Heritage Statement – Proposed Installation of Ensuite Bathroom

Property: Grade II Listed Victorian Building, The Leas, Folkestone

Proposal: Installation of an ensuite bathroom within an existing bedroom

1. Introduction and Purpose of the Statement

This Heritage Statement has been prepared to support an application for Listed Building Consent for the installation of an ensuite bathroom within an existing bedroom of a Grade II listed Victorian property. The purpose of this document is to assess the significance of the heritage asset, describe the proposed works, and evaluate their impact in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and relevant local conservation policies.

2. Significance of the Heritage Asset

The property forms part of a **Grade II listed Victorian building** situated on The Leas in Folkestone, within a designated conservation area. The building is recognised for its **architectural and historic interest**, including:

- High-quality Victorian construction and detailing
- Original joinery, including solid hardwood doors and moulded architraves
- Historic plan form typical of late-19th-century seaside residential architecture
- Contribution to the wider historic character of The Leas and its formal Victorian townscape

The interior significance derives primarily from surviving original features, materials, and spatial proportions. Areas of later alteration or modern intervention do not contribute to the building's special interest.

3. Description of the Proposed Works

The proposal is to install a **self-contained ensuite bathroom** within an existing bedroom. The works include:

- Construction of a new internal partition to form the bathroom enclosure
- Installation of a **solid hardwood door** matching the existing original doors in profile, weight, and finish
- Installation of bathroom fittings and sanitaryware in a **Victorian style**, sympathetic to the age and character of the building
- Removal of a **non-historic alcove**, constructed from modern wood
- Integration of plumbing and ventilation in a manner that avoids disturbance to historic fabric

The new partition will be of **substantial construction**, with timber detailing and mouldings designed to match existing joinery. All visible elements will be finished in a manner consistent with the building's established Victorian character.

4. Assessment of Impact on Historic Fabric

A key principle of the proposal is that **no historic fabric will be removed, altered, or obscured**. The following points demonstrate compliance:

- The existing bedroom walls, floors, ceilings, and joinery will remain intact and unaltered.
- The new bathroom enclosure is **entirely reversible**, constructed as an independent partition that does not require removal of original structure.
- The only element to be removed is a **modern, non-historic alcove**, which does not contribute to the building's significance.
- The new hardwood door and matching woodwork ensure continuity of character and avoid introducing incongruous modern materials.

As such, the proposal results in **no loss of historic fabric**.

5. Assessment of Impact on Significance

The significance of the heritage asset is derived from its Victorian architecture, original materials, and contribution to the conservation area. The proposed works:

- **Do not alter the historic plan form** in any meaningful or irreversible way
- **Do not affect any original features**
- **Do not impact the external appearance** of the building
- **Introduce high-quality, sympathetic materials** consistent with the building's character
- **Remove a modern, intrusive element**, thereby improving the integrity of the interior

The installation of a Victorian-style bathroom within a reversible partition is entirely in keeping with the building's architectural language. The works are confined to an internal space and have **no impact on the building's external significance or its contribution to the conservation area**.

In accordance with NPPF paragraphs 199–202, the proposal results in **no harm** to the significance of the heritage asset.

6. Positive Enhancement

The proposal offers several **heritage benefits**:

- Removal of a **non-historic alcove**, improving the authenticity of the room
- Introduction of high-quality joinery that matches original Victorian detailing
- Increased utility and long-term viability of the property, supporting its continued residential use

- A reversible intervention that respects the building’s historic character while improving modern functionality

These enhancements contribute positively to the building’s ongoing conservation and appropriate use.

7. Conclusion

The proposed installation of an ensuite bathroom is carefully designed to respect the historic and architectural significance of this Grade II listed Victorian property. The works:

- Do **not** involve the removal of any historic fabric
- Do **not** harm the significance of the heritage asset
- Are fully reversible
- Use materials and detailing appropriate to the building’s character
- Improve the building by removing a non-historic alcove
- Enhance the building’s long-term usability and conservation

The proposal is therefore fully compliant with the NPPF, Historic England guidance, and local conservation policies, and should be considered acceptable in heritage terms.