

Design and access statement

New height restriction barrier

Brock Keep
571 Oxford Road
Reading, RG30 1HL

Brock Keep is a prominent Grade II Listed Building on Oxford Road, Reading, built in 1877 as a part of Brock Barracks following Sir Edward Cardwell's Army reforms. A number of these keeps were built throughout the UK to inspire local pride and promote recruitment to county regiments. They acted as gatehouses, armouries and secure regimental stores. Reading's keep is one of the surviving few that remain in nearly original condition and is of significant historic importance.

In 1980s all three floors were divided by temporary chipboard partitions into studios of various sizes, currently accommodating 17 artists.

1. The site

- 1.1 The site is bordered to the north by Oxford Road, by Brock Gardens residential area to the west and by Brock Barracks to the east and south.
(see Dwg A Location Plan)
- 1.2 The site uses the existing pedestrian access from Oxford Road and existing vehicle access from Brock Gardens, leading to 17 car parking spaces within the enclosed site of Brock Keep. The second existing vehicle and pedestrian access in the arched brick gate along Oxford Road are not in use at the moment, but it is hoped that reopening this gate will be the subject of the future development phase.
(see Dwg B Block Plan)
- 1.3 The site is well served by regular bus services and is within 20 minutes walk of a variety of amenities in Broad Street of central Reading. It also fits well with Reading Borough Council RBC long- term plan for improvement of Oxford Road for people and cyclists through this densely populated area with a wide ethnic and cultural diversity, in a mix of Victorian and new residential, retail and business premises and four schools, but very few cultural attractions.

2. Design principles

- 2.1 An approach of minimal intervention and disturbance to the fabric as the fundamental principle of the good conservation of historic buildings will be implemented as much as possible. The stock of historic building is finite and every loss is significant.
- 2.2 Only appropriate materials and methods of conservation should be used.