

207 OXFORD ROAD
PLANNING AND HERITAGE STATEMENT
ISSUE 02
FEBURARY 2023



Bristol Studio

On behalf of Purcell ®

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February 2023

READING HSHAZ - 207 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 207 Oxford Road

PART 1 - BACKGROUND & BRIEF

1.3 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 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.



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)

I.4 207 OXFORD ROAD

207 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

207 Oxford Road forms part of a row of three properties which includes 205 and 209 Oxford Road. 205 is part of the HSHAZ project. 209 is an exemplary example of a historic shop front which has been refurbished. Many of the original architectural details remain on the upper floors. However, while the timber bay window still exists at first floor level, uPVC windows have been inserted within the timber frame.

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.

1.6 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

2.1 ELEVATIONAL STUDY

PROPOSED ELEVATION OF 207 OXFORD ROAD



205-209 Oxford Road, Group 3 as existing
No. 207 has been highlighted



Mock-up proposal for Group 3 (as per feasibility study)
No. 207 has been highlighted

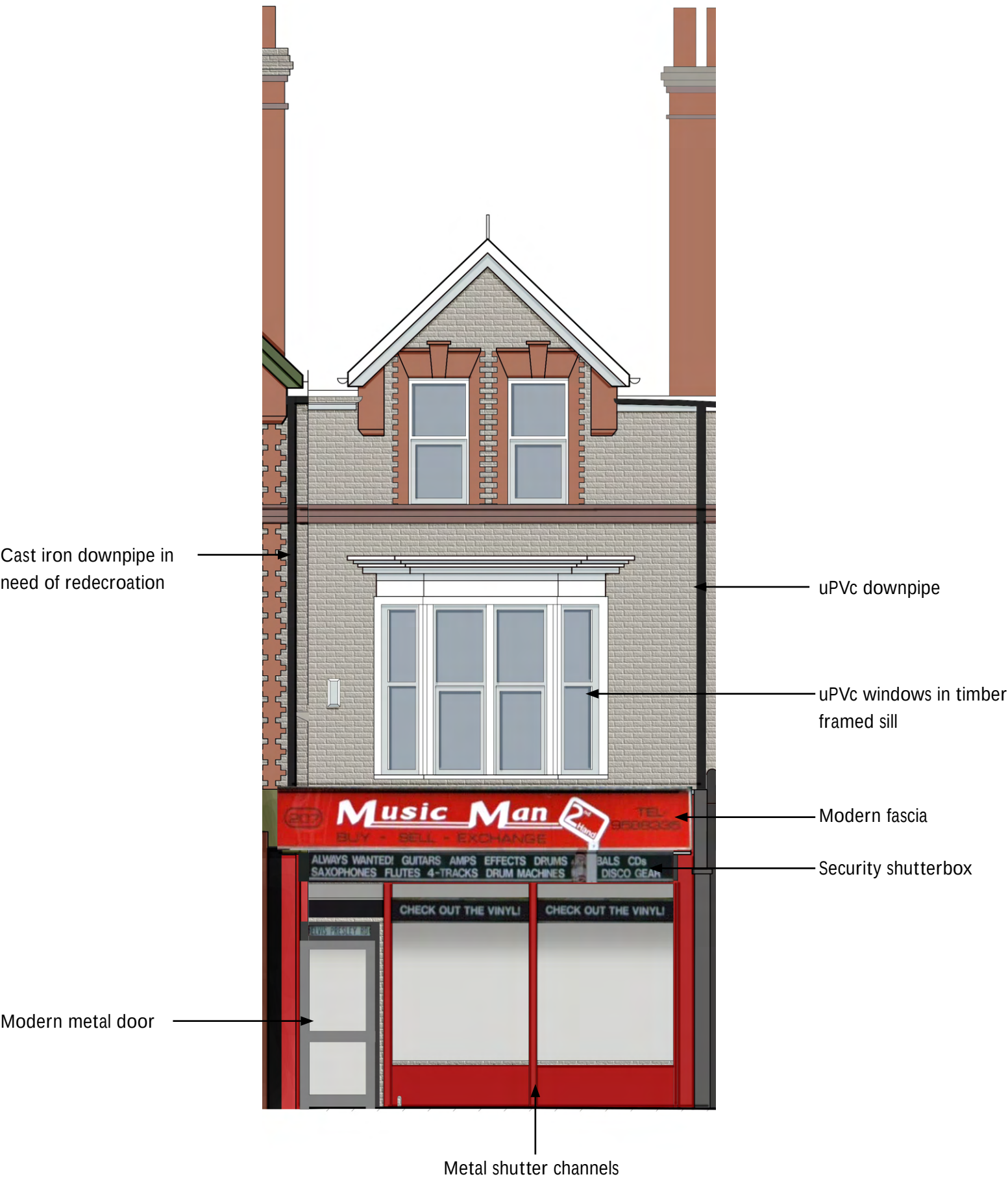


Mock-up proposal for Group 3
No. 207 has been highlighted



Proposed Elevation of 207 Oxford Road alongside existing shop front of 209 and the proposed shop front of 205 Oxford Road

2.2 EXISTING ELEVATION



2.3 PROPOSED ELEVATION

DESIGN JUSTIFICATION

The scope of the project is for a new fascia with associated corbels and pilasters and for the redecoration of the rest of the shop front. The existing shutters are to be maintained. Generally the design is to match 209 Oxford Road where possible as this is the most intact shop front within this row of three properties. All signage will be hand painted. It is proposed that the black horizontal member which divides the glass into two is removed and new uninterrupted pieces of glass are installed. Removing this element of the facade will allow the shop front to be more in keeping with 209 Oxford Road.



2.4 PROPOSED SIGNAGE + LIGHTING



Front Elevation

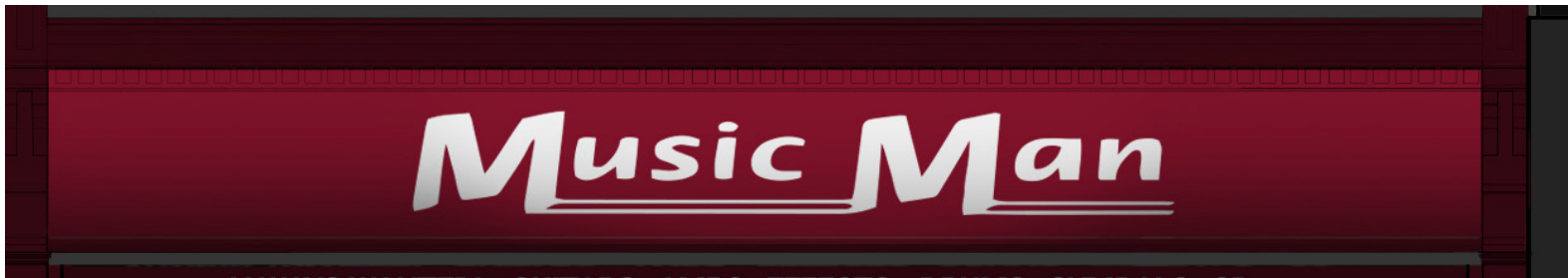
Front Elevation



Timber fascia to be fabricated by specialist contractor. All logos and lettering to be handpainted. Shopfront to be painted in RAL 3003. Primary lettering to be painted in RAL 9003.

Pilaster and capitals to match 209 Oxford Road

Front Elevation lit at night



Concealed slim Cowl light installed in the top of sign molding. 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)

