

Evan Holland
42 London Rd,
Newbury RG14 1LA

10th April 2026

Ref: 32377 / Royal Berkshire Archives Extension

Dear Evan,

Royal Berkshire Archives Extension - Structural Statement

Price & Myers are the structural engineer for the proposed extension to the existing Royal Berkshire Archives, as part of Feltham Construction Ltd's design team led by A'Bear & Ball Architects.

As requested, this letter sets out the key site constraints and associated design drivers that have informed the current proposals, particularly in relation to the planning comments concerning the northern wraparound extension and proposed green roofs.

Previously Proposed Northern Wrap Around

There is an incomplete set of original record information for the existing archive building, particularly in relation to the foundations and bearing strata preparation. Investigations have confirmed the presence of a ground-bearing raft slab extending beyond the external wall line, broadly following the footprint of the oversailing roof canopy.

The proposed northern wraparound extension would require partial removal of the existing raft slab to accommodate the new external wall and floor construction, while maintaining a level threshold between the new and existing building. This has the potential to adversely affect the performance of the existing structure.

Establishing the existing bearing strata and as-built reinforcement within the raft slab would necessitate intrusive investigations, including removal of finishes, radar scanning, core sampling, trial pits, and localised breakouts. However, it is not practicable to fully verify the slab construction, as confirmation of the bottom reinforcement would require tunnelling beneath the raft. This would represent a

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high-risk operation, both in terms of construction safety and the potential to induce movement within what is an inherently sensitive archive building.

Furthermore, even with additional investigation, there remains a risk that the findings could demonstrate that partial removal of the raft slab is not feasible. A separate ground movement assessment by a geotechnical specialist would also be required to determine whether removal along the northern edge could be undertaken while maintaining movements within acceptable limits. This assessment may likewise conclude that the proposed works are not viable.

Given these constraints, and the practical limitations of investigation, it is not possible to confirm that the proposed structural alterations can be undertaken safely.

Retrofitting Green Roof to Existing Building

There is limited record information available for the existing roof structure, and its loadbearing capacity cannot be confirmed at this stage. Depending on the extent and location of the proposed green roof, further intrusive investigation may be required to determine whether it can be supported without alteration or strengthening of the existing structure.

Yours sincerely,
for Price & Myers

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A Stearn', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Andrew Stearn
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