensions to Yeomanry House. Demolition of redundant buildings in grounds- Consent
- 09/01019/LBC (PL/09/0637) – Provision of replacement rear door, new handrail and widening of footpath – Approved 30/10/2009 (Referred to SoS)
- PL/19/0936/LBC – Part Demolition and rebuilding north boundary wall and localised repair to loose and cracked brickwork – Approved 6/9/2019
- PL/19/0629/FUL – Use of Building as a day nursery and office. Internal and external alterations to a listed building – Approved 16/5/2022
- PL/19/0722/LBC - Use of Building as a day

nursery and office. Internal and external alterations to a listed building – Approved 16/5/2022

- PL/21/1485/FUL - Extension to the existing Berkshire Record Office and associated site works – Approved 12/8/2022

2.7 Consultations undertaken

2.7.1 Pre-application advice was sought from Reading Borough Council (Reference PL/25/1077/PREAPP). The Conservation Officer raised no objection to the principle of its change of use, provided that the significance of the listed building and its setting within the Conservation Area is preserved. The Officer's response questioned the proposed new external stair access, the subdivision of rooms and the potential for masking original features and highlighted the importance of the TPO trees, the curtilage-listed elements and the visual separation of the Lodge.

2.7.2 Subsequently, preliminary phasing plans were submitted for information, which showed that the evolving design aligned with those phases. A meeting was held on 2nd December 2025 to discuss specific impacts during a Site walk-over. The Conservation Officer requested that all



work required for Building Regulations will be detailed and integrated within the application for new domestic use.

- 2.7.3 Further comments outline the requirements for a sensitive heritage restoration project, to gain Listed Building Consent. These include conservation principles of minimal intervention and reversibility, material authenticity and feature preservation; layout and architectural legibility, and minimal impacts by services and utilities.
- 2.7.4 All changes should do as little damage as possible. Any new additions should be designed so they can be removed in the future without having permanently altered the original historic fabric. External works can use traditional materials, specifically limewash and appropriate renders, rather than modern cements. Harmful materials, such as asbestos, can be professionally removed. Original openings, windows and doors, should be retained. If they are of poor quality, they should be repaired or replaced with historically accurate versions rather than generic "copies."
- 2.7.5 Original room layouts, fireplaces, and chimney breasts can remain "legible", meaning the historic floor plan should still be recognisable

despite the conversion into residential units. The new external stairs would be modern and lightweight so they do not compete with or overwhelm the original building's character. There is a specific concern regarding new front entrances. The applicant can justify whether these are based on historical evidence or are merely a convenience for the new floor plan.

- 2.7.6 It is noted that installing modern kitchens and bathrooms often damages cornices, architrave, and skirtings. This is to be avoided. Additionally, the Conservation Officer requested full details of piping, electrics, heating et cetera to ensure they are placed in minimally impactful areas. New plumbing, electrical wiring, and extractor fans should be kept to a minimum and tucked into "less significant" areas (like the rear of the building) to avoid scarring historic walls or ceilings. Proposed internal stairs blocking windows are a major concern, as they would be visible from the street and disrupt the original façade organisation.

2.8 Design evolution

- 2.8.1 The Proposed Development seeks permission for the subdivision of the property into 8 Units comprising 3 houses and 5 flats. Where sufficient fabric survives in Phases 1, 3 and the



second floor of Phase 2, the current design includes:

- reinstating the historic layout as far as practicable given the limited information about it, pre-dating 1997
- reinstating the historic fixtures
- protecting the setting and the curtilage listed elements.

2.8.2 The current design is based on initial comments, two meetings, and a final response to the planning consultation.

2.8.3 There are no proposals to convert the basement into habitable space.

2.9 Approach and methodology

2.9.1 The Heritage Impact Assessment follows the principles set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Historic England's Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes (GPA1, GPA2, and GPA3). The core objective is to identify the historic significance of the designated heritage asset and its setting, assess the impact of the Proposed Development on that significance, and thereby inform the planning decision-making process (see Appendix 9).



3 Yeomanry House's significance

3.1 Understanding form and history

- 3.1.1 The building's high Significance is derived from its architectural quality, pivotal role in the (see Appendix 14) streetscape, and strong historical associations. Being located within the Castle Street/Castle Hill Character Area of the Conservation Area, the setting is *"prestigious blocks of Georgian villas built on the back of the pavement or set back from the road with landscaped front gardens"* (Reading Borough Council, 8).

3.2 Architectural and artistic interest

- 3.2.1 The domestic and institutional aesthetic of the building and detailing holds value. The Georgian design is legible in its stuccoed frontage, symmetrical fenestration, and the original room proportions of the principal floor. The grander rooms on the ground floor, such as the drawing room, articulate their high status through their ornate plasterwork and high ceilings, signalling their high status. In contrast, decorative features are less ornate in the smaller, private rooms and absent in servants' quarters. The Victorian changes have complicated the floor

plan but it retains its original clarity of use and status within the house. These distinctions, though weakened by the later subdivision and changes to the decorative detailing, aid understanding of the original hierarchy within the house. This aspect of significance holds **Very High Sensitivity** to further change (see Table 3).

- 3.2.2 Additionally, the retention of the building provides stimulus by supporting the sensory and intellectual appreciation of being in the historic suburbs of Reading. It signifies *"the early move by the more affluent to the west of the town to take advantage of the salubrious area away from local industry"* (Reading Borough Council 2020, 8). The Conservation Area Appraisal states that Yeomanry House is *"the most significant remaining example of the grand houses built at the junction of Castle Hill, Russell St and Coley Avenue for the wealthy and prominent businessmen of Reading"* (Reading Borough Council 2020, 46). The Appraisal shows Yeomanry House as a focal building highly visible in two important views seen from Numbers 152 - 160 Castle Hill, including a specified Conservation Area View (Reading Borough Council 2020, Figure 4.2.1, View 14). Yeomanry House garden is one of the few green spaces in the conservation area. Its significance lies in these attributes that contribute to its Significance, which holds



Medium Sensitivity, given its capacity for sympathetic change (see Table 3).

- 3.2.3 Architectural interest and communal values connected with buildings provide meanings that form a sense of place that people can relate to, and may form part of a collective experience or memory. The building holds architectural interest in terms of the design. Yeomanry House and the surrounding Georgian villas were built in the 'Classical' tradition, which was indicative of the aspirations of the wealthy residents of the 19th century. Its significance lies in the classical architectural connections with surrounding buildings. Phase 1 and 3 and on the second floor of Phases 2a and 2b hold **Very High Sensitivity** (see Table 3). The ground and first floors of Phases 2a and 2b are more easily subjected to change.
- 3.2.4 Externally, the building is a high quality. The polychrome brick construction and detailing to the rear contrasts with the rusticated stucco frontage. The frontage also displays a series of decorative details elaborate a fanlight, quoins, and arched sash windows with corniced detailing. Internally, cornices, architraves, skirtings, door cases feature in many rooms, in addition to an ornate entrance hall and stairs. All attest to the building's importance. The

grandeur of the elevations and detailing of the external appearance holds **Very High Sensitivity** to further change (see Table 3).

3.3 Historic interest

- 3.3.1 The Site holds evidential value for Reading's industrial history for the seed trade. Additionally, the historic interest of Yeomanry House, originally known as Castle Hill House, holds both illustrative and associative values, which demonstrate the connections through time in any particular place. Illustrative values include the architectural "statement", designed to reflect the increased wealth and importance of the area by the late 19th century. Additionally, its illustrative significance lies in the historical development of Reading from a seed industry hub to a fashionable residential area for the wealthy.
- 3.3.2 Changes of use have altered the functional associations between these complexes and the associated listed buildings. In the 1830's when the Tithe Map Apportionments were illustrated, the House was associated with two plots, the dwelling and curtilage buildings and pasture by Coley Avenue. It was an estate of seventeen-acres and twenty-one perches (Amos n.d.). In 1850 it was listed as having 3 principal



bedrooms, 3 smaller bedrooms, servants' rooms, lofty drawing and dining rooms, breakfast or morning room, china closet, storerooms and cellar. Stables, two coach houses and out-houses. It was purchased by John Cooper and soon after by Reverend Walter Levett (Amos n.d.). The extent of this estate remained intact until Susan Levett granted it in her will to Reverend Frederick Anson. The 1880 sales catalogue lists six-acres with the main house.

- 3.3.3 In 1880 it was sold by auction to Edwin John Springbett Jesse who was the last generation of the Jesse family. At this point in history the Jesse family owned large parts of the area and were key to its development as an extension of Reading Town centre. During this time, the House was let to notable historic figures. As Ascham House Gentleman's Preparatory School era (*circa* 1888) it was associated with pupils and its principals. The principals, Miss Adams and Mr. T. H. Penson, were a noted scholar and tutor. Edwin Jesse then let it to the Honorary J.F.T.W. Fiennes, who lived there until he became the 17th Baron of Saye and Seal in 1887 (Gold 1999). Moreover, the Berkshire Territorial Force and Berkshire Yeomanry B Squadron resided here during the First World War (Gold 2016). Several of its members were recipients of the

Victoria Cross. For example, one of the B Squadron troops, Trooper Potts VC was a Victoria Cross recipient, which adds national-level historic interest. A Riding School was built for the Yeomanry, which later became the footprint for the purpose-built Royal Berkshire Record Office. The Territorial Army Association and the remaining Yeomanry units left the property in 1967. These changes have altered the historic links and associated illustrative values.

- 3.3.4 Furthermore, there is additional social value to the building because it served as the Registry Office since 1968 (Amos n.d.), which creates a strong "collective memory" for the town. Reconfiguration of the spaces was necessary to accommodate this new use. These changes facilitated the historic links and associated illustrative values. Based on these connections, the building also holds associative values within the Conservation Area. **High Sensitivity** is associated with these historic connections, which would be affected by the allocated change of use back to homes (see Table 3).

3.4 Archaeological interest

- 3.4.1 The structural fabric includes the main Georgian villa and extensions, the *circa* 1840s Gatehouse



Lodge, and the surviving boundary walls. The survival of the original path layout and garden orientation is also important, though the actual fabric, such as modern tarmac etc., is less so. The design is restrained and symmetrical, reflecting the Neoclassical influence of the time. The dominant window type is the vertical sliding sash window, set back into the opening (a 'recessed-box' sash). The most characteristic pattern at this time was the six-over-six (six small panes in the upper sash and six in the lower sash). However, in some domestic properties, six-over-six panes may have replaced eight-over-eight or nine-over-nine, which were also common on grander properties or larger windows. Glazing bars (astragals) were typically slender or thin, especially towards the later part of the period, to maximise the light.

- 3.4.2 These historical links influenced the building's development. The house does not appear on Coates' map of 1802, establishing the start of Phase 1 as occurring between 1802 and 1810. The core is an early 19th century villa of five phases. By the 1830s (end of Phase 2), the house was part of a larger estate and lists the rooms it had by 1850 (Phase 3), together with the addition of the *circa* 1840s Gatehouse. A Riding School was built for the Yeomanry during their residency, which later became the footprint for

the Royal Berkshire Record Office. The interior has been subject to alteration during its school and military uses, reducing the sensitivity of some internal plan forms.

- 3.4.3 As described, the archaeological interest and evidential value relate to the potential of a building and Site to yield evidence that informs us about the way people lived in the past. The Site and house are linked with significant phases of Reading's expansion and military history. Its significance lies in the level of sensitivity of the external appearance of the building, which holds **High Sensitivity** to further change (see Table 3).
- 3.4.4 The window schedule will provide details about the age and condition of each window. The Design and Access Statement states *"Refurbishment and redecoration of all shutter boxes and architraves (D11, F1, F4 & F5). The shutter boxes to be placed back in working order"* (Colony Architects 2026, 13).
- 3.4.5 The 1997 drawings of the 'existing' from the planning archive do not provide further information and there are no earlier detailed drawings or photographs to reveal further information than outlined below.



3.5 Setting

- 3.5.1 Originally grounds of seventeen-acres and later six-acres. Therefore, the extensive gardens and formally designed landscape are important in maintaining a visual understanding of this prominent high-status home. The tithe map shows it part of a small cluster. Moreover, the tithe apportionment describes the plot as a "*Dwelling House, Outbuildings, Yards, Gardens and Drying Grounds, etc.*". However, beyond the attractiveness of the architectural style and high quality detailing, the building also provides an opportunity to derive sensory and intellectual stimulation from this place. It is an architectural expression of suburban living on the outskirts of Reading, and its contribution to understanding the aspirations of the wealthy of 19th-century Reading. This gives the sense of being in, the Russell Street/Castle Hill/Oxford Road Conservation Area. Part of that 'feel and grain' is created by the sense of enclosure, which is related to the position of the buildings within their plots and their location on the edge of the street frontage.
- 3.5.2 The intentional view from Coley Avenue was likely designed in the 1840s when the Gatehouse was constructed. The layout of the path to Yeomanry House's front door is

unchanged from the original design, though the surfacing has changed. This designed approach helps our understanding of how people historically approached the building. This placement also highlights the house's role within a key intersection where several other grand homes for Reading's affluent residents were developed during the early 19th century.

- 3.5.3 Today it is a "Non-Designated Heritage Asset" that forms a group value with the main house. The visual link between the Lodge and the House is a key part of the setting. The views into the property from Castle Hill also amplify the view into the courtyard of Number 154-160 Castle Hill. Additionally, the trees and gardens shield those occupying Yeomanry House from the heavy traffic and associated distracting environment along Castle Hill. The significance of the setting lies in the contribution of this building to the sense of place within the Castle Hill/Coley Avenue intersection, which holds **High Sensitivity** to further change (see Table 3).

3.6 Landscaping proposals

- 3.6.1 The 'historical open space' around the frontage is recorded on historic maps and that significance is noted in the Conservation Area Appraisal. The heritage benefits of maintaining



the historic form of the access and front garden as far as practicable are outlined below. The landscape design is intended to position modern features like parking spaces as far as possible away from the drive as possible. The parking area is parallel and perpendicular to the building to maintain the relationship between the house and gatehouse.

- 3.6.2 It's helpful to note when comparing historic landscaping, the planting details and areas of planting for the frontage varied. Nevertheless, the concepts of sweeping lines and that 'natural' concept of landscaping characteristic of the 1800s are depicted on several maps for the Site. The planting in the front of Units 1, 2 and 8 has been designed to recreate those more naturalistic sweeping lines, as far as practicable, whilst retaining the defined Unit divisions that would work well within this historic context (see Drawing 375-90-00).
- 3.6.3 The enclosed private and communal garden spaces to the rear is intended to reflect a square or box-like containment. This arrangement is seen historically in Yeomanry House grounds as illustrated in the 1880 Sales Catalogue (see Figure 5). Though the area for the rear garden was once more extensive, the available area today is much smaller because of Estate

subdivision and the Site's red line boundary. Low planting of native species may be desirable.

3.7 The level of the general significance

- 3.7.1 The level of the general significance of the heritage asset is **High**, derived from its architectural quality, its pivotal role in the streetscape of the Conservation Area, and its strong historical associations with key people in Reading's history. The building has historically demonstrated a high capacity for adaptive reuse. It evolved from:
- a private residence, Castle Hill House;
 - to a Preparatory School, Ascham House;
 - to a military headquarters Yeomanry House; and
 - a Registrar's Office.
- 3.7.2 Its use as a Registrar's Office links it with social history in Reading relating to births, deaths and marriages.



4 External condition

4.1 General

- 4.1.1 The condition survey can also be cross-referenced between the photographic evidence (see Appendix 11) and the labels shown on the Existing Elevations (see Appendix 13). The building is in need of repairs to correct water ingress. The front and western side elevations, along with part of the rear elevation, are stuccoed and painted an off-white, while the rest is plain brickwork. It is constructed of red brick and varies between two and three storeys.
- 4.1.2 Inspection and repair of the gutter and downpipe system is recommended as a priority to ensure good drainage and avoid wall saturation. The roof should be checked for damage slates, failing lead flashing, and the condition of the roof timbers and any roof membranes. Where it has been applied, the cementitious render needs to be removed from the chimneys. Being non-vapour permeable, this type of render causes visual and material harm to the historic fabric because it can trap moisture within the brickwork leading to condensation and damp damage. It's important to remove trial areas of the render by hand

using a conservation-led methodology. The render adhesion can be assessed to determine the potential for removal without causing damage. Trial removal in discrete locations allow for assessment of the underlying brick condition. Work should be photographed as it progresses. Manual tools such as hammer and chisel offer the greatest control and precision for removal of blown or loose render. Power tools may be used by experience conservation accredited individuals.

- 4.1.3 The Chrysotile asbestos coatings are failing as evidenced by cracked and flaking render below the cornice and other window sills (Riverside 2024). Given the confirmed presence of asbestos in the exterior coating, the failing surfaces should be professionally abated and stripped under controlled conditions as a high priority to meet safety regulations. Its removal and removal of all other asbestos-based items should be removed under controlled conditions by licensed professionals to accord with Health and Safety Executive regulations. Following safe stripping, the rendered surface requires patching, stabilisation, and re-rendering, followed by lime washing or a vapour permeable paint.



4.2 CAA Action Plan

4.2.1 While the Site is located within a Conservation Area at Risk, Yeomanry House and the surrounding area contributes rather than detracts from it. Moreover, the street is not listed within the Article 4 Directions and LDOs (Reading Borough Council 2020, 115). Nevertheless, Yeomanry House would be included within the list of issues in 3.1 Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) Action Plan Table 2 (see Appendix 8). In particular, it is necessary to ensure:

- the retention of architectural detail and features such as windows, doors, chimneys et cetera. This applies to original high quality replacements.
- protection against over-painting of original polychrome brickwork visible at the rear of the building.
- protection against the loss of boundary walls.
- protection against the erection or alteration of gates fences or walls.
- protection against poor maintenance.

4.2.2 The house is a multi-phase construction that originally relied on access through adjoining rooms (enfilade), like the library communicating with the study, and internal staircases. The plans

show the existence of multiple staircases, the "principal" stair on the ground and first floors. The "servants' staircases", indicate servants' quarters. Gas lighting was used until later replaced.

4.3 Phasing

4.3.1 Yeomanry House was built *circa* 1810 as a two-storey villa with an attic and basement. The columned balustrade and the double segmental bows indicate the grandeur of the design. The villa has undergone four phases of extension, demonstrating a high capacity for adaptive reuse. Pre-1840 and post-1850 maps provide a comparison (see Figure 3). Map regression indicates the following phasing (see Figures 3-6 and Appendix 12):

- Phase 1 – *circa* 1802-1810 wing
- Phase 2 – *circa* 1810-1840 wing
- Phase 3 – *circa* 1840-1850 wing
- Phase 4 – *circa* 1840-1850 (demolished out-building)



Figure 3: Tithe map, left, and Board of Health map, right, (Reproduced with permission from the Royal Berkshire Archives, catalogue ref: [D/D1/98/1] AND [R/AS2/4/22])

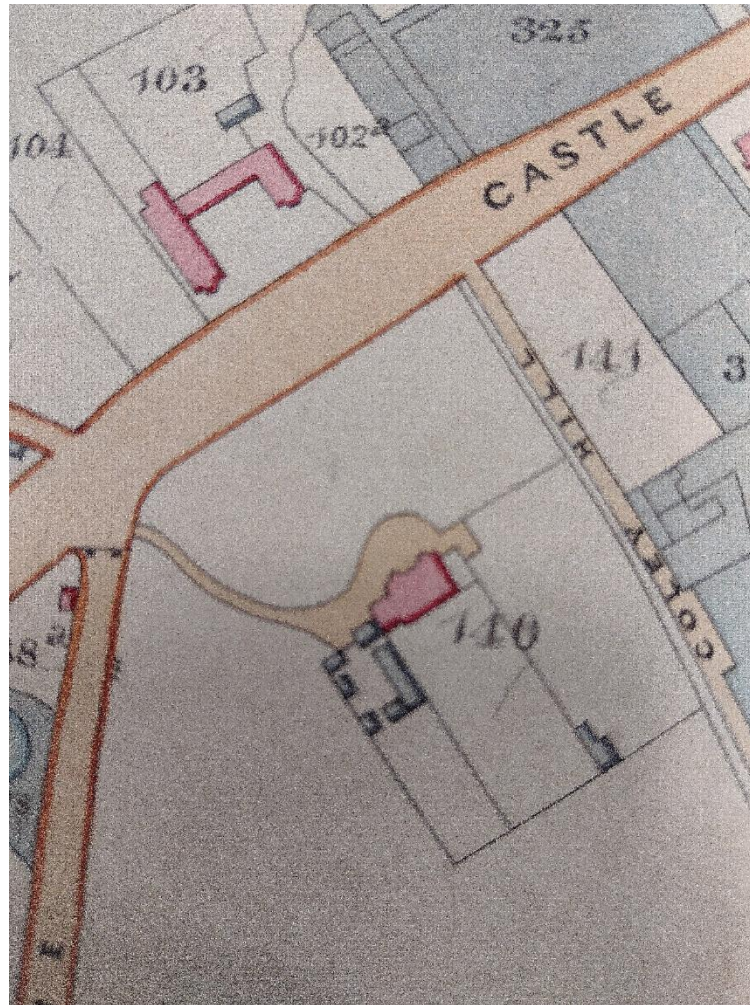


Figure 4: Tithe map showing the designed access and approach to Yeomanry House (Reproduced with permission from the Royal Berkshire Archives, catalogue ref: [D/D1/98/1])

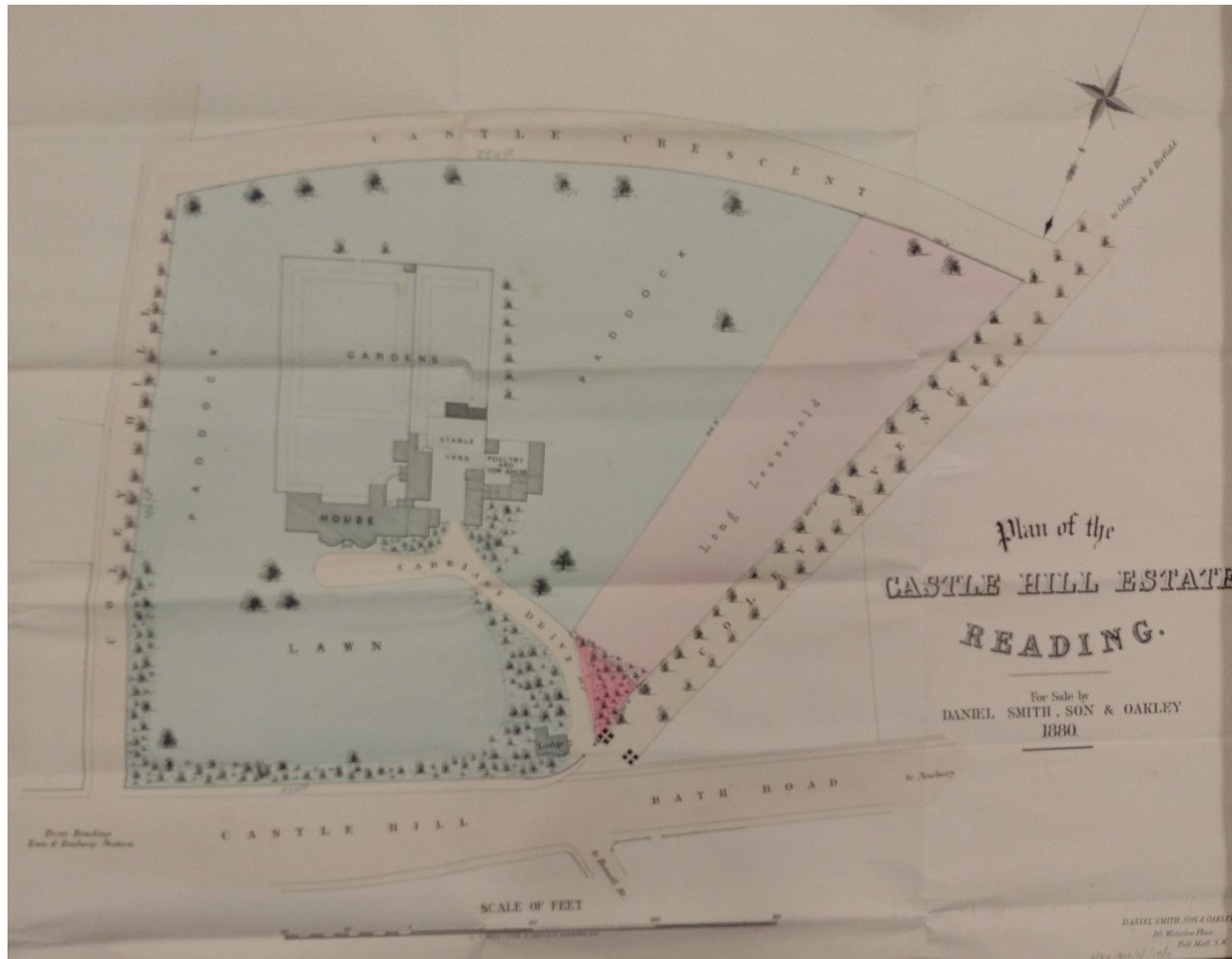


Figure 5: Yeomanry House illustrated in the 1880 Sales Catalogue (Reproduced with permission from the Royal Berkshire Archives, catalogue ref: [D/EX1942/2/1/15/3])

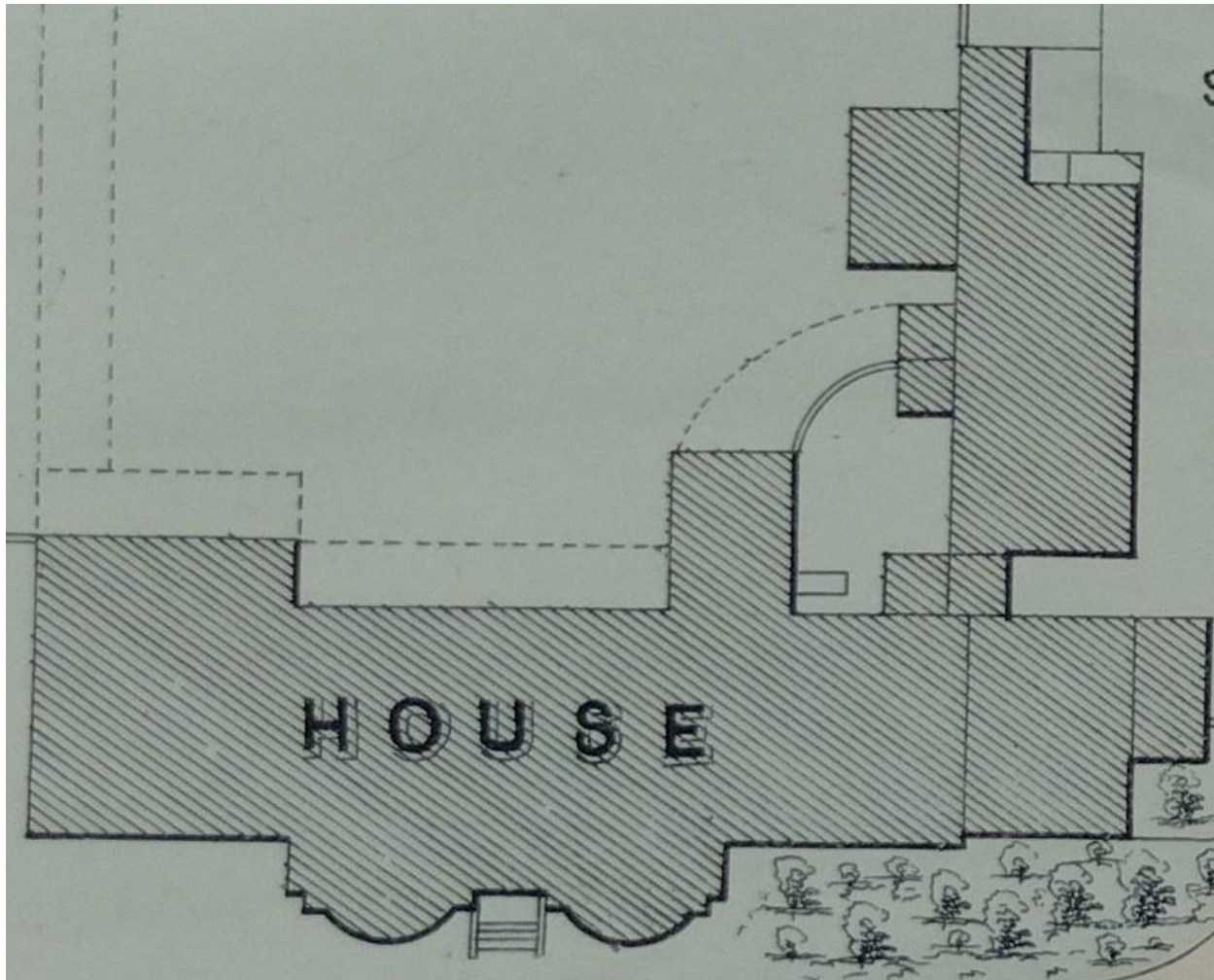


Figure 6: The extended Yeomanry House as described in detail in the 1880 Sales Catalogue (Reproduced with permission from the Royal Berkshire Archives, catalogue ref: [D/EX1942/2/1/15/3])



4.4 Phase 1 – circa 1802-1810

- 4.4.1 The front elevation of this phase, the main body of the building, sits over two storeys (see Figures 7-9). It is characterised by two slightly projecting, full-height bays, each featuring three six-over-six sash windows. Each window has a rendered sill. These flank a recessed central bay with a large, recessed door with rusticated sides and fanlight at ground level and one eight-over-eight sash window on the first floor above the door. The roofline includes a moulded cornice topped by a stone balustrade that runs across the top of the central section.
- 4.4.2 The rear elevation of this phase has a range constructed of polychromatic red and grey brick, two storeys high plus an attic. The construction method is Flemish bond and the window openings are segmental arched, constructed of rubbed brick. A section of wall has been rebuilt in modern brick and different style of brick bond where the former extension once stood.

Doors and windows

- 4.4.3 The ground floor front elevation features a central door under a timber canopy. On either side of the door there are rooms lit by a single

sash window. Both have six-over-six panes. Externally it appears that the stairwell in between the two floors is lit by a single sash window, with six-over-six panes. However, internally it lights a 'larder'. The two first floor rooms are lit by a single sash window, each with six-over-six panes. An additional modern sash window has been inserted to the left of the westernmost sash, which indicates alterations that are the result of demolished extensions. This also explains the changes in brickwork and bricked up opening below these windows on the ground floor. The roof contains a pair of 20th-century flat-roofed attic dormer windows with leaded cheeks lit by three-over-three paned sash windows.

- 4.4.4 Unsurprisingly, the door and windows for the frontage accurately reflect the historic arrangement. It is likely that the window for Room 4 was once the arrangement for Room 6 as seen on the rear elevation. The alterations in this area and use of non-original bricks is evident. A second and more recent series of alterations for openings is again evident in the adjacent section of brickwork on the ground floor. The continuation of the brickwork can be seen on the first floor where a new window has been inserted. That narrow first floor window lighting Room 12 is a style similar to the other



sashes, therefore close examination of the wood type and layers of paint is key to understanding what is original and replicated.

Condition and priorities

- 4.4.5 The moulded cornice and stone balustrade show significant surface deterioration and may require a structural assessment. Repair or replacement of the defective stonework is recommended to prevent further decay. The weathered window sills and sashes require cleaning, repair, refinishing, and repainting. The bushes encroaching on the lower wall should be cut back and removed to prevent moisture damage.

4.5 Phase 2a – west wing

- 4.5.1 This phase was either contemporaneous with the main section of the building with projecting bays or built quickly thereafter (see Figures 10-11 and 13). Having servants' quarters on the attic floor of the main section means that the additional servants' stair indicates additional accommodation was required. The décor of the second floor suggests additional servants' quarters. There is a servants' stairs preserved on the first and second floors. Plans dating to 1997, available from the Planning Department's

Archive, demonstrate a ground floor staircase positioned to allow independent access. The stairs would have been lit by a now blocked-up window seen on the far left between the ground and first floors.

- 4.5.2 The front elevation of this phase is a three-storey wing that features varied fenestration, including two six-over-six light sash windows on the ground floor located to the right of a blocked-up doorway. The first floor currently appears to have one, one-over-one light sash window. However, further windows are likely to have lit this floor originally. The second floor has a group of three one-over-one light sash windows. The roof is a gabled slate roof without a cornice or stone balustrade.
- 4.5.3 The rear elevation of this phase is three bays wide. The ground floor features a door to the right and two small two-over-two light sash windows. The first floor features one-over-one light sash windows. The second floor features two window openings. Both windows are three-over-three light sash windows.

Condition

- 4.5.4 The front elevation of this phase was originally stucco and appears generally less severely



damaged than the central section but still shows dirt and aging. The bushes encroaching on the lower wall should be cut back and removed to prevent moisture damage.

4.6 Phase 2b – west wing expansion

- 4.6.1 The early maps show this as a separate out-building and this later addition became blended into the three-storey wing of Phase 2a by 1850 (see Figure 3). It features varied fenestration, including one single six-over-six light sash window and one double six-over-six light sash window at ground floor level located to the left of a doorway. The first floor currently appears to have two, one-over-one light sash window. The second floor has a group of three one-over-one light sash windows. The roof continues the gabled slate roof from Phase 2.
- 4.6.2 The rear elevation of this phase is three bays wide. The ground floor features a central timber door under a canopy and a small two-over-two light sash window. The first floor features three, three-over-three sash windows. The second floor features three window openings, one of which has been blocked up. The other two windows either side of the central blocked opening are three-over-three light sash windows.

- 4.6.3 The side elevation is also rendered. There is a blocked up doorway and double casement timber window to its right. The opening appears to have been a segmental arch lintel. The first floor has a double window with a central mullion, each side comprising a one-over-one light sash window. And the second floor is lit by a small timber casement window.

Windows

- 4.6.4 The windows for the historic stairwell accurately reflect the historic arrangement. The vertical window proportions accurately reflect Georgian aesthetic at the front and back. However, the horizontal arrangement and rhythm on the front and back elevations do not align.
- 4.6.5 Ground floor: The former horizontal positioning and pattern of the fenestration does not provide an accurate representation of the original. It indicates the extent of changes for rear extensions, now demolished, and new openings on the frontage. This will become clear once the render is removed and bricks are exposed.
- 4.6.6 First floor: The three windows lighting the WCs are modern alterations. Given the extent of alterations, it will only be possible to confirm the historic arrangement on this floor once the



render is removed. This in turn will indicate the historic room layout.

- 4.6.7 Second floor: The horizontal arrangement and rhythm of windows on the back elevation are more likely to reflect the original layout.
- 4.6.8 The side elevation was altered to accommodate the extensions as evidenced by the small window on the ground floor gable wall. The first and second floor windows has also been altered and may not reflect the original design intent.

Condition

- 4.6.9 The front elevation was originally stucco and appears generally less severely damaged than the original core but still shows dirt and aging.
- 4.6.10 The side elevation is in poor condition with cracks appearing and patch repairs that have attracted moss and other plant growth, which traps water and exasperates damage.

4.7 Phase 3 – east wing

- 4.7.1 This phase (1850-1880) is a two-storey section located to the east of the main central core (see Figures 12 and 13). The matching height of the two-storey phase and the columned balustrade of the extension marks the desire to retain the

building's sense of symmetry and grandeur. The ground floor features three recessed arches, each containing a six-over-six light sash window. A rendered string-course separates the floors. The first floor has a three-over-six light sash window in each of the three bays. The central core's roofline of moulded cornice and stone balustrade continues from the central section. The lower slate roof is visible behind the balustrade.

- 4.7.2 The rear elevation of this phase is constructed of plain red brick, sitting over two storeys. The construction method is Flemish bond and the window openings are segmental arched constructed of rubbed brick. The ground and first floors have three large one-over-one light sash windows, symmetrically placed. The signs of flashing for a former extension is also visible between the ground and first floors.
- 4.7.3 The side elevation is constructed in polychromatic brick using English bond. A vertical line of modern bricks indicates a 'repair'.

Door and windows

- 4.7.4 The three windows lighting Room 41 are modernised and the fire door accommodates the ramp access to the rear car park. Apart from



a repair associated with a demolished extension, the brickwork appears intact. Therefore, these openings reflect the original arrangement on both floors. The horizontal arrangement and rhythm on the front and back elevations align, indicating these windows on the frontage accurately reflect the historic position. However, only the removal of the render will reveal whether the ground floor window openings and arches into which they are set reflects the original.

- 4.7.5 There are no openings on the side elevation at ground floor level and two openings on the first floor. The doorway opening onto the fire escape is a modern insertion. The adjacent window is more historic with a brick sill and segmental arched head of rubbed bricks.

Condition

- 4.7.6 The front elevation of this phase is stucco and is generally less severely damaged than the core but still shows dirt and aging. The downpipe is likely to be a soil pipe, which needs to be decommissioned but retained as part of the history of the building.
- 4.7.7 The side elevation has been mortared with cementitious mix raised above the surface of

the bricks. Therefore, it is necessary to repoint brickwork where necessary using lime mortar to a **bevelled** profile. The bricks' surfaces on the ground floor corner nearest the rear elevation have been scored. This surface level damage impacts the fire-face and the bricks ability to shed water and allow it to evaporate from the brick's core. The replacement bricks may be the result of repair post-extension or former staircase support removal. The moss growing on the chimney and discolouration indicates a sheltered location by the trees. The moss can hold water, encouraging moisture ingress.



Figure 7: The frontage of Phase 1, the original core of Yeomanry House



Figure 8: Side elevations of the projecting bow windows of Phase 1



Figure 9: The rear elevation of Phase 1, the original core of Yeomanry House



Figure 10: The frontage of Phases 2a and 2b



Figure 11: The rear elevation of Phases 2a and 2b



Figure 12: The gable elevation of Phase 2b



Figure 13: The front and side elevation of Phase 3





Figure 14: The rear elevation of Phase 3



4.8 Lead roof

- 4.8.1 The lead roof of Phase 1 was discovered to have been stolen 9th February 2026 (see Appendix 15). The area was temporarily covered as quickly as possible, however, damage was caused internally. This will require additional repair work and preferably workers on-site immediately. Planning and Conservation Officers were informed immediately. The water ingress was sufficiently persistent as to damage ceilings and floors of each floor level. The floor boards have warped as a result. A temporary GRP is being proposed.

4.9 Re-rendering

- 4.9.1 As a listed building, the current render layers should be removed and a three-coat lime render applied. The current asbestos survey may be referred to as a management survey to identify and manage the risk. An additional refurbishment survey may be needed to provide more detail and recommendations for removal.
- Remove asbestos layer safely to heritage conservation standards.
- 4.9.2 The next step is to test for different types of stucco because correct identification of which

basic types of lime render used is essential to ensure structural compatibility and historical continuity.

- Sample render below the asbestos layer for analysis and stucco from points on the elevations where differential deterioration is apparent.
- 4.9.3 There are three basic types of lime render. If a fat lime and sand mix, it was sometimes mixed with animal hair as reinforcement. The risk of anthrax needs to be assessed. If the lime render is a form of mastic that repels water, then it can become very brittle with age and is likely to have allowed moisture ingress if not carefully managed. If it's a hydraulic mix containing either hydraulic lime and sand, or fat lime with a pozzolanic additive and sand then the same mix needs to be used again.
- Seek conservation contractor's advice on a suitable replacement render and limewash or paint.
- 4.9.4 Once the previous stucco layers have been removed sufficient to check the condition of the underlying bricks, then desalination of the bricks using poultice may be required. Repointing with lime mortar should follow where necessary. This summary of methods is



informed by published articles and books (IHBC 2018, Ian Constantinides and Lynne Humphries 2003, and Historic England 2012-2015).

4.10 Cracked moulded cornice and balustrade

4.10.1 Repair is needed to prevent deterioration. The balusters along the balustrade on top of the Phase 3 portion of the building have cracked. Deep tamping and repointing or grouting will stabilise cracking at the joints. Repairs need to be colour and texture-matched. The chemical composition of the stone or underlying brick will influence the type of grout chosen. Chemical incompatibility will increase the rapidity of decay. Closer inspection using a cherry picker is needed to assess whether some dismantling and rebuilding is required. For example, new stones may replace the damaged stone. Replacement is undertaken only where the structural integrity is in question.

4.10.2 Delamination below the balustrade and hairline cracks may be degrading plaster and also requires close inspection (Historic England 2012-2015).

4.11 Chimneys

4.11.1 High moisture meter readings are noted in

chimney stacks on the condition drawings. Careful removal of cementitious surfaces, to repair underlying brick, lime pointing and flashing, as necessary, is outlined at the end of this report section.

4.11.2 Assessment requires an understanding of chemical levels so that these can be neutralised. The primary danger to a redundant flue is the old combustion deposits (sulphates) and moisture. When water enters an old flue, it reacts with soot to form weak acids. These acids dissolve the lime in the parging of internal lining and mortar joints, eventually weakening the brickwork. This reaction creates hygroscopic salts which attract even more moisture from the air, causing permanent damp and internal staining. Preventing this chemical cycle is the core goal of conservation.

4.11.3 Use controlled ventilation is required top and bottom. A chimney stays healthy through airflow. In an active fireplace, the fire provides the heat; in a redundant one, install a discreet ventilated cap, such as a C-Cap. This acts as a lid to stop rain ingress while allowing stagnant air to escape. Ensure the flue is not sealed. Use a decorative vent at the hearth or draw air from "hidden" spaces like floor voids or corridors to avoid visually intrusive modern grilles. Avoid



sealing flues, which traps humidity, accelerating acid attack and timber rot in adjacent joists.

- 4.11.4 Repair the external fabric is required to stop water ingress. Rainwater bypasses the flue through the "neck" of the chimney where it meets the roof. Inspect lead flashings against Lead Sheet Association standards. Avoid intrusive "through-structure" lead trays. Instead, ensure sound lime pointing and consider taller flashings to shield porous brickwork. If the stack wall is thin or porous, rain can soak through the brick itself. Maintain the exterior with breathable lime mortar to ensure moisture can evaporate outward rather than being trapped within the stack.
- 4.11.5 Even without a fire, tall or cold flues can suffer from internal condensation. While flue liners are standard for active fires to reduce surface area, for a redundant chimney, the best defence is consistent airflow. Be aware that once you cap a chimney, water that was previously absorbed by porous internal parging may now run down the flue like a drainpipe. Monitor the hearth for any new signs of liquid runoff.
- 4.11.6 If a pot must be replaced to aid ventilation, use a design that matches the original historic silhouette. Avoid modern gas terminals or

incongruous cowls.

- 4.11.7 If the hearth is being modified for looks, prioritise "invisible" changes. Lowering the effective height of the opening with a subtle glass or metal frame is often more effective and sympathetic than closing it up entirely (Russell Taylor 1999 and Historic England 2012-2015).

4.12 Existing external stone steps

- 4.12.1 Retention and refurbishment of the existing external steps to the basement and careful cleaning of stone steps (BS 8221-1:2000). Low pressure cold water or at 90 degrees C if cold water proves ineffective. Only clean when there is no risk of frost, and to the extent necessary to enable inspection of corrosion and wear and tear. Gentle brushing may also prove effective. The use of chemicals is not recommended.

4.13 Damaged window and shutters

- 4.13.1 The windows painted shut will need to be eased and adjusted. The benefits of refurbishing are based on longevity, cost and carbon and performance. Original timber windows are often superior to modern replacements:
- Georgian and Victorian sashes were made from high-quality, dense "Baltic" softwood that can



last centuries if maintained.

- Repairing 95% of the original timber is more sustainable and cost-effective than full replacement.
- A well-refurbished sash window can achieve comfort levels and noise reduction 10dB comparable to modern double glazing without losing its historic character.

4.13.2 Repair and timber restoration requires addressing the rot, replicating details and preserving the glass:

- Use a two-part epoxy resin system to bond and repair rotten wood, particularly sills and rails where water pools. If deterioration is extreme, only those specific sections of the frame should be replaced rather than the whole unit. Alternatively splicing wood or complete replacement of horizontal members may be the best option if hard wood is chosen.
- Where glazing bars are damaged, they should be replicated to match the original thin, refined profiles.
- Retain original "crown" or "cylinder" glass where possible. If glass is broken, look for restoration glass with natural imperfections.

4.13.3 A thermally efficient window needs to close properly by rebalancing weights, servicing cords and pulleys and draught-proofing.

- Check the sash weights housed within the frame. If they are misaligned or missing, the window will stick or fail to close tightly.
- Replace decayed sash cords and lubricate pulleys to ensure the sashes slide smoothly, allowing for a tight seal when shut.
- A poorly sealed frame can have a total air gap equivalent to a 125mm hole in the glass; sealing these gaps virtually eliminates rattles and drastically reduces energy consumption. Introduce a professional sealing system (such as brush or compression seals) to the meeting rails, window head, and sill. This is the most effective way to stop rattles.
- Options include draught-stripping, replacing the parting bead and compression seals. Specialised weather seals are routed into the timber or attached via new components. For double-hung sashes, the process often involves replacing the "parting bead" with a new version that incorporates rubber blades or brush seals to maintain a tight seal at the sides. These are installed at the meeting rails (where the two sashes touch), the window head, and the sill.



- Ensure there is a 3mm gap around moving faces to allow for movement while the seals fill the void.

4.13.4 If draught-proofing is not enough, secondary glazing is the preferred "conservation-friendly" alternative to double glazing. Add a second pane of glass on the interior side. This allows the original exterior window to remain untouched. This can reduce heat loss by 65% and, when combined with heavy curtains, can achieve a U-value as low as 1.3 W/m²K. Refurbishing internal or external shutters provides an extra layer of thermal defence.

- Internal fold-back shutters should be repaired so they fit tightly into their architraves. When closed, they provide a significant thermal buffer.
- Refurbish the pulleys and cords. These can be restored to provide privacy and insulation.
- Historically, the combination of a well-fitted shutter and heavy curtains was the primary method of heat retention before modern heating (Jeanette Bowden and Abigail Cragg 2006, Linda Hall 2007, Historic England 2012-2015, and David Wrightson 2001).

4.14 Removal of cementitious render

1. Trial areas

4.14.1 Use the trial areas to fully assess the render's adhesion and composition and assess the condition of the underlying masonry, for example, spalling, salts, or delamination.

- Trial areas establish the safest, non-destructive removal technique before attempting full-scale removal.
- Take photographs of the exposed brickwork in the trial area and record its condition.

2. Removal guidance

4.14.2 Follow-up consultation with the Conservation Officer to agree full remedial work before proceeding with full removal.

- Locate hollow areas by tapping the render surface and listen for a hollow sound ('blown' or de-bonded areas).
- This initial removal establishes the depth and level needed to insert an old wood chisel or a masonry bolster behind the remaining render. Chip away at the material. Pieces that



were not properly bonded will often come off cleanly, easily, and in large lumps.

- Strike 'blown' areas with a club hammer to loosen and establish a starting point.
- Use an old wood chisel or a masonry bolster to chip away the remaining material. Aim to get behind the render at an angle.
- Remove the material in the same layers it was originally applied, if possible.

4.14.3 Advise on how to reduce the risk to underlying brick then must be followed.

- Manual tools (hammer, chisel) offer the greatest control and precision and are generally safer.
- Power tools should only be used by highly experienced conservation accredited individuals due to the high risk of damaging soft, historic masonry (SPAB and English Heritage advice – Practical Building Conservation).
- Where there is a risk of large areas becoming detached in an uncontrolled way, consider mechanically cutting the render into smaller,

manageable chunks before chiselling to prevent large, heavy sheets from detaching unexpectedly (English Heritage advice – Practical Building Conservation).

3. Leave well-adhered render

- Where the render is well-bonded and not causing damage, it's often best practice to leave it in place to age naturally, as aggressive removal attempts can damage soft, historic fabric (SPAB) advice).



5 Internal condition

5.1 General

- 5.1.1 The condition survey can also be cross-referenced between the photographic evidence (see Appendix 11) and the labels shown on the Existing Plans (see Appendix 13). The internal fabric of Phases 1, 3 and to a lesser degree, the second floor of Phase 2, offers a rich, layered, and highly legible record. This provides an articulation of its architectural evolution and shifting social function, confirming its high sensitivity as a historic asset. The original dwelling's significance is primarily articulated through the hierarchy of its principal rooms and the surviving decorative schemes of Phases 1 and 3.
- 5.1.2 The room dimensions provided in the 1880 Sale Catalogue helps to identify room allocations at that time. The original drawing room and library occupied the large, prominent spaces to the left (west) of the central stairs and entrance hall. The drawing room (24ft x 18ft 10in) was the largest and most formal reception room. It was a single, impressive space used for entertaining guests. The library (20ft 4in x 17ft) was described as communicating with the study. The study is 15ft

3in x 13ft with a veined marble chimney piece. It was located centrally, likely retaining its formal position adjacent to the main stairs. The ante room was 9ft 6in square with a coved ceiling adjoining and communicating with the book room.

- 5.1.3 A clear gradient of status is manifest in the surviving decorative joinery and plasterwork. The library, for example, is distinguished by highly decorative cornicing featuring the classical Egg-and-Dart motif—a hallmark of high-status Georgian, Victorian, and Edwardian architectural finishings across England. Conversely, the adjacent 'small ceremony room' exhibits a comparably restrained and non-decorative cornice, underscoring a subtle, yet significant, shift in the formality of the sequence of rooms. The presence of exceptionally high skirting in the library and drawing room further attests to their initial prestige. This type of detailing was often employed to heighten the perceived grandeur of the space.
- 5.1.4 The organisation of ancillary spaces illuminates the domestic economy of the period. The butler's pantry, was strategically positioned adjacent to the drawing room for efficient service. It was associated with a sink and cold water supply. For an understanding of the



remaining historic layout, we are reliant on historic documentation. The housekeeper's or smoking room was located in the western extension, approximately 17ft x 11ft. This spatial separation is an important feature. Other ground floor servant's spaces included a lobby, large kitchen, larder, side entrance, large wash house, coal cellar with man's bedroom over, mangle room, knife house, etc., small enclosed yard and servants' water closet, and a gentleman's water closet in the garden (Amos n.d.). This paints a detailed picture of a self-contained, large-scale domestic operation.

- 5.1.5 The chambers on the first floor include 5 principal sleeping apartments, 2 dressing rooms, ante room, and 2 water closets. There were accommodations for 3 servants' bedrooms, a housemaid's closet, and staircase. There are 2 large servants' bedrooms and lobby on the second floor (Amos n.d.).

5.2 Phase 1 - Circulation space

- 5.2.1 A panelled Georgian entrance door has a fanlight above to light the hallway. The entrance hall features plain coving, relatively decorative but low skirting, and a dado rail (Appendix 11, Plate 1). The panelling flanking the arch consists of a pilaster, which includes a base or plinth, a

shaft, and a capital rail (Appendix 11, Plate 2). A detailed image shows the newel post, the main vertical structural post at the foot of the principal staircase. Notably, there doesn't appear to have been panelling below the dado rail. A dado rail is typically positioned around 3 to 3.3 feet from the floor rail (Appendix 11, Plates 3 and 4). Its function was to protect expensive wall coverings (such as silk or wallpaper) from damage, and it also became a decorative feature dividing the wall's lower third (the "dado") from the upper section. The dado area was often finished with a different colour or paint effect.

Condition

- 5.2.2 Hairline cracking is evident on the hall ceiling and within the alcove return at the transition to the stairs (Appendix 11, Plate 5). Some cracks on the hall ceiling can be monitored as part of the building's maintenance or filled and the cracks beneath the staircase require remedial repair (Appendix 11, Plates 6 and 7).

Phase 1 - Basement

- 5.2.3 Few details are provided about the basement because the Proposed Development does not include its refurbishment. It comprises several



rooms and storage space with tiled floors.

Condition

- 5.2.4 There are damp areas and condensation causing 'bubbling' to finishes, water and hygroscopic salt stains to the brickwork and significant mould growth on the doors.

Phase 1 - Ground floor

Rooms 2 and 3 - The Corridor and Book Room (Deputy Office Room)

- 5.2.5 A modern corridor wall partition sub-divides the book room, later Deputy Office Room (Appendix 11, Plate 8). The interruption of the cornice and the skirting board at the corner of the partition, while both continue on the other side, suggests the area was originally one large room. The book room itself features low skirting, cornice detailing, and bow windows (Appendix 11, Plate 10). The three windows are six-over-six sash windows with tri-folding shutters (Appendix 11, Plate 9). The room was heated by a fireplace. The decorative cornicing is traditionally made from plaster and depicts intricate flower patterns. The ceiling is very smooth, which may indicate it is lath and plaster, and it shows some

paint cracking (Appendix 11, Plates 11 and 12). Hairline cracks are visible in part of the cornice on the wall opposite the fireplace.

Room 4 - The Small Ceremony Room

- 5.2.6 The small ceremony room connects with the drawing room and has comparatively low skirting, no rails, and a relatively plain, non-decorative cornice (Appendix 11, Plate 13). It was heated by a fireplace. The room's six-over-six sash window has tri-folding shutters, situated opposite double-width doors (Appendix 11, Plate 16). The room is in good condition with no signs of damp or water ingress. An iron tie rod protrudes from its encasing on the rear wall, indicating that additional structural support was required in the past (Appendix 11, Plate 14).

Room 5 - The Library (Administration Office)

- 5.2.7 This room is notable for its highly decorative cornicing, a fireplace, and extremely high skirting, but it lacks a dado rail (Appendix 11, Plate 18). Like the book room, it features three bow windows, each being a six-over-six sash window with tri-folding shutters (Appendix 11, Plate 17). The highly decorative cornicing is traditionally made from plaster with intricate flower patterns, that includes Egg-and-Dart



decorative detailing (Appendix 11, Plate 19). This Egg-and-Dart motif is a classic pattern in western architecture, common in highly decorative Georgian, Victorian, and Edwardian cornices across the UK. The ceiling appears to be in good condition (Appendix 11, Plate 20).

Room 6 - The Waiting Room

- 5.2.8 The waiting room features a modern partition with a glazed window in the reception area for the Births, Deaths and Marriages Services. It has no coving and low non-decorative skirting (Appendix 11, Plates 21-22). Opposite this is a six-over-six sash window that is boarded up externally but appears undamaged internally (Appendix 11, Plate 23). A source of damp on one wall requires investigation.

Phase 1 - First floor

- 5.2.9 This level was dedicated to the family's private life, encompassing five principal sleeping apartments, two dressing rooms, and ancillary spaces, maintaining a relatively high degree of decorative finish consistent with the principal floor. The accommodation for servants' rooms exhibit a distinct reduction in decorative expenditure.

Room 1b - Principal Stairs

- 5.2.10 The existing dado rail profile in the entrance hall continues along the entire stairwell elevation (Appendix 11, Plate 24). The ceiling above the principal stairs, which is lath and plaster construction, shows a crack and deflection (bowing) across the supporting beam (Appendix 11, Plate 25).

Rooms 7 and 8 – Landing and landing cupboard

- 5.2.11 The first floor landing has a timber panel at the stairhead, which appears to be an infill section, possibly closing off a previous double doorway (Appendix 11, Plate 27). New skirting boards matching the historic profile have been installed along this partition to match (Appendix 11, Plate 26). Visitors are met by two fire doors; one leads to a cupboard, and the other leads to the servants' stairs to the second floor (Appendix 11, Plates 28-29). A modern corridor sub-divides the historic bedrooms.

Room 9 - 'Larder'

- 5.2.12 The small serving area ('larder') was accessed from the main rooms, one door has since been blocked (Appendix 11, Plate 30). It has a timber floor, very low non-decorative skirting, and no decorative detailing. Historic features include



cupboards and hooks are located either side of the eight-over-eight paned window (Appendix 11, Plate 31). The floorboards continue into the adjacent cupboard under the servants' stairs (Appendix 11, Plate 32).

Room 10 - Office (Waiting Room)

5.2.13 There are two rooms on the west side lit by bow windows, featuring six-over-six sashes with tri-folding shutters (Appendix 11, Plate 33). The fireplace has a marble surround (Appendix 11, Plate 34). The coving is non-decorative, the skirtings are relatively high, and there are no rails (Appendix 11, Plate 36). The room shows signs of damp on the corner wall associated with minor damage to the coving (Appendix 11, Plate 35). The ceiling appears to be lath and plaster with signs of historic damage but is generally in good condition.

Room 13 - Waiting Room

5.2.14 The coving is non-decorative, the skirtings are relatively high, and there are no rails. The fireplace surround is modern. A former doorway that historically gave access to the larder is blocked up (Appendix 11, Plates 38-40).

Room 12 - Office (principal bedroom)

5.2.15 Situated on the west side of the principal stairs, this rear room is illuminated by bow windows positioned over six sashes and equipped with tri-folding shutters. The interior features non-decorative coving, low-profile skirting, and an iron fireplace surround (Appendix 11, Plates 41-42). Further inspection reveals details of the tri-folding shutters, including an accessible weighting system, opened for maintenance purposes (Appendix 11, Plate 43), as well as the specific detailing of the lower half of the shutter assembly, which could be closed independently for privacy (Appendix 11, Plate 44).

Room 14 - Office C

5.2.16 This room, originally one of the principal bedrooms, overlooks the rear and features a fireplace and a strangely positioned doorway. The doorway connects to the higher-level Phase 3 extension, suggesting the space had been a cupboard (Appendix 11, Plate 47). The rear-facing window is a much larger, wider single window with different proportions than the others (Appendix 11, Plate 46).

Phase 1 - Attic

5.2.17 The servants' accommodation exhibits a



distinct reduction in comfort with limited heating options, signifying the lower status of these service areas. The servants' stair to the attic floor has a high, non-decorated skirting (Appendix 11, Plate 48). It lacks dado, coving, or decorative features, consistent with a stair up to the attic floor.

Room 16 - Landing

The landing is in good condition, but the wall on either side is in very poor condition due to damp (Appendix 11, Plate 49).

Rooms 17 and 18 - Storerooms

5.2.18 Both storerooms may be described in the same way (Appendix 11, Plates 50-61). The roof timbers are entirely modern, comprising mechanically cut timbers. There is evidence of mould, but these modern timbers appear structurally sound. No original timbers are visible. Animal hair is in evidence within the plaster (Appendix 11, Plate 60). The flooring and the original brick joist supports are exposed along the roof span.

5.3 Phases 2a and 2b - west wing

5.3.1 The modernisation of the ground and first floors

leave compromise the legibility of the historic plan leaving a question mark over the phasing (a and b). The western extension was constructed by the late 1830s, as illustrated on the Tithe Map. It may have continued the 2-storey plus attic configuration to match the symmetry or constructed as it is today, to a full 3-storey height. There is an indication of an extension to this west wing as seen on the Board of Health Map, which is interpreted as Phase 2b (see Figure 3).

5.3.2 The most disruptive interventions were the enlargement of spaces for new uses. For example, the installation of downstands illustrate the consolidation of former rooms into modern facilities for the building's use as the Registry Office. This space is now housing the WC facilities (Ladies, Men's, Disabled), store rooms, and plant rooms, in addition to rooms once open for public services, such as the Berkshire Family Society Office and Exhibition Room. This reconfiguration facilitated the installation of modern plumbing and mechanical systems. Additionally, the installation of new, independent corridors on the ground and first floors provided independent fire and access compliant routes to the ceremony rooms and designated offices, eliminating the need to traverse one room to



reach another (Appendix 11, Plates 62-78). While functionally necessary, this created a network of internal partitions that sub-divide and interrupt historic decorative elements, such as cornices and skirtings, thereby diminishing the coherence of the original enfilade of rooms.

Phases 2a and 2b - Circulation space

- 5.3.3 The historic stairwell was removed on the ground floor but retained on first and second floor levels (Appendix 11, Plates 79-82). Damp is in evidence along the ceiling and wall in the historic stairwell.

Phases 2a and 2b - Second floor

- 5.3.4 The second floor of the Phases 2a and 2b additions, exhibits architectural detailing consistent with a secondary or service function within the historic residential structure, likely housing former servants' quarters or minor family accommodation (Appendix 11, Plates 83-102).
- 5.3.5 Later, an internal corridor was constructed to provide independent routes into each room when renovated for private accommodation. The historic function of this space is interpreted as servants' quarters. Original skirting boards

are present, though they are characterised by a simple profile, lacking the complexity of the highly decorative examples found in the original core and east wing. There is a distinct absence of high-status decorative plasterwork or joinery, with no coving (or cornice), no dado or picture rails, and very basic finishes throughout. The window and door surrounds feature plain architraves, further confirming the secondary status of these rooms.

Condition

- 5.3.6 There is general evidence of historic damp throughout this wing. The most specific condition issue is noted in the room opposite the bathroom. Here, historic damp is showing through the wallpaper in the corner where the fireplace was once located. This is a common location for moisture to manifest, potentially due to chimney breast saturation or issues with the external roofline or parapet. Damp is also visible on the adjacent corner and wall. There is damaged, loose or blown plaster (Appendix 11, Plates 86-87 and 97).
- 5.3.7 In general, the plaster to both ceilings and walls is perished through water ingress to various locations. There are areas of lath and plaster, albeit with a gypsum plaster skim coat, much of



which are now perished and require replacement with new lath and lime plaster.

5.4 Phase 3 - east wing (Regency influence)

- 5.4.1 The Phase 3 extension, notable for its Regency influence, introduces a significant architectural detail (Appendix 11, Plates 103-104, 111, 116). Groin vaulting in the Ante Room, alongside elaborate architraves and high decorative skirtings, points towards a high-quality, fashionable addition that augmented the building's formality and capacity for reception. The subsequent subdivision of these high-status rooms, such as the drawing room, by later partitioning, constitutes a primary intrusion on the original spatial integrity. However, it highlights the need for functional subdivisions that were not envisaged when the building was first constructed.

Room 38 - The Ante Room

- 5.4.2 The ante room is characterised by decorative groin vaulting (Appendix 11, Plate 103). It features a six-over-six sash window with tri-folding shutters and high, decorative skirting boards. Elaborate architraves and door cases are attached to the wall panelling beneath the lintel of the wall connecting the two phases. A

wall-mounted pull-cord light switch, consisting of a round, moulded ceramic base plate, is located in the ante room adjoining the drawing room (Appendix 11, Plates 104-106).

Rooms 39 and 40 - The Butler's Pantry and Washroom

- 5.4.3 The butler's pantry room has a timber floor. The skirting on the exterior wall is described as "very makeshift" compared to the well-made skirting of the inserted wall. The inserted wall has simpler skirting detailing and is lower than the pantry's skirting. The comparatively simpler architrave detailing is also seen between the butler's pantry and washroom. An angled wall cuts into the window architrave, which often indicates that an original room was later subdivided to create a smaller, functional space, such as a butler's pantry or washroom. The butler's pantry ceiling shows cracks but is otherwise in good condition (Appendix 11, Plates 107-110).

Room 41 - The Drawing Room (Large Ceremony Room)

- 5.4.4 The large ceremony room has highly decorative cornicing, traditionally made from plaster with intricate leaf patterns, and exceptionally high skirting, but it lacks a dado rail (Appendix 11, Plate 111). It contains a central decorative ceiling rose (Appendix 11, Plate 112). The three



windows have the same architrave and folding shutter detailing as the ante room but modern panes replace the historic windows. The ceiling is in good condition except in one corner (Appendix 11, Plates 113-114). However, hairline cracks are visible in the ceiling and the cornice, both requiring stabilisation and repair. There is also damp visible behind very wet wallpaper in the opposite corner (Appendix 11, Plate 115). A central wall partition sub-divides the drawing room. This partition was installed across the cornice, and the skirting continues in the corridor (Appendix 11, Plate 116).

Phase 3 - First floor

Room 42 - Corridor Partition and Steps

- 5.4.5 A corridor partition was installed to create independent access to office C and the waiting room. This wall interrupts the coving where the steps rise, strongly suggesting it was a later insertion. The change in floor levels is interpreted as designed to accommodate the high ceilings of the anteroom and the later-added drawing room (Appendix 11, Plate 117-120).

Rooms 43-45 - Eastern Corridor and Offices A and B

- 5.4.6 The skirtings in the eastern corridor are high and highly decorative, and there is a picture rail, which is not a feature found elsewhere in the property. The interrupted detailing indicates the subdivision of a significant room into offices A, B, and the kitchenette (Appendix 11, Plate 120-130).
- 5.4.7 In Room 43, office B, the skirtings are high and highly decorative for a private first-floor room, and the coving matches that in the corridor. Historically lit by three windows, it is now lit by a single sash window. The space may have been a storage area. A damp stain caused by water ingress affects what appears to be modern and historic coving installed side-by-side (Appendix 11, Plate 121-123).
- 5.4.8 In Room 44, office A, the matching skirtings and covings are also seen in office a, indicating subdivision. Pre-subdivision it was lit by three windows; it is now lit by two sash windows. Damage above one of the windows may indicate structural movement. A damp stain caused by water ingress affects modern and historic coving. Hairline cracks in the coving are seen above the fireplace (Appendix 11, Plate 124-126 and 130).



Room 45 - Kitchenette

- 5.4.9 The kitchenette and its corridor interrupt the original size of the room subdivided into offices A and B (Appendix 11, Plate 129). The doorway to the kitchenette appears to be a modern insertion, and the modern corridor partition interrupts the original size of the sub-divided room (Appendix 11, Plate 127-128).

Rooms 46 and 47 – Store and Office C

- 5.4.10 The alteration of the original room plan is consistently legible in the surviving joinery. An angled corner feature on the skirting and an angled corner former fireplace in office C indicate a historic change in room plan (Appendix 11, Plate 134). The fireplace suggests an addition post-dating the subdivision created by the angled wall (Appendix 11, Plate 131). The angled wall sub-divides the front rooms, and damage above one window may indicate structural movement. Two windows currently light this space, which originally had three one-over-two sash windows (Appendix 11, Plate 132). The roofline of office C has a different slope to the adjacent room because it is narrower than the adjacent bedroom over the original drawing room. The geometry of a simple pitched roof dictates that a narrower

room below results in a steeper ceiling pitch for a consistent ridge height (Appendix 11, Plate 133). The skirtings in office C are much higher than in the store room, indicating it had a more minor status (Appendix 11, Plate 136). This store room features another angled wall cutting into the window architrave, often seen when an original room layout was subdivided later to create a smaller, functional space (Appendix 11, Plate 135). It is lit by an additional casement window. The shelving dates to the installation of the adjacent office room.

Condition

- 5.4.11 The plaster to both ceilings and walls is damaged through water ingress to various locations. There are also areas of lath and plaster, ceiling plaster and cornice damage due to water ingress.

5.5 Condition and repair of ceilings

- 5.5.1 Water damage, historic damp, hairline cracks and more major repairs of the lath and plaster ceilings and plaster work in Room 41, the drawing room and later large ceremony room. Few hairline cracks require repair as they are part of the natural movement of historic buildings. Ceiling repairs may be approached



from the floor above and begin with an inspection of timber, lath and lime 'nibs' stability and include beetle infestation checks.

1. Temporary support and re-alignment

5.5.2 If plaster can be re-aligned safely, it can be temporarily supported to prevent further collapse during permanent repair.

- Position kiln-dried, untreated softwood battens against the plaster surface, aligned with the joists or studs.
- Secure these battens using brass or copper-wire 'hangers'.
- Pass wire through small holes drilled on either side of the timber, twisting the ends together above the joist.
- Twist wire around stainless steel screws set into the side of the timber.
- Use long, thin-gauge stainless steel screws inserted through the plaster into the underside of the joists.
- Only attempt re-alignment if the plaster moves easily with gentle hand pressure. Never use jacks or mechanical force; if

distorted plaster has achieved a "temporary equilibrium," forcing it back will likely shatter the "nibs" (the plaster keys) and cause total failure.

2. Minimally invasive restraint system

5.5.3 This system is used to secure detached plaster to its lath or joists, often avoiding the need for demolition and replacement.

- Use short lengths of stainless steel dowels or countersunk stainless steel washers. The use of stainless steel prevents rust-staining and "blown" repairs.
- Washers are fixed into the plaster and tensioned using thin wire passed through to a flexible perforated metal straps bridging the joists above or behind.
- In addition to mechanical ties, modern conservators may use nanolimes or acrylic-based injection grouts to consolidate the rear of the plaster and re-establish a bond where nibs have failed.
- Use a stable acrylic emulsion primer rather than standard PVA, which can remain moisture-sensitive.



- Fill holes with a lime-based mortar or a compatible proprietary injection grout to maintain the breathability of the ceiling.

3. Advantages and technical benefits

5.5.4 The wire-and-strip system allows the ceiling to accommodate the natural "bounce" of historic floors without cracking.

- No significant weight or moisture is introduced to the structure.
- Ties can be easily undone or adjusted in the future.
- Allows for continued airflow over the timber, preventing damp and rot.

4. Essential modern safety and compliance

5.5.5 Before commencing any works at Yeomanry House, the following can be addressed:

- Historic ceilings often have layers of lead-based paint. Ensure any drilling or sanding follows lead-safe protocols.
- Older plaster containing animal hair should be treated with caution. While rare, disturbing dry, dusty hair in historic buildings

can pose a respiratory risk.

- Lift the floorboards to inspect the condition of the "lime nibs" or "lime keys".

5. Repair of plasterwork

5.5.6 A crack in the cornice and less visibly in the plasterwork as noted in Room 41, the drawing room and later large ceremony room. Repair is needed of the plasterwork in Room 2. Damage to the cornice is also recorded, for example, above the window and opposite the fireplace in Room 3 (see Appendix 11).

- Free-standing props should be evenly spaced with platforms no larger than one square metre.
- Platforms should be topped with blankets or foam.
- The padding should be held "just shy of the surface," allowing for easy access to the plaster while providing a safety net.
- The wider the crack, or the larger the repair, the more prone it is to pulling away from the edges (poor lateral adhesion) as they dry and



shrink. Wide cracks tend to shrink and peel away; adding gypsum helps, but they still need careful attention

- While widening a small crack helps the new lime "grip" the sides, it physically weakens the ceiling by removing the natural friction that currently holds the old plaster pieces together.
- Depending on the original materials used, mould-making and casting may be necessary. The original may be solid or hollow and the weight of a solid replacement mould will need to be considered.
- While marketed for being water-resistant and durable, these are often too hard for historic work.
- Using a dense, hard filler on "soft" historic plaster can cause further damage, as the materials will expand and contract at different rates (Ireland 2005 and Historic England 2012-2015).

5.6 Condition and repair of flooring

5.6.1 Before any boards are removed, their exact

position, orientation, and condition must be documented. Due to limited access before purchase only small portions of carpet and lining was removed to expose flooring (see Appendix 11). The majority of flooring is timber except the solid flooring on the ground floor of Phase 2, due to modernisation. Each board is assigned a unique number to ensure reversibility and authenticity. Numbering allows the floor to be reinstated in its original configuration, preserving the historical "footprint" and ensuring that seasoned boards fit back into their specific worn grooves.

5.6.2 Floorboards are lifted without breakage to reveal the timber beams and joists beneath. This allows for a thorough assessment of the primary structure. Look for signs of rot or beetle infestation that might be hidden by the surface finish.

5.6.3 Rather than replacing an entire beam, "cutting and splicing" is used. Damaged or rotted ends of joists are cut back to sound wood, and new matching timber sections are joined (spliced) in. This follows the principle of minimal intervention. It saves the majority of the historic beam while restoring its load-bearing capacity.

5.6.4 Missing decorative or functional components



are reconstructed using matching materials. Previous "bad fillings", such as modern cement or inappropriate resins, are removed and replaced with compatible materials. Poor past repairs can cause moisture traps or physical stress. Rectifying them restores the chemical and mechanical balance of the floor (Weldon 2009 and Historic England 2012-2015).

5.7 Condition and repair of damp

5.7.1 Contributing factors to 'rising damp' labelled in the ground floor Rooms 6, 22 and the adjacent room, Room 24, includes an '*insufficient airflow below ground floor timber floor joists*' noted on the condition drawings, faulty drainage and the use of impermeable materials such as gypsum plaster, non-vapour permeable paints and cementitious-based products. The tide marks associated with capillary action will not be resolved by a DPC, which when used will worsen the trapping of moisture and associated soluble salt deposited. Salt accumulations can remain when the water ingress has been resolved. Desalination of the brick beneath by applying poultices dissolves salts out of the brick capillaries. Reducing the "salt load" in the brickwork before applying lime mortar repair and lime plaster is key to stopping the damage

in conjunction with resolving the source of the damp.

5.7.2 The source of the damp at ceiling level noted in Rooms 10, 44 and 43 at first floor level appears localised though the source needs to be identified and may be found some distance from the visible evidence. The damp in the corner of Room 41, likely the result of an external source, which may relate to rain water goods and drainage, impermeable surfaces internally and externally and needs invasive investigation to reveal the sources.

5.7.3 Damp in stairwell, Rooms 29 / 30, so extensive as to suggest a water ingress. Severe historic damp staining is visible on the opposite corner and adjacent wall, indicating a pervasive moisture issue within the external fabric.

5.7.4 Given the level of deterioration of the Phase 1 attic ceiling full removal without salvage is anticipated. This will give access to the new roof timbers and check for sources of moisture ingress, humidity and allow ventilation to be installed. Though modern, mould is growing on the timbers, and high moisture reading noted in chimney stacks on the condition plans and the attic walls subdividing the landing from the rooms are also in poor condition. Once repairs



are completed, using methods outlined in this report, then insulation to meet modern standards within a space with limited head height leads to the proposed approach. To insulate between the structural timbers, 150mm flexi-wood fibre system, apply wool-wood board over, and lime plaster over it. Additional insulating cork or hemp could be added to the lime plaster to improve the thermal efficiency. There are two advantages. Firstly, it applies a 'whole' insulation system using both the fibre and board, rather than partial application of fibre only. Secondly, maximises the available head height.

- 5.7.5 The damp in the corner of Room 31 and 36, and below the window in Room 33 is likely the result of an external source, which can be assessed by removing render and plaster. This will be followed by removal of cementitious-based and asbestos-based products and repair with vapour permeable materials as described in this report. The levels of high moisture meter reading are noted in the floorboards Room 33 on the condition plans are likely connected though the apparatus used and therefore its reliability is unknown. Methods for managing floorboard condition is outlined previously in this report (Historic England 2012-2015).

5.8 Assessment of moderate cracks

- 5.8.1 Input from a structural engineer may be required in some areas, such as above the windows in the first floor Offices A and B, Rooms 43 and 44. One method that may prove useful for cracks of this size, once any structural repair has been completed, is the use of a suspended bridge. It comprises stainless steel wire mesh or hessian or fibreglass mesh soaked in casting plaster fixed to the inside of structural timbers and suspended over that portion of the ceiling. This will stabilise the plaster applied. This should only be used in a limited area because it adds weight and is irreversible (Wheatley 2014).

5.9 Damp remediation works

- 5.9.1 The Basement is not intended for habitation and therefore the measures to improve the current conditions are more easily managed by monitoring the effectiveness of works undertaken; those initial options should be reviewed and additional measures carried in response depending on the problems observed. Some of the current issues would be addressed when cleaning and repairing services, such as drains. Additionally, removal of doors with mould and improved ventilation are recommended. algae, mosses, and fungi are a



sign of excess moisture. Inhaling spores is a health hazard. Some species produce toxins which can be dangerous if ingested or absorbed through the skin if the environment is humid enough to support the mould. There will be a wide range of other potential allergens also present. As mould growth requires a source of liquid water, it can be controlled by managing moisture levels by applying the techniques set out in this report.

- 5.9.2 Condensation due to high humidity commonly occurs in corners and is accompanied by a musty smell. It is useful to map the distribution of decay and compare the locations for signs of liquid moisture ingress or condensation, that may be influenced by the thickness and construction of walls and unique scenarios like under the only window in the Basement.
- 5.9.3 As previously advised, mould and fungi die when moisture levels are correctly managed. Fungicides can be extremely damaging and are unnecessary. Containing the spread of spores needs to be considered when cleaning surfaces to avoid them re-establishing. Dead algae and moss can then be brushed away. Identifying microbiological species is not always necessary because the removal of the source of liquid water provides the ultimate solution. It should

however be noted that surface growth and strands may be visible after the fungus itself has died. An active outbreak requires advice from an independent specialist with experience of working to historic building guidelines.

- 5.9.4 The Basement shows evidence of salt crystallisation and fungal growth. Basements are humid environments. Damp can occur even without the application of modern impermeable plasters and paints. However, application of impermeable materials to the surface of vapour permeable materials exacerbate the process by which moisture levels within historic fabric cause deterioration. It is exacerbated when moisture within the original porous materials, like historic bricks and lime mortar, cannot evaporate from the surface preventing the floors and walls from drying out.
- 5.9.5 When evaporation is impeded due to non-vapour permeable coatings, like non-breathable paint or cementitious materials, and exacerbated by leaks and damp environmental conditions, then historic brick and lime mortar crumble. It is a process whereby moisture moving into the bricks and mortar contains salts, which is a mix of various minerals in the materials through which the water has travelled, and washes out salts from the materials it is



penetrating. In this case, the bricks, and lime mortar. Evidence of this underlying process is seen as peeling paint, crumbling brick and lime mortar, cracking cementitious mortar, damp staining and damp patches, different types of mould and salt crystallisation. Salt crystallisation may form salt blisters along the mortar bed and on the surface of some bricks.

5.9.6 The following describes the process of salt crystallisation as the result of increasing concentrations of the salt solution as water evaporates and crystallises. These crystals are deposited on the surface of materials, within the pores or interfaces between materials. Surface crystallisation or efflorescence is composed of highly soluble salts and rarely causes damage. When salts are less soluble or in areas where drying is rapid, crystallisation occurs beneath the surface or within the pores of bricks or the mortar. This process is called crypto-florescence. This exerts pressure within the brick pores and lime mortar pores, causing decay. Decay occurs in the form of softening and powdering and scaling of bricks and mortar. Repeated cycles of crystallisation of salts exacerbate the process, weakening bricks.

5.9.7 Combinations of salts affect bricks differently and some can be more harmful. Where the

source of moisture is groundwater, salt damage tends to be apparent in the evaporation zone. This is the area subject to the most frequent wetting and drying cycles. For this reason, there is more apparent evidence of damp along the 'base' of the walls in the Basement, while the bricks higher up 'appear' in good condition.

Initial options for neutralising current decay

1. Testing and sampling

5.9.8 Gravimetric analysis to measure the moisture content of all these materials is possible using drilled cores. The moisture content is measured from the sample once it has been dried in an oven using a calibrated scale. The samples are usually taken from various heights to confirm the suspected cause of damp in any given area. The use of hand-held, electronic moisture meters does not provide a reliable alternative.

5.9.9 Additionally, professional salt analysis is used to test areas of dampness, and salt crystallisation using lab-grade chemical strips. Salts include chlorides, nitrates and sulphates. The advantage of testing the type of salt present is that it indicates the source of moisture ingress. For example, nitrates originate from decomposing organic materials found in drains



and sewers. Whereas sulphates originate from modern building materials such as cement and gypsum plaster.

2. Remove modern coatings

5.9.10 Solutions for modern building materials are unsuitable for pre-1919 buildings. For example, chemical injections and tanking or replastering of all walls with modern sand and cement plaster are unacceptable in listed buildings. Scientific research has demonstrated that modern renovation materials are not compatible with historic permeable materials. Core samples can confirm the presence of cementitious plaster and gypsum finishes, where there is any doubt of their use.

5.9.11 To remove “non-breathable” paint from the bricks, test patches are recommended to choose the most appropriate method. Bricks should be pre-wetted before chemicals are applied. The lowest possible effective concentration should be applied and removed as quickly as possible.

5.9.12 Pre-cleaning the brick with alkali-based degreaser will improve effectiveness of cleaning products. The range of available methods include poultices, and gels for larger areas

because they can help absorb loosened dirt. One option is to brush away any detached and flaking paint that has become loose and use of 1% hydrochloric-acid.

5.9.13 It is essential to neutralise the applications and PH levels tested as confirmation. Rinsing with water is then required. Never allow chemical applications to dry and applications need to be carefully controlled to ensure no damage to the fired surface. Re-pointing after cleaning is recommended.

3. Desalination options and lime repointing for the walls

5.9.14 There are three options.

Poultices

5.9.15 An absorbent material (typically bentonite clay, sepiolite, or paper pulp) is mixed with distilled water and applied 10–25mm thick directly to the bare brick. As the poultice dries, it draws moisture and dissolved salts out of the brick capillaries and into the clay. Once bone-dry, the clay (now saturated with salt) is peeled off and discarded. This reduces the “salt load” in the brickwork before applying the first lime coat.



Electro-osmosis

- 5.9.16 Electro-osmosis can be used as an alternative. For this method, a series of small titanium anodes are inserted into the mortar joints of the brickwork. A very low-voltage DC current (safe and virtually silent) is passed through them. This creates an electrical field that counteracts the "capillary pull" of the bricks. It physically pushes water molecules (and the salts dissolved in them) back toward the earth, away from the interior face. It is fully reversible and does not require chemicals or digging. It keeps the core of the wall drier, which prevents the salts from crystallising (the process that actually causes the brick to "blow").

Salt neutralisers

- 5.9.17 Another alternative is products like Wykamol Salt Neutralizer, applied as a liquid wash. They react with the soluble salts in the brick, converting them into insoluble compounds.

4. Monitoring

- 5.9.18 Monitor the results to see if this is sufficient to halt decay. If further work is required to protect the structure, then Rinzafo MGN Roman is a salt-resistant lime 'base' coat intended to be

applied under a main lime 'over-coat'.



6 Impacts and repairs

6.1 General

6.1.1 As evidenced, a small number of interventions would result in localised impacts on the historic fabric. These have been carefully considered and balanced against the need for modernisation and continued use. The works have been designed to retain the legibility of the building's historic significance, with a clear distinction between new and old elements where appropriate. Yeomanry House has **High Sensitivity** though specific features and attributes that vary in sensitivity (see Table 3). The changes would have beneficial and adverse impacts (see Table 4) each with a resulting Effect (see Table 5).

6.1.2 The Proposed Development focuses on the subdivision of the building into multiple units (Units 2, 3, and 4 are visible on the plans) and comprehensive restoration, which requires internal modifications and the removal of modern, intrusive additions. A detailed analysis of the proposed impacts is provided through cross-referencing the colour-coded drawings (see Appendix 14) and the Tables (see Assessment of Effects). The condition survey can

also be cross-referenced between the photographic evidence (see Appendix 11) and the labels shown on the Existing Drawings (see Appendix 13).

6.2 Previous impacts

6.2.1 The existing entrance hall was retained but formalised as a main thoroughfare. The conversion from a grand residential structure to a multi-purpose office and public building involved significant internal reconfigurations to meet modern standards for accessibility, fire safety, and functional use. New corridors were inserted, particularly on the ground and first floors, to allow independent access to all the newly designated spaces and ceremony rooms without walking through another room.

6.2.2 The current offices A, B, and C were created by installing new, non-structural partition walls within the footprint of the original large bedrooms. This provided privacy and separate access necessary for individual business units or departments. Smaller rooms were most likely demolished or combined to create larger, more functional spaces like the modern WC facilities (Ladies, Mens, Disabled), store rooms, and plant rooms seen on the ground floor plan. This consolidation allows for modern plumbing and



mechanical systems.

6.3 Proposed impacts

- 6.3.1 The overall design intent seeks to emphasise the building's Phases by creating dwellings within those vertical phases. As such, it retains a large majority of key historic features like the primary staircase to the second floor, the most decorative rooms on the ground floor and the circulation between rooms in Phase 1. Additionally, the design reintroduces lost features such as the ground floor stairwell window and the secondary ground floor staircase in Phase 2. Where doorways are blocked up, the door frame and architrave would be retained, in each case, as shown on the proposed drawings. Therefore, the infill would be reversible. The modest two storey side extension, housing the external stair to Unit 8, introduces a lightweight and discreet addition to one end. This is legible in plan form and elevations.
- 6.3.2 Localised impacts on the historic fabric have been carefully considered and balanced against the need for modernisation and continued use. The works have been designed to retain the legibility of the building's historic significance.

- 6.3.3 The Proposed Development subdivides the building into multiple units that matches original Phases. This work is associated with restoration, which requires internal modifications and the removal of modern, intrusive additions. This subdivision is made possible by a new external stair to replace the existing. The tripartite division of floors and each division is designed to reflect the proportions of classical architecture and the regular rhythm of the fenestration, which respects the strong sense of symmetry and classical proportions of the historic buildings. The classical proportions reflect the strong sense of symmetry.
- 6.3.4 The high significance of the original layout associated with Phases 1 and 3 lies in its design intent. Enhancing this significance is reflected in the subdivision of the Units. There is a low significance associated with the physical fabric of Phase 2 given the alterations previously required for its 20th century use as a Registry Office. While that was an historically important phase, it did not contribute to the building's physical significance. In fact, it reduced that significance with unsympathetic sub-division, creating new openings and blocking-up historic openings, and the use of downstands to create open spaces.



6.4 Conservation approach

Proposed works

- 6.4.1 The conservation principles by which the proposed works would be carried out are detailed in 375-100-00-Schedule of changes-repairs and annotated on the Drawings. Where non-original features need to be upgraded or introduced these additional elements would be interpreted with a considered contemporary approach to maintain legibility. *"This approach safeguards the authenticity and evidential value of the building by avoiding conjectural replication, ensuring that the evolution of the structure can be clearly understood"* (see 375-100-00-Schedule of changes-repairs).
- 6.4.2 Note F01 on the Drawings show locations where former fireplace openings can be revealed or recreated to their former scale and any hidden features, e.g. the heart stones, can become legible. Depending on the level of existing preservation additional elements would be interpreted with a considered contemporary approach to maintain legibility. *"This approach safeguards the authenticity and evidential value of the building by avoiding conjectural replication, ensuring that the evolution of the structure can be clearly understood"* (see 375-100-00-Schedule of

changes-repairs).

6.5 Proposed energy efficiency upgrades

- 6.5.1 The compatible retrofit of historic floors (F01), walls (P10) and original windows (w02) is a beneficial impact (see 375-100-00-Schedule of changes-repairs). A rigid board non-breathable insulation product with ventilation inside and a breathable felt membrane under the slate would avoid condensation issues. Materials are listed but the option for alternatives would form part of the conditional approval process.

6.6 Proposed repairs

- 6.6.1 Repair of historic and decorative features would be completed as part of the Proposed Development. *"Evidence of damp, rising moisture, and associated water-related deterioration has been identified. Remedial measures shall be guided by a principle of minimum intervention and informed by investigation to determine the source and mechanism of moisture ingress. Works shall prioritise addressing underlying causes, including the improvement of drainage, rainwater goods, ventilation, and ground moisture management, before considering fabric repairs. Any damaged plaster, joinery, or finishes shall be carefully removed only where necessary and replaced using*



breathable, compatible materials, such as lime-based plasters and mortars. All repairs shall ensure the continued breathability of the building fabric and the protection of adjacent historic elements" (see 375-100-00-Schedule of changes-repairs).

Proposed layouts

- 6.6.2 Phase 1 evidences circulation between primary and secondary rooms as described in historic documents. Confining circulation within the ground floor Units 1 and 5 helps to preserve that legibility. Retaining current openings, blocking-up others and opening up a new doorway is acceptable to achieve this over-riding result. Confining circulation within first floor Units 2 and 4 has similar advantages. However, the cupboard under the stairs and the larder would be removed. The second floor, Unit 3, also preserves legibility of the subdivisions between the circulation area and rooms, interpreted as original features. The blocking of doorways, is reversible. Nevertheless, it divorces Phase 1 from Phases 2 and 3.
- 6.6.3 The subdivision of Phases 2a and 2b, into Units 6 and 7, demarcates the original phasing, which improves legibility comparative to the Registry Office phase of use. Reinstating the ground floor stairwell in its original position is also positive.

The dividing wall between it and Rooms 26 and 31 indicate an original layout, a subdivision that is most legible as Rooms 30, 31 and 35. Beyond these features, little historic structure remains beyond the main walls and the fireplaces on the gable end.

- 6.6.4 Phase 3 evidences that walking from room to room, requiring servants' sub-divisions, illustrates a key development of a specialist function area within the house that was facilitated by the ability to walk from room to room as part of the design intent. This evidence is retained in Unit 8, with the exception of one blocked doorway. However, uncertainty remains about the original access to the first floor. It may be assumed that it was originally accessed through the door by the chimney breast in Room 14. The blocking of doorways, is reversible. Nevertheless, it divorces Phase 3 from Phase 1.
- 6.6.5 Comparatively, the significance of the Registry Office phase of use and associated layout also holds historic significance. However, the alterations made to deliver these services damaged the fabric of the original layouts. As a result, it is impossible to redraw the original layout with any confidence. However, fireplaces are revealed by the positioning of installations,



which for the most-part reinstate them as focal points.

Proposed external appearance

- 6.6.6 The heritage benefits of the proposed organisation are outlined under 'Proposed layouts', which reflects the historic internal layout of Phases 1 and 3. However, the Registry Office reorganisation of Phases 2a and 2b does not hold the same level of significance. Nevertheless, the use of existing window and door openings is preferable to further impacting on this elevation where feasible within the design. It is impossible to state whether the proposed design reflects the original design intent of Phase 2 because there is insufficient evidence to indicate the number of openings on those elevations.
- 6.6.7 The rear elevation requires little change beyond window refurbishments and new rooflights on the rear elevation and refurbishments on the front elevation. These are improvements with beneficial effects. The elevation facing onto the Royal Berkshire Offices would remain unchanged. The opposite elevation would be enclosed by a glazed unit to house a new staircase to meet modern standards. This elevation does not reflect the historic

arrangements and therefore is an improvement on 20th century modifications. Overall, these alterations enhance the current exterior and reflect historic Phases, which delivers heritage benefits.

- 6.6.8 A detailed analysis of the significance of the historic and architectural elements is illustrated in colour-coded significance drawings. These are preliminary because full archaeological analysis of building phases requires the removal of the render and dismantling of features (see Appendix 13).

6.7 Service Integration to avoid damage

- 6.7.1 The following work would ensure minimal impact on the historic fabric. Underfloor fire and acoustic barriers avoid disturbing historic ceilings. It requires the lifting of only a limited number of floorboards, to be reinstated. A fixing plate is required at intervals. An overlay of acoustic rubber mat is to be installed directly above the retained historic boards without fixings.
- 6.7.2 All services would be installed through single apertures and where existing apertures are already present, those openings would be reused. Some adverse impacts are unavoidable,



such as new soil pipes and soil vent pipes penetrating the existing rear roof slope. Details for pipework, electricity, extractor fans, heating systems are underway. Cast iron facings on external units are proposed.

**6.8 Assessment tables**

Area/ Feature	Value/Sensitivity	Proposed Intervention	Impact Magnitude	Effect Level	Justification, Mitigation, Benefits
External fire escape	Medium Sensitivity (Rear Elevation/Clutter)	Demolition of the existing external fire escape stair and associated fire door	Very Small Beneficial	Minor Beneficial	This action removes a visually intrusive, non-historic addition from the side elevation, significantly improving the building's aesthetic. The legibility of the high-quality replacement is comparatively an enhancement being a lightweight, simple and elegant in form.
New access / extension replacing fire escape					
External fabric restoration	High Sensitivity (Elevations/ Finishes)	Comprehensive cleaning, repair, and restoration of stucco render, chimney stacks, brickwork (with lime mortar repointing), and stone steps	Medium Beneficial	Moderate Beneficial	The methods for undertaking this necessary remedial work are included in Sections 4.9, 4.11, and 4.14 of this report.
External repairs					
Air conditioning units	High Sensitivity (Elevations/ Finishes)	Removal of AC units, electric radiators, fire escape doors, exit lights, alarms	Very Small Beneficial	Minor Beneficial	The removal of modern AC units from the exterior elevations results in a Very Small Beneficial Impact, tidying the facade and restoring the visual integrity of the historic finishes.



Area/ Feature	Value/Sensitivity	Proposed Intervention	Impact Magnitude	Effect Level	Justification, Mitigation, Benefits
Retaining original division	High Sensitivity Internal Historic Layout/Plan Form, particularly the highly decorative rooms (see Appendix 13)	Installation of new internal separating walls and new lightweight timber stair construction to facilitate the creation of the residential units.	Small Beneficial	Moderate Beneficial	The subdivision alters the existing, non-domestic, layout, which is beneficial to the legibility of all the Phase 2 wing.
Reversing current subdivision	Medium Sensitivity Areas where original design intent is legible though impacted (see Appendix 13)	The alterations are positioned to avoid principal historic features, allowing for future reversibility.	and	and	No impact is associated with the Phase 2 wing ground floor and very small adverse associated with the proposed first floor alterations.
New internal subdivision	Low Sensitivity Internal Modified Layout that can't easily be rectified, specifically, the plan Form of Phase 2 wing		Very Small Adverse	Minor Adverse Balances in favour of Minor Beneficial Effects	The impacts associated with Phase 1 are considered very small on-balance. For example, there is a continued subdivision in Bedroom 1, Unit 4 and reversal of subdivision in the Lounge, Unit 2 but adversely impacting new subdivision in Bedroom 1 for both Units. Nevertheless, the subdivision of individual Units matches the construction phases, which aids legibility overall which balances in favour of beneficial effects.



Area/ Feature	Value/Sensitivity	Proposed Intervention	Impact Magnitude	Effect Level	Justification, Mitigation, Benefits
External pipework and clutter	Medium Sensitivity (Rear Elevation/Clutter) High Sensitivity (Reverse Water Ingress)	Rationalisation of drainage pipework and removal of redundant pipework	Small Beneficial	Minor Beneficial	Rationalising redundant drainage pipework to tidy the elevations.
Repair/ replacement of decorative finishes	Medium Sensitivity (Interior Finishes) Rooms 4, 6 and first floor rooms of Phases 1 and 3 High Sensitivity (Decorative Finishes in the Rooms 3, 5 and 41)	Replacement of perished plaster with new lath and lime plaster and making good/replacing missing/damage d floorboards	Small Beneficial	Minor – Moderate Beneficial	The methods for undertaking this necessary remedial work are included in Sections 5.5 and 5.8 of this report. The work reverses damage and decay, contributing directly to the fabric conservation of the interior structure, thereby securing the long-term integrity of the building's finishes.
Floorings and ceilings	Medium Sensitivity	Repair (and retain) all lath and plaster and flooring in poor condition	Small Beneficial	Minor – Moderate Beneficial	Repair methods are outlined in this report under Section 5.6 and a schedule of works will be submitted with the application



Area/ Feature	Value/Sensitivity	Proposed Intervention	Impact Magnitude	Effect Level	Justification, Mitigation, Benefits
Retain original windows / doors	External and internal appearance	Repair or installation of new doors and windows to match existing style where needed using contemporary materiality with complementary form.			Repair sash windows and shutters is a beneficial outcome. The methods for undertaking this necessary remedial work are included in Section 4.13 of this report.
Replace windows / doors in poor condition	High Sensitivity				Replacement will be carried out only where repair is inadvisable (see Window Schedule). This ensures that necessary replacements match the building's character and that existing joinery is restored to working order (addressing rot and structural damage), leading to an overall enhancement of the exterior's authentic appearance.
Retain generic windows / doors	Medium Sensitivity	Full refurbishment of the majority of the existing with secondary glazing inserts.	Small Beneficial	Minor Beneficial	
Secondary glazing	High Sensitivity				Four types of secondary glazing are proposed: Type 01 would be inserted into the existing window frames; Type 02 and 03 glazing panels secured with magnetic tape; and Type 04 mechanically fixed toughened glazing to mitigate the risk of falling.
Refurbished shutters	High Sensitivity	Full refurbishment of the shutters (D11, F1, F4 & F5)			



Area/ Feature	Value/Sensitivity	Proposed Intervention	Impact Magnitude	Effect Level	Justification, Mitigation, Benefits
Installation of kitchen/showers/niches (pipework, electricity, extractor fans, heating systems)	Medium – High Sensitivity (Previously addressed in terms of room sub-division, now assessed for changes to the physical fabric)	Installation of new kitchen units and new shower rooms plus new niche shelves. These would be housed in self-contained units with low profiles so that ceiling decoration above is visible and protected against steam etc.		Minor Adverse (First floor Units 2, 4 and 8 where a new sub-division is introduced)	Where ever possible, existing apertures will be reused. Localised removal of fabric to drill holes in floorboards for services, which would otherwise be installed in a way that avoids damage to original features such as cornices, architraves, and skirtings.
			Small Adverse (Where a new sub-division is introduced)	Minor Beneficial (Ground floor Units 2, 4 and 8 where a 20 th century sub-division is reversed or new sub-division aids legibility in Phase 2	While new services and partition walls result in localised impact, the design intent minimises harm to the most significant features. Nevertheless, reversing existing sub-division and introducing new sub-division affects the appreciation of the original space and associated design intent.
			Small Beneficial (Where an existing sub-division is reversed)		



Area/ Feature	Value/Sensitivity	Proposed Intervention	Impact Magnitude	Effect Level	Justification, Mitigation, Benefits
Fireplaces	Medium – High Sensitivity	Fireplaces are reinstated (see 6.4.2).	Small Beneficial (Where an existing masking is reversed)	Minor Beneficial	The reinstated fireplaces become a focal point in Units 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 8. The position of the proposed stairwell has been moved to address the critique that the northern fireplace hid the previously proposed stairwell on each floor in Unit 7.
Demolition of modern stair	Low Sensitivity (Internal Appearance)	Demolition of a modern stair	Small Beneficial	Minor Beneficial	Localised removal of previously impacted fabric for necessary for rationalising circulation within the new unit layout.
Demolition of low walls	Low Sensitivity (External Appearance)	Demolition of low-level garden brick walls	Very Small Beneficial	Minor Beneficial	Loss of modern structures to facilitate improved landscaping to the rear.
Landscaping	High Sensitivity (External Appearance)	Landscaping to frontage improved	Small Beneficial	Minor Beneficial	This work, while not directly on the historic fabric, it enhances the public appearance of the Listed Building and improving its context within the street scene.



Area/ Feature	Value/Sensitivity	Proposed Intervention	Impact Magnitude	Effect Level	Justification, Mitigation, Benefits
Improvements to the basement conditions and external stair to the basement	High Sensitivity (External Appearance)	Retention and refurbishment of the existing external steps to the basement and careful cleaning of stone steps	Very Small Beneficial	Minor Beneficial	The methods for undertaking this necessary remedial work are included in Sections 4.12, 4.13 and 5.9 of this report. Ensures the preservation of specific historic access features.
External walls/curtilage	Medium Sensitivity (External Appearance)	Repair garden brick walls	Very Small Beneficial	Minor Beneficial	Their repair is minor though their repair is important because they are walls that demarcate the Site.
Roof, services and insulation		Repair of stolen lead, slates, moulded cornice, stone balustrade, and installation of a new rooflight (Note 21).	Small Beneficial	Minor Beneficial	The methods for undertaking this necessary remedial work are included in Section 4.8 and 4.10 of this report. One new rooflight uses a slim, low-profile design (R03) to match the roofline.



6.9 Conclusion

- 6.9.1 A full assessment confirms that all interventions result in localised impacts on the historic fabric, these have been carefully considered and balanced against the need for modernisation and continued use. The small adverse impacts stem primarily from the necessity to subdivide the internal spaces with new separating walls and to install new services for the residential units (see Table 4). The demolition of the modern secondary internal stair also forms part of the design associated with no adverse impact. These minor changes are necessary to achieve the optimum viable use of the building and are often designed to be reversible, which acts as effective mitigation.
- 6.9.2 Conversely, the Proposed Development incorporate numerous small beneficial impacts, particularly the extensive restorative work, including the lime mortar repointing, repair of stucco render, and refurbishment of all historic windows and the reinstatement of the ground floor secondary staircase (see Table 4). Furthermore, the removal of non-historic additions, such as the external fire escape and AC units, substantially enhances the visual integrity of the building. The works have been

designed to retain the legibility of the building's historic significance, with a clear distinction between new and old elements, as appropriate.

6.10 National and local policy

- 6.10.1 This Assessment has been prepared in accordance with the NPPF, giving 'great weight' to the conservation of the heritage asset. The Proposed Development results in a combination of adverse and beneficial impacts. Where specific interventions result in a degree of harm, this is outweighed by the collective heritage and public benefits of the Proposed Development.
- 6.10.2 The proposal results in 'less than substantial harm' at the lower end of the spectrum, stemming from necessary internal subdivisions and the sensitive installation of services to facilitate the building's change of use. However, this harm is localised and mitigated by a design that enhances the legibility of the building's construction phases. All new partitions have been designed to be visually distinct from the historic fabric and are fully reversible, ensuring the long-term protection of the asset's significance.
- 6.10.3 The NPPF allows for less than substantial harm to be weighed against the public benefits of



securing its optimum viable use. The minor adverse changes are necessary to secure the optimum viable use of the building as residential accommodation, which delivers public benefits. The Assessment concludes that the adverse impacts are outweighed by the beneficial impacts.

6.11 EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

- 6.11.1 The Proposed Development demonstrates a commitment to protecting and enhancing the historic environment, which includes the Grade II listed building and the Conservation Area. The Proposed Development also incorporates small beneficial impacts through comprehensive restoration, which addresses existing decay and neglect. This includes the repair of historic stucco, brickwork, lime mortar repointing, and the full refurbishment of historic doors and windows. This action directly enhances the fabric of the listed asset. While the internal subdivision causes localised harm, the purpose is to return the building to an economically viable residential use, which is seen as a long-term benefit for the building's conservation. The impact is deemed Less than Substantial Harm, and this Assessment has been produced to

justify the works.

6.12 EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas

- 6.12.1 The Proposed Development would make a positive contribution to the special interest and character of the Russell Street/Castle Hill/Oxford Road Conservation Area. The Proposed Development includes the removal of non-historic, intrusive additions, such as the external fire escape and AC units, which would substantially enhance the external visual integrity of the building. The proposed repair and restoration of the external appearance of Yeomanry House would enhance this key positive building and focal point within the Conservation Area.

6.13 WR3e: Yeomanry House, Castle Hill

- 6.13.1 The application directly responds to the specific site allocation policy that facilitates a change of use, without detrimental effects and that retains the setting. The Proposed Development is for a change of use to domestic accommodation, which is one of the explicitly acceptable uses specified by Policy WR3e. The Assessment concludes that the works would, where specific interventions result in a degree of harm, that harm would not be outweighed by



the collective heritage and public benefits of the Proposed Development. This demonstrates that the Proposed Development would avoid detrimental effects on the significance of the Listed Building and the Conservation Area, meeting the core requirement of WR3e. The Proposed Development includes the commitment to protecting the setting and curtilage listed elements. The plans focus on internal and external fabric, maintaining the required retention of the lawn and wooded frontage to Castle Hill as a key part of the building's setting.



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Appendix: List Entry Summary

Official list entry

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1321962

Date first listed: 14-Dec-1978

Date of most recent amendment:
16-May-1979

List Entry Name: YEOMANRY HOUSE

Statutory Address 1:

YEOMANRY HOUSE, CASTLE STREET

The scope of legal protection for listed buildings

This List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest.

Unless the List entry states otherwise, it includes both the structure itself and any object or structure fixed to it (whether inside or outside) as well as any object or structure within the curtilage of the building.

For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure can have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.

[Understanding list entries \(link\)](#)

[Corrections and minor amendments \(link\)](#)

Location

Statutory Address: YEOMANRY HOUSE, CASTLE STREET

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

District: Reading (Unitary Authority)

Parish: Non Civil Parish

National Grid Reference: SU 70888 72899

Details

In the entry for

CASTLE STREET Castle Hill 13/38 Yeomanry Hill House
the address shall be amended to read Yeomanry
House

CASTLE STREET 1. 5128 Castle Hill Yeomanry Hill
House SU 70 13/38 II GV 2. Known as Castle Hill house.



Early C19 with modern extensions and adjoining buildings. Original front 2 storeys, stucco with moulded cornice and balustrade carried right across. Slate roof. Wide central 6 panel door flanked by rusticated side panels, in recessed arch with key pattern ornament to door head; wide radiating fanlight. Glazing bar sash windows, 1 over door, flanking full height segmental bows with 3 windows each. Wing to left handy 2 storeys, 3 windows, ground floor windows in arched recesses. 3 storey later (late C19) wing to right.

Listing NGR: SU7088872899

Legacy

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number: 38816

Legacy System: LBS

Legal

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.



8 Appendix: The Russell Street/Castle Hill Conservation Area specifically:

ISSUE	ACTION
Overarching Recommendations:	
The Conservation Area should be extended in accordance with the recommendations in this reappraisal.	Adoption: Approve extension of Conservation Area
Risk of neighbouring tall building development adversely impacting views and character of the Conservation Area	Consultation: Public consultation, Environmental Surveys, Historic England input (Historic Places Panel), Design Review Panel Mitigation: Where possible and in-line with the Local Plan steps should be taken to mitigate damage to the views within and out of the area.
Need for improved enforcement for listed building and conservation area infractions	Enforcement: Increased detection and enforcement, funding for Council resourcing



ISSUE	ACTION
Maintenance issues with private premises- domestic and retail	
Loss of architectural detail and features (windows, doors, chimneys, etc.)	Development Control: Article 4 Direction with Local Development Orders (LDOs) need to be put in place in multiple areas of the Conservation Area
The over-painting and covering up of original brickwork, especially noting polychrome patterned brickwork	Development Control: Article 4 Directions plus LDOs
The building or alteration of a front porch or weather-shield	Development Control: Article 4 Directions and enforcement
The creation of hard standing surfaces for rubbish bins in front gardens and/or the removal of front garden boundary walls	Development Control: Article 4 Directions plus LDOs and improved detection and enforcement
Removal or loss of front and side boundary walls and railings	Development Control: Article 4 Directions plus LDOs
Installation of uPVC windows and uPVC primary entrance doors	Development Control: Article 4 Direction plus LDOs and improved detection and enforcement
Multiple façade satellite dishes, redundant cabling and pipes on street-facing façades	Community Involvement: Improved detection Enforcement: improved enforcement of the existing regulations Development Control: Article 4 to remove PD rights for façade blighting elements visible from a public highway, including footpaths
Creating unconsented access onto a road or public highway	Community Involvement: Improved detection Enforcement: improved enforcement of the existing regulations
The erection or alteration of gates, fences or walls	Development Control: Article 4 Directions plus LDOs and improved detection and enforcement



ISSUE	ACTION
Prolonged and persistent poor maintenance of properties detrimental to local character	Community Involvement: Communication with landlord and tenants Enforcement: Enforcement; including in the most severe cases, where detrimental to the surrounding quality of life the issuance of Community Protection Notice (CPNs)
Prolonged and persistent poorly maintained façades: painting, rendering using out-of-keeping materials, redundant wires, excessive pipes detrimental to local character	Community Involvement: Communication with owners; Enforcement: Enforcement; including in the most severe cases, where detrimental to the surrounding quality of life the issuance of Community Protection Notice (CPNs)
Prolonged and persistent poorly maintained boundaries, hedges, fences, and gates detrimental to local character	Communication with landlord and tenants Enforcement: Enforcement; including in the most severe cases, where detrimental to the surrounding quality of life the issuance of Community Protection Notice (CPNs)
Prolonged and persistent poor management of rubbish detrimental to local character	Enforcement: Enforcement; including in the most severe cases, where detrimental to the surrounding quality of life the issuance of Community Protection Notice (CPNs)
Reduction of green canopy in gardens	Community involvement: improved detection Awareness: Create and provide householder information document on the added value and visual importance of green canopy in gardens Enforcement: of existing regulations
Non-compliant estate agent signage; unduly prolonged time period for signage presentation and use; projection beyond boundary onto public highway	Enforcement and detection: Improved detection and enforcement. Adherence to and enforcement of RBC's policy on estate agent signage,



ISSUE	ACTION
Shop fronts	
Lack of knowledge by shop-owners about the policy and suggested design parameters within the conservation area	Education: of shop-owners Policy: to review and reinforce the policy on shop-fronts and retail signage Funding: improvement schemes for shop fronts
Unsympathetic retail signage, hiding of string courses, windows, window sills; use of garish colours, plastic lettering, over dominant lighting, internally illuminated signage	Policy update: Update Council SPD policy for signage, issues. Enforcement of current policies Funding: seek and implement funding to work with retailers to improve frontages
Loss of historic shopfronts and replacement of key heritage details	Policy creation: Article 4 Direction plus LDOs Detection and enforcement: of current policies Secure funding: seek and use funding to improve issues
Metal roller security shutters	Policy creation: Article 4 Direction plus LDOs Enforcement: and improved detection; Secure funding: seek and implement funding to work with retailers to improve issues
Parking on retail frontages and forecourts	Policy creation: Article 4 Direction plus LDOs Enforcement: where appropriate
Excessive freestanding sale boards and advertising flags	Detection and enforcement: to improve
Prolonged and habitual storage of goods beyond curtilage and on public pathways	Detection and enforcement: to improve
Permanent storage of rubbish on forecourts	Detection and enforcement: to improve



ISSUE	ACTION
Public Realm	
Tarmacadam pavements and patched pavements	Secure funding: Seek and implement funding for improved pavements within Conservation Area
Retention of granite kerbs and setted gutters	Repair: and improved detection and reporting
Unconsented drop kerbs in the Conservation Area	Community detection: improve Enforcement of current policies
Out of keeping modern lamp posts	Seek funding: and implement to install more character- appropriate lamp posts
Redundant and excessive street signage	Survey of streets: community-led and Council adoption Reduction and improvement: where possible
Street furniture	Review: street furniture throughout the area in line with future replacements to be evaluated and considered replacing with street furniture more in keeping with the Conservation Area budget dependant.
Unsympathetic street litter bins- free- standing and on poles	Seek funding: and implement to install more character- appropriate bins
Redundant, excessive and unsightly overhead wires	Survey of area: community-led Removal and reduction: where possible in conjunction with Council and utility companies
Household bins on public pavements	Enforcement: and improved detection



ISSUE	ACTION
Fly tipping of bulky items	Communication with landlords and tenants Enforcement: and improved detection
Lack of green canopy cover in area	Funding: sought through private benefactors and RBC Location: of appropriate sites and programmes for increased canopy cover
Crime and ASB	
Graffiti on public and private realm walls and units	Detection and removal: to be improved. Enable communities to be able to remove graffiti
Open drug dealing and use of drugs	Enforcement: and improved detection. This also links to much wider strategies to combat these issues, not within the remit of this Action Plan.
Antisocial behaviour	Enforcement: and improved detection



9 Appendix: Methodology and method of assessment

9.1 General approach

- 9.1.1 The historic environment consists of buildings, monuments, settlements, buried sites or scapes on land or underwater. This appendix explains the approach taken to determine the significance of Heritage Assets and the predicted residual effects of the Proposals, where possible. Each of the aspects considered is dealt with individually in the sections below.
- 9.1.2 The detail of the assessment presented in the report is proportionate to identify issues likely to be relevant in enabling *“an informed and reasonable decision to be made”* when determining the planning application for the Proposals.
- 9.1.3 The assessed likely residual effect is used as the basis for assessing the ‘Harm’ caused by the Proposals in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (‘NPPF’, DCLG 2012), which stipulates that all Proposed Development fall into one of two scenarios: ‘Substantial Harm’ and ‘Less than Substantial Harm’.
- 9.1.4 The assessment was undertaken in accordance

with the principles of the NPPF, within the context of the Development Plan and is produced in accordance with:

- the standard and guidance for archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014) with a PDF of the report deposited at the local Historic Environment Record;
 - the guidance on assessing impacts and effects of the Guide to the conservation of historic buildings (2013); and
 - the levels of recording outlined in Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice (Historic England 2016).
- 9.1.5 It also utilises the guidance provided in Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance, published in 2008 by English Heritage, when working on projects that have a direct physical impact on Heritage Assets.
- 9.1.6 To begin the explanation of methodology and method of assessment, clarity of the use of the term significance is provided.



9.2 Significance of Heritage Assets

- 9.2.1 From a heritage perspective, significance is defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as the Heritage Assets interest which “may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic”. Included in the definition of significance, in Annex 2 of the NPPF, is a statement about setting - “Significance derives not only from a Heritage Asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting”.
- 9.2.2 This definition ties in with the Conservation Principles guidance document published by Historic England (2008). Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (Historic England 2008) provides more information on how the above may be interpreted, as evidential and illustrative, historical, aesthetic and communal. The significance of the heritage asset leads to a judgement of the Heritage Assets importance, in policy terms. The degree of protection afforded to a heritage asset is based on its significance and expressed as having a specific degree of importance.
- 9.2.3 Where there would be a likely reduction of significance caused by the Proposed Development, the importance of the Heritage Assets is assessed (see Table 1).



Table 1: Criteria for measuring the importance attributed to designated Heritage Assets

Importance	Indicative criteria
Very High	Heritage Assets of acknowledged international significance
High	Grade I and Grade II (Scotland: Category A) Listed Buildings Grade I Registered Parks and Gardens, Conservation Areas containing very important buildings Other Listed Buildings that can be shown to have exceptional qualities in their fabric or historical associations not adequately reflected in the listing grade
Medium	Grade II (Scotland: Category B) Listed Buildings
Low	'Locally Listed' buildings (Scotland Category C(S) Listed Buildings) Historic (unlisted) buildings of modest quality in their fabric or historical association
Very Low	Buildings of no architectural or historical note; buildings of an intrusive character
Unknown	Buildings with some hidden (i.e. inaccessible) potential for historic significance



9.3 Gathering evidence and assessing significance of Listed Buildings

9.3.1 Any changes to the readability or understanding of the building and the relative importance of the historic fabric is assessed in terms of how

renovations would alter the Value of individual components. Value is a term attributed based on the contribution to the building and may be measured (see Table 2).

Table 2: Criteria for measuring the Value of historic fabric

Level	Indicative criteria
Very High	Components notable in a Grade I or Grade II Listed Building or Registered Park and Garden or a Conservation Area
High	Components essential to the listing of a Grade II Listed Building or Registered Park and Garden
Moderate	Individual elements make up part of the components that add to the importance of a Grade II Listed Building or Registered Park and Garden
Low	Individual elements make up part of the components that aid readability but do not add to the importance of the building

Very Low Components that detract from or mask the significance of the building

9.3.2 The Value may be evidential, historic (illustrative), aesthetic and communal

contributions to the significance of a Listed Building.



Assets is based on the indicative criteria in Table 3.

9.4 Sensitivity

9.4.1 A measure of the sensitivity of the Heritage

Table 3: Criteria measuring the sensitivity of a heritage asset to further change

Level	Indicative criteria
Very High	The original fabric has been preserved with limited degrees of incremental changes
High	The original fabric has been reduced by medium degrees of incremental changes or sufficient of the fabric can be conserved so that patch repair is recommendable
Medium	Much of the original fabric has been replaced or the condition of the fabric requires replacement of sections or structural elements to support the surviving surrounding fabric
Low	Specific areas of the original building has been compromised by changes not in keeping with the original fabric or the fabric is disintegrating and cannot be reinstated intact
Very Low	The original fabric has been compromised across a larger part of the building



forming the basis for the magnitude of impact is given in Table 4.

9.5 Impacts

9.5.1 The assessment of the impact is carried out on the heritage asset. The indicative criteria

Table 4: Criteria for measuring the magnitude of impact

Magnitude	Indicative Criteria
Very Large	Total loss of heritage asset without recorded evidence.
Large	Extensive disturbance of most or all known and potential architectural fabric, such that the resource is totally altered
Medium	Widespread disturbance of many known and potential architectural fabric, such that the resource is clearly modified
Small	Limited disturbance across a wide area or within areas of known and architectural fabric such that the Heritage Asset is slightly altered
Very Small	Very minor impacts on known and potential architectural fabric
None	No Impact on known and potential architectural fabric

9.6 Effects

9.6.1 Assessing the combination of the sensitivity of the heritage asset and the magnitude of impact provides a resultant level of effect (see Table 5), which may be

beneficial or adverse. When assessing the likely effects of the Proposed Development on Heritage Assets, the sensitivity of different elements of change is considered for location, fabric and appearance of the Proposed Development.

Table 5: Criteria for measuring the likely effects

Effect	Indicative criteria
Substantial	Change to most or all architectural fabric
Major	Changes to many known and potential architectural fabric
Moderate	Changes to known and potential architectural fabric
Minor	Changes to elements of known and potential architectural fabric
Negligible	Very minor changes to known and potential architectural fabric
Undefined	Changes to the potential Heritage Assets would occur but the extent and the quality of the potential architectural fabric is unknown
No Change	No change to known and potential architectural fabric

9.6.2 Once mitigation has been taken into consideration, what remains are the likely residual effects which may be

beneficial or adverse (see Table 6).

Table 6: The relationship between sensitivity, impact and effect

Sensitivity \ Magnitude	
Sensitivity :	Magnitude: Very small → Very Large
Very Low ↓ Very High	Negligible
	Minor
	Moderate
	Major
	Substantial

9.7 The assessment effects within the planning context

9.7.1 The criteria adopted for determining the likely residual effect equates to the degree of harm to the significance

of a heritage asset, which may be '**Substantial harm**' or '**less than substantial harm**'.

10 Appendix: Planning background and legislative framework

10.1 Legislative framework

10.1.1 The Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 and the planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides for the preservation of buildings of outstanding historic or architectural interest and their contents and related property.

10.1.2 The National Heritage Act 2002 makes further provision in relation to the functions of the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (Historic England).

10.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

10.2.1 The NPPF (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities 2024) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. National heritage policy is contained within section 16 of the NPPF. The over-arching principles are:

"203. Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

a) "the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits

that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place."

10.2.2 The relevant policies are:

"207. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than sufficient to understand the potential impact of the Proposed Development on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation."

"208. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a Proposed Development (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a Proposed Development on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the Proposed

Development"

"210. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness."*

"212. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance."

"213. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) "Grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;*
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional."*

"214. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use."*

"215. Where a proposed development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the Proposed Development including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use."

"216. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset."

"217. Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the

whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred."

"218. Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted."

"219. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposed Developments that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably."

"220. Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 201 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 202, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole."

"221. Local planning authorities should assess whether the

benefits of a Proposed Development for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies."

10.3 Local policy

10.3.1 The Site is located within the administrative area of Reading Borough Council. The Council has produced a New Local Plan, adopted in 2019, which contains the planning policies to guide development up to 2036. The New Local Plan includes EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment, EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas, EN4: Locally Important Heritage Assets and EN6: New Development in A Historic Context.

Reading Borough Council's New Local Plan

EN1: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

"Historic features, areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their settings will be protected and where possible enhanced. This will include:

- *Listed Buildings;*
- *Conservation Areas;*
- *Scheduled Monuments;*
- *Historic parks and gardens; and*
- *Other features with local or national significance, such as sites and features of*

- *archaeological importance, and assets on the Local List.*

"All proposals will be expected to protect and where possible enhance the significance of heritage assets and their settings, the historic character and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located. Proposals should seek to avoid harm in the first instance. Any harm to or loss of a heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification, usually in the form of public benefits."

"Applications which affect, or have the potential to affect, the significant features of heritage assets should be justified by a Heritage Statement."

"The Council will monitor buildings and other heritage assets at risk through neglect, decay or other threats, proactively seeking solutions for assets at risk including consideration of appropriate development schemes that will ensure the repair and maintenance of the asset, and, as a last resort, using its statutory powers."

"Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect or of damage to a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision."

EN3: ENHANCEMENT OF CONSERVATION AREAS

"The special interest, character and architecture of Conservation Areas will be conserved and enhanced. Development proposals within Conservation Areas can make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Positive consideration will be given to proposals which take opportunities to enhance the character of Conservation Areas. These may include:

- *Reducing visual clutter caused by negative factors,*

such as poles and overhead wires, satellite dishes or unnecessary street furniture;

- *Restoring original building features;*
- *Removing inappropriate additions or alterations to buildings;*
- *Protecting and encouraging the maintenance of green spaces and important trees, particularly where they are intrinsic to the history and character of the area;*
- *Improving signage and street furniture;*
- *Restoring or re-establishing appropriate paving, railings or walls;*
- *Sympathetic landscaping and planting;*
- *Improving or restoring green spaces, including front gardens, that are appropriate to the historic interest of a Conservation Area;*
- *Signage that reveals and promotes the Conservation Area and its boundaries;*
- *Interpretation panels to inform the public of the area's historical significance."*

"Where a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan has been adopted for a particular Conservation Area, this will be a material consideration in determining applications for development."

WR3: OTHER SITES FOR DEVELOPMENT IN WEST READING AND TILEHURST

WR3e YEOMANRY HOUSE, CASTLE HILL

Change of use of listed building to residential use or to potential office or restaurant use. Development should:



- Avoid detrimental effects on the significance of the listed building and the Conservation Area;
- Address noise impacts on residential use;
- Address air quality impacts on residential use;

- and
- Retain the lawn and wooded frontage to Castle Hill as a key part of the setting of the building and conservation area.