



SHAUN•TANNER
ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING

STL Architecture Ltd

3 Thames Court
2 Richfield Avenue
Reading
RG1 8EQ

Heritage Statement

for

**New boundary treatment to include access gate,
brick wall and railings**

At

St Mary's Service Yard

**Reading
RG1 2HX**

Prepared by STL Architecture



CONTACT DETAILS

STL Architecture

Email: studio@stlarchitecture.co.uk

Tel: 0118 9890808

Web: stlarchitecture.co.uk

Registered Office Lime House, Grass Hill, RG4 7TJ
Company No. 12041439 VAT No. 325235524



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1. INTRODUCTION

This Heritage Statement is for a Planning Application for maintenance works for a new boundary fence by Reading Borough Council. These works have been detailed by STL Architecture to accompany a Planning Application for the proposed works. The Council property, currently a service area for parking and refuse collection containers is within St Mary's Butts/Castle Street conservation area. However, it abuts the century of a Grade I church and as such must take into consideration the setting of the listed church and cemetery.

2. BACKGROUND - SIGNIFICANCE

2.1 Site context

The proposed new fence is slightly north of the northern boundary of St Mary's Cemetery. It will be on Reading Council property and will provide protection for the area which the Council uses for refuse storage containers and car parking. It is paved and at the rear of a row of terraces to the north on Broad Street.

Illus. 1: General view looking west, near the northern boundary of the church cemetery on the right.





2.2 Site Notes

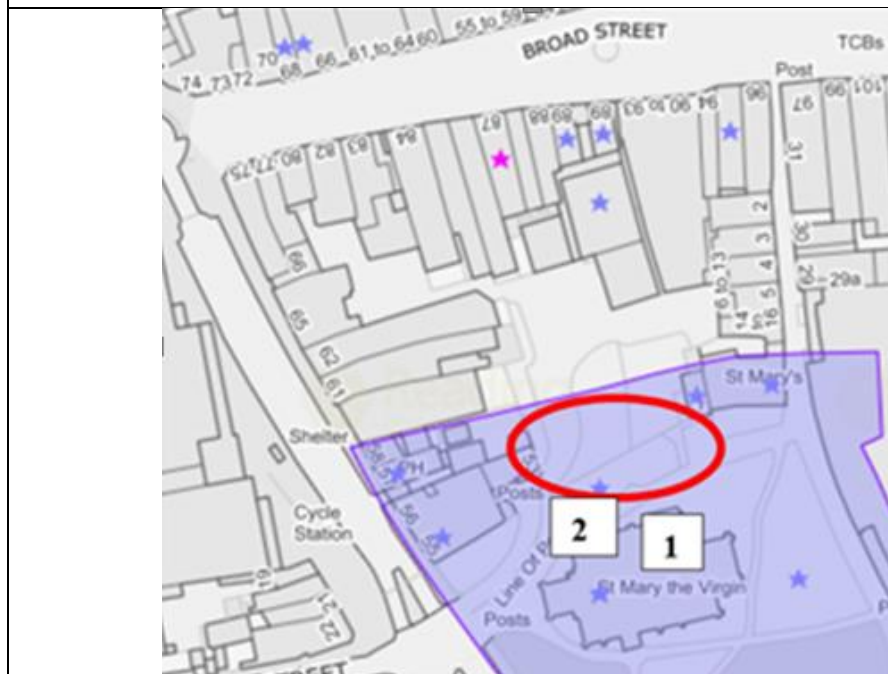
Part A – St Mary's Cemetery

Illus. 2: RBC GIS Map.

There is a listed monument close-by and the new fence is slightly off the northern boundary of St Mary the Virgin Church.

Key: 1. – St Mary the Virgin (church) – Grade I.
2. – Tomb – Grade II;

The site is within St Mary's Butts/Castle Street Conservation area and circled in RED. The listed heritage items are shown by the numbers 1 & 2.



Illus. 3: Approximate location of new fence on boundary of cemetery.



2.3 Significance of St Mary's Church Site

The site is in the heart of Reading, within St Mary's Butts / Castle Street Conservation Area. St Mary's Butts, the oldest part of Reading, takes its name from the archery butts where yeoman practiced archery. St Mary's Church and its Cemetery is a Grade 1 listed building and an outstanding local landmark surrounded with the churchyard, a significant open space / green area.

2.4 Historic England website notes

1. ST MARY'S CHURCH - Listed Grade: I List UID: 1113573

General note: "Church of England. Like St Laurence's, a Reading landmark. Nothing retains of the Norman Church except a doorway built into north wall. Built in distinctive materials: a chequerwork of quarry and quaternary flint and Taynton stone ashlar with tiled roofs.

Prominent west tower, hall church with four bay aisled nave and projecting chancel. The tower, 1550-53, is of three stages, crenellated and with polygonal angle buttresses capped by crocketed pinnacles.



The south aisle with projecting gabled porch in third bay is 5+2 (later) bays with dividing buttresses and Decorated-style tracery. Three bay chancel (1864) in Early English style with bill flowers to moulded cornice. (Built in knapped and squared flint).

To north vestry projects with door to east and older polygonal turret with decorated cornice. The north transept is indicated by a gable. Three bay north aisle (1871, Joseph Morris) with decorated tracery.

***Interior:** south arcade circa 1200 with chamfered soffits and alternately scalloped and fluted caps (Pevsner sees these as transitional waterleaf) North arcade has a circa 1300 1½ bay return screen to form transept. Arch brace truss roof with scissor braces above. Four dormers in south slope of nave roof. Screen dated 1631 under west tower gallery has cusped panelling. Memorial to William Kendrick (died 1635). Memorial by Flaxman to John Monck (died 1809)."*

**2. PART OF GROUP OF 4 LISTED CHURCHYARD TOMBS,
NORTH OF ST MARY'S CHURCH - Listed Grade: II Listed UID: 1156950**

"ST MARY'S CHURCHYARD

1. 5128 Group of 4 Churchyard SU 7173 SW 2/235B Tombs: north of St Mary's Church II GV 2.

1. Circa 1732 large carved chest tomb with set-back corner pilasters and carved side panels (angels to west). Retains cast iron palisade.

2. John Martin tomb. Circa 1790s, a Martin family vault. Stone with panelled sides.

3. 1830, John Tappenden tomb. Stone with downwards tapered corners which have banded angle piers. Cross gabled capping.

4. Circa 1820 stone with moulded top and reeded side piers. Wide surround for railings, (removed)."



2.5 Conservation area synopsis

“Area 1: St Mary’s Church and Churchyard St Mary’s Church lies at the heart of the Conservation Area, and is situated within its largest public open space. It is the most pedestrian-friendly part of the Area. The area is defined by walls round three sides and part of the 13 fourth (north) side, with buildings facing it at the eastern end of the north side. The Grade 1 listed church, the open, people-friendly character of the churchyard around it, and the pedestrian routes through and around the space, are a marked contrast to the close-knit buildings beyond heavily used roadways outside the churchyard. The churchyard was not always open to view as it is now, because from the sixteenth to the mid nineteenth centuries there were originally almshouses on its southern and western boundaries. Their removal clearly benefited the now open character and appearance of this part of the Conservation Area.”

(Source: RBC CA Appraisal. 2008)

2.6 Historic Maps

Illus. 4: 1853 map showing vicarage and garden.
(Board of Health map.) Berkshire Records Office.
Boundary of church cemetery circled in RED.



Illus. 5: 1879 map showing the site was part of the garden Of the Vicarage.
Only trees are shown in the area proposed for the boundary fence & circled in Green. (Royal Library of Scotland).



Illus. 6: 1898 map showing the site was still part of the garden Of the Vicarage.



Illus. 7: (Goad insurance map 1895). Shows Garden of Vicarage.



2.7 Site photos

Illus. 8: Historic photo, c.1960. Demolished Vicarage. Existing tree shown on left (Source Historic England.)



Illus. 9: Western end of site and spot where a gate will be placed.



Illus. 10: View looking east along the boundary. Council car-park on the left and graves in cemetery on the right.



Illus. 11. Medium height brick fence (600mm high) on the eastern side of the car park.



Illus. 12: Detail of eastern end of wall is a modern construction of low significance.



3.0 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

3.1 Description

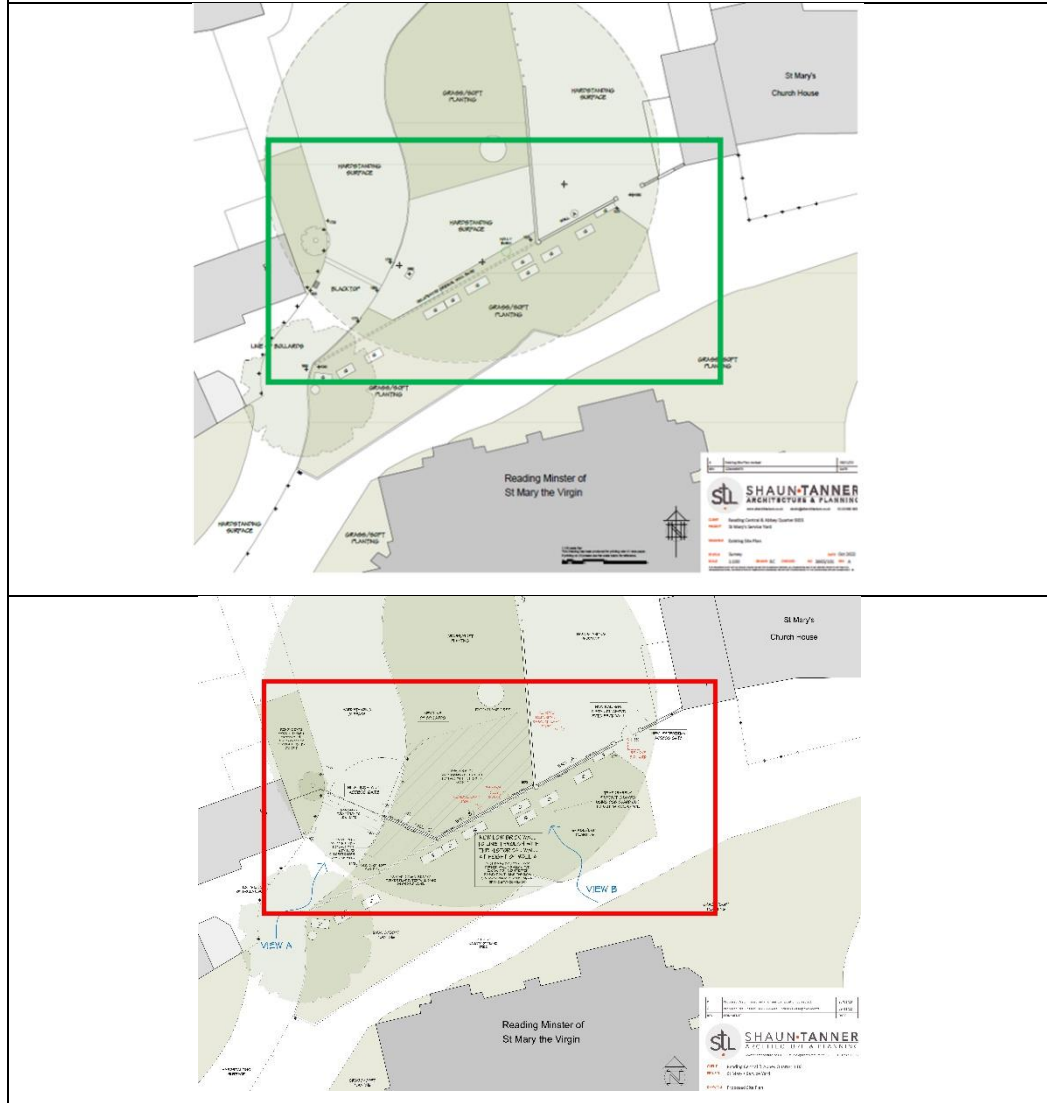
A new black steel picket rail fence is proposed to separate the working car park and historic cemetery to the south. Please refer to architectural drawings prepared by STL for details.

3.2 Materials and design

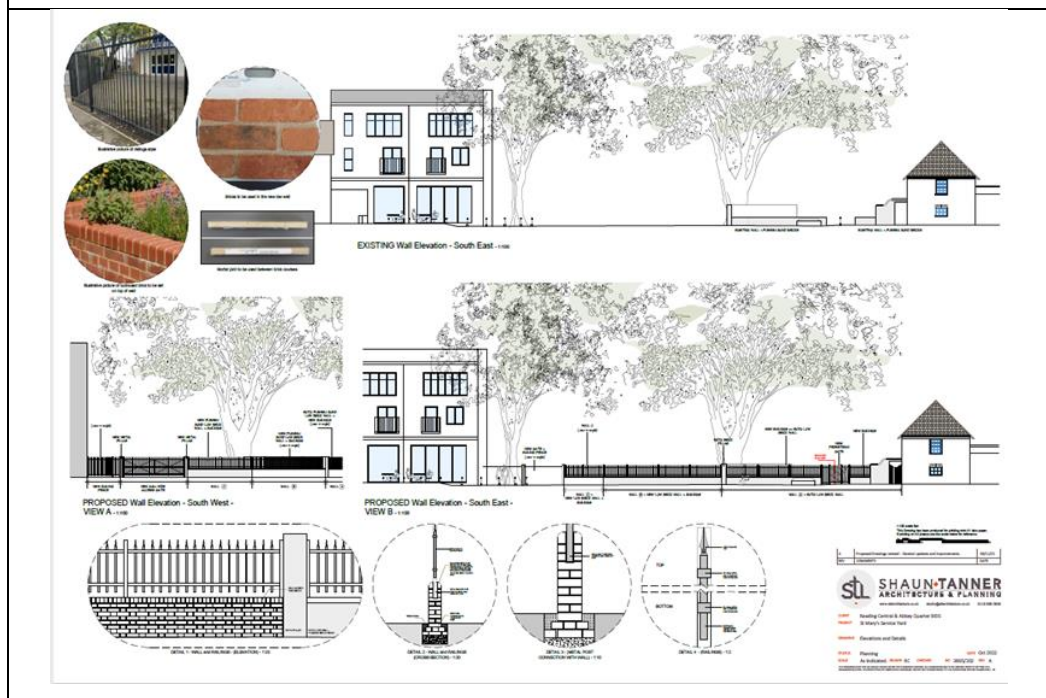
The boundary originally had a brick fence and it is proposed to be built adjacent the remains of the former wall. It is set on the Council owned property. The design has been carefully thought about to have minimal harm to the setting and be an

enhancement to the Conservation area. The fence is in two sections, the western half goes down to the ground, whilst the eastern half is placed on top of the modern brick wall.

Illus. 13: Existing fence and setting.



Illus. 14: Architectural details – and elevations.



Illus. 15: Edge of century look west. Church on the left and boundary on the right. Position of new fence marked by the green line. Listed tomb, Grade II, circled in blue.



Illus. 16: Detail of Listed tomb surrounded by square black metal railings, and simple decorative tops.



Illus. 17: A black painted steel railing fence has been selected to complement the historic monument. The details have been deliberately kept simple so that it respects the church setting and is subservient to the listed monument.



Illus. 18: The railing are slightly wider than the tomb so that it can be seen through, and not over-power the setting. The details are similar but do not copy the original square railings. Round railings have been selected for the new fence.



4. IMPACT ON SIGNIFICANCE

4.1 Reading Borough Council has had on-going problems in regard to maintaining a safe environment for the public in general in this area. There have been a number of social problems and therefore they need to put in measures to make the area safer and generally a better place.

The council has employed STL Architecture, to prepare a scheme that will complement the historic setting, which includes a Grade I church within a conservation area. The materials and design have been chosen carefully not to overpower the setting and be an enhancement to the area. The materials selected (metal rail fence and base in selected bricks similar to the existing built remnants) are considered appropriate to the edge of the boundary of the century and be transparent but also carry out their purpose of making the car park area a better place but still enable the functions required by council.

A desk top study has been carried to check there are no significant archaeological remains. A c. 1850s historic map shows the proposed work area was originally the garden of a now demolished Vicarage.

Reference should also be made to the archaeological report as well as the Arborist report.



5. CONCLUSION

This application for a new boundary fence adjacent to the cemetery, has been carefully prepared and is considered to meet the guidance and requirements for this sensitive and important site. We recommend Council **Approve** the planning application.



ANNEXURE 1 - REFERENCES

- a) **Department for Communities and Local Government 2021** *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)*
- b) **Historic England 2008** *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*
- c) **Historic England 2015** *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment*
- d) **Historic England 2016** *Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management*
- e) **Historic England 2017** *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Second Edition)*
- f) **Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990** Act of UK Parliament
- g) **RBC - St. Mary's Butts** / Castle Street Conservation Area Character Appraisal
Cartographic sources
- h) Ordnance Survey maps viewed at: www.old-maps.co.uk, www.promap.co.uk and www.maps.nls.uk/geo/find/ and Berkshire Records Office.



ANNEXURE 2 - PLANNING CONSTRAINTS

The following planning constraints were considered as part of the design process for this project.

A2.1 Statute Policy and guidance context

This assessment has been undertaken within the key statute, policy and guidance context presented within Table A.1, below. The applicable provisions contained within these statute, policy and guidance documents are referred to, and discussed, as relevant, throughout the text.

Table A.1.

Statute	Description
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990)	Act of Parliament placing a duty upon the Local Planning Authority (or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State) to afford due consideration to the preservation of Listed buildings and their settings (under Section 66(1)), and Conservation Areas (under Section 72(2)), in determining planning applications.
National Heritage Act 1983 (amended 2002)	One of four Acts of Parliament providing for the protection and management of the historic environment, including the establishment of the Historic Monuments & Buildings Commission, now Historic England.
Conservation Principles (Historic England 2008)	Guidance for assessing heritage significance, with reference to contributing heritage values, in particular: <i>evidential</i> (archaeological), <i>historical</i> (illustrative and associative), <i>aesthetic</i> , and <i>communal</i> .
National Planning Policy Framework (2021)	Provides the English government's national planning policies and describes how these are expected to be applied within the planning system. Heritage is subject of Chapter 16.
Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 2 (GPA2): Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (Historic England, 2015)	Provides useful information on assessing the significance of heritage assets, using appropriate expertise, historic environment records, recording and furthering understanding, neglect and unauthorised works, marketing and design and distinctiveness.
Reading Borough Local Plan - 2019	Comprises the local development plan (local plan), as required to be compiled, published and maintained by the local authority, consistent with the requirements of the NPPF (2021). Intended to be the primary planning policy document against which planning proposals within that local authority jurisdiction are assessed. Where the development plan is found to be inadequate, primacy reverts to the NPPF (2021).



A.2 Methodology

A.2.1 Assessment of heritage significance

This Heritage Statement aims to identify the main character criteria of the exterior areas of the listed building and cemetery heritage assets, (St Mary's Church and cemetery). The proposed fence is just outside the property line of the listed church.

The Statement of Significance draws upon the following heritage sources:

- the Historic England web-site for listed buildings; These details are considered sufficient in relation to the listed building, as the host building will not be worked on part, in relation to this planning application, except in relation to the setting;

A.2.2 The impact on the significance of the building, and the surrounding Conservation Area, has been assessed and described, in accordance with paragraph 189 of the NPPF (2018), and Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2 (Historic England 2015).

A.2.3 Assessment of potential development effects (benefit and harm). The report sets out, the ways in which identified susceptible heritage assets might be affected by the proposals, as well as the anticipated extent of any such effects. Both physical effects, i.e. resulting from the loss of historic and important fabric, and non-physical effects, i.e. resulting from changes to the setting of heritage assets, have been assessed.

A.2.4 Identified effects upon heritage assets have been defined within broad 'level of effect' categories (Table 2.2 below). These are consistent with key national heritage policy and guidance terminology, particularly that of the NPPF (2021). This has been done in order to improve the intelligibility of the assessment results for purposes of quick reference and ready comprehension. It should be noted that the overall effect of development proposals upon the designated heritage asset are judged, bearing in mind both any specific harms or benefits (an approach



consistent with the Court of Appeal judgement *Palmer v. Herefordshire Council & ANR* Neutral Citation Number [2016] EWCA Civ 1061).

Level of effect	Description	Applicable statute & policy
Heritage benefit	The proposals would better enhance or reveal the heritage significance of the heritage asset.	Enhancing or better revealing the significance of a heritage asset is a desirable development outcome in respect of heritage. It is consistent with key policy and guidance, including the NPPF (2021) paragraphs 184 and 200.
No harm	The proposals would preserve the significance of the heritage asset.	Preserving a Listed building and its setting is consistent with s66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990). Preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area is consistent with s72 of the Act. Sustaining the significance of a heritage asset is consistent with paragraph 184 of the NPPF and should be at the core of any material local planning policies in respect of heritage.
Less than substantial harm (lower end)	The proposals would be anticipated to result in a restricted level of harm to the significance of the heritage asset, such that the asset's contributing heritage values would be largely preserved.	In determining an application, this level of harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals, as per paragraph 196 of the NPPF (2021). Proposals involving change to a Listed building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, or change to the character or appearance of Conservation Areas, must also be considered within the context of Sections 7, 66(1) and 72(2) of the 1990 Act. <i>The provisions of the Act do not apply to the setting of Conservation Areas.</i>
Less than substantial harm (upper end)	Proposals would lead to a notable level of harm to the significance of the heritage asset. A reduced, but appreciable, degree of its heritage significance would remain.	With regard to non-designated heritage assets, the scale of harm or loss should be weighed against the significance of the asset, in accordance with paragraph 197 of the NPPF.
Substantial harm	Proposals would very much reduce the heritage asset's significance or vitiate that significance altogether.	Paragraphs 193 - 196 of the NPPF (2021) would apply. Sections 7, 66(1) and 72(2) of the Planning Act (1990) may also apply. In relation to non-designated heritage assets, the scale of harm or loss should be weighed against the significance of the asset, in accordance with paragraph 197 of the NPPF.

Table B.2 Summary of level of effect categories (benefit and harm) referred to in this report in relation to heritage assets, and the applicable statute and policy.



A.3 ANNEXURE 3

A3.1 Limitations of the assessment

This assessment is presented mainly as a desk-based study. Where required secondary information has been consulted, only some of which have been directly examined for the purpose of this assessment. The assumption is made that this data, as well as that derived from other secondary sources, is reasonably accurate. There was sufficient access to the property to understand the historical significance. Sufficient access was available to the Conservation Area, with the assessment undertaken from public highways and footpaths.