

# F A L

LIME TREE HOUSE, LIME TREE COURT, KING STREET, SAFFRON WALDEN CB10 1HG  
DESIGN, ACCESS AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

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**LIME TREE HOUSE,  
LIME TREE COURT, SAFFRON  
WALDEN, CB10 1HG**

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Design, Access & Heritage Statement in  
support of a listed building application for  
amendments to approved application ref:  
UTT/22/0185/LB.

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April 2024

Planning

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Ref: 0821.PL.240402.LTH Amend Design-Access- Heritage Statement

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**FAL** | ARCHITECTS

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Revision: - | Prepared By: AF | Checked By: AF

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# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This design & access statement has been prepared by FAL- Architects on behalf of the owners of Lime Tree House, in support of a listed building application for amendments to the approved layout of application UTT/22/0185/LB.

The Grade II listed building is located at the end of Lime Tree Court which is accessed from King Street in Saffron Walden. The building was last used as a restaurant but is now vacant.

The proposals seek to sensitively renovate and convert the existing building back to residential use and allow the building to be brought back into use. The building received planning approval in 2008 for the conversion of the building back to a single dwelling and conversion into apartments in 2022.

The purpose of this report is to provide the background to the application, outline the scope of the work in relation to the amendments. This document is to be read in relation to the accompanying design drawings.

The submission contains the following documents:

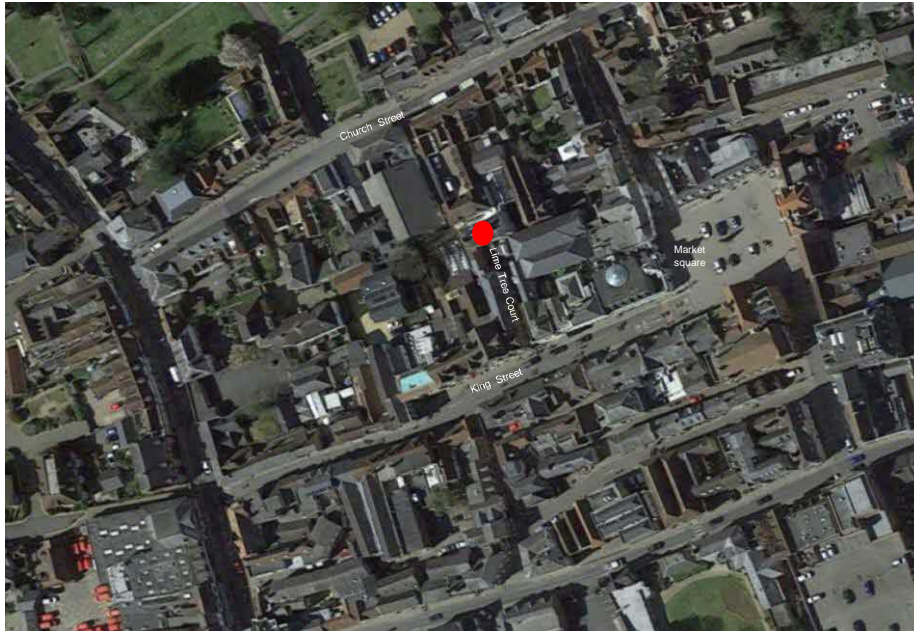
- Planning Application Forms
- 0821 PL-00 Site Location Plan
- 0821 Amendments UDC Minor Development Biodiversity Checklist
- 0821 EX-01 Existing Plans
- 0821 EX-02 Existing Elevations and Sections
- 0821 PL-11E As Approved Plans
- 0821 1011F Proposed Setting out plans
- 0821 PL-13A Existing & Proposed Block plans

## 2.0 SITE LOCATION

### 2.1 Wider Location

Saffron Walden is designated as a service centre and hub for the surrounding rural areas. Saffron Walden is a popular traditional market town with a number of recent residential developments on the periphery of the town.

The application site is situated within the zone 2 Conservation Area. It is nestled between the main streets- King Street and Church Street. The surrounding uses are predominately retail and commercial with some residential backland developments.



(Above) Aerial view showing site location in relation to King Street  
(Image courtesy of google maps)

### 2.2 Site

Lime Tree House is located at the rear of Lime Tree Court. Lime Tree Court is accessed from King street through a short thoroughfare passage between No. 6 & No. 8 King Street. The site is occupied by a four-storey building that is connected to a redundant retail arcade to the west and a vacant site to the east with a dilapidated conservatory building and garden area. The building is vacant and was last used as a restaurant. Access to the site is from King Street. The site has hardsurfaced block paving to the front for car parking.



(Right) Site location in relation to Lime Tree Court  
(Image courtesy of OS)

## 3.0 SITE CONTEXT & HISTORY

### 3.1 Site Context

The site's location nestled between two main streets is not immediately obvious for retail and commercial uses, and perhaps this is reflected in the lack of viable options to date and recent conversions of adjacent buildings to residential use. The building is not readily visible from the main routes in the town such as King Street and Church Street. Nor is there any direct connection between the two.

Its setting is somewhat fragmented with varied and mixed built form extending to 4 storeys in height.

To the west of the site is the vacant single storey 1970's arcade development.

To the north is Ashcroft Court, accessed from Church Street, which is a recently completed flat development.

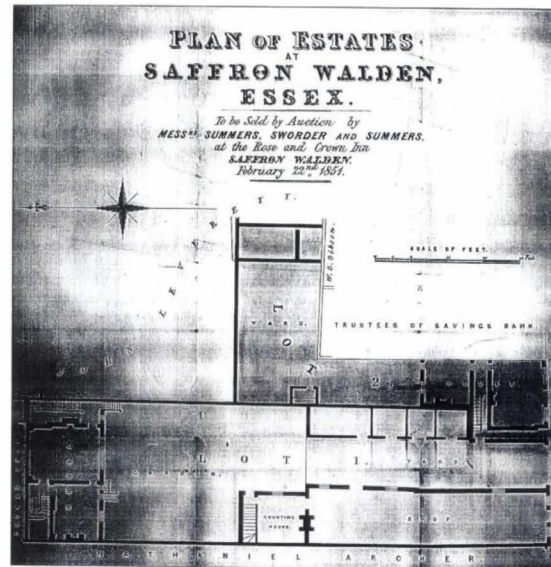
Immediately to the east is the vacant conservatory site which has a separate title plan but of which is currently accessed through the rear of Lime Tree House. Adjacent to the conservatory is Clifford House, currently home to Angela Reed retail shop.

### 3.2 Site History

The origins of Lime Tree House are unknown but when it was Listed on 1 November 1972 the list description dated its construction to c.1800. A plan of Saffron Walden dated 1835 shows a building of generally the same proportions as today with a boundary about a third of the way down the passage towards King Street

(then called Market End Street). By the time of 1897 Ordnance Survey map, the building appears to have been little altered on plan with the external stairs and front garden still evident. All but the western-most stairs survived in the 1921 Ordnance Survey Map.

The building had a number of different uses throughout the C20 including building society, solicitors office, car spares shop, restaurant and beautician. The use as a restaurant has perhaps left the largest impact on the building with the erection of the large conservatory to the rear (north) and the gutting of the basement to allow the installation of cooking equipment and plant which included some unsightly external flues at the rear.



1851 Sales plan



View of front elevation



View of front courtyard



View of conservatory

# 4.0 PLANNING HISTORY & POLICY

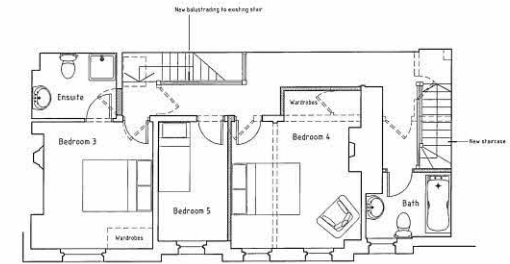
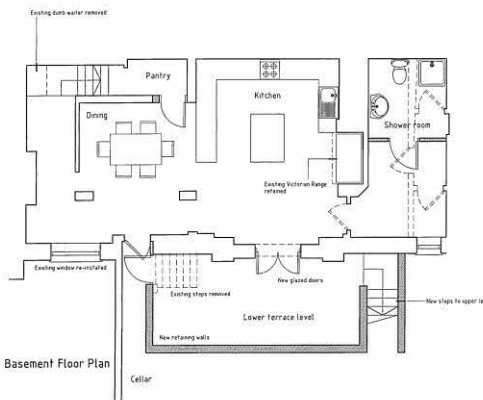
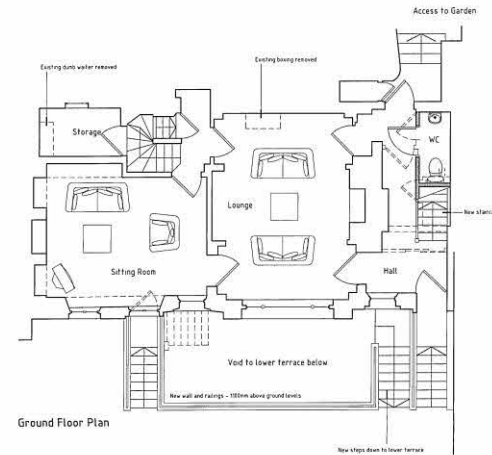
## 4.1 Previous applications:

The site achieved planning consent for residential conversion to a single dwelling in 2008 and conversion to apartments in 2022.

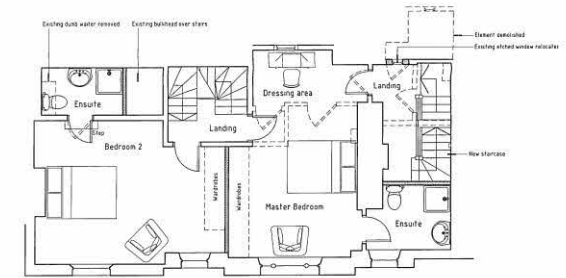
The Previous applications for the site are detailed below:  
 UTT/22/0158/LB - Approved 20 Jan 2023  
 Internal and external alterations to windows and repairs to roof

UTT/22/0184/FUL  
 UTT/22/0185/LB - Approved 12 Aug 2022  
 Conversion of existing building to provide 4No. Apartments.

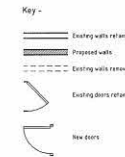
UTT/0838/08/FUL - Approved 10 Jul 2008  
 Change of use of retail premises to residential use  
 Internal and external alterations. Demolition of conservatory.



Second Floor Plan



First Floor Plan



2008 Approval floor plans – copyright Portess & Richardson



## 5.0 HERITAGE

### 5.1 Conservation Area

The site sits within zone 2 Saffron Walden Conservation Area which comprises - Church Street south side, Common Hill and Fairycroft Road west sides, HighStreet east side including King Street, Market Place area, Hill Street and Gold Street; Audley Road and southern extent of South Road.

Local Plan Policy ENV1 - Design of Development within Conservation Areas states, "Development will be permitted where it preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the essential features of a Conservation Area, including plan form, relationship between buildings, the arrangement of open areas and their enclosure, grain or significant natural or heritage features"

Views to the building are glimpsed through the short passage from King Street. The building is not within any important views of the conservation Area or market square.

### 5.2 Listing

Lime Tree House was Grade II listed on November 1972. The listing description is detailed below: "Large house, now commercial premises. c1800, with C20 additions and internal alteration.

Gault brick, slate roof, some timber framing plastered. Plan rectangular with large C20 conservatory room attached to NE corner. 3 storeys and basement.

S front elevation: in Adamesque style, 5 bays, 2 stacks, articulated front, central pediment, outer bays different widths, deep eaves. Piano Nobile has large Venetian window with stucco shell tympanum, detached shafts and sash windows with glazing bars, 1x4, 4x4, 1x4 plus radial panes.

Window details taken down to basement sash windows, 1x2, 4x4, 1x2 panes. Each side of Venetian window, depressed arched headed sash window 2x3 panes plus radial with rusticated surround. To E and W are doorways approached by flight of steps, one to E has gabled porch on reeded columns with capitals of Egyptian profile, C19 door or 6 panels, recessed, reed moulded. Doorway to W more simple, French window 2x5 panes with C20 restored pediment, C19, reeded columns. To W, similar casement window with basement sash window below 4x2 panes.

First floor, flanking bays to centre, shallow stone balustrades with rosette paterae decorated stucco string below. Central tripartite sash window slight segment head, glazing bars, 1x4, 3x4, 1x4 panes. Each side, over balustrade, sash windows 2x4 panes. W bay segment headed sash window 3x4 panes. Second floor has lower brick string, sash windows with glazing bars, four 2x3 panes, one (W) 3x3 panes. Central 3 bays first and second floors have ochre wash with white tuck pointing. E end elevation: wall blank, timber-framed and plastered, brick facing to front evident, slight ground floor rear lean-to. Large C20 conservatory block to N, red brick base wall.

INTERIOR: Adamesque style in principal rooms. Ground floor central moulded plastered ceiling, oval and shell motif, tripartite niches in W wall with reeded columns and archivolt paterae. Room to W, 4 doorways with reeded architraves and paterae, marble chimney-piece. First floor rooms have acanthus decorated plaster frieze. Well stairs with turned newel posts, shaped handrail, stick balusters. The evident timber framing plus irregularity of the facade suggest both adaptation and subsequent alteration."

Local Plan Policy ENV2- Development affecting Listed Buildings states, "Development affecting a listed building should be in keeping with its scale, character and surroundings. Demolition of a listed building, or development proposals that adversely affect the setting, and alterations that impair the special characteristics of a listed building will not be permitted. In cases where planning permission might not normally be granted for the conversion of listed buildings to alternative uses, favourable consideration may be accorded to schemes which incorporate works that represent the most practical way of preserving the building and its architectural and historic characteristics and its setting.



### 5.3 Statement of significance

The following sections review the special architectural and historical significance of the existing building and rooms within. The level of significance is judged on a scale set out below and represented by a colour referred to on a key on the floor plans provided.

Very high significance – retained in its current form and repaired/restored using appropriate traditional techniques

High significance – retained and repaired. Alterations to the features should only be accepted when the overriding reasons would bring about long term beneficial use and continued maintenance. Any later alterations to features should be removed or replaced with more appropriate forms

Moderate significance – features which have been subject to some alteration in the past. Where possible these features should be restored. Modern unsympathetic alterations and features should be removed, altered or removed without affecting the historical interest

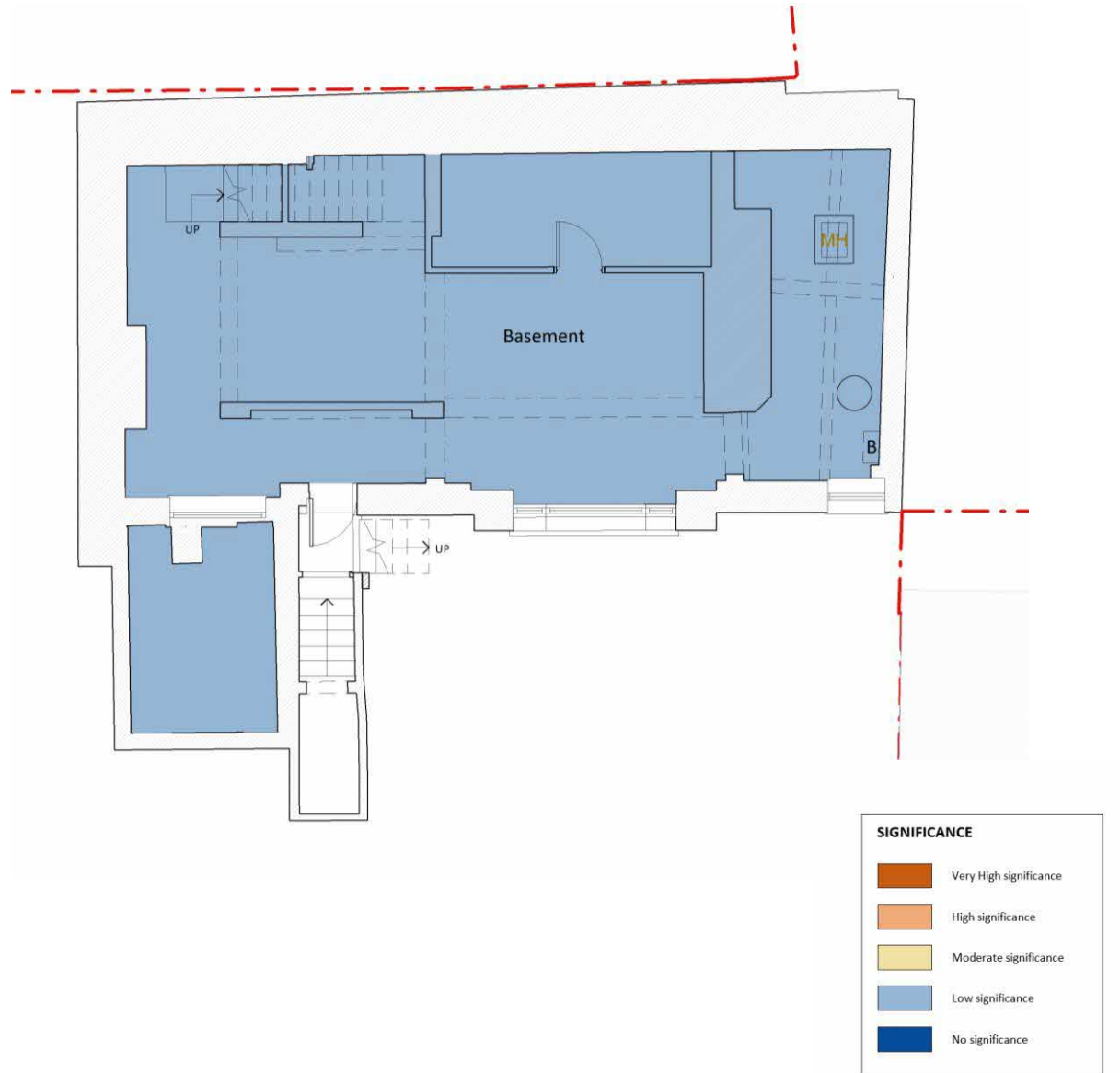
Low significance – Have few if any historical interest. Generally modern intervention with limited value. Replacement or alteration in many cases will enhance the character of the building.

No significance – It is modern and is considered to contribute nothing to the special architectural or historic interest of the building

### 5.4 Historical significance – basement

#### Low significance

The basement has little of historic interest remaining and has been altered over a period of time as its commercial use has dictated. Entirely fitted out as a kitchen in the late 1990's with large ceiling extractor and galvanised ducting. Tiled walls and concrete floors. Windows boarded and door to outside blocked. It is believed there was once a Victorian range in the east wall of the main room.



## 5.5 Historical Significance – Upper Ground floor

### Room 3: very high significance

Fine room with 'Adamesque' decoration. Plaster ceiling with circular centrepiece with guilloche border and chevron patterns to form squares with leaf decoration in corners. Outer circular moulding with rosettes and flower buds. Separate diamond-shaped panels with similar motifs to north and south. Elaborate cornice of guilloche pattern with gilded acanthus leaves beneath. East and west walls have large central niches with smaller flanking niches, each with reeded colonettes supporting a moulded archibolt with paterae decoration. The outer niches contain doorways: that to the stairwell with a surviving 6 panelled door. The east wall has a fireplace in the large central niche with a contemporary mantel-shelf supported on colonettes. The west wall has a opening through to Room 2. Reeded door surrounds with plain blocks in the centre of the top of the frame.

### Room 2: high significance

Simpler late Georgian style decoration. Reeded cornice with paterae in corners. Fireplace in west wall flanked by plain niches. Similar large recess in North wall. Reeded door surrounds with paterae corners. Modern door to staircase. Modern skirtings. French doors set within an arch and with surviving window shutters

### Hallway: Low significance

Main stairwell. Modern oak stairs with oak handrail and newel posts, MDF treads and twisted metal balustrade.

### Rear Stairwell: High significance

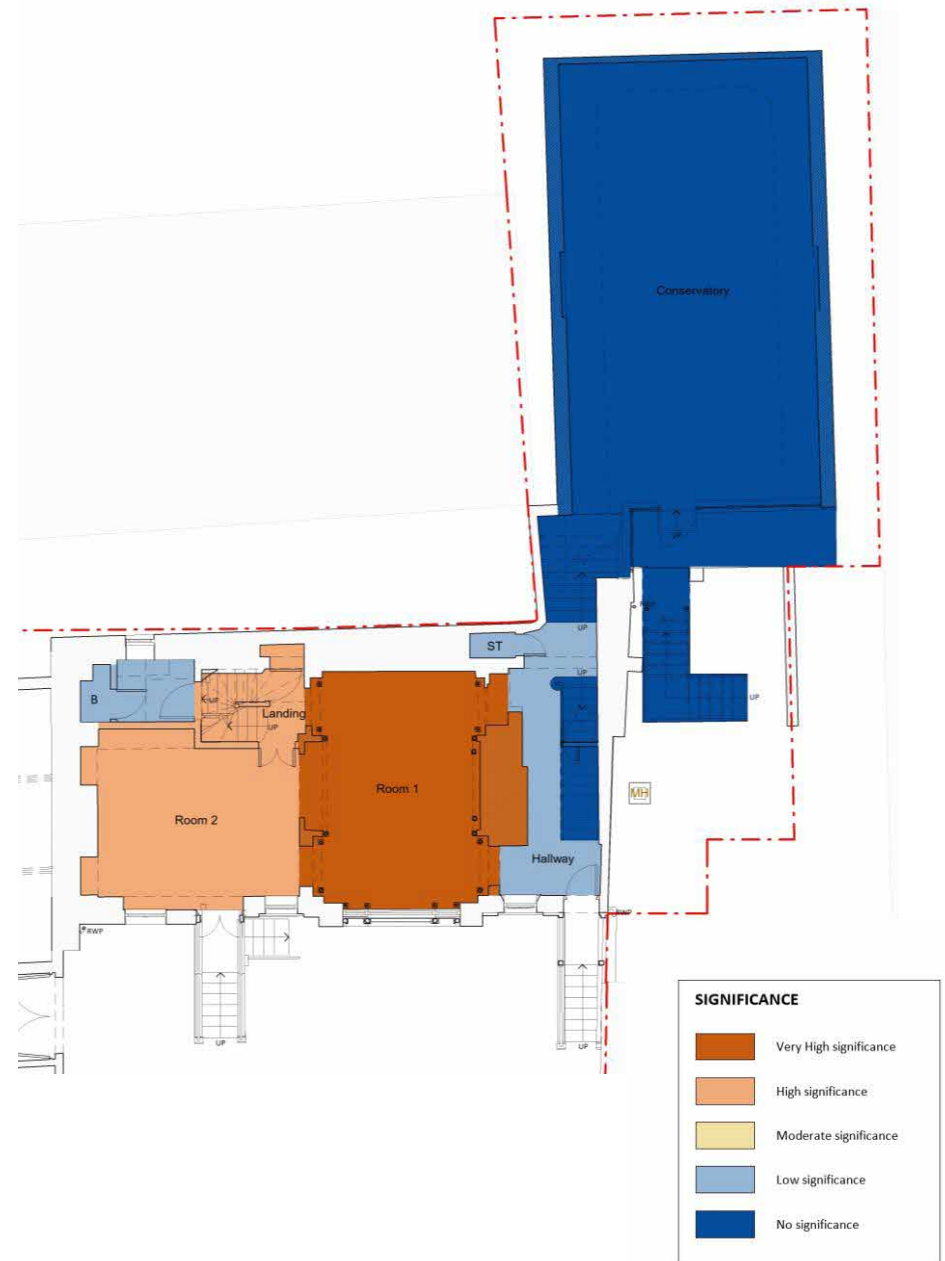
Dogleg stair with access to rear store room on first quarter turn with modern pigs ear handrail. The stair has been altered close to the top of the flight evidenced by the change in string where the stair dog legs

### Rear half landing store room: low significance

Plain room with C19 door with damaged glass. Modern ductwork alongside west wall. Alterations evident from removal of previous dumb waiter.

### Conservatory: No significance

Stairs and link from main hallway. Large modern conservatory erected in the 1980's in a state of disrepair. Timber glazing on a red brick plinth



## 5.6 Significance – 1st floor

### Overview:

The first floor presently has little indication of its original plan form and has lost many features such as the fireplaces from what would have been the two main bedroom suites of the house.

### Room 3:

Moderate significance

Large room probably created from two or three rooms. Acanthus cornice finished short of windows otherwise modern ceiling. Some C19 skirtings. Modern partition to rear stairwell. Arch to main stair landing.

### Main stairwell:

Moderate significance

Acanthus cornice. Some C19 skirting

### Rear Stairwell:

Moderate significance

Probably modern partition.

### Room 4:

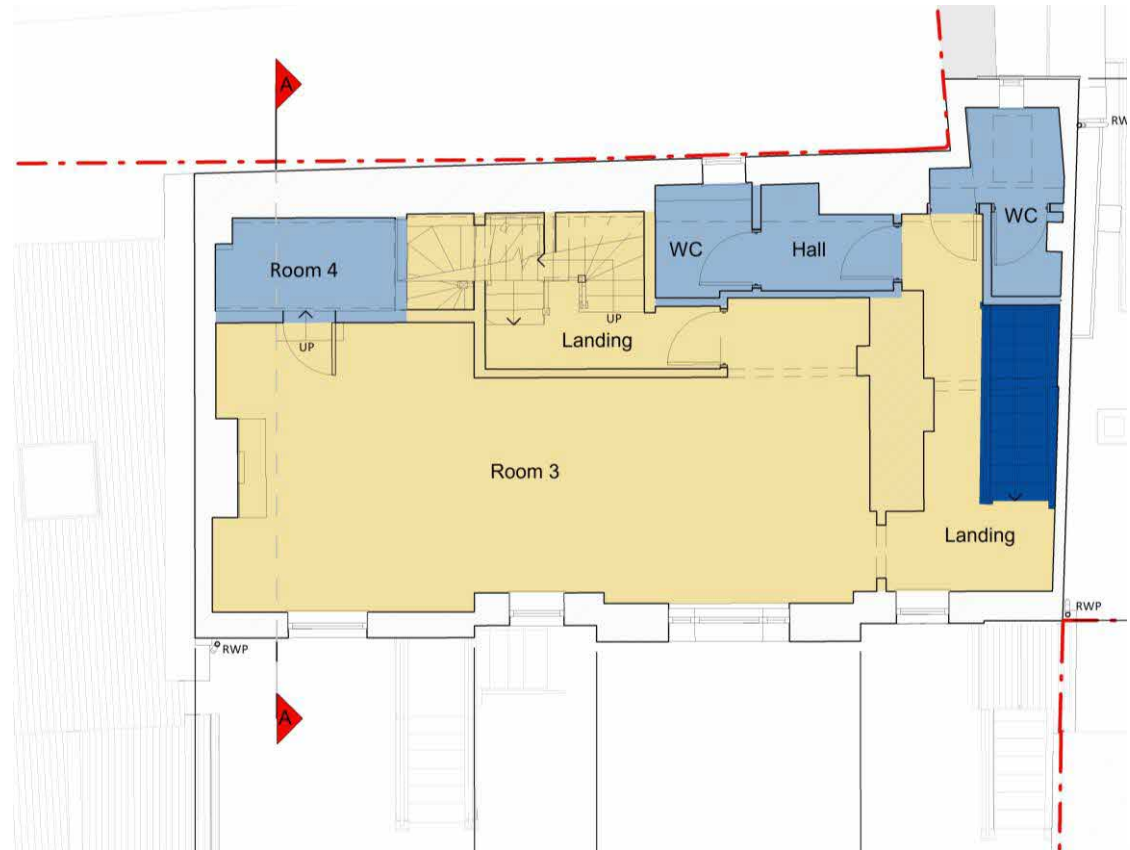
Low significance

Step up from Room 3. Modern door. Modern ductwork

### WCs:

Low significance

Modern cornice. Modern doors



SIGNIFICANCE	
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #8B4513; border: 1px solid black;"></span>	Very High significance
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #D2691E; border: 1px solid black;"></span>	High significance
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #F0E68C; border: 1px solid black;"></span>	Moderate significance
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #ADD8E6; border: 1px solid black;"></span>	Low significance
<span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: #00008B; border: 1px solid black;"></span>	No significance

## 5.7 Significance – 2<sup>nd</sup> floor

### Overview:

The second floor is much later than the rest of the house as it is believed to have been added in the late C19 and has subsequently been altered in the C20. The original plan form is unclear, there may have been three separate rooms with a larger room adjacent the easternmost fireplace. The proposals aim to provide better proportioned rooms which make the best use of the available space without detrimentally affecting the existing features.

### Room 8:

Low significance

Egg and dart cornice C19 skirting and modern door

### Room 7:

Moderate significance

Acanthus cornice, C19 fireplace in plain surround, C19 skirtings, modern door. Ceiling finishes in poor condition

### Room 6:

Moderate significance

Acanthus cornice, C19 dog grate with painted timber surround at east end off centre. Downstand beam with cornice continuing either side. Modern door. Possible blocked door in west wall to room 7. High level modern windows to corridor either side of door interrupt cornice.

### Room 5:

Moderate significance

Acanthus cornice, C19 skirting, modern door

### Room Hall/Landing:

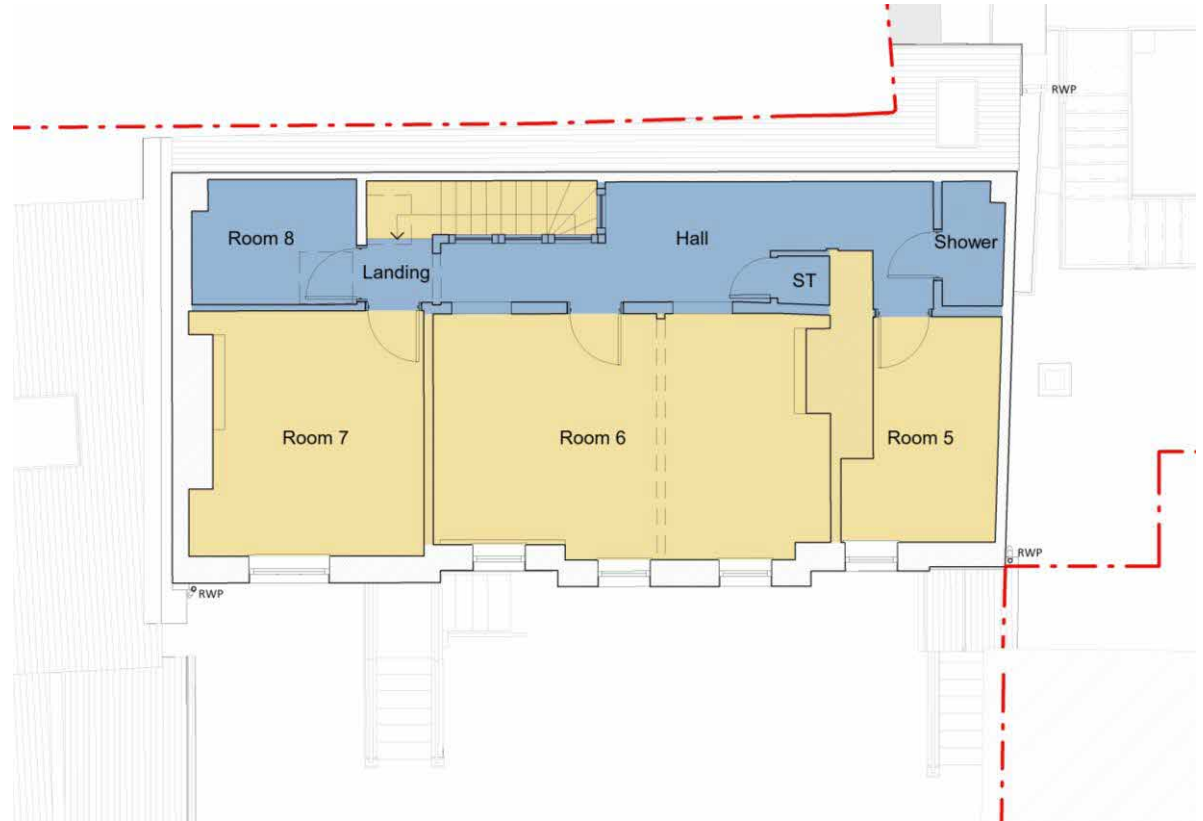
Low significance

Modern Fire rated glass openings/boxing to modern stair enclosure. Modern cornice. Modern doors. Cupd towards east end of the corridor. boarded rooflight.






### Room Shower:

Low significance

Modern partition, cornice and door



### SIGNIFICANCE

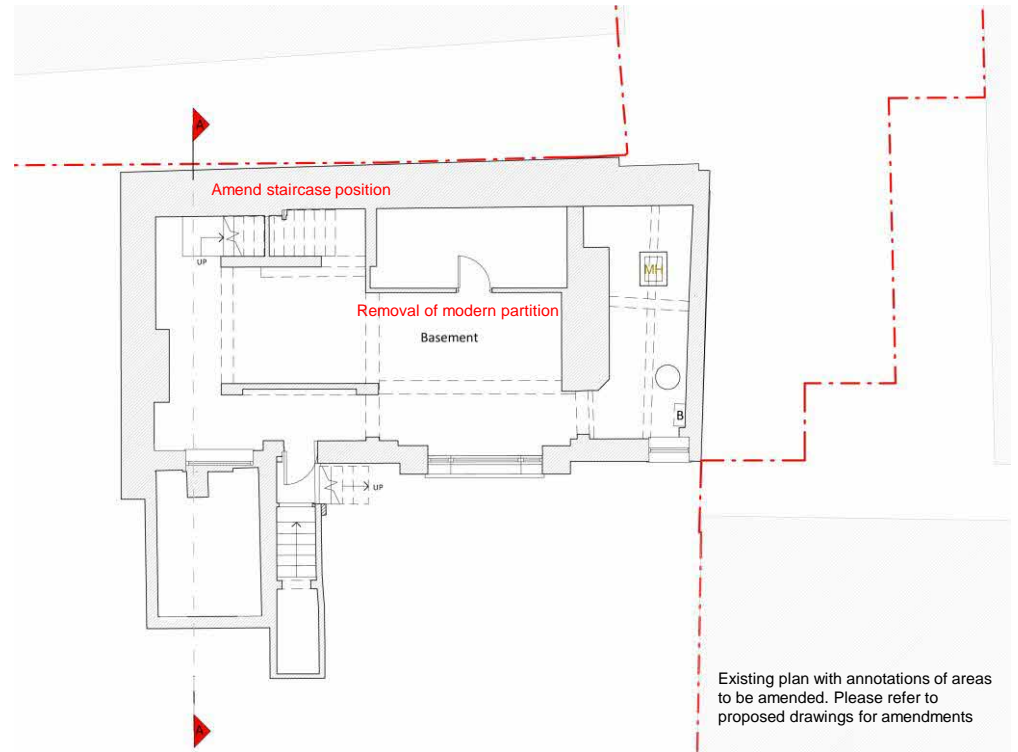
	Very High significance
	High significance
	Moderate significance
	Low significance
	No significance

## 5.8 Impact assessment - Basement

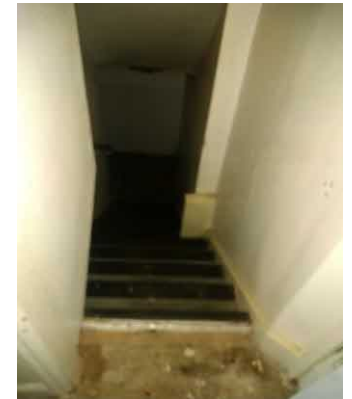
The existing basement has been altered over time and is currently essentially one large room with tiled walls and concrete floor from when it was last used as a restaurant kitchen. The room to the far right previously housed some toilets but these have since been removed. The basement has the potential to be a very useable space, free from damp, with reasonable head height and the potential to be well-lit from the south facing semi basement windows.

The proposals seek to largely retain the original basement arrangement. The modern partition currently forming the store room will be removed. The existing narrow stairs which is in a poor condition will be removed. A new stair of traditional design will be installed.

Internal alterations will have a very limited impact upon the historic fabric of the property.



Existing modern partition to the left to be removed



Existing basement stair to be carefully removed



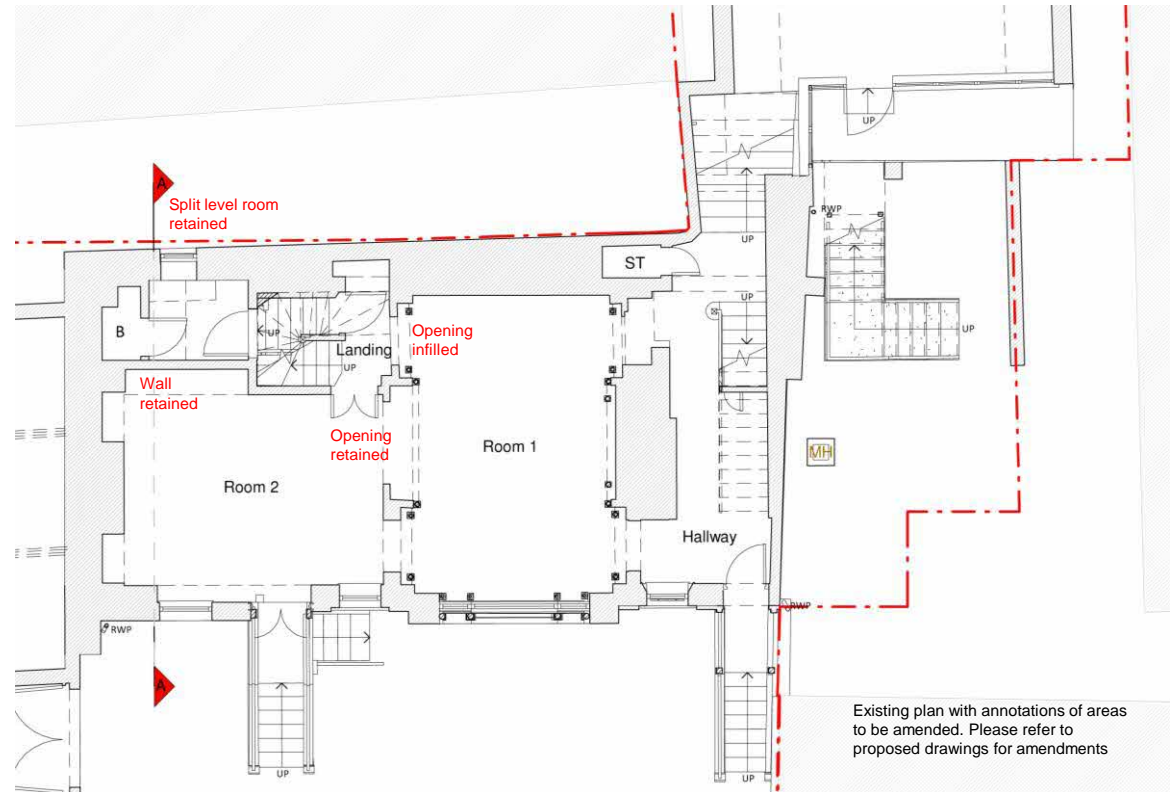
## 5.9 Impact assessment – Upper Ground Floor

Amendments to the ground floor are summarised as:

The new opening proposed in Room 2 and new staircase has been removed from the proposal and the existing basement stair route will now be altered. The half landing room at the rear of Rm 2 will be retained to allow for a bathroom for the first floor flat rather than removing under the previous approval.

The door opening will be retained to the rear landing from Rm 2. The right hand opening will be infilled behind the opening forming a recess to the western wall of Rm 1. All historic architectural features will be retained.

The amendments allow for the retention of more of the fabric of the building than the 2022 approval.



Modern door to basement stair removed



Existing opening retained



Wall to be retained



Right hand opening infilled with false door

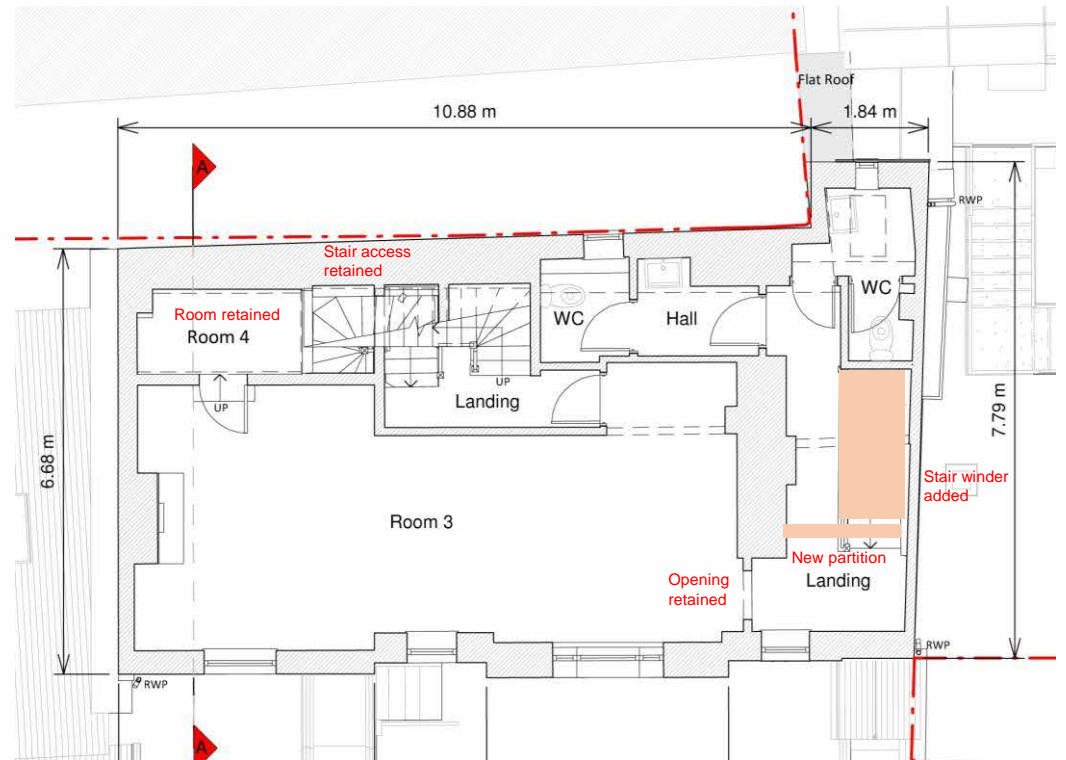
## 5.10 Impact assessment - 1<sup>st</sup> floor

Room 3 was probably divided into two or three rooms originally. The proposals seek to reinstate this arrangement by the creation of a new partition to create a bedroom to the westernmost corner. A further partition will be constructed to provide a second bedroom to match the 2008 approval. New doors of a suitable traditional design will be installed to the bedrooms & study. The partitions will be carefully scribed around the existing acanthus cornice and skirting which will be retained and replicated on the new partition.

Rather than breaking out the floor and removing the split level room between the ground and first floor, Room 4 will be retained as a dressing room and the split level room will be retained and made a bathroom.

The opening between the landing and room 3 will now be retained and a door installed to provide a study area. To facilitate this a new partition will be installed in the landing to match the 2008 approval

The proposal seeks to now use the section of existing stairs between the first floor and split level above the back west corner of the ground floor rather than blocking this section off.



Existing plan with annotations of areas to be amended. Please refer to proposed drawings for amendments



Modern East staircase



Room 3 arched opening to landing



Room 3 open room



Room 4 retained as dressing room

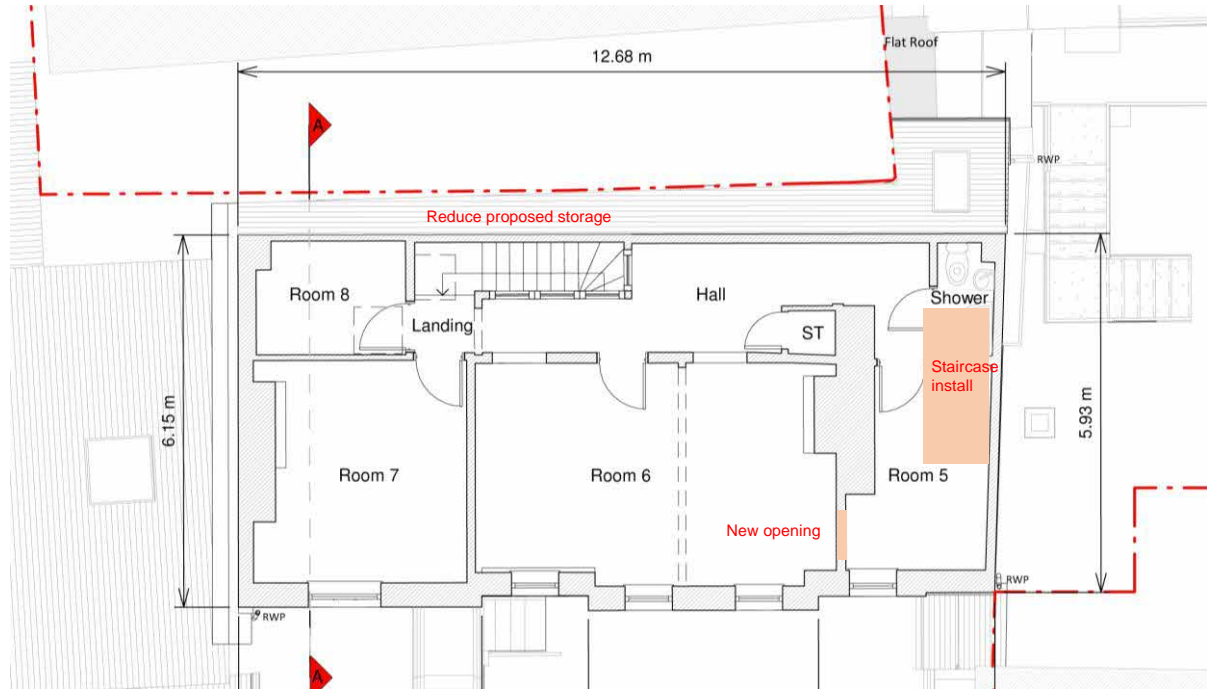


## 5.11 Impact assessment - 2nd floor

The new main stair continues up to the second floor where the existing shower room will be removed to facilitate this entailing the removal of a modern partition. The staircase design has been amended slightly to accommodate at winder from first floor level.

A new opening into Room 5 is proposed that mimics the existing opening in the floor below.

Minor amendment is proposed to the new storage area over the existing rear stair.



Existing plan with annotations of areas to be amended. Please refer to proposed drawings for amendments



Room 5/6 wall for proposed opening



Existing equivalent opening on the first floor



Staircase modern partition above

## 6.0 DESIGN - PROPOSALS

### 6.1 Proposed works

The application seeks listed building approval for changes to the internal layout.

The external appearance of the building is unaltered.

Summary of amendments by floor:

#### Second Floor

S1 - Amend staircase to winder from straight flight (As 2008 approval)

S2 - Amend door position into Study and create opening in existing wall to accommodate door ref D-2-05

S3 - Reduce storage partition (As 2008 approval)

#### First floor

F1 – Retain existing opening D-1-05

F2 – Amend positions of new partitions to form Bedroom 2

F3 – Omit bathroom to First floor (move to mezzanine level between Gnd and first as existing)

F4 – Omit new partition to existing staircase

F5 – Add doors D-1-06 & D-1-07

F6- Amend door position into Bed 2 (as per 2008 approval)

#### Ground Floor

G1 – Omit new opening to form opening to new staircase ( retaining existing wall)

G2 - Amend position of new staircase – retaining existing access arrangement

G3 – Retain existing mezzanine and install bathroom fittings

#### Basement

B1 – Amend layout of new partitions

B2 – Amend position of new staircase

B3 – Remove existing partition (as per 2008 approval)

### 6.2 Use

Approval for a change of use of the building to residential use (C3) was achieved on 12<sup>th</sup> August 2022

The amendments to the layouts are provided on design drawings 0821-1011E Proposed setting out plans