

# The Waldegrave Suite

## Design & Access and Heritage Statement

May 2022



Planning and listed building application for conversion of an existing fire exit on the western side of the building into a new entrance, including reinstatement of an existing window, and creation of screening and signage, internal modifications to this double height entrance area to create space for a platform lift, and internal modifications to the first floor area to create an accessible toilet, and link the lift and new entrance through to the main corridor of The Waldegrave Suite.

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Applicant: St Mary's University, Twickenham  
Agent & Architect: Michael Jones Architects Ltd

## INTRODUCTION

The Waldegrave Suite is a collection of rooms located on the first floor of Block B at St Mary's University, Twickenham. As well as providing the university with lecture rooms, function rooms and event rooms, it offers event spaces available for hire, with closely associated catering facilities. The Waldegrave Suite suffers from difficult access, with no real direct entrance from outside the university, and no inclusive access for the disabled or those with mobility impairments. The purpose of this application is to make improvements to the way the Waldegrave Suite is presented, improve the access experience to external users and to address the lack of disabled and service access.

The building is closely linked with the grade 1 listed Strawberry Hill House, and although the list description (see Appendix A) does not directly mention any of the areas associated with the proposed works, anecdotally the listing does apply to some of these areas, hence the reason we are applying for listed building consent for the works as well as planning permission.

This planning and listed building application is for conversion of an existing fire exit/secondary entrance on the western side of the building into a new primary building entrance, including reinstatement of an existing window above the door, and creation of screening and signage. Internally modifications to this double height entrance area will create space for insertion of a platform lift, and internal modifications to the first floor area will create an accessible toilet, and link the lift and new entrance through to the main corridor of The Waldegrave Suite.

A pre-application was submitted by the University for a proposal similar to this on 18th March 2022, but as no response was received we have developed the scheme and proceeded with a full planning and listed building application.

## THE EXISTING BUILDING/HERITAGE

There are two significant parts to the existing building that are relevant to this planning application. The older part of the building, which can be identified by the stucco render and battlemented parapet, was originally developed during the late 18th Century, along with the adjacent property at Strawberry Hill House. The rest of the building, which contains the entrance area, where we are proposing to install the lift, was a later extension, believed to have been added in the mid 20th Century.

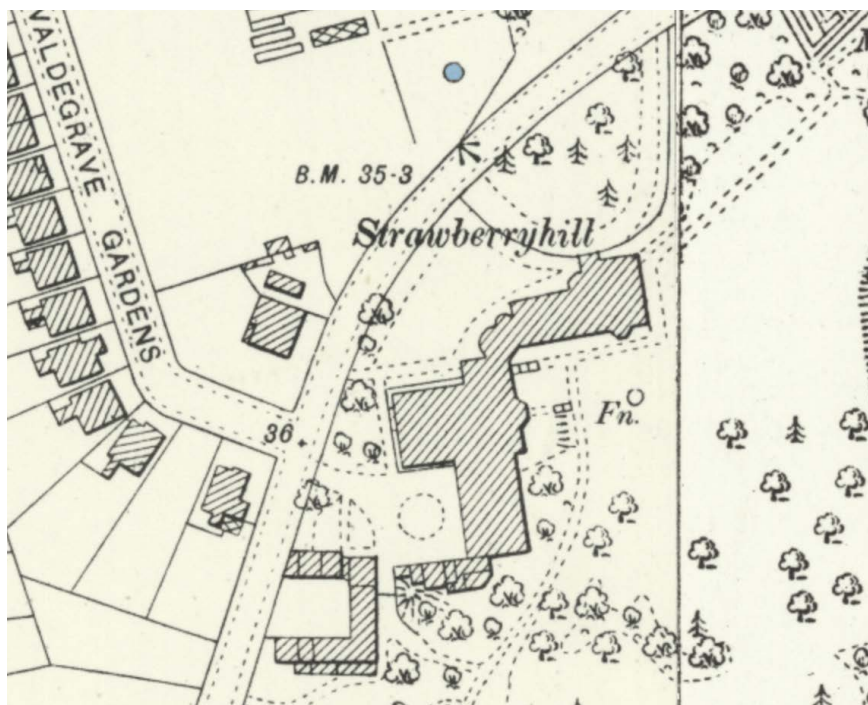


Figure 1 - OS Map Extract from 1900, showing the building prior to the mid 20th Century additions



Figure 2 - Aerial Photograph showing the two significant parts of the building as it currently stands today

The function rooms and main corridor within the Waldegrave Suite are within the first floor of the older part of the building. These areas are well restored and generally in good condition. The remaining area of the first floor provides support spaces to these function rooms, such as a small bar, storage areas and food preparation spaces. These areas are not so well maintained, and over the years appear to have undergone substantial and unsympathetic modification from their original appearance and layout. The following figures are extracts from a plan of the first floor of the building dated 1979, and the current existing floor plan, which demonstrate the level of recent modification that has taken place in these secondary areas.

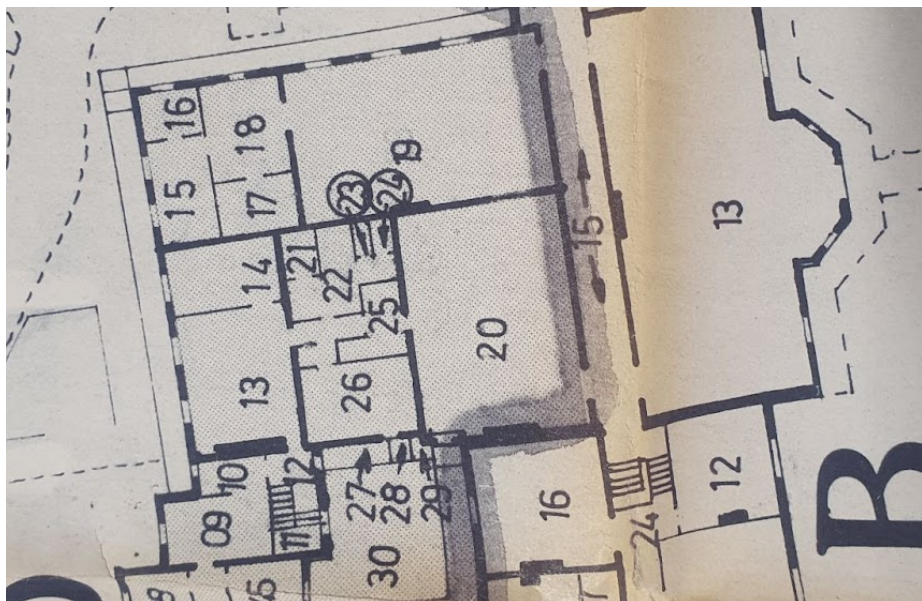


Figure 3 - Extract from 1979 first floor plan of the area containing the Waldegrave Suite (source: Richmond Archives)



Figure 4 - Extract from current existing first floor plan of the area containing the Waldegrave Suite

The 1979 plan extract in Figure 3 shows something that is believed to be closer to the original layout of the building, significantly no openings exist between the rooms labelled 20, 26 and 13, confirming that these are both modern interventions, and the internal partitioning in the area labelled as 13, 21, 22 and 25 is substantially different to the current layout, confirming that the partitions that currently exist in this area are not significant in terms of heritage value.

#### RELEVANT PLANNING/LISTED BUILDING CONSENT HISTORY

The planning and listed building history for the University is extensive. As an overview, a series of applications exist from between 2006 and 2010 in relation to the extensive refurbishment and restoration of Waldegrave Lodge, also known as Strawberry Hill House, which is immediately adjacent to The Waldegrave Suite, and the primary subject of the grade 1 listing. This permission is believed to include refurbishment and restoration of parts of The Waldegrave Suite as well.

There are also a number of permissions for extensions and modifications to Waldegrave College from the 1940s and 1950s, although there is little information available online relating to these, we believe one of them relates to the construction of the existing building containing the entrance area that we are proposing to modify (possibly 47/5177).

In addition to the above, there was a listed building consent granted in 2008 (08/1629/LBC) for the insertion of a partition wall in one of the office spaces on the first floor of the building, close to where our proposed lift arrives on the first floor. This permission has been implemented, and we are now proposing to remove part of this modern partition.

#### THE PROPOSAL

In developing this proposal for providing improved access to The Waldegrave Suite, several alternative options were considered, and one of the key determining factors behind the selection of this option was its ability to fulfil the brief whilst minimising impact on the heritage asset.

There are a number of distinct aspects to our proposal, all of which combine to achieve the goal of improving inclusive public accessibility to the Waldegrave Suite. We have broken the proposal down into 5 distinct parts, each one described in turn below.

## 1. Improvements to the external appearance of the entrance

- These works include the replacement of an existing timber fire exit door with a new hardwood framed glazed door, construction of a contemporary canopy and timber screen and signage to conceal the adjacent bin store, and partial reinstatement of a window above the new entrance canopy.
- This part of the proposal is to the more recent 20th century extension to the listed building. It will result in a significant improvement in the appearance of this area by overhauling what currently presents itself as a bin storage area and service yard. In turn this will result in improvements to the appearance and setting of the listed building.
- The canopy has been designed as a modern addition, distinctly different in appearance to its host building. It will be supported by a single post in one corner and then fixed to the facade of the 20th Century part of the existing building, and will be clad in a lightweight Equitone fibre cement cladding (<https://www.equitone.com/en-gb/> - a sample of which can be provided to the council if required as part of this application).
- The timber screen and planting will provide a natural palette of materials to further improve and enhance the setting of the grade 1 listed building behind, and will act as a guide for people arriving at the site and looking for the entrance to The Waldegrave Suite.



Figure 5 - Sketch view of the proposed entrance area

## 2. Internal reconfiguration of the entrance lobby to provide access to the new lift.

- These works are proposed within the later, mid 20th Century area of the building, and involve the removal of a suspended ceiling and modern internal partitioning which currently forms a w/c and kitchenette.
- Reinstatement of the original ceiling height returns the space to its original volume and allows for the reinstatement of the blocked-up window above the entrance door, increasing the natural light coming into the space.
- A new plastered ceiling and cornicing will be provided in keeping with the character of the style and appearance of the existing building.
- Due to the high ceiling height in this entrance space, we are able to install a platform lift that will provide disabled access from this entrance level, up to the first floor without interference to the floor structure or office space above.
- This type of lift does not require a deep pit or large machine room. All of the mechanism is housed within the side of the lift shaft enclosure.
- The existing window adjacent to the lift will be retained as existing, and the lift car and lift shaft will have an obscure glazed side to enable natural light to still come through into the lift car.

- The lift will be constructed on a new concrete slab set within the existing floor build-up. Locating the lift here, as opposed to within another part of the grade 1 listed area of the building, results in achieving the key requirements of the project with minimal harm and risk to listed fabric.

### 3. Access into the first floor

- The lift arrives at first floor level in the back of a modern cupboard within an existing storage room in the grade 1 listed area of the building. In order to provide access, this modern cupboard will need to be removed and a modest opening within the historic end wall of the early fabric of the building will need to be created. This opening will be no more than the minimum width and height required in order to enable safe access to and from the lift, keeping potential harm to the listed fabric to a minimum.
- The original end wall will remain separately intelligible from the new lift structure, allowing the legibility and historical development of the building to become visible.
- Modification to the internal partitions in this area is also proposed in order to create a suitably sized landing area for the lift, a disabled toilet and a table storage room. The internal partitions that are proposed to be removed here are ones that were given approval in the 2008 application for listed building consent (08/1629/LBC).
- The drainage from the new disabled toilet will be taken back through the kitchen/store behind and into the existing waste pipe that comes out through the external wall of this room. The waste pipe will need to be upgraded from a 40mm pipe to a 110mm pipe to accommodate the toilet, by re-using the existing route we are again minimising potential harm to the listed fabric.
- In addition we will provide mechanical ventilation to the disabled toilet via a domestic style extractor fan, which will have a 100mm diameter duct running up into the roof space and out through a tile vent in the slate roof above. This will not affect the appearance of the listed building from the front due to it being small and discreet, and from most vantage points hidden behind the existing parapet.



Figure 6 - The modern cupboard that needs to be removed.

#### 4. Modification of access through to the Billiard Room

- A route through to the Billiard Room already exists, albeit it is not suitable as an accessway for wheelchair or public use due to its narrow and fragmented makeup. It involves passing through two fire exit doors and the Billiard Room, which means that when the Billiard Room is in use the access route is unavailable.
- Our proposal involves the widening and consolidation of this existing route.
- The first fire exit door, which is located in a highly unsympathetic modern opening in the original fabric of the listed building (see figures 3 and 4), and is of poor quality construction, is to be improved by removal of the fire exit door and repositioning of the opening more centrally in the widened corridor, enabling the original structural wall of the building to become more visible. The repositioned opening will have a pointed arch and decorative plaster lining, similar to others throughout the building.
- The corridor between the new lift landing area and Billiard Room will be widened by removal of more modern internal partitions, and reconstruction of a wall enclosing the chair store and av store. Changes in this area are not harmful to the heritage value of the building due to the amount of modification that has taken place in the past (see figures 3 and 4).
- The second fire exit door, coming from the Billiard Room into the corridor is a jib door of modern construction with a panelled and wallpapered face to the Billiard Room side. Again, this is not an original opening (see figures 3 and 4), and the panelling within the Billiard Room is believed to be restoration or replica, as opposed to original. This door is too narrow for the purposes of our access route, and we are proposing to widen it, increase its height and reverse the swing. The new door will be constructed in the same manner as the existing, reusing the existing panelling where possible to ensure a seamless match to the panelling in the Billiard Room is achieved.



*Figure 7 - The first fire exit door where we wish to remove modern fabric and adjust the position of the non-original opening.*



*Figure 8 - The second non-original fire exit door. We wish to recreate a wider version of this door of a similar design.*

5. Access through the Billiard Room to the Main Corridor

- To make the final link from the jib doorway into the Billiard Room through to the Main Corridor we require a screen to be installed to separate the main part of the Billiard Room from the access route. The purpose of this screen is to allow the access route to remain in full use whilst events are held in the Billiard Room.
- In order to ensure that this screen is not visually intrusive, and does not cause the original plan form to be harmed, it is proposed to be a lightweight metal framed glass screen from floor to ceiling. Wall panel and ceiling details will be retained and a timber fillet will be scribed around the edge of these details to give a clean fixing point for the metal frame screen, enabling it to be fitted without damage to the existing detailing.
- The screen will be clearly legible as a modern intervention, its lightweight glazed nature enabling the whole room to still be perceived as a single space.
- The screen would also be fully reversible, further mitigating potential harm.

**USE**

This application does not propose any change of use to the existing building.

**FLOOD RISK**

The application site falls within flood risk zone 1 which denotes areas with a low probability of flooding. As the site is not deemed to be at any special risk of flooding and the proposal will not increase the likelihood of flooding, it is not necessary to produce a full flood risk assessment.

**CONCLUSION**

The key goal behind this planning and listed building application is to improve the accessibility of The Waldegrave Suite, which is contained within a historically significant grade 1 listed building. These improvements will enable the building to become more readily available for use by groups outside the university, and thereby will undoubtedly provide a substantial public benefit.



In general, the modifications proposed in the application either involve the removal of modern internal partitioning, or the adjustment or improvement to previous unsympathetic modern interventions into the historic fabric. These modifications generally result in improvements and enhancements to the legibility of the historic building. The one exception to this is the creation of a small opening in the original end wall of the building to allow access from the new lift at first floor level. This intervention has been proposed in such a way that minimises the potential impact by keeping the new opening as small as possible and ensuring that the original wall is clearly legible. In our assessment this less than substantial harm would be outweighed by the other positive improvements and enhancements to the building, which improve the legibility of the historic fabric and provide public benefit by enabling much better, and more inclusive access to the historic rooms in The Waldegrave Suite.

Andrew Breathwick  
Michael Jones Architects  
May 2022



# Strawberry Hill (St Mary's Training College)

Listed on the National Heritage List for England.

[Search over 400,000 listed places](https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/) (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>)

## Official list entry

Heritage Category: **Listed Building**

Grade: I

List Entry Number: **1261987**

Date first listed: **02-Sep-1952**

Statutory Address 1: **St Mary's Training College, Waldegrave Road**

Statutory Address 2: **Strawberry Hill, Waldegrave Road**

**This List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest.**

Unless the List entry states otherwise, it includes both the structure itself and any object or structure fixed to it (whether inside or outside) as well as any object or structure within the curtilage of the building.

For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure must have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.

**[Understanding list entries](https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/understanding-list-entries/)** (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/understanding-list-entries/>)

**[Corrections and minor amendments](https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/minor-amendments/)** (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/minor-amendments/>)

## Location

Statutory Address: **St Mary's Training College, Waldegrave Road**

Statutory Address: **Strawberry Hill, Waldegrave Road**

**The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.**

County: **Greater London Authority**

District: **Richmond upon Thames (London Borough)**

Parish: **Non Civil Parish**

National Grid Reference: **TQ 15817 72315**

## Details

TQ 1572 17/10

WALDEGRAVE ROAD Strawberry Hill (St Mary's Training College)

2.9.52

I 1749-76. Built by Horace Walpole, with William Robinson and later James Essex as executive architects, with some interiors designed by Richard Bentley, John Chute, Thomas Pitt, and Robert Adam. The chief facades are to the south and east. Stuccoed, of two to three storeys. Extending southward to the left on the south facade are C19 additions by Lady Waldegrave, which now encase the base of the circular tower (1759), containing kitchens and Round Room Tudor windows. Turret behind, (1777) with steep conical roof covered by fishscale slates.

To the right, a five bay range, two storeys high, with painted two-light windows and buttresses between (Great Cloister to ground floor, Gallery above). Single bay to right, set back, and to right of this a triple angled bow window, two storeys high, with trefoil-headed ogee windows on each facet. (contains Little Parlour and Blue Bed Chamber). Single bay to corner, with similar return to east, of three storeys, with ogeed two-light windows to ground, and first floors and quatrefoils above. To the right, along the east facade, a three-faceted bow with ogee heads to first floor, above which a rectangular oriel with five painted lights, under stepped gable. To the right, a single bay contains the Great Parlour, and above, the library. Square headed oriel to parlour, ogeed cinquefoil headed window within intersecting tracery library, flanked by quatrefoils. Battlemented parapets throughout, with pinnacles at intervals.

Inside, many notable interiors, including: Staircase, (Bentley); Library, with Gothic arches for bookcases; fireplace inspired by that of Edmund Crouchback in Westminster Abbey, and elaborate ceiling (1754, Chute), Holbein Chamber, triple-arched screen, tracered ceiling, elaborate niched fireplace, (Bentley); Gallery, fan-vaulted with elaborate canopied (Pitt); Round Drawing Room, and Beauclerc Room (Adam); Tribune, elaborate domed and traceried ceiling (1763 mostly Chute); Great Bedchamber (1772).

Listing NGR: TQ1581072308

## Legacy

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number: **436168**

Legacy System: **LBS**

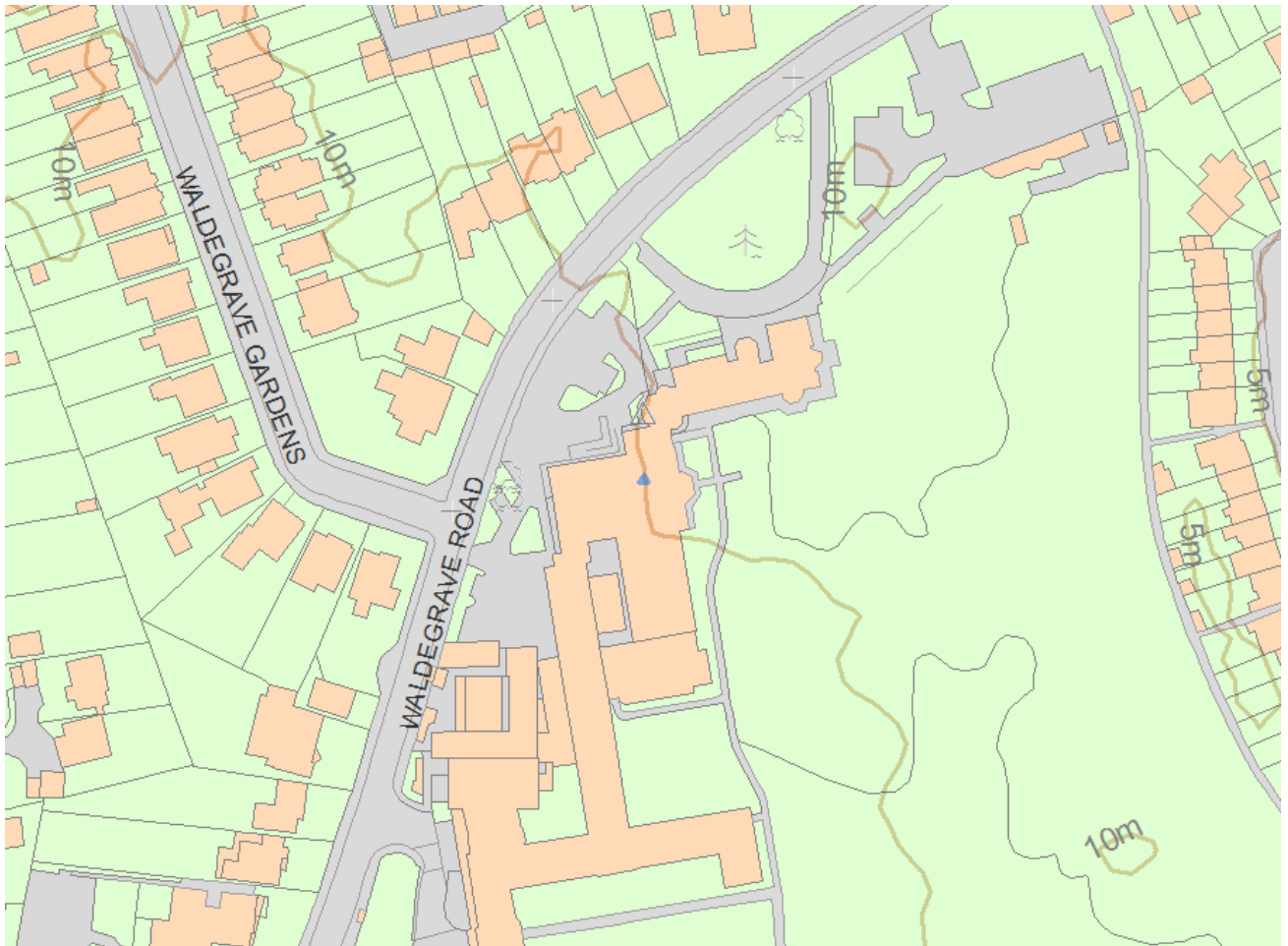
# Sources

## Other

Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England, Part 17 Greater London

# Legal

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.



## Map

This map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale.  
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