

183A OXFORD ROAD  
DESIGN, PLANNING & HERITAGE STATEMENT  
DECEMBER 2022



**Alasdair Ferguson + Isaac Slater**

On behalf of Purcell ®

Old Police Station, 6 St Peter's Court, Bristol BS3 4AQ

[www.purcelluk.com](http://www.purcelluk.com)

All rights in this work are reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced, stored or transmitted in any form or by any means (including without limitation by photocopying or placing on a website) without the prior permission in writing of Purcell except in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Applications for permission to reproduce any part of this work should be addressed to Purcell at [info@purcelluk.com](mailto:info@purcelluk.com).

Undertaking any unauthorised act in relation to this work may result in a civil claim for damages and/or criminal prosecution. Any materials used in this work which are subject to third party copyright have been reproduced under licence from the copyright owner except in the case of works of unknown authorship as defined by the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. Any person wishing to assert rights in relation to works which have been reproduced as works of unknown authorship should contact Purcell at [info@purcelluk.com](mailto:info@purcelluk.com).

Purcell asserts its moral rights to be identified as the author of this work under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

Purcell® is the trading name of Purcell Architecture Ltd.

© Purcell 2022

# READING HSHAZ - 183A OXFORD ROAD: DESIGN & PLANNING STATEMENT

## CONTENTS

---

### PART I - BACKGROUND & BRIEF

---

- I.1 SITE HISTORY
- I.2 SHOPFRONT DESIGN PRINCIPLES & OBJECTIVES

---

### PART II - DESIGN

---

- 2.1 GROUPING STUDY
- 2.2 EXISTING ELEVATIONAL STUDY
- 2.3 PROPOSED ELEVATION (VISUALISATION)
- 2.4 PROPOSED SIGNAGE

# PART I - BACKGROUND & BRIEF

## INTRODUCTION

### WHAT IS THE HERITAGE ACTION ZONE INITIATIVE?

Historic England is delivering the £95 million government-funded High Streets Heritage Action Zone programme. This aims to unlock the potential of high streets across England, fuelling economic, social and cultural recovery and breathe new life into it for future generations. Reading is one of 60 high streets to be offered funding as part of a four-year programme.

The High Street Heritage Action Zone in Reading extends across three conservation areas. However, as funding is limited this will be focused on the areas in need of the most investment. This includes Oxford Road and the junction of St. Mary's Butts and Castle Street.

### 183a RECENT PLANNING HISTORY

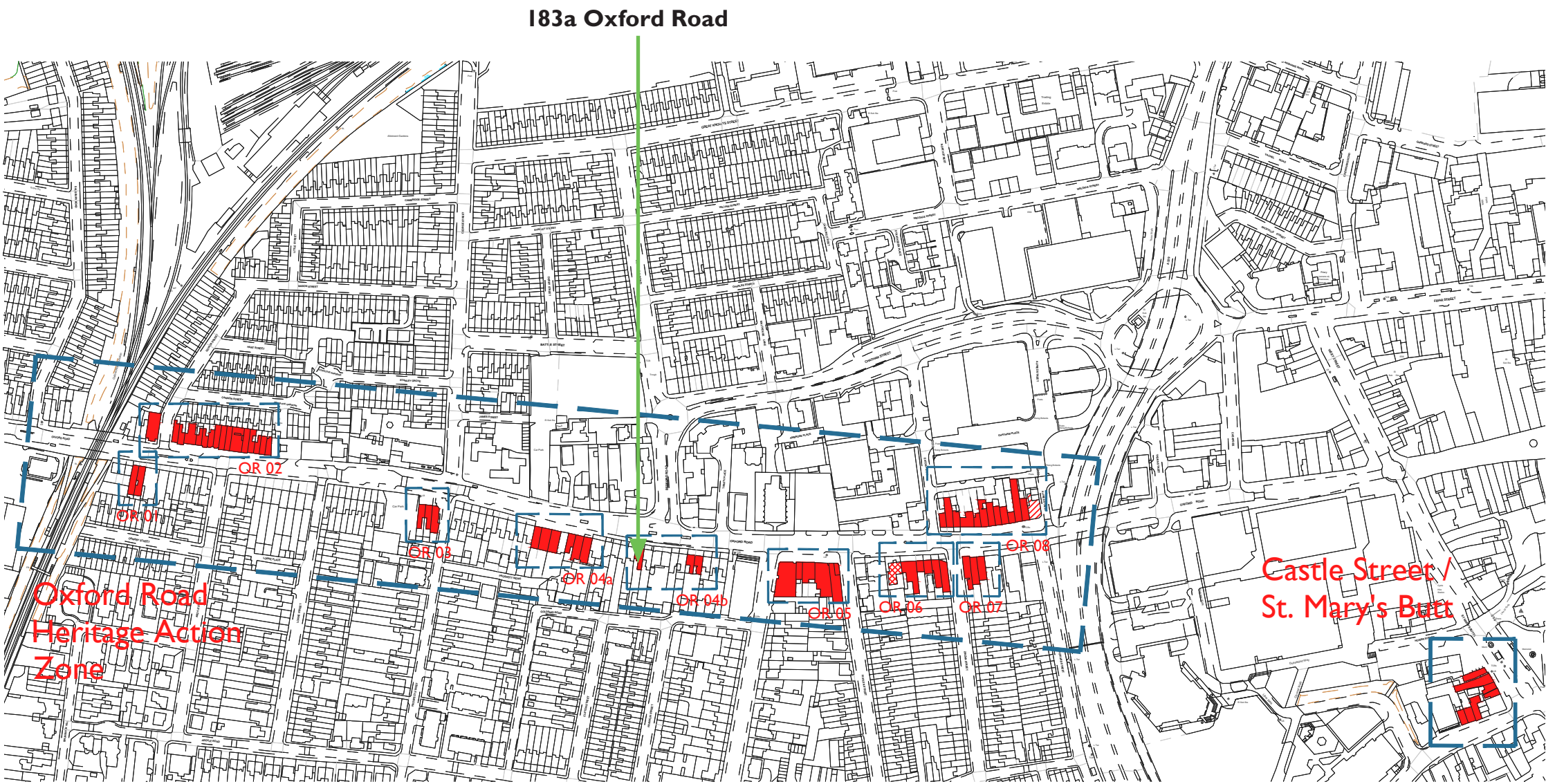
App. No.: I40385  
Description: Change of use of first (part), second and third floors from Class BI(a) (offices) to C3 (dwellinghouses) to comprise 1 x 3 bed dwelling.  
Date Received: 14 March 2014  
Decision Date: 06 May 2014, Prior Approval Given

App. No.: I11123  
Description: Certificate of lawfulness for existing use as a one bedroom flat on the ground floor and three studio flats (two on the first floor and one on the second floor).  
Date Received: 24 March 2011  
Decision Date: 11 May 2011, Certificate of Lawfulness (existing) approved no conditions

### READING HSHAZ OBJECTIVES

- To enhance the understanding of Reading's heritage by revealing it's hidden histories and to give the community a sense of pride and ownership in developing the town's future
- To improve the physical condition and viability of the high streets within the three conservation areas by identifying those properties most at risk and engaging with property owners to help them to restore the buildings, to show them how to maintain the buildings and to share best practice. We want to see premises viably and fully occupied and footfall and customer satisfaction increasing.

- To develop a comprehensive strategy to improve the public realm across the HSHAZ. The outcome will be a better experience and sense of place for those living or working in or visiting the town centre.
- To support local businesses, the economy and local community and cultural initiatives by creating a positive sense of place through contributing to the heritage of their high street.



Masterplan showing situation of 183 Oxford Road within the Reading Heritage Action Zones.

## PART I - BACKGROUND & BRIEF

### I.1 SITE HISTORY

Oxford Road is one of the earliest routes leading out of Reading's medieval town centre to Pangbourne and Oxford to the west. Until the early 19th Century, the road passed through an open rural landscape with minimal development.

#### GEORGIAN DEVELOPMENT

Several properties along the eastern stretch of Oxford Road were built prior to 1840 in the Georgian or Regency period. The terraces are recognisable for their restrained elevations, sash windows and round-arched entrances with fanlights. The detached villas are grand in scale and character, for example, the porticoed entrance of Mannson House.

#### VICTORIAN GROWTH AND EXPANSION

The mid-to-late-Victorian terraces that infilled open land between the scattered Georgian developments range in scale and level of detailing, reflecting the demands of both the new industrial workers but also an emerging professional class. Unlike the Georgian residential development, these terraces comprised retail units at ground floor with residential above, introducing a greater degree of self-sufficiency to Oxford Road.

#### 183a OXFORD ROAD

The proposals are again a mix of repairs and interventions. Historic features and details that have been removed or damaged and are to be repaired where appropriate. Shop fronts are replaced with new timber frontages with recessed doors, stall risers, fascia's below architectural detailing and localised roof repairs and localised doff cleaning to stone and brickwork. Heritage paint colours have been selected to create variation along the street frontage as well as an appealing shop front for the vendor. The proposed timber shop front will unify the heritage elements of the street and improve the visual apperance of the property.



Map of Reading, drawn and engraved by Edward Weller, printed by John Snare, 1840. The map shows the development of Georgian terraces and detached dwellings at intervals along the road. Oxford Road is highlighted.



An early / mid-19th century Georgian terrace at Nos. 187-193.



Late Victorian terraced development next to the railway bridge.



View of the end of Oxford Road (north side) showing shops including F. J. Cotton, dry cleaner (No. 84); Album Brothers, tailors (No. 82); K.C. Burdett, ice cream shop (No. 78) and Reading Motor Accessories (No. 76), 1965 (Reading Library), 1965 (Reading Library: (READ)192475(Sirsi) 1222017)

## PART I - BACKGROUND & BRIEF

### I.1 SHOPFRONT DESIGN PRINCIPLES & OBJECTIVES

Oxford Road has undergone much alteration since the early 20th century, however, there are a number of architectural features that remain which bring character to the street and reflect its historic function and character as a retail and residential street. These features should be retained where remaining and repaired where deteriorating.

The component shopfront parts survived in many instances along the street. Corbels are the most common remaining fragment, although pilasters survived in places and some cornices above. Some shopfronts retain appropriately proportioned fascia signage, but generally these have been replaced by inappropriate modern versions featuring oversized fascia signs and internally lit signage boxes. Glazed panels divided by mullions have generally been replaced by full-height modern glazing, which lacks depth and articulation.

What survives of the historic shopfront features are generally in poor condition across Oxford Road and should be retained, repaired and incorporated into new schemes rather than being replaced.

Ornament to upper storeys varies across the street. Georgian terraces are generally restrained, featuring sash windows, arched doorways and fanlights. The later Victorian terraces, however, exhibit a greater range of architectural features, which add character to groups of building and enliven the skyline.



Diagram showing typical features of a single shop front.



Largely intact historic shopfront at no. 111, with Early-Victorian sash windows



Historical image showing grocery store at no. 184. C. 1910

## PART II - DESIGN

### 2.1 GROUP 8 ELEVATIONAL STUDY



Photograph of Group 4b - 179a-185a Oxford Road.

No. 183a has been highlighted



Mock-up proposal for Group 4b (as per feasibility study)

No. 183a has been highlighted



Mock-up proposal for Group 4b (Updated with Historic England comments)

No. 183a has been highlighted

2.2 EXISTING ELEVATIONAL STUDY



2.3 PROPOSED ELEVATION



2.4 PROPOSED SIGNAGE

Primary/Mezzanine signage (RAL 3000)



Secondary/Ground Floor signage (RAL 3032)



Timber fascia to be fabricated by specialist contractor. All lettering to be handpainted. Shop front and secondary sign to be painted in RAL 3032. Main sign to be painted in RAL 3000. Main lettering to be painted in RAL 9003.



Concealed slim cowl light installed in the top of the sign molding. Signage to be externally illuminated at night as illustrated. Illumination to be static Lighting specification: Neutral (400k). 1440 lumens per metre.



Slim cowl light example (to be concealed in top of fascia)

