



Residential Architecture Design and Planning

Design, Access and Heritage Statement

Bathroom Alterations at 1 The Square, Buxton, Derbyshire

1. Introduction

This Design, Access and Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of an application for Listed Building Consent and associated Planning Permission for internal alterations and the installation of a single external air conditioning condenser unit at 1 The Square, Buxton.

The proposals have been carefully developed to improve the functionality of the dwelling for modern residential occupation whilst preserving the special architectural and historic interest of the Grade II* listed building. The works have been designed to minimise intervention into the historic fabric and are fully reversible where practicable.

2. Site Description

1 The Square forms part of the historic townscape surrounding The Square in Buxton and occupies a prominent position opposite The Crescent.

The property is a traditional historic townhouse arranged over several floors and retains features which contribute to its significance as a designated heritage asset.

The application relates principally to internal alterations to existing bathroom accommodation together with the installation of a discreet external air conditioning condenser unit.

3. Design Proposal

The application comprises the following works:

First Floor

The existing bathroom situated directly opposite The Crescent has clear glazing and unsuitable for bathroom accommodation, will be converted into a home office.

A compact WC will be retained adjacent to the room to provide convenient facilities without altering the principal layout of the building.

This alteration makes better use of the available accommodation while providing flexible working space appropriate for modern residential living.

Second Floor

The existing bathroom will become an en-suite shower room serving the front bedroom.

A second en-suite shower room will be created between the front and rear bedrooms to serve the rear bedroom.

The proposals provide appropriately sized bathroom facilities expected within contemporary family accommodation whilst making efficient use of the existing floor plan.

The alterations improve the long-term viability of the building as a family home without affecting its principal historic rooms.

4. Construction Methodology

The internal alterations have been designed to minimise impact upon the historic building.

Works comprise:

- lightweight timber stud partitions filled with insulation and finished with plasterboard and skim.
- associated plumbing and electrical installations.

No historic structural walls will be removed.

No historic beams, masonry or significant architectural features will be altered.

The proposals are largely reversible and involve modern lightweight construction techniques.

No external historic fabric will be removed or adversely affected as a consequence of the internal alterations.

5. Air Conditioning Unit

A single external condenser unit is proposed to serve the new internal accommodation.

The condenser will be mounted on the side elevation at second-floor level.

This location has been selected because:

- it is screened from public viewpoints;
- it overlooks the rooftop plant and existing air conditioning equipment serving The Crescent Hotel;
- it cannot be readily viewed from surrounding streets, public spaces or the wider conservation area;

- it avoids visual clutter on the principal elevation facing The Square.

The visual impact upon the listed building and surrounding heritage assets is therefore considered negligible.

Installation will utilise existing mortar joints where possible to minimise intervention into the historic masonry and ensure that any fixings remain reversible.

6. Heritage Impact Assessment

The proposals have been developed in accordance with the principles of minimum intervention.

The internal alterations do not affect the building's principal elevations, historic stair arrangement, roof structure or structural walls.

The proposed bathrooms are created within existing domestic accommodation using lightweight partitions that can be removed in the future without permanent loss of historic fabric.

No decorative plasterwork, historic joinery, fireplaces or other significant architectural features are affected by the proposals.

The office conversion simply changes the use of an existing room and does not result in the loss of heritage significance.

The proposed air conditioning condenser is positioned on a secondary elevation where its visual impact is substantially screened by the adjacent built form and existing rooftop plant associated with The Crescent Hotel.

Overall, the proposals preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

The works are considered to result in less than substantial harm, at the lowest end of the spectrum as defined within the National Planning Policy Framework. That limited impact is significantly outweighed by the public benefit of securing the continued viable residential use of the listed building through improvements that facilitate modern living standards and improve the long-term sustainability of its occupation.

Official Listing from Historic England:

SK0573NE THE SQUARE 616-1/3/85 (East side) 25/01/51 Nos.1-6 (Consecutive)

GVII*

Six apartments, now offices and flats. 1803-06, with C20 alterations. By John White. Ashlar gritstone with ashlar dressings and Westmoreland slate hipped roof with grouped stone stacks with caps. EXTERIOR: 3 storeys. First-floor band and eaves

band with moulded cornice. Main, north-west front has 16 windows. Ground floor has open arcade of 16 round arches with impost blocks, inner set back 14-window facade has 3 irregularly placed doorways with 6 panel doors with original door fittings and overlights, plus 11 glazing bar sashes. Above 16 glazing bar sashes, and above again 16 smaller glazing bar sashes, one blind. South-west front has 10 windows, identical to north-west front though with 2 doors and 7 windows to set back ground floor. North-east side also has 10 windows, identical to north-west side, though with a single door and 8 windows to set back ground floor, upper floors also have various blind windows. Rear extended and altered late C20. INTERIOR: of Nos 4 & 6 retain central hall with staircase rising from rear. Folding shutters survive to the first floor rear of No.4. Doors are in moulded surrounds. (Hall I: Georgian Buxton: Chapel-en-le-Frith:1984-:40).

Listing NGR: SK0571973512

7. Design Principles

The proposals have been guided by the following principles:

- preservation of historic fabric;
- reversibility wherever practicable;
- minimal intervention;
- retention of the existing historic plan form where possible;
- use of lightweight modern construction;
- careful positioning of external plant to avoid visual impact;
- enhancement of the building's continued residential use.

The alterations provide modern facilities expected within contemporary residential accommodation whilst respecting the significance of the listed building.

8. Access

The proposals do not alter existing access arrangements to the property.

There are no changes to the principal entrance, circulation routes, escape routes or access from the public highway.

The proposed office and bathroom alterations improve internal functionality without affecting accessibility.

9. Conclusion

The proposed internal alterations have been carefully designed to provide improved residential accommodation that meets modern living requirements while preserving the special architectural and historic interest of this Grade II listed building.

The works involve only limited and reversible internal alterations using lightweight construction methods, with no loss of significant historic fabric. The external air conditioning condenser has been located on a discreet secondary elevation where it is effectively screened from public views and where its setting is influenced by existing rooftop plant serving The Crescent Hotel.

The proposals preserve the character, appearance and significance of the listed building and its setting and comply with national and local planning policies relating to the conservation of heritage assets.

It is respectfully submitted that Listed Building Consent and Planning Permission should therefore be granted.