

HERITAGE STATEMENT rev. 00

Heritage Asset and its Setting:

Project Address: 1a Eaton Place, Reading RG1 7LP

Conservation Area: Castle Hill/ Russell Street/ Oxford Road Conservation Area

Listing Status: N/A

List entry no. N/A

Building Use: Office

Project Overview:

The demolition of an existing single storey office and replacement with 2 one bed maisonettes with cycle store.



Photo 1 – Front Elevation

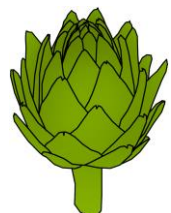




Photo 2 – View of the front of the building from Oxford Road and with the context of the Listed building 104 Oxford Road.



Photo 3 View on approach from Chatham Street

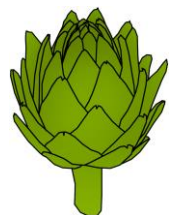
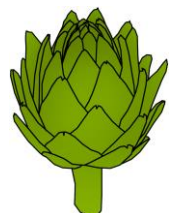




Photo 4 View from behind site looking towards Listed building.

In order to achieve the works, the following alterations/ interventions will be required:

- Demolition of the existing single storey office.
- New build of a two storey maisonette with pitched roof.

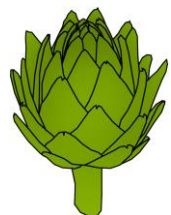


Setting Overview:

Eaton Place runs perpendicular between Oxford Road and Chatham Street. It sits within the extended Conservation Area for Oxford Road and sits within the context of Mannson House (formerly Bath Lodge), a Grade II Listed early 19th Century house now used by The Royal Meteorological Society and addressing Oxford Road. The dilapidated single storey building on the site sits in what was garden for the row of terraces/parade of shops addressing Oxford Road, specifically 104a Oxford Rd. The road behind, looking at the OS map for 1879, was separate land and the access road was a narrow route to access a row of additional terrace houses called Providence Place before it was all demolished to make way for a multi storey car park in the 1960s before being replaced with a block of flats. The site prior to the mass terrace housing was largely undeveloped until the 19th Century when Reading underwent massive growth to house the rapid population expansion. Oxford Road is a major route into Reading Town Centre hosting a mix of Georgian and Victorian architecture (west of the bridge). Eaton Place, was historically Eton Place, is a secondary access road now feeding the back of the row of shops. The building on site is a poor quality flat roof 21st Century office building, likely associated with the multi storey car park or warehouse opposite. The site is a small unremarkable site addressing Eaton Place rather than the side road. Immediately behind the site is the large rear extension to the Premier Express stores built in 2018.



Map taken from Historic England Listing Database. Property shown with a red dot.



Impacted Heritage Assets:

The building is within the extended conservation area.

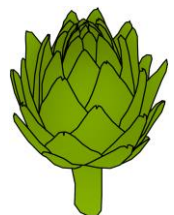


The building itself is an unremarkable single storey modern building likely a consequence of the multi-storey car park development. It sits dwarfed by the flats to its left and the 3 storey terrace house/shops to the right. In front of it is the side of the Grade II Listed former 19th Century high status house now used by The Royal Meteorological Society.

Mannson House Grade II List Entry number: 1113549

OXFORD ROAD 1. 5128 (North Side) No 104 (Mannson on House) SU 7073 12/219 II 2. Early C19. 2 storeys. Red brick, small moulded stucco cornice and blocking course. Slate roof (hipped). Glazing bar sash windows, 5 on 1st floor, 4 on ground floor. Central Doric portico with moulded steps, arched fanlight to 6 panelled door.

Listing NGR: SU7091973409



Assessment of Significance:

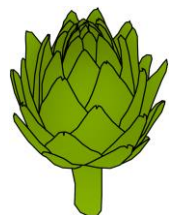
Heritage has cultural, social, economic and environmental values. The attributes that combine to define the significance of a historic building can relate to its physical properties or to its context. – BS 7913:2013..

The building itself is of a very low significance and is currently having a negative impact upon the Conservation Area and the setting of the Listed building.

The site was formerly rear garden to 104a Oxford Road and prior to that the site was undeveloped.

The site has no known connections with historical events or persons.

The site addresses the side elevation of the Grade II Listed building and has an impact upon its setting.



Development Impact on the Historical Asset:

Building Elevations and Setting: The existing building is of a poor quality and negatively impacting the Conservation Area and the setting of the Listed building.

The new proposals enhance what is currently a very substandard area with a building that is of a scale and massing that is traditional in its form and appropriate in relation to the scale of the Listed building.

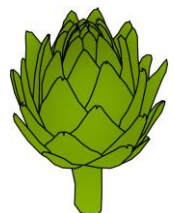
Internally: The internal arrangements are not impacted by the proposals. The proposals intend to provide the best economic use of the site for the users without harming the value of place.

Scale and Massing: there is no impact upon the scale and massing of existing architecture. The proposals remain subservient in their setting.

Archeaology: The proposed works impact an area of ground that has been significantly impacted in the past and therefore there is no anticipated impact upon below ground archaeology.

Use: The building is currently unused and substandard as an office. Bringing it back into use would benefit the Conservation Area setting.

Overall the impact of the development is minor in nature and in our view there is no harm to the material value of the place.



Relevant Policy:

The Government has set out its planning policies for the historic environment in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This was published in March 2012 and replaced in 2018 and 2019. It replaced Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment. The PPS5 Practice Guide remains valid for use alongside the NPPF.

In determining applications, the NPPF explains at paragraph 189 that local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.

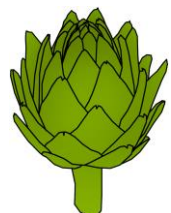
Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- (a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- (b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- (c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Historic England 'Conservation Principles' deem new work or alteration to be normally acceptable where the proposals do not materially harm the value of the place. They consider the setting of the heritage asset to contribute greatly to its significance. They accept that a heritage setting changes over time.

The local authority guidance also includes policies which seek to ensure the protection of the historic environment and that development is of a high quality and seeks to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Heritage Asset. Changes to the setting of historic buildings / Conservation Areas are to be sympathetic in terms of siting, proportion, scale, form, height, materials and detailing.



Conclusion:

The proposed works are minor, and enhance a very poor area of the Conservation Area. They are on land which is traditionally residential in nature. They have no impact upon the scale and massing of the Listed building or Conservation Area. There is a positive impact upon the streetscape replacing a poor quality flat roof construction with a new build of traditional form, subservient to the architecture of Oxford Road.

The proposals are respectful in relation to the material palette used relating to the surrounding architecture.

There is no loss of historic features.

The proposals act in accordance with the requirements of the local authority as well in accordance with Historic England development guidelines and policies.

Surveyor:
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Date of visit: 27/07/2021

