

HERITAGE STATEMENT rev. 00

Heritage Asset and its Setting:

Project Address: Land to the rear of 97/ 99 London Road Reading RG1 5BY

Conservation Area: None

Listing Status: Grade II List no. 1113508

Project Overview:

Erection of a 2 storey detached building, comprising 1x1 bed flats and 1x2 bed flats, with associated hard and soft landscaping in the land to the rear of 97/99 London Road and addressing Fatherson Road. This is the resubmission of a much larger 3 storey scheme application (ref 18173).



Photo 1 Front elevation of 95/ 97 London Road

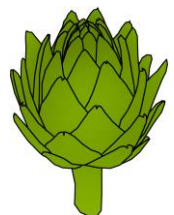




Photo 2 Land to the rear of the property addressing Fatherson Road



Photo 3 view from Fatherson Road looking towards the Listed building

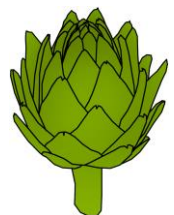




Photo 4: View of the site from London Road

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

A new two storey dwelling behind the existing Listed Building and adjacent building addressing Fatherson Road.

Listed Building:

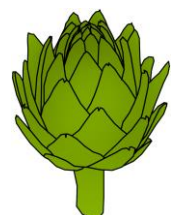
- No work is proposed to the Listed building itself so there will be no alterations to the principal elevation which addresses London Road.
- Part of the linear rear garden of the property will be portioned off and a new plot will be formed retaining access to the small flat at the rear of No. 99 London Road.

Setting Overview:

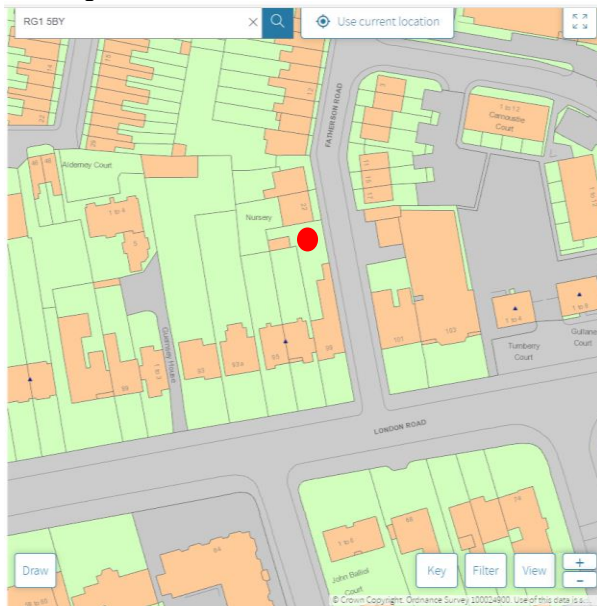
The Listed Building 95/97 London Road sits along one of the primary roads through Reading (formally turnpiked) and its principal elevation addresses it as such and is set back off the road. As with many of the properties along the road the two storey plus basement residential villa has now been subdivided into flats. The site however, although it is part of the rear garden of 97 London Road, clearly addresses Fatherson Road and there are very limited views of the site from London Road. It is significantly enough set back from London Road not to be considered visually as a corner plot.

The gardens to the properties on London road are linear in their nature and of significant length as is typical for that style of property. The adjoining property, 99 London Road, has a significant single storey rear extension which dominates the view down Fatherson Road.

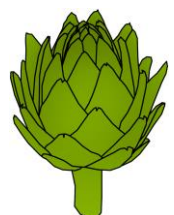
The building in question has a more ornate stucco finish to replicate an Italian villa to the front elevation and a plainer red brick finish to the rear.



Adjacent to the site, addressing Fatherson Road is a 3 storey red brick Victorian villa of significant massing which is now used as a nursery. Fatherson Road is also a residential road, with two storey red brick terrace housing.



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



Impacted Heritage Assets:

The building is Grade II Listed. The following is extracted from the Historic England Listing Description

LONDON ROAD 1. 5128 (North Side) Nos 95 and 97 SU 7273 7/516 II GV 2. Mid C19 pair. Eldon Square type Italianate. 2 storeys stucco on brick. Band over ground floor. Slate roof with projecting eaves. 4 windows including gabled end breaks over porches. 1st floor paired narrow round headed sashes, in centre a grooved panel. French casements ground floor to verandah between outer breaks, cast iron guard and standards, tented canopy painted in alternate stripes. End bays have slight projection for round headed doorways and windows above which have dentil cornice and pediment capping. Recessed doors.

Listing NGR: SU7272273114

There is no known impact upon archaeology from the proposals due to the extent of former ground disturbance in this localized area.

Assessment of Significance:

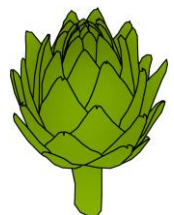
The Listed building is in need of significant general maintenance including redecoration however the building frontage has high aesthetic group value within the local area and as such is very much worthy of retention.

The traditional architectural detailing, villa style massing and materiality is seen typically within the local area reflecting the former high status of the dwellings along that road.

Its current building usage although now subdivided is still residential reflecting that of the immediate vicinity and also that for which it was originally designed and so is also of significance.

The rear of the building offers little in terms of aesthetics but the linear plot is typical of the architectural style. The rear garden contains no features of historical interest.

The proposed site itself is of low significance relating more dominantly to Fatherson Road than to the Listed Villa.



Development Impact on the Historical Asset:

Front elevation: No impact upon the front elevation or the streetscape of London Road as a whole.

Rear Elevation: No impact to the rear elevation of the Listed Building itself.

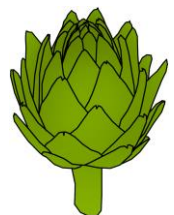
Internally: No internal works proposed to the Listed Building.

The development impact relates only to the building curtilage and whether the shortening of the garden is deemed to be acceptable or not. The new dwelling relates comfortably to those already on Fatherson Road and has no impact upon the Listed Building itself. The rear of the Listed Building is already concealed by the ground floor extension of 9 London Road and a new dwelling in this location would not look alien or out of place. It would not be over bearing to the Listed Building in any way.

I would argue that the extension to the rear of 99 London Road is the dominant feature to the rear in this instance and that the proposed new dwelling will have no impact upon the Listed Building or its setting from a historic perspective providing the boundary treatment is carefully considered.

Materiality:

The new building will have red brick façade and a slate roof with detailing typical of the local vernacular. The windows will be white painted timber sliding sash windows.



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.

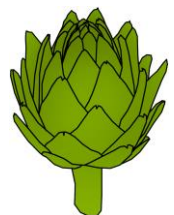
In determining applications, the NPPF explains at paragraph 189 that local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting.

In Paragraph 193 it states that: When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

In Paragraph 196 it states that: 'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'

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 new dwelling will in my opinion be of a small enough nature not to detract from the Listed building or its setting and will reflect the residential vernacular on Fatherson Road.

The scheme has been substantially reduced from the original scheme and is much more sympathetic to the existing urban grain and housing density.

The discussion in regards to the impact upon the historic asset is simply whether it is acceptable to shorten the garden which is typical of this size of style of house. In determining the application it needs to be decided whether the need for housing in the local area is a public benefit which outweighs the less than substantial harm of reducing the garden size.

In my opinion this is acceptable providing the boundary treatment is carefully considered and kept at a low level or of a transparent nature so not to create multiple small pockets of land.

The scheme is sympathetic in terms of siting, proportion, scale, form, height, materials and detailing.

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

