
MEMORANDUM

From:	Built Heritage Officer		
Service	Green Infrastructure	App No:	252533
Address:	Reddam House, Bearwood Road, Sindlesham, RG41 5BG.		
Proposal:	Application for Listed Building consent for the proposed structural remedial works to stairwell.		
Heritage Asset:	Reddam House – grade II listed building Listed Buildings are classed as designated heritage assets under the NPPF (2024) and in the Council's Local Plan policies.		
Site Visit Made:	04/11/2025		

Summary Of Recommendations

The structural repairs to the back staircase at Reddam House will result in harm in the loss of part of the historic original decorative cornice detailing element within the listed building, through the loss/damage to ceiling cornice/crown mouldings. With the form and placement of the gallows brackets as proposed being considered to result in an unwelcomed visual incongruity to the overall architectural arrangement of the back staircase through having a non-complimentary designed bracket pairs being installed off set to the centre point of the arched. Such as together for those reasons, the Built Heritage Officer raises an objection to the level of harm the scheme in the form as proposed would result in,

The harm caused assessed as amounting to being 'less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset' and as such in accordance with the guidance given in the NPPF (under paragraph 213) 'this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use' which would be for the case officer to determine.

Whilst the Built Heritage Officer considers there may well be a less harmful solution to the structural issues with the staircase however should the case officer be minded to grant consent, it be subject to the conditions as advised below.

Comments On Proposal

Structural cracking has occurred to the cantilevered flights stairs of the back staircase at Reddam House, works are proposed to ensure the structural safety of the back stairs.

The back stairs is an original feature and represents a secondary 'service' staircase to Reddam House, connecting all floor levels. The staircase which winds around on itself, creating an open stairwell, is of a cantilevered design which each flight between floor levels consisting of three short runs of stairs, with two quarter turn landings, with a further landing to the top of each flight of stairs between the floors.

A decorative cast iron balustrade runs the length of the staircase around the open stair well.

It appears the issues is with the cantilevered landings at either end of the flight of stairs between floor levels. A structural solution is being proposed with the introduction of a pair of metal gallows brackets to be fixed to the underside of each of the cantilevered floor landings to the staircase that would fix into the adjoining masonry walling. The structural intervention being intended to ensure the long-term structural stability of the 'back' staircase, and to ensure ultimately the safety of those using these stairs.

At this point it should be said that at the time the visit for this consultation response aside from the visual evidence issue seen with the need to prop the first-floor landing to the cantilevered staircase it did not seem apparent that this cracking issue was noticeable or evident on the other floor landings, none of which have had to be propped for safety.

Under paragraph 213 of the NPPF (2024) makes clear that 'any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.'

Presently it is considered not particularly appear clear the justification given for the need for carrying out the structural works to all the cantilevered landings at each floor level and/or that these landing are or will fail in the same manner. Given the similar arrangement of the two intermediate landings to each flight of stairs between floors raise the question as to whether these elements may not also be likely to potentially develop similar structural issues.

Furthermore, it is noted the submitted plans for the structural works and the accompanying appendix document are both dated January 2024, and together clearly relate to the current situation with respect to the propped cantilevered land at the top of the staircase to the first floor.

In terms of the actual intended structural works the proposal is for the addition of mild steel brackets with a 'L' shaped profile to them that are to be secured in pairs to underside of the staircases floor level landings and also secured in the masonry walling above the archway opening to the floor level below, with a 300mm wide mild steel spreader plate added on the aspect of the walling within the main building, with the upper end 250mm of the spreader plate bent over 90 degrees and fixed into the ceiling/floor slab.

From a heritage stance there are two matters that of concern with the proposed manner in which the structural gallows brackets are to be installed, these being:

- The approach proposed will result in harm to historic original decorative moulding, as part of it will need to be removed along with the plaster to the walling/ceiling.
- The discordant visual effect of the positioning of the brackets being equally spaced on the underside cantilevered landing but in terms of the site the decorative arched opening off each the corresponding flight of stairs below would appear visually jarring in being offset/unbalanced to the architectural feature as viewed looking both up the stairwell of the back staircase, and

from on the stairs when looking directly to the arch opening floor level opening.

There is also a degree of concern given the need to drill into the cantilevered landings for the gallows bracket fixing of a potential risk to the brittle iron balustrade railing.

Historic Cornice Moulding

There is historic decorative cornice crown moulding detailing to the ceilings of the formal corridor/landing to each of the floors (other than basement level) of the main building to which the staircase give access to. Whilst an original and plainer cornice moulding detail runs beneath the cast iron balustrades, of each of the floor slabs, on the stairwell side, running across the back of underside of the landing, atop each staircase run and along the outer wall of the back stair enclosure.

Firstly, there are two points it is felt need to be raised with respect to the submitted section drawings in light of that seen on site, namely:

- The sections do not accurately depict the profile of the cornice moulding, especially that of the crown moulding, which does not accord with the form and depth (projection out onto the ceiling).
- Also not convinced the sections accurately show the height from the top of the archway opening (it is noted the arch moulding to the arch is not shown) and that of the ceiling/underside of the floor slab of the level above. The photograph attached shows a much smaller apparent gap.
- Whilst it is clear the height of the masonry walling above the decorative floor level archway landing opening to have installed the intended support brackets, albeit with one of the brackets seemingly would extend down to terminate close (best guestimate is less than 100mm) to the decorative arch moulding. In slab of the floor above resulting in a reduced area of masonry walling over the decorative moulded arch opening does suggest that it is questionable there is sufficient space to install at least one of the backing plates, which appear to be 500mm in length (best guestimate). As such there is concern spreader plates may affect the decorative moulding of the archways.

From a heritage stance the concern here then is with the apparent intention remove part of these decorative cornice mouldings in order to both affix brackets and their back plates to the masonry walling, with the submitted proposed section drawings appears to indicate the intention to have removed both the cornice moulding and wall plaster where the brackets are to be situated. Whilst the proposed elevation does not make it clear as to the extent of the cornice and plasterwork would need to be removed. Furthermore, with respect to proposed elevation plan it is not clear given the 'L' shaped profile of the brackets as to whether they are to be a mirrored pair or not. And whether, given the intention to cut back the plasterwork to the face of the masonry wall to be able mount the brackets as to whether the plaster would be re-instated over the back vertical portion of the brackets or not.

As proposed, it would be necessary to remove sections of these historic decorative cornice mouldings, along with the walling plaster, in order to fix the brackets and spread plates into to the masonry walling between around the moulded arched opening to the floor level below and each of the cantilevered staircase landing. It

is stated under paragraph B9 of the appendix document that once the brackets and spreader plates has been installed it is intended to then to reinstate the cornice moulding and wall plaster to match the original finishes. There are no details presently provided to confirm how this is to be achieved over the mild steel plates with it to be assumed the depth of the wall plaster and the cornice moulding is such that the plates and fixings could be covered over. Also, with the staircase side it will not be possible to fully reinstate the cornice detailing, which would be intersected by the gallows brackets that cut across it.

In summary, it is thought along with the need for the accuracy of the submitted drawings to be confirmed and further consideration given to the possibility of achieving a visually more desirable solution, one with would avoid or at the least minimise the impact to historic decorative elements.

Advised Conditions

Gallows Bracket Details

Notwithstanding the details submitted, prior to commencement of the works hereby consented for the installation of structural gallows brackets to support the back stairs, details for the design and finish of the gallows brackets shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The installation of the gallows brackets shall then be undertaken in accords with the details as approved.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the building. Relevant policy: National Planning Policy Framework Section 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB24.

Confirmation of Installed Position for Gallows Brackets & Spreader Plates

Notwithstanding the details submitted, prior to commencement of any works to remove plasterwork and cornice moulding in order to have installed the gallows brackets and spreader plates, details to confirm the position of the gallows brackets and spreader plates have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The details shall confirm installation of the brackets and spreader plates on the masonry walling over the arched opening to the floor level can be carried out without affecting the decorative moulding of the arched opening. Works to install the gallows brackets and spreader plates shall then be undertaken in accordance with the details as approved.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the building. Relevant policy: National Planning Policy Framework Section 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB24.

Cornice Moulding & Wall Plaster Repair

Notwithstanding the details submitted, no works to make repairs to the historic decorative cornice mouldings and the plaster to the walling until details setting out the methodology for the re-instatement of the cornice mouldings and wall plaster have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The reinstatement of the cornice mouldings and wall plaster shall then be undertaken in accordance with those details so approved.

Reason: In order to safeguard the special architectural or historic interest of the

building. Relevant policy: National Planning Policy Framework Section 16 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment) and Managing Development Delivery Local Plan policy TB24.

Date:

17/12/2025

Signed:

Keith Frost
Built Heritage Officer



Underside of cantilevered landing of stairs at first floor.



Crown moulding & decorative arch, main building.

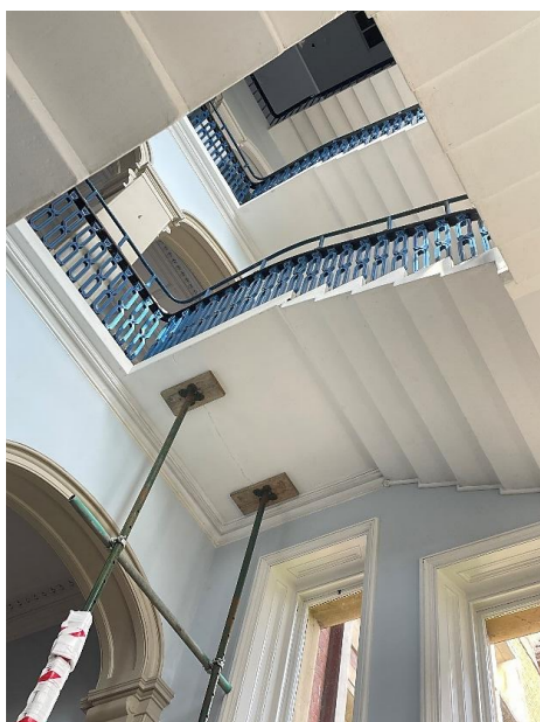
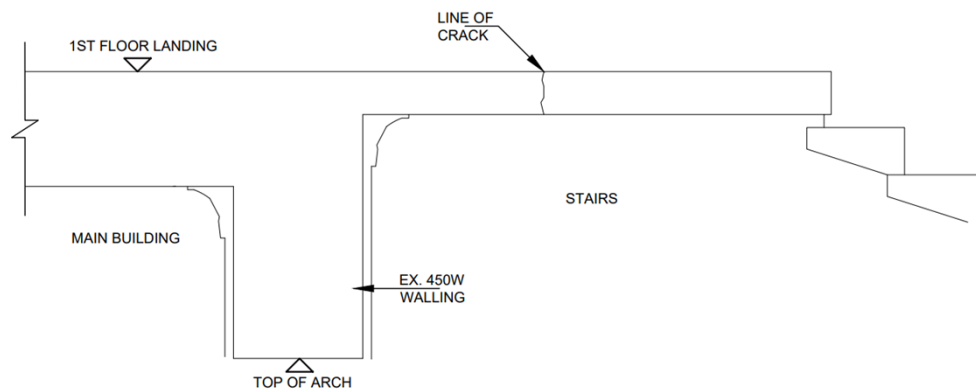


Figure 1. View of underside of feature arch over ground floor landing.

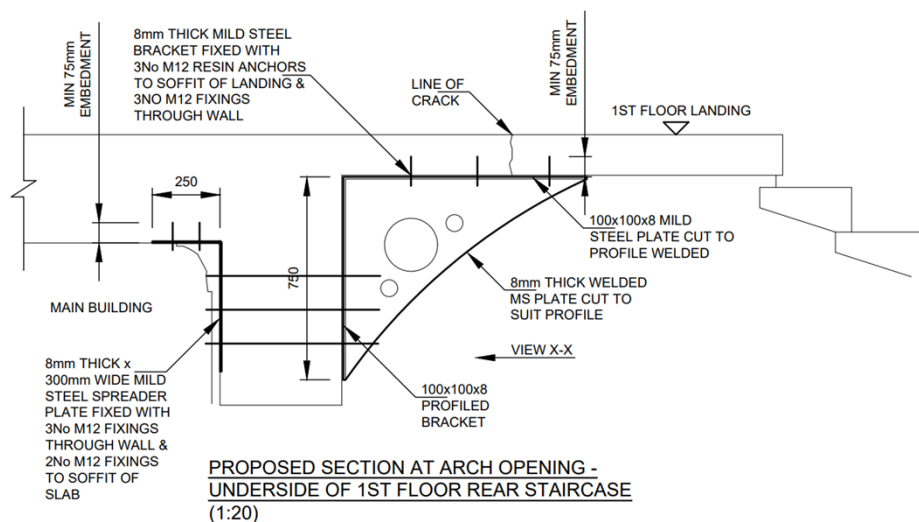


Private: Information that contains a small amount of sensitive data which is essential to communicate with an individual but does not require to be sent via secure methods.

Public: Information that can be seen and used by everyone inside and outside the Council.



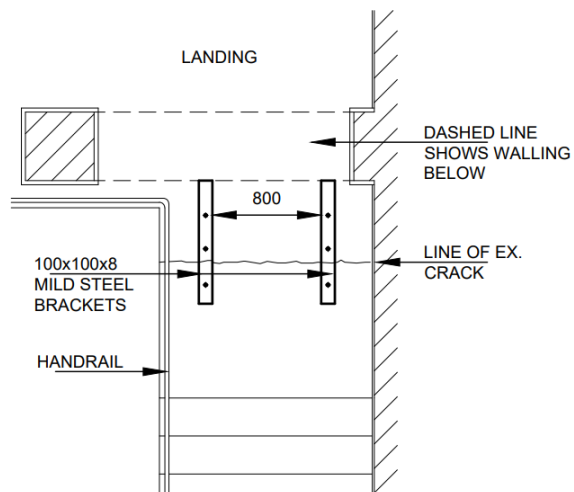
**EX. SECTION AT ARCH OPENING - UNDERSIDE
OF 1ST FLOOR REAR STAIRCASE (1:20)**



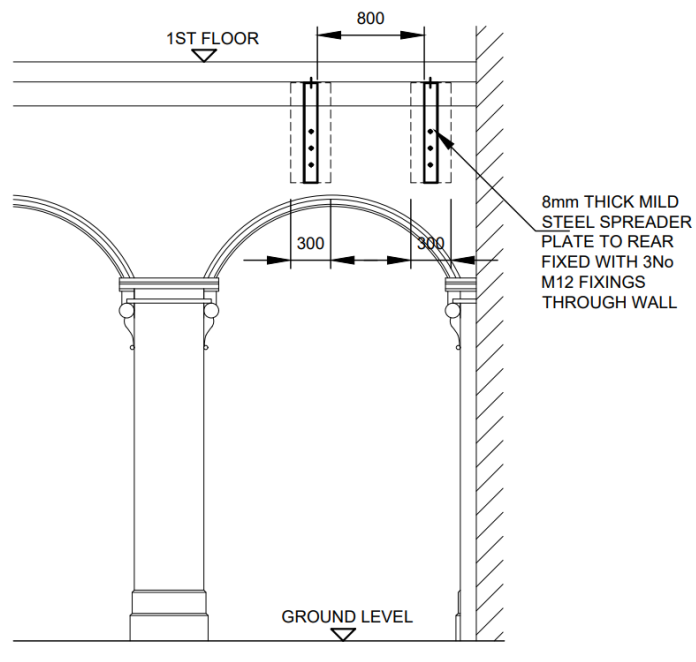
**PROPOSED SECTION AT ARCH OPENING -
UNDERSIDE OF 1ST FLOOR REAR STAIRCASE
(1:20)**

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PROPOSED PLAN ON 1ST FLOOR LANDING
(1:50)



PROPOSED ELEVATION ON ARCHED
OPENING AT GROUND FLOOR LANDING
TO REAR STAIRWELL (1:50)