

3.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

3.1 Conservation Area

The application site is located within the Russell Street / Castle Hill Conservation Area at the northern boundary.



Fig.18: Conservation Area boundary extent plan extract indicating the site highlighted in green at the northern edge

Within the Conservation Area, the application site is located within the Oxford Road Character Area. This character area is generally defined by the Georgian and Victorian terraced buildings along Oxford Road containing a mix of uses, often with commercial active frontages at street level. These terraces are predominantly constructed with red brickwork or painted render walls and natural slate roofs.

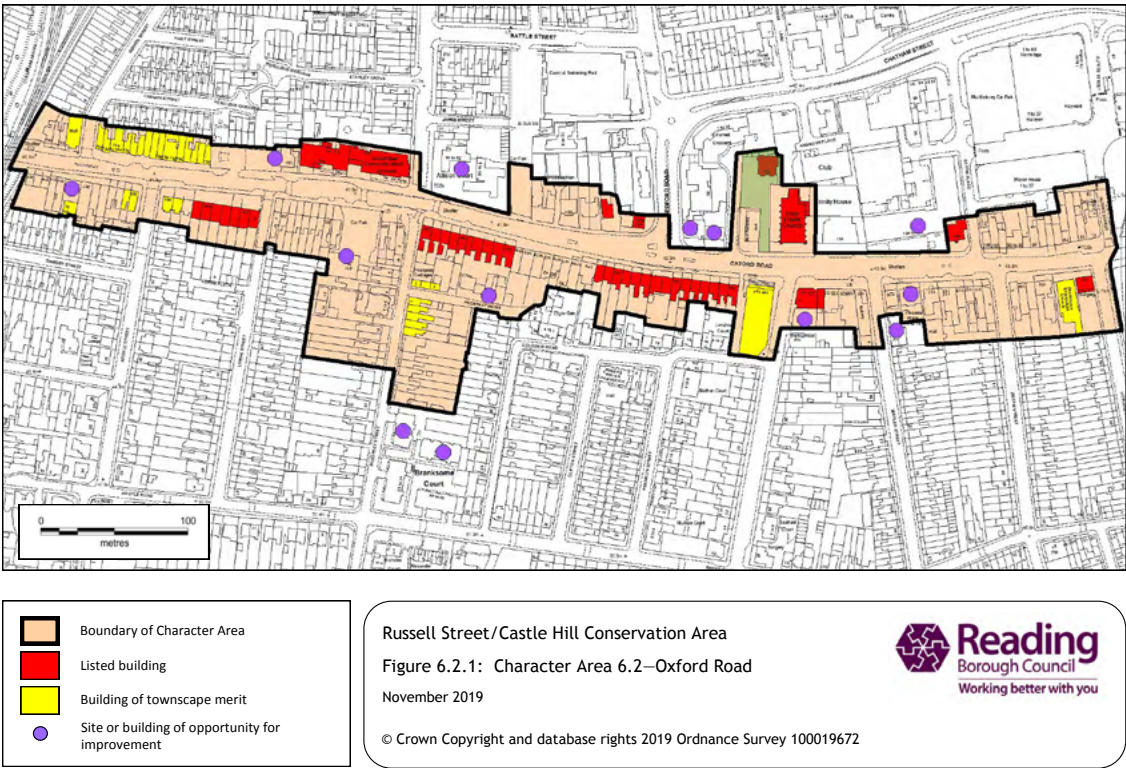


Fig. 19: Oxford Road Character Area plan extract indicating the site highlighted in green

Today, in urban design terms 118 Oxford Road, known as Carlisle House, is a relative anomaly within the character area due to its design as a standalone 'object' building with significant 50-metre set-back from Oxford Road and very limited site street frontage. The stonework walls and neo gothic detailing (which Carlisle House shares with its listed building neighbour at Holy Trinity Church) further set the building and site apart within the Conservation Area.

Historically, there was a small cluster of neo gothic buildings comprising comprising the Holy Trinity Church complex:

- Holy Trinity Church
- Holy Trinity School (now the Oddfellows Hall)
- Trinity Parsonage (Carlisle House / 118 Oxford Road)



Fig.20: Historic photograph of Holy Trinity Church and Holy Trinity School (circa 1904), Reading Library Local Studies Collection

The Holy Trinity School buildings were replaced by the Oddfellows Hall building around 1970 and the original boundary treatments have also been lost which have had an unfortunate impact on the character on this portion of Oxford Road.



Fig.21: Current photograph of Oxford Road with Oddfellows Hall on the site of Holy Trinity School

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3.2 Site and Building

118 Oxford Road, also known as Carlisle House, is understood to have been built around 1845 and was first listed grade II with Historic England in 1978 under listing entry number 111351, see listing wording extract below:

'Circa 1845, probably by John Billing. Ashlar 2 1/2 storey villa with slate roof and extruded chimneys. 2 storey angled bays flanking present (modern) entrance and with gables above having 2 light windows to attic. Gabled porch to west.'

The building is considered to have been designed by local Architect John Billing who is acknowledged as the Architect for the Holy Trinity School and the rebuilding of Holy Trinity Church on the neighbouring Oxford Road sites.

1837	READING Royal Berkshire Hospital, comp.
1839/40	READING Castle St, St Mary's Chapel, adds, competition (Dearing p.54).
1840/44	HENLEY, OXON Adds to workhouse (with Richard Billing) (ORO/PLU 4/G/2M6).
1845	READING West St, 5 proposed houses (R/M May 17 1845 p.1 col 4).
1845c	READING 118 Oxford Rd (DOE perhaps by Billing).
1845/46	READING Houses in Victoria Sq, King's Rd, comp winner (B/C Jan 25 1845 p.3 col 3; B/C Apr 5 1845 p.2 col 5; B/C Feb 1 1845 p.59 & May 17 1845 p.1; B/C Feb 21 1846 p.2 col 6).
1845/46	READING Holy Trinity Church, Oxford Rd, rebuilding (B/C Oct 11 1845 p.2 col 6; Ecclesiologist 1846 p.196).

Fig.22: Extract from Architect John Billing's Biography and Works, A Biographical Dictionary of Architects at Reading.

It has been confirmed by copy of a deed that the property's name was chnged from Trinity Parsonage to Carlisle House, however the origins of the name are unclear. The name Carlisle House emerges in local directory and OS mapping records starting from 1879.

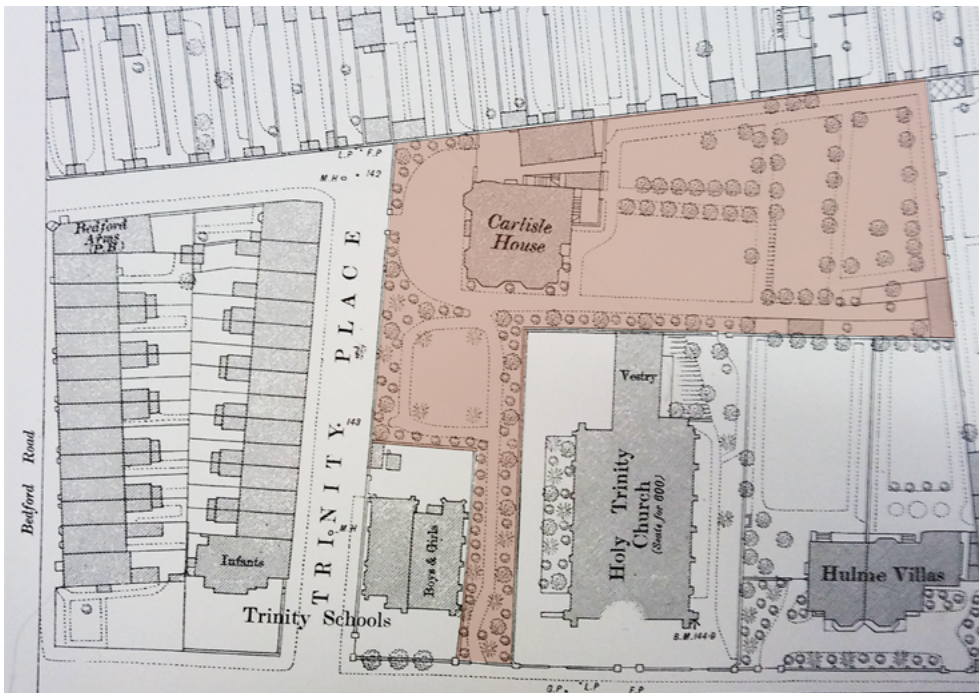


Fig.23: Extract from 1879 OS Map acknowledging Carlisle House name and illustrating the original plot extent with large garden to the east of the house. Orange infill highlighting original Carlisle House plot

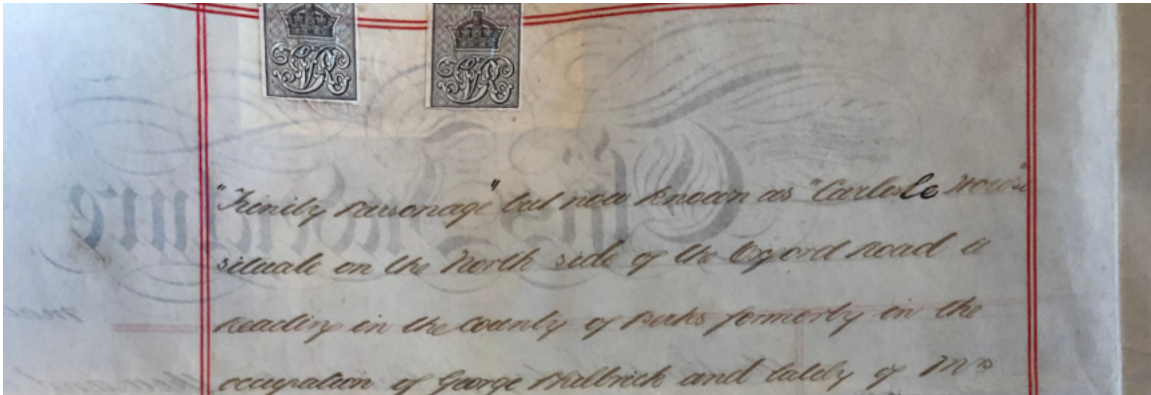


Fig.24: Extract from property name change deed

One of the most significant occupants of 118 Oxford Road was building contractor McCarthy Edward Fitt who was resident from 1901 until he died in 1915, his wife continued to live there until 1925. Mr Fitt established his company's workshops and yard at the eastern end of the original large plot belonging to 118 Oxford Road. His contracting firm were specialist in monumental masonry and were credited for building significant local buildings including Henley Town Hall and the Reading Corporation Art Gallery.

Following the Fitt family's departure from 118 Oxford Road the original house was sub-divided into 4no. residential flats, used to house employees of the family firm, which began being recorded with four separate occupants in local directories from 1937. The site was divided at this stage with the residential building and associated garden to the west and the builder's yard to the east. It is clear that the McCarthy E. Fitt contracting name continued long after it's founders' death as can be seen from the 1929 Kelly's trades directory extract below. Later Ordnance Survey mapping records a new access serving the builders yard being created north through to Chatham Street, with a builder's yard being recorded in this location up until at least 1961.



Fig.25: McCarthy E. Fitt advert from Kelly's Trades Directory, 1929

Between 1960 and 1980 there was major change to the site's context at its north, east and western boundaries with the clearance of the original terraced housing along Chatham Street and Bedford Road as well as the builders workshops and yard. The land clearance was carried out in order to build the residential, office and night club buildings which are still present today.



Fig.26: Historic Map Extract from 1879



Fig.29: Historic Map Extract from 1931

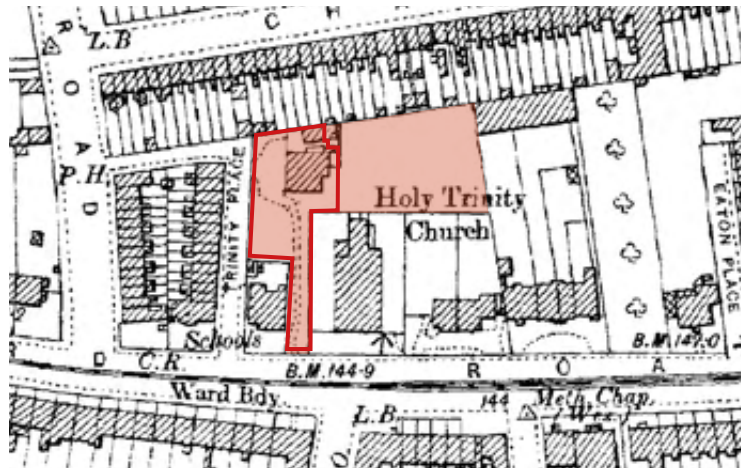


Fig.27: Historic Map Extract from 1899



Fig.30: Historic Map Extract from 1958-61



Fig.28: Historic Map Extract from 1912



Fig.31: Historic Map Extract from 1986-93

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The original building was built with natural stone walls with steep pitched natural slate gabled roofs in a gothic revival style which was popularly used for high status buildings during the Victorian era.

The use of pointed arch profile window and door heads and gothic style mouldings have been used extensively throughout the building's exterior.



Fig.32: View of Carlisle House with gothic details from the north west

Following its construction, the significant event to date in the life of the existing building was its sub-division into 4 no. separate residential flats in the 1930s. It is understood that the floor plan arrangement established at that time is how the building remains today.

The change of use and subdivision was carried-out in a fairly heavy-handed way which resulted in the following significant changes:

- The original staircases from basement up to first floor level have been removed. Reported that the stair was relocated to an arts and crafts style house called Monksway which Selina Fitt (McCarthy's widow) had built on Southcote Lane, Reading after 1925.
- The large lower ground / basement rooms which benefit from natural light and a good 2.5 metre ceiling height were left vacant
- All ground floor entrance doors became inaccessible
- New door and window openings installed to the south elevation causing harm to the appearance of a principle elevation

Later on, since 1970, the chimney stack heads and pots were also removed.



Fig.33: View of Carlisle House south elevation from 1970, following flat conversion but prior to removal of chimney stacks.

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It is possible to reasonably establish what the original layout had been like by examining clues visible within the building fabric, including imprint of the original stair case within the basement and the apparent external window and door alterations.

The floor layout diagrams below highlighting the proposed original house layout in orange overlayed above the existing floor plans have been based on examining the apparent clues to the original form.

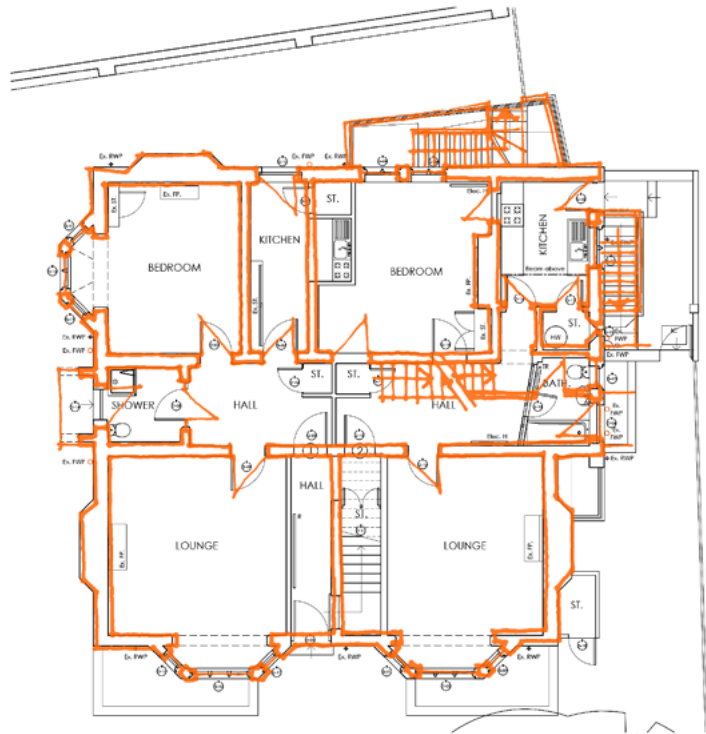


Fig.34 Ground Floor

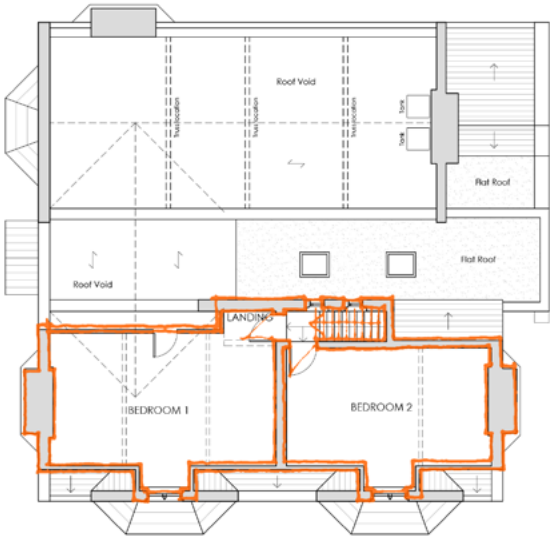


Fig.36: Second Floor

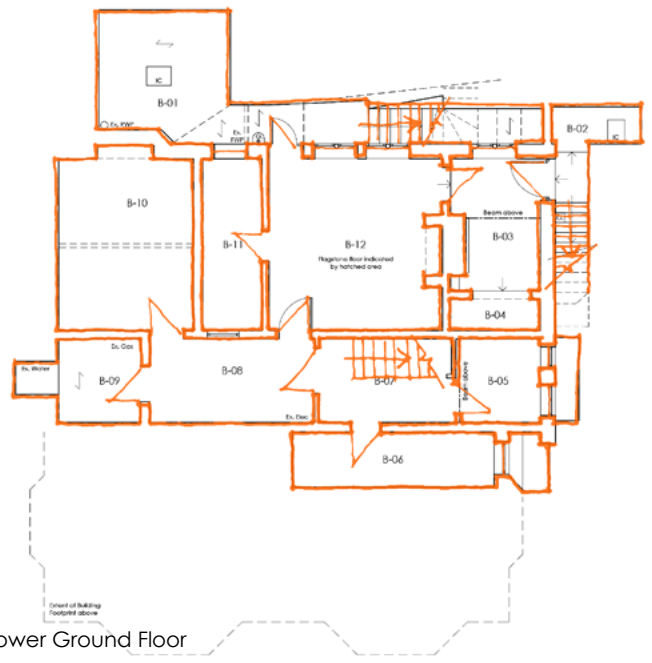


Fig.35: Lower Ground Floor

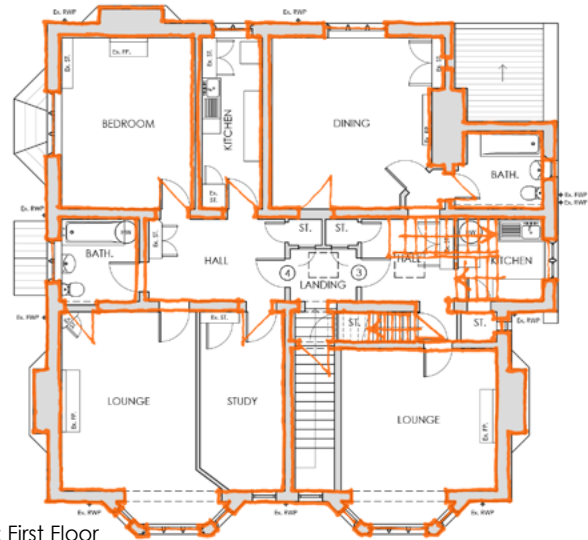


Fig.37: First Floor

Fig.34-37: Orange line proposed original house floor layout proposal overlayed on existing floor plans.

4.0 AMOUNT

4.1 Site and Building Accommodation

The application site area is 1123 square metres.

The existing gross internal floor area of the building is 460 square metres, proposed to increase to 522 square metres, the additional 62 square metres being provided by the extension of the second-floor accommodation.

All of the proposed flats have a net sales area which far exceeds the nationally described space standards which have been adopted by Reading Borough Council. Refer to the schedule of accommodation table below for better clarification of the proposed dwelling flat areas in comparison to the space standards.

Schedule of Accomodation			
Flat no.	Flat Size	Net Sales Area	Space Standard
1	2 bed / 4 person	99 sq.m	70 sq.m
2	1 bed / 2 person	68 sq.m	50 sq.m
3	1 bed / 2 person	73 sq.m	50 sq.m
4	1 bed / 2 person	64 sq.m	50 sq.m
5	1 bed / 2 person	65 sq.m	50 sq.m
6	2 bed / 4 person	106 sq.m	70 sq.m

Fig.38: Schedule of Accommodation Table Extract from Proposed Site Plan Drawing 18009-PL-03

4.2 Car Parking

The existing car parking provision of 4no. car spaces in the north-west corner of the site remains unchanged. The site is located within Zone 2 of Reading Borough Council's Parking Zonal Scheme which specifies that a provision of 6no. car spaces should be provided (one per dwelling flat). We propose that the provision of a total of 4no. spaces should be deemed acceptable given the location of the site in such close proximity to the town centre with its associated employment, retail, leisure and public transport opportunities. The addition of 2no. additional car spaces would be possible within the site however we consider the enlargement to the car parking area would cause harm to the setting of the listed building.

4.3 Cycle Storage

Secure and sheltered cycle storage is proposed within a new detached cycle store in the western corner of the site adjacent to the boundary with the Oddfellows Hall. Reading Borough Council's cycle parking standards would require that storage for 3no. cycles is provided (0.5 spaces per flat). The proposed store will be large enough to accommodate 6no. spaces. The over-provision is proposed to compensate for the shortfall in car parking provision and will assist in providing a clean transport strategy to the development.

4.4 Bin Storage

Bin storage is proposed in a screened area to the east of the building and north of the proposed plant room out-building. Provision has been made for the storage of 2no. 1100 litre four wheeled bins, one for landfill refuse and the other for mixed recyclables.

Bin collection area is proposed in a screened area at the southern end of the application site adjacent to Oxford Road and the boundary with the Oddfellows Hall. The Applicant will have a management system in place to ensure that the bins are moved between the bin storage area and bin collection area according to the correct collection days.

4.5 External Amenity Space

Semi-private amenity space is proposed to serve Unit 1 and Unit 3 to the north and east sides of the buildings respectively. A private external roof terrace amenity space is also proposed to serve Unit 6 on the second floor.

High quality shared amenity space for the benefit of all the units is provided within the landscaped gardens within the site to the south side of Carlisle House.

5.0 USE

The existing use is as 4no. dwelling flats (C3a use class). This use was established around 1937 when Kelly's Directory began recording the address comprising of 4no. individual flats and occupants.

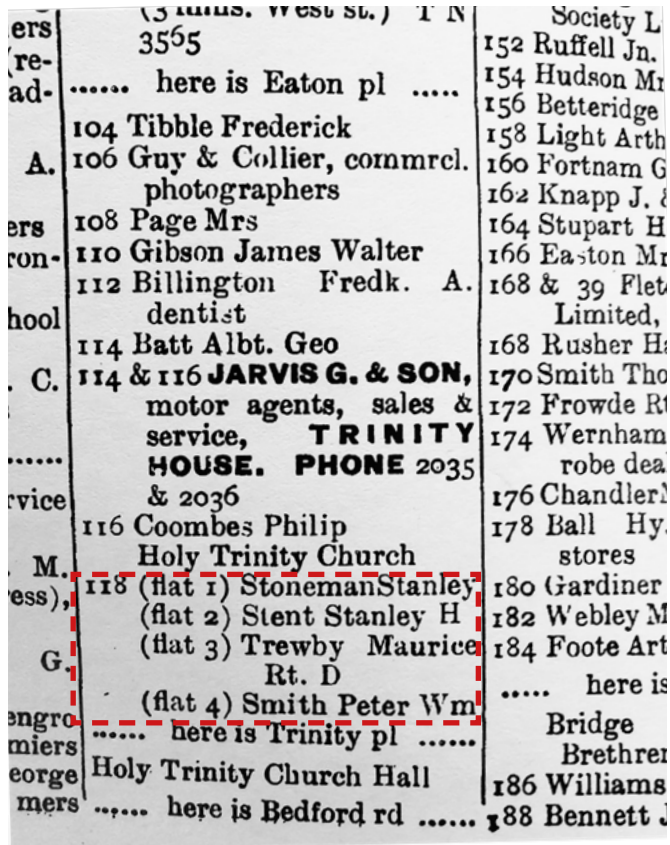


Fig.39: Extract from Kelly's Directory

It is proposed to change the use to become 6no. dwelling flats (C3a use class).

6.0 SCALE

There is no material change in scale proposed by the application.