

**HERITAGE STATEMENT**  
FOR  
2 Highgate, Beverley HU17 0DN

**SUMMARY**

2 Highgate in Beverley is an imposing Georgian property built in circa 1759 by the architect William Middleton. This planning application is for the change of use of the premises from Offices to Residential use. The previous office tenant in this property abruptly quit his commercial lease in Dec 2022 and upon vacating the premises, the property was in quite a state of disrepair. However, in analysing the scope of the repair and preservation work required, it became clear that this amazing Georgian property still had a very sound structure and many historical features still prominent. Its heritage makes it much more suited to a residence as originally built in 1759 and remained in situ until 1998 when permission was granted to make it offices. In 2018, it has come to light through The Beverley civic society and English Heritage that the property was the childhood home of Mary Wollstonecraft. A green plaque is now on the front of the property and research into Wollstonecraft's time in Beverley was recorded. Following that discovery, Roger Thomas, an audit advisor from Historic England performed a detailed audit of the property to apply for listed 2\* status.

**METHODOLOGY**

This report has been compiled by consulting the following resources:

- 1) The Beverley Civic society announcing the research performed and erection of the plaque for Mary Wollstonecraft at 2 Highgate.  
<http://www.beverleycivicsociety.co.uk/assets/newsletter-bev-civ-soc-autumn-2018-v2.pdf>
- 2) An excerpt from the Mary Wollstonecraft society investigation into Mary's childhood home in Beverley and the importance of 2 Highgate being the only remaining home still standing of Mary Wollstonecraft.  
<https://www.wollstonecraftsociety.org/news-1/ao4tbu27ns2epvj3wrkw1kwpdcweat>
- 3) Historic England (Historic Environment Record) consultation report on 2 Highgate highlighting all property features to be included in Grade 2\* listing.  
<http://services.historicengland.org.uk/webfiles/GetFiles.aspx?av=E194091B-FB93-422F-841C-76D34ECDA7F0&cn=916CA708-F362-4303-A962-59519BAF1776>
- 4) East Riding of Yorkshire Planning Portal

**SITE LOCATION AND PLANNING POLICY**

This middle-class town house was built in about 1750 on Highgate, the main thoroughfare from Wednesday Market to Beverley Minster, with an extension to rear range added shortly afterwards. The site had previously been occupied by housing and industries with medieval origins, including leather tanning. 2 Highgate was built and designed by William Middleton,

Beverley's leading architect/builder of the C18, and is considered to be his earliest surviving house. This area of Highgate is in a conservation area made up of similar Georgian/Victorian properties running all the way down to the historic Beverley Minster.

The Historic England consultation report provides detail of the features of special architectural or historic interest of 2 Highgate. With that in mind, this application will be insistent in maintaining and preserving ALL of those features in any redecoration and repair work that is done.

It should also be noted that 2 Highgate is located in the historically important market town of Beverley. Many other Georgian/Middleton built properties coexist in this beautiful town making it a key destination for the English Heritage open days. 2 Highgate has been opened over the last few years for these open days, and even in the state of disrepair and computer mainframes scattered throughout the office rooms, it was still very much evident the valuable historic features still in situ. Visitors were extremely impressed with the site and were all very much looking forward to seeing it restored to a Georgian residence as originally intended. Certainly, returning to its former glory will be a welcome contribution to the local character, history and distinctiveness of Beverley.

## HISTORIC PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Application Reference	Proposal	Decision Date	Decision
96/61829/PLB	2 Highgate East Riding of Yorkshire Listed Building consent internal alteration to allow for conversion to two dwellings from one at 2 Highgate East Riding of Yorkshire	7/11/96	Approved
98/00673/PLF	<a href="#">Change of use from dwelling to office accommodation</a>	18/5/98	Approved
18/01124/PLB	<a href="#">Installation of a metal memorial plaque</a>	25/06/2018	Approved

## DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

A Mid-C18 town house, about 1750, by William Middleton, with C19 and C20 alterations.

MATERIALS: brick, painted stone sills to front elevation, with tumbled brick gables and kneelers, and pantile roofs but with front slope re-clad in Welsh slate. PLAN: L- plan, four-bays,

two-storey house with a service range to the rear; the principal elevation faces east on to Highgate.

**EXTERIOR:** The four-bay, main elevation has the lower nine brick courses forming a plain flush plinth, which has a recessed stone-mounted boot scrapper and an incised broad arrow benchmark, to the right of the front door and an iron cellar ventilator grille to the left. A recessed six-panel timber door with a moulded three-light rectangular fanlight, is set within a classical-style pedimented doorcase, approached by three Yorkstone steps. The fanlight has stained glass panels, each with polychrome edging. The central panel is occupied by a star and the two sides have a central Christogram of IHS (representing Jesus) flanked by yellow coloured English and Scottish symbols. The prominent doorcase projects out from the building; it has a moulded and rebated shouldered architrave rising off a three-stepped plain plinth on each side, with a central tablet to the frieze, and a moulded cornice and pediment. A Royal Exchange Assurance fire insurance sign is attached to the wall above the pediment. A circular green Beverley and District Civic Society plaque commemorating Mary Wollstonecraft is attached to the wall to the right of the front door. There is a single window to the left of the doorway, two to the right, and four to the first floor; all with two-light Victorian sashes, painted stone sills and gauged brick lintels. To the rear, the projecting service range obscures the two northern bays of the building. There is a partially glazed six-panel rear door in the left of the two exposed bays, with a four-light sash window above. The door has a moulded three-light rectangular fanlight with stained glass oval panels that contain a variety of diamond-set coloured patterns and motifs. Both Historic England Consultation Report 03 July 2023 Page 4 of 10 floors of the right-hand bay are blind, apart from a blocked-up cellar window with a segmental brick arch. 2 Highgate is attached on both sides to other buildings and only the upper parts of the gables are visible. Both ends of the gabled roof have raised tumbled brick verges, which terminate in moulded brick kneelers and a brick chimney rises from each gable apex. The south gable has a two-light attic window that is partially obscured by the roof of 4 Highgate and a similar window in the north gable is also partially obscured by the roof of an adjacent house. The east slope of the roof is clad in Welsh slate and has two square-headed dormer windows, fitted with four-light sashes, flat canopies and glazed side panels, and the guttering is carried on a moulded brick eaves course and has a modern rainwater downpipe. The western slope of the roof is clad in pantiles and is drained into the roof guttering of the rear service range.

**INTERIOR:** the entrance hall spans the full width of the building and connects the front and rear doors. The hall has a stone tiled floor, painted timber dado panelling and picture rails, and is divided by an arch carried on moulded pilasters. Two doorways to either side of the front hall have moulded architraves and plain door reveals. The one to the left enters a small reception room with a blocked canted corner chimney breast, and the one to the right enters the former parlour/dining room. Both rooms have mid-C18 painted dado panelling with window seats and panelled window shutters and moulded cornices. The former parlour/dining room has a chimney breast against the north wall that has a large late-C19 polished slate fireplace, with a projecting cast-iron grate with floral tiled panels. A wide depressed open archway in the west wall leads into a servery passageway. A four-panelled door in the rear wall of the passageway, originally gave access to the kitchen in the service range, and a tall doorway with a segmented fanlight at the southern end of the passageway leads back into the hall, opposite the staircase. A

mid-C18, closed well staircase with an open string rises on the southern side of the rear of the hall; it has dado panelling and a ramped handrail carried on a balustrade of tapered turned balusters, with an end spiral terminating in a column newel post on a curtail step. A four-panel door located beneath the soffit of the upper flight, opens onto a flight of brick steps that lead down to a low barrel-vaulted basement, which spans the southern bays of the house. The first-floor landing is lined with dado panels and lit by a four-light sash window, fitted with shutters and a window seat. A large contemporary low-relief ceiling rose is situated directly above the stairs. The landing gives access to three rooms; one occupying the northern two-bays, and two smaller one-bay rooms to the south. Apart from a Victorian fire surround in the northern room and panelled window seats and window shutters, these rooms are unadorned. The southern room has a blocked corner chimney breast like the reception room below. A short passageway on the northern side of the landing gives access to a blocked door into the rear range and to a steep dog-leg winder stair to the attic. It leads to a small landing within the slope of the roof that has three doorways leading off it; one blocked into the rear range and two into the attic rooms. Each room is unadorned and built into the slope of the roof, with sloping ceilings, a blocked chimney breast and are lit by a casement window in the gable walls and have east facing dormer window. A hatch above the landing allows access into the roof, which has a mixture of principal and common rafters, a bitumised felt lining, and secondary struts beneath the western slope of the roof.

## **HISTORY OF THE SITE**

This middle-class town house was built in about 1750 on Highgate, the main thoroughfare from Wednesday Market to Beverley Minster, with an extension to rear range added shortly afterwards. The site had previously been occupied by housing and industries with medieval origins, including leather tanning. 2 Highgate was built and designed by William Middleton, Beverley's leading architect/builder of the C18, and is considered to be his earliest surviving house. William Middleton was responsible for the listed Grade I Beverley Guildhall, the listed Grade I Nos 66 and 67 Beverley North Bar, and three other listed Grade II buildings in Beverley, along with many other un-listed buildings. The most famous resident of the house was Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797), who was nine-years old, when the Wollstonecraft family moved to Beverley, where she spent her formative years. It is unclear whether the family resided at 2 Highgate all of this time, but rate returns between 1771 and late September 1775, show that the family were certainly living at 2 Highgate between those dates. Mary's education was limited to attending a day school to learn to read and write; however, she was also tutored in philosophy and science by Dr John Arden, a friend's father. Mary was only 15 years and five months of age when the family left Beverley in 1775. From 1780 to 1880, the house became the home of the Lambert family. George Lambert and his son George Jackson Lambert, were the Minster organists between 1777 and 1874. George senior's daughter Elizabeth, was the organist of the Church of St Mary, Beverley and was also an accomplished artist. The house remained in residential use until the 1980s, when it became an office.

## **ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

2 Highgate is a valuable heritage asset of which its significance can be assessed as follows:

**Evidential Value:** The property is a prime example of mid 18<sup>th</sup> century Georgian architecture built by the famous architect William Middleton. Many of the interior and exterior details are well documented and are preserved representation of this era.

**Historical Value:** Through archived registers and historical documents, it has been proven that 2 Highgate is the childhood home of Mary Wollstonecraft. It should also be noted that this house is the only surviving residence of Mary Wollstonecraft during her lifetime, with many of the features from the house during that time still in place to be preserved.

**Aesthetic Value:** Again, the design of the house is representative of William Middleton's Georgian style.

**Setting:** The house is with the Highgate/Wednesday Market/Minster conservation area which is high on the list of English Heritage open day's viewings. It is wonderful that so many people with an interest in this history and architecture can view the house on a regular basis.

## **THE PROPOSAL OF WORKS**

The proposal of this application is to convert the functionality of each room in the house simply by adding free standing furniture/decor sympathetic to a Georgian era residential property. There will be NO structural changes (ie no changes or alterations of walls, floors, windows, etc nor the exterior of the building). All existing heating, plumbing and electrical infrastructure will be utilised and maintained. The owner of the property undertaking this conversion is passionate about the wonderful heritage of the property and has done much research into the way a house of this period would look and be used as a residence. In particular, each room will be reassigned as follows:

- 1) Ground floor Reception will become a Dining/Pantry room.
- 2) Ground floor Office will become a lounge.
- 3) First floor kitchen will become a Kitchen/Lounge
- 4) First floor bathroom will remain a house bathroom.
- 5) First floor Office will become a Bedroom.
- 6) Second floor Office1 will become a Bedroom.
- 7) Second floor Office2 will become a Bedroom.

Externally there will be no change at all to the building and access to the front and rear of the property will remain as currently in place.

# PHOTOS

## EXTERIOR FRONT



GROUND FLOOR ENTRANCE, HALLWAY and STAIRCASE

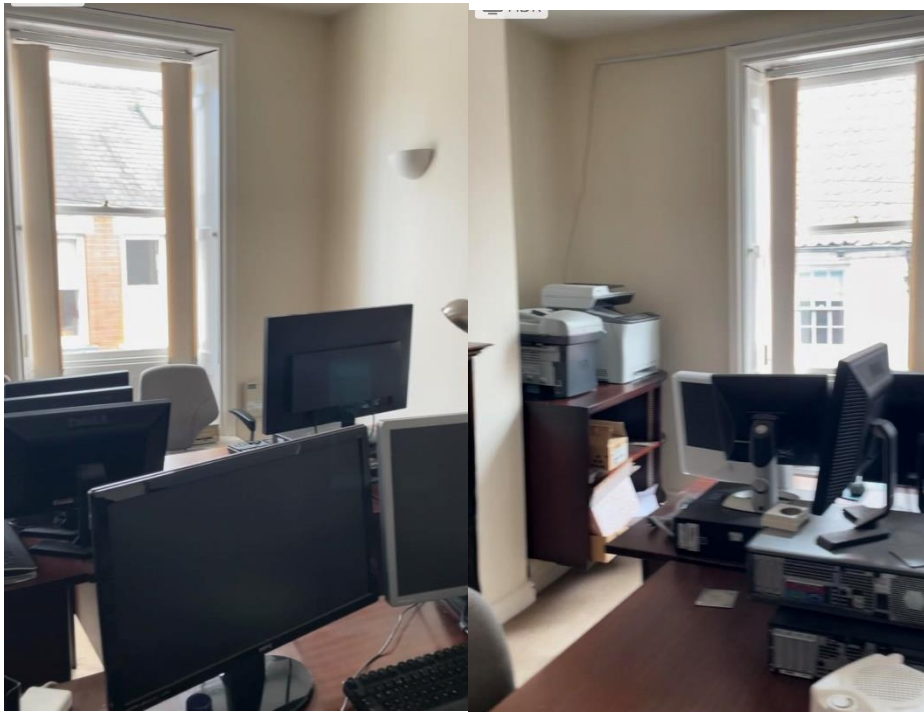


FIRST FLOOR LANDING, BATHROOM, KITCHEN





FIRST FLOOR OFFICE, SECOND FLOOR OFFICES AND STAIRCASE



GROUND FLOOR OFFICE

