

205 OXFORD ROAD
PLANNING AND HERITAGE STATEMENT
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READING HSHAZ - 205 OXFORD ROAD: PLANNING AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

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PART I - BACKGROUND & BRIEF

INTRODUCTION

I.1 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. Oxford Street in 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.

I.2 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.



Location plan showing situation of 205 Oxford Road

PART 1 - BACKGROUND & BRIEF

I.3 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.

VICTORIAN GROWTH AND EXPANSION

The mid-to-late-Victorian terraces that inlled 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.



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 1 - BACKGROUND & BRIEF

I.4 205 OXFORD ROAD

This property was added to the feasibility study because of its prominent corner location and the features retained on the upper floors.

205 Oxford Road is sited in the immediate area of several listed properties. The property is opposite the Grade II listed Oxford Road Community School (1392867). It is immediately to the west of the Grade II listed Sydney Terrace and other residential properties at 187-203 Oxford Road (1302906, 1321911 and 1113547), and it is to the east of the Grade II listed Prospect Terrace 237-247 Oxford Road and 2 Lorne Street (1113548).

The property lies within the 2019 extension of the Russell Street / Castle Hill / Oxford Road Conservation Area and occupies a prominent corner site of Oxford Road with Prospect Street on the eastern edge of a parade of three shops. Prospect Street is one of the two earliest north south roads laid out by William Pratt Swallow in the early nineteenth century; the other was Howard Street. Development on the western corner of Oxford Road and Prospect Street did not take place until the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The area was originally a meadow which was attached to and led down from Sydney Lodge. It was given over progressively to housing and businesses.

205 - 209 Oxford Road appear to have been purpose built shops with 205 being the largest and tallest on the corner site. According to Kelly's 1899 Berkshire directory it was occupied by Samuel Percy Beal, a butcher.

I.5 PLANNING HISTORY

There is no planning history for this property within the last ten years. The last planning application submitted for this property was in 2002.

PART 1 - BACKGROUND & BRIEF

I.6 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 EXISTING ELEVATIONAL STUDY



Photograph of Group 3 - 267-275 Oxford Road.
No. 205 has been highlighted



Mock-up proposal for Group 3 (as per feasibility study)
No. 205 has been highlighted



Mock-up proposal for Group 3
No. 205 has been highlighted

2.2 EXISTING ELEVATION



2.3 PROPOSED ELEVATION

DESIGN JUSTIFICATION

The scope of the project is for new fascias with associated corbels and pilasters and for the redecoration of the rest of the shop front. The existing shutters are to be maintained. The main alteration will be setting back the fascia and reducing its height to correlate with 209 Oxford

Road. This will result in the shutter box protruding beyond the fascia, however, it will future proof the scheme should the shutters need to be removed or replaced in the future.

Generally the design is to match 209 Oxford Road where

possible as this is the most intact shop front of this row of three properties.

The colour scheme is in line with the branding requirements of the shop. All signage will be hand painted.



2.4 PROPOSED SIGNAGE + LIGHTING

East Elevation



Timber fascia to be fabricated by specialist contractor. All logos and lettering to be handpainted. Shopfront to be painted in RAL 3027. Primary lettering to be painted in RAL 9003, secondary lettering to be painted in RAL 1023.

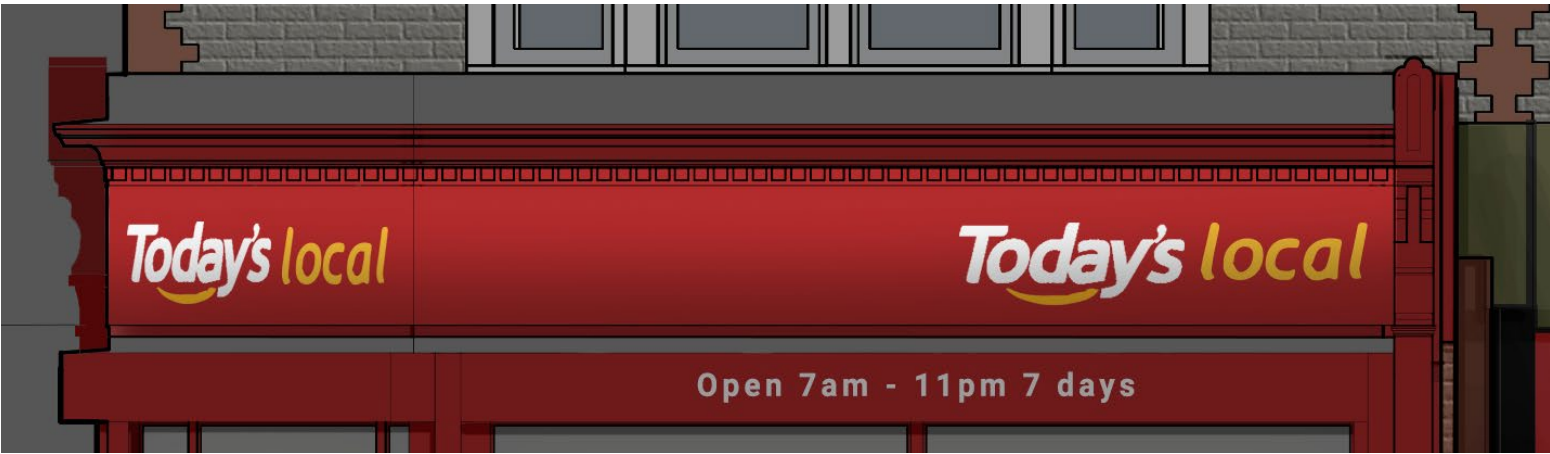
North East Elevation



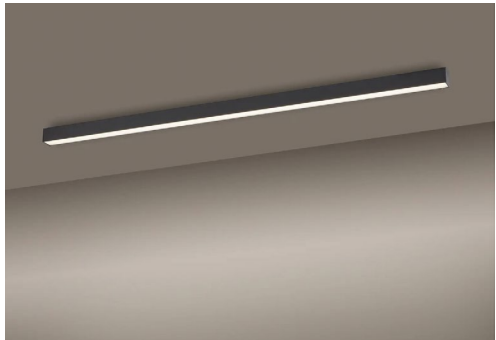
North Elevation



East Elevation lit at night



Concealed slim Cowl light installed in the top of sign molding (see drawing 3001). Signage to be externally illuminated at night as illustrated. Illumination to be static. Lighting specification: Neutral colour (4000k), 1440 Lumens per meter.



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

