

Heritage Assessment

173-177 Kings Road,
Reading,
RG1 4HJ

June 2019 | Project Ref 4827



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1.0

1. Introduction

1.1 This heritage assessment has been prepared for Christina Meyer Homes by Heritage Collective. It relates to a planning application for erection of a three storey building comprising six residential units on the existing carpark to the rear of 173-177 Kings Road (Figure 1). 173-183 Kings Road are grade II* listed, and the application site is also within the Eldon Square Conservation Area (Figure 2).

1.2 The application site is currently a large open tarmacked surfaced car park, formed from the combined former rear gardens 173-177 Kings Road. The neighbouring sites of 163-171 and 179-183 Kings Road are also used predominantly for car-parking (evident in Figure 1).

1.3 173-183 King's Road was listed grade II* 22 March 1957. The list description describes the buildings as follows:

KINGS ROAD 1. 5128 (North Side) Nos 173 to 183 (odd) SU 7273 7/141 22.3.57. II GV 2. After 1832. The principal houses in the former Waterloo Place. Three separate blocks of 2 houses each joined together by single storey links of varying design Similar design apart from applied order. Modified Doric for Nos 173/175 and 181/183, composite Nos 177/179. Each block 3 storeys and basement, Nos 173-179 with attics. Bath stone. Slate roof with central chimney stack with many pots. Channelled ground floor with moulded string, entablature and blocking course with corner and central pilasters framing two 3 storey bows, each with 1 windows. 4 bays, glazing bar sashes (cornices on 1st floor), centre break with bows. Ground floor has 2 windows (French casements) with balconies and contemporary cast-iron rails and decoration. Doors in outer bays have segmental heads and 2 panels. No 169 linked to No 171 and No 183 linked to No 185 by recessed Ionic porticoes in antis with parapets. To rear: Nos 177/179 have full height bows; Nos 181/183 have ground floor bows. Interiors: No 173 contemporary staircase with moulded rail and stone steps, delicate undercut cornices (similar to contemporary ones in Cheltenham). No 183 contemporary staircase.*

1.4 There have been substantial alterations to buildings within the group listing of 173-183 Kings Road, particularly to the rears. These changes are further detailed in Chapter 3.

- 1.5** The Eldon Square Conservation Area was designated in 1972, and extended in 1982.
- 1.6** Planning application 180795 was refused by Reading Borough Council on 13 December 2018. The application was for a five storey apartment building comprising 9 units. The refusal letter provided specific commentary relating to the reasons for refusal, which included opposition to the 'mass height and scale' which they believed would be 'detrimental to the setting of nearby listed buildings and the character and appearance of the wider Eldon Square Conservation Area.' The council also stated that the 'detailed design' was of not sufficient quality to maintain or enhance the character of the conservation area or the prevailing form and materiality of the area.
- 1.7** Historic England were also consulted for advice on the original five-storey proposal, and highlighted the glimpsed views of the new building from King's Road as particularly harmful to the significance of the listed building. They explained further that although the front elevation is of principal architectural interest, the use of stone and three storey bows on the rear elevation indicate it was also an important feature of the building. Historic England regarded the obscuring of the rear elevation as harmful.
- 1.8** In response to the Council and Historic England's advice the building's scale and form has been refined to address the primary concerns of the proposal's potential impact upon the heritage assets.
- 1.9** A site visit was undertaken on 8 February 2019.
- 1.10** This heritage assessment describes the significance of the designated assets identified above and assesses the impact of the proposed changes on that significance.



2.0

2. Relevant Heritage Policy and Guidance

- 2.1** The decision maker is required by section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting. The decision maker must also give considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the listed building. There is a strong presumption against the grant of permission for development that would harm the special interest of the listed building, though the presumption can be overcome if the harm is mitigated or outweighed by public benefits.
- 2.2** A broadly similar duty exists in respect of development within a conservation area, under section 72(1) of the Act.
- 2.3** For the purposes of this assessment “preserve” means to do no harm.¹ Harm is defined by English Heritage as change which erodes the significance of a heritage asset.²
- 2.4** The significance of a heritage asset is defined in the NPPF as being made up of four main constituents, architectural interest, historical interest, archaeological interest and artistic interest. The setting of the heritage asset can also contribute to its significance. Setting is defined in the NPPF as follows:
- “The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.”*
- 2.5** The assessments of heritage significance and impact are normally made with primary reference to the four main elements of significance identified in the NPPF.

¹ *South Lakeland District Council, Appellants v Secretary of State for the Environment and Another, Respondents*, House of Lords 30 January 1992 [1992] 2 W.L.R. 204

² Paragraph 84 of *Conservation Principles* 2008 and 2015.

- 2.6** The NPPF requires the impact on the significance of the heritage asset to be considered in terms of either “substantial harm” or “less than substantial harm” as described within paragraphs 193 to 195 of that document. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) makes it clear that substantial harm is a high test, and recent case law describes substantial harm in terms of an effect that would vitiate or drain away much of the significance of a heritage asset.
- 2.7** Paragraph 193 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset when considering applications that affect its significance.
- 2.8** This assessment has regard to Historic England’s guidance on development affecting the setting of heritage assets, generally known as GPA3.

Local Policy

- 2.9** Heritage guidance contained in the *Reading Borough Local Development framework Core Strategy* (adopted 2008, revised 2015), has been consulted and has informed the proposals. This guidance is specifically contained in policies:
- CS7 – Design and Public Realm: ‘All development must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which it is located.’
- CS33 - Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment: ‘Historic features and areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their settings, will be protected and where appropriate enhanced.’
- 6.1** Guidance within the *Reading Central Area Action Plan* (2009) has also been consulted, specifically policy:
- RC5 – Design in the Centre: requiring new developments to respect the existing layouts, form, massing, materiality and architectural quality of the surrounding area.
- 6.2** The Eldon Square Conservation Area Appraisal (undated) describes the history and development of the area, an analysis of the character and appearance, and guidance on new development within the conservation area. It has been consulted for guidance to inform the proposal.

2.10 This assessment is confined to the significance of heritage assets and the impact of change on that significance. It does not address the planning balance in which public benefit is weighed against the degree of harm, if any.



3.0

3. The Significance of the Heritage Assets

Introduction

3.1 This chapter of the assessment examines the significance of the heritage assets affected by the proposed development: 173-183 Kings Road and other nearby statutory listed buildings, and the Eldon Square Conservation Area.

3.2 Figure 3 indicates the placement of these heritage assets relative to the application site.

3.3 To the west of the grade II* 173-183 Kings Road, and approximately 65m to the west of the application site lies the grade II listed 163 Kings Road, which was listed on 22 March 1957. The list description is as follows:

Circa 1840, probably earlier. 2 storeys, attic and basement. Bath stone, with chamfered quoins. Moulded frieze and eaves cornice. Hipped slate roof and 3 dormers with pedimented heads. 3 windows with architrave surrounds on 1st floor, late C19 sashes. Central 8 panel door with architrave surround, frieze and cornice on console brackets. Nos 163-189 (odd) probably by the same architect except possibly No 185 (later) and 167 (possibly earlier). Formerly known as Wellington Place.

3.4 To the east of the grade II* 173-183 Kings Road, and approximately 50m to the east of the application site lies the grade II listed 185 Kings Road, which was listed on 24 October 1974. The list description reads as follows:

After 1832. Part of Waterloo Place. 2 storeys, rendered Bath stone. Plain front with string at 1st floor cill level. Flat eaves cornice. Slate double ridge roof with end gable brick chimneys which have moulded stone capping. Gabled central projection with central arched door and fanlight under arched porch above steps. Glazing bar sash windows, 3 on 1st floor. Lower 2 storey wings with parapet and hipped roof, round headed window 1st floor, garage doors to right hand wing. Central 1st floor window has open pediment on console brackets over.

- 3.5** Further to the east, approximately 75m from the application site is the grade II listed 187 and 189 Kings Road, which was listed on 24 October 1974. The list description for the building reads as:

After 1832, part of Waterloo Place. 3 storeys and basement. Bath stone. Slate roof. Rusticated ground floor, moulded let floor cill string. Dentil cornice entablature and blocking course. A symmetrical pair of houses. Bays, ground and let floors retain most glazing bar sashes. 1st floor windows have architrave surround and moulded cornice on console brackets. 2 windows on ground floor with contemporary balconies and cast-iron balustrades (honey-suckle pattern). 6 panel doors (part glazed) at sides under Doric porches, approached by steps. 2 storey extension to right of No 189 with 1 window. The contemporary Orts Road 'service' houses have recently (1977) been demolished.

- 3.6** On the opposite side of Kings Road, numbers 196-200 (even) are approximately 80m south-west of the application site. The buildings were listed grade II on 24 July 1974. The list description reads as follows:

1840s. A block of 3 houses formerly known as Wilberforce Place. Restored. Plain Bath stone ashlar fronts with slate roofs. No 198, 2 storeys and basement. 3 windows on 1st floor with raised surrounds, glazing bar sashes with marginal glazing. 2 French casement windows with balconies and contemporary cast iron rails on ground floor and central 2 panel door with rectangular over-light. Raised door surround with moulded pediment ornamented with corner stele. Nos 196 and 200 form 3 storey gable end pavilions with channelled ground floors below impost string of round headed windows which have apron panels below. 1 window each with cast iron rails, side elevations. Modern extensions: No 196 has a 2 storey bay to right; No 200 has replica style 2+4 bay extension to Eldon Road.

- 3.7** Also on the opposite side of Kings Road to the application site are 220 and 222 Kings Road, approximately 75m south-east of the application site. The pair were listed on 14 December 1978, with the list description reading:

Early C19, "restored". Previously known as Nelson Place. Bath stone now rendered. Double gabled 3 storey and basement front. Wide eaves to slate roof. Each house has 1 window, arched on ground floor, glazing bar sashes. Modern semi-replica doors: 2 glazed doors reached by modern steps. French casements to basement.

- 3.8** In the case of the grade II listed buildings near the site, any effect on the significance of the designated heritage assets will arise from a change to their setting, triggering section 66(1) of the Act. In the case of the conservation area any effect on the

significance of the designated heritage asset will arise from a change effecting the character or appearance of the area, triggering section 72(1) of the Act.

173-183 Kings Road

- 3.9** The date of the building of 173-183 Kings Road, and the date given in the list description, is between 1832 and 1879 (see Figure 11). A visual assessment of the building places it as late Regency style, with a date of circa late 1830s/ early 1840s.
- 3.10** 173-183 Kings Road (Figures 5 - 10) was listed grade II* on the 22 March 1957. The buildings have undergone multiple phases of works, most notably at the rear where 173/175 and 181/183 have been substantially changed.
- 3.11** Architectural Value: 173-183 Kings Road forms part of a long row of prestigious Bath stone former early 19th century residences with Classical and Italianate detailing. Its features of architectural value include the contemporary cast-iron rails and decoration and French casement windows. The interior of 173 and 183 have contemporary staircases, with the staircase in 173 having moulded rail and stone steps. 169 is linked to 171 and 183 is linked to 185 by recessed Ionic porticoes with parapets.
- 3.12** Historical Value: 173-183 Kings Road is an example of the late Regency style of building of the early 19th century. This style was classical in nature and used the philosophy and traditional designs of Greek and Roman architecture. The 'Grand Tours' that the upper classes went on across Europe contributed to the late Regency style of building and reflect the influence of the classical period on thought and building styles at this time. The building was built as part of Reading's rapid expansion in the 19th century as a result of the development of the canals and Great Western Railway, both of which resulted in a growth of industries and an increasing population. This is the case with all the listed buildings along the terrace.
- 3.13** Artistic Value: It is not of specific artistic value.
- 3.14** Archaeological Value: It is not of specific archaeological value.

Summary of Significance

- 3.15** 173-183 is a building of historical significance as it is a surviving example of late Regency style of building from the early 19th century. Its architectural value comes from its features of the late Regency date and style. The cast-iron rails and decoration are typical of this style as are the recessed porticoes. Its architectural significance is based on its historic value. However, this significance has been reduced by the extensive changes that the building has undergone since.

Nearby listed buildings

- 3.16** The buildings pictured in Figure 3, and identified in paragraphs 3.3 to 3.7 are listed buildings.
- 3.17** As with the rears of 173/175 and 181/183 Kings Road, the rear elevations of the surrounding listed buildings on King's Road have been substantially altered. This is evident in comparison of OS Maps from 1879 and 1995 (Figures 10 and 11).

163 Kings Road

- 3.18** 163 Kings Road was listed in 1957 and is grade II listed. It is on the north side of Kings Road. Its list description is as follows:

Circa 1840, probably earlier. 2 storeys, attic and basement. Bath stone, with chamfered quoins. Moulded frieze and eaves cornice. Hipped slate roof and 3 dormers with pedimented heads. 3 windows with architrave surrounds on 1st floor, late C19 sashes. Central 8 panel door with architrave surround, frieze and cornice on console brackets. Nos 163-189 (odd) probably by the same architect except possibly No 185 (later) and 167 (possibly earlier). Formerly known as Wellington Place.

- 3.19** Architectural value: 163 Kings Road is part of a long row of prestigious Bath stone early 19th century residences in a Classical style. 163 to 189 Kings Road form an almost continuous row of buildings. The listing indicates that 163-189 (odd, apart from 185 and 167) were probably all designed by the same architect, giving them a group value.

- 3.20** Historical value: 163 is an example of the late Regency style of building of the early 19th century, in this case in a Classical style. The building was built as part of Reading's rapid expansion in the 19th century and represent part of Reading's growth and development.
- 3.21** Artistic value: There is no known artistic value.
- 3.22** Summary of significance: 163 Kings Road is an example of late Regency architecture in a classical style. As is the case with the rest of the terrace it is built in Bath stone. More widely, it was built as a result of Reading's historic development.

185 Kings Road

- 3.23** Architectural value: As above, 185 Kings Road is also built in Bath stone. It is believed that 185 Kings Road was built slightly later than the other buildings on the terrace. It has an end gable brick chimneys which has moulded stone capping. There are 3 glazing bar sash windows on the first floor and a central arched door and fanlight under the arched porch above the steps.
- 3.24** Historical value: A Regency style classical building from the later part of the mid-19th century. Built as a result of the growth of Reading as a centre with an increasing population.
- 3.25** Artistic value: There is no known artistic value.
- 3.26** Summary of significance: 185 Kings Road is a late Regency house in a classical style, possibly of a slightly later date than the rest of the terrace. As is the case with the rest of the terrace it is built in Bath stone. More widely, it was built as a result of Reading's historic growth.

187 and 189 Kings Road

- 3.27** Architectural value: It has a slate roof and 2 windows on the ground floor with contemporary balconies and cast-iron balustrades in a honey-suckle pattern. These cast-iron balconies are typical of Regency style house. It has 6 panel doors (part

glazed) at sides under Doric porches and they form a symmetrical pair of houses. There is a two storey extension to the right of 189 Kings Road.

3.28 Historical value: As above, forms a part of Reading's expansion in the mid-19th century. An example of 1840s Regency style housing.

3.29 Artistic value: There is no known artistic value.

3.30 Summary of significance: 187 and 189 Kings Road are an example of Regency houses in a classical style. The two houses form a symmetrical pair and this symmetry is also typical of the period.

196-200 Kings Road

3.31 A block of three houses formerly known as Wilberforce Place. Their front faces 163 Kings Road.

3.32 Architectural value: Built in Bath stone with slate roofs. The three houses have been restored. They are identified in the Conservation Appraisal as not being as grand as 163-189 Kings Road. Dated to the 1840s.

3.33 Historical value: An example of 1840s Regency style building. They represent a less 'grand' version of this style in comparison to the terrace of 163-189 across the road.

3.34 Artistic value: There is no known artistic value.

3.35 Summary of significance: A block of three houses built in the 1840s. Formerly known as Wilberforce Place. Also built in Bath stone.

220 and 222 Kings Road

3.36 Two buildings previously known as Nelson's Place.

3.37 Architectural value: Originally Bath stone but now rendered as they have been restored. Through this restoration they have lost some of the mid-19th century architectural value such as the modern semi-replica doors and modern steps.

- 3.38** Historical value: Originally built in the 1840s but its restoration has somewhat diminished its historic value by removing historic fabric and replacing it with modern, such as the stairs and doors.
- 3.39** Artistic value: There is no known artistic value.
- 3.40** Summary of significance: 220 and 222 Kings Road was built in the 1840s. As with the other listed buildings described this was as a result of Reading's expansion and growth, resulting in middle class housing being built. Its significance has been somewhat diminished by its restoration which has removed historic fabric and replaced it with modern.

Eldon Square Conservation Area

- 3.41** The Eldon Square Conservation Area (Figure 2) was designated in 1972, and extended in 1982. It was Reading's first conservation area. The Eldon Square Conservation Area Appraisal (undated) describes the history and development of the area, an analysis of the character and appearance, and guidance on new development within the conservation area.
- 3.42** The conservation area is in an urban location and comprises a dense network of streets and roads of terraced, detached and semi-detached buildings. Building height is usually two or, less commonly, three storey. However, there are modern 20th century office blocks that are up to five storeys high. The area's special interest is summarised as the cohesive architectural development of the mid-19th century with contrasting middle-class and working class housing. Emphasis is also placed on the prevalent use of Bath stone and local brick.
- 3.43** The Conservation Area Appraisal includes key views and vistas and refer to 163-189 Kings Road:
- Nos 163 to 189 Kings Road are set well back from the road. Because of a slight bend in the road and its unusual width, these large stone houses, elevated above semi-basements, are prominent in views along Queen's Road and Kings Road. Northward views along Eldon Road and Eldon Street are enhanced by a glimpse of the stone facades of no. 169 and no. 187/189 respectively.*

- 3.44** Architectural interest: There are many listed buildings in the conservation area of architectural interest, most of which are characterised by tall detached or semi-detached residences faced with Bath stone and set back from the highway with long rear gardens. There is an architectural cohesion of prestigious mid-19th century residences with prevalent use of local stone. Most of the buildings were built during a 40 year period between c1835-1875. There are also brick terraces characterised by a narrow frontage with a round arches brick door and brick chimney stacks.
- 3.45** Historic interest: There are areas of historic stone paving and kerbs in Eldon Square. There are also a number of listed buildings that were largely built in the 1840s at a time when Reading was expanding and had a growing population and an emerging middle class. However, the Conservation Appraisal notes that there are many features negatively impacting the historic character and appearance of the area including the modern development on the south side of Kings Road and the loss of original front boundary walls and railings. There is also a historic association with Arthur Rimbaud (1854-1891) the French Decadent poet who lived in 165 Kings Road in 1874. Henry and Nathaniel Briant were local architects who designed houses in Eldon Square and Reading cemetery.
- 3.46** Archaeological interest: The Conservation Area Appraisal does not identify any known areas of archaeological interest.



4.0

4. Effects on Heritage Significance

The application proposal

- 4.1** The proposed plan is for the erection of a three storey building comprising six residential units on the existing car park to the rear of 173-177 Kings Road. The scale of the building has been significantly reduced from the original proposal in response to feedback from Reading Council and Historic England.
- 4.2** At present, the site is characterised by its use as a large hard-surfaced car parking area, formed from the combined former rear gardens 173-177 Kings Road. The neighbouring sites of 163-171 and 179-183 Kings Road are also used predominantly for car-parking.

Effect on significance and setting of 173-183 Kings Road

- 4.3** The proposed new building is not an extension of 173-183, nor does it result in any change to the fabric of 173-183 Kings Road. 173-183 will remain an example of late Regency style building. As it will be unchanged, there will not be an impact on 173-183 Kings Road's architectural value. The important historical connection both to the expansion of Reading and its connection to the Regency Classical style will still be present. The building will remain part of the wider terrace and therefore its group value will be maintained.
- 4.4** There will be a change to the setting of the listed buildings of 173-183 resulting from the introduction of a new building to their rear. The new building will change the use of the rear part of the building from car parking to residential dwelling. It is possible that the connection with this piece of land as a long garden associated with the terraced housing (see figure 11) may no longer be as evident, although the carpark has already obscured this connection for many years. Historic England noted in their response to the original five storey proposal that it would have a marked effect on the rear of 173-183 Kings Road. The revised proposal, by its considerable reduction in height, will be a subordinate feature in the context of the listed buildings and will

still allow views to and from the rear of 177. The rear elevation to buildings within the group 173-183 have been subject to a substantial amount of changes, as well as the considerable change to their setting by loss of original gardens and replacement with a large open tarmacked surfaced car park. Historic England confirmed that the significance of the buildings was best appreciated from their frontages in their response to the original application in September 2018.

4.5 Historic England had highlighted specifically that the glimpsed view (of the original 5 storey proposal) between 175 and 177 *'would entail material harm to the architectural qualities of the group.'* The revised proposal has addressed this issue, with the reduction in height removing any possible view between 175 and 177 when looking from Kings Road. Whilst the proposed building is slightly higher than the link building between 175 and 177, the proposed building would only start to come into view over the ridge of the link building some 110m away from the site. This distance is only achieved walking up Eldon Road, at which point Hanover House and the trees in front of this building intersect the views.

4.6 There will be glimpsed views of the proposed building between 179 and 181 Kings Road (Figure 13), when viewed from the opposite side of the Road. These will be oblique views from in front of 220 Kings Road. Viewed from the street at eye level (approximately 1.5m above ground) only the top 1.5m of the proposed building will be visible as the worst case. As this viewpoint is approximately 60m away, the diminishing perspective means the perceived height of the building above the ridge of the link building between 179 and 181 Kings Road will be approximately 900mm (relative to the frontage buildings) as the worst case (taking into account how the proposed building will appear in perspective being located significantly behind the frontage buildings). The use of yellow gault bricks will reduce any visual impact as glimpsed from the opposite side of Kings Road.

Effect on significance and setting of nearby Listed Buildings

4.7 The nearby listed buildings all share the characteristics of dating to the Regency era and being built in Bath stone. 165-189 Kings Road form a unified group through their shared use of Bath stone, and 196-200 and 220 and 222 are opposite this terrace. The proposal will perhaps be most visible from 185 Kings Road as the back part of

the building will look down onto the proposed site, although this rear extension to 185 is itself an imposing and incongruent element against the surrounding Regency style properties. The nearby listed buildings are architecturally characteristic of the Regency period and represent a classical style of building with 165-189 being an example of the grandeur this style represented. They are part of the historic expansion of Reading in the mid-19th century. This connection is re-enforced by their group value. This value is not altered by the proposal as they will continue to be a part of Reading's Regency era past. The renovations that have been undertaken on 220 and 222 Kings Road have diminished their historic significance by removing original building fabric.

- 4.8** The proposed building will be within the setting of the nearby listed buildings. It will change the rear areas behind the terrace as they will no longer be empty. This may alter the connection between the rear pieces of land with the listed terrace buildings, although the associations with gardens has long since been removed as the area was consolidated for car parking. However, the impact of the proposed building is mitigated by the reduced bulk of the proposal which seeks to 'fit' behind the listed buildings and not dominate them.

Effect on Eldon Square Conservation Area

- 4.9** The Eldon Square Conservation Area is characterised by its 19th century street pattern and terraced houses typical of Reading. Its architectural cohesion and residential development underpins its character. This includes its prevalent use of local stone and bricks. The Conservation Area Appraisal highlights the negative impact of traffic, noise and pollution along several of the roads in the conservation area, including Kings Road.
- 4.10** The listed buildings and their architectural cohesion within the conservation area have been discussed above. The proposal will alter this by creating a standalone building to the rear of the terrace along Kings Road. This will have an effect on the architectural interest of the conservation area. However, the proposal does not compete with the grandeur or dominance of the large stone terrace buildings, and so this change will be a neutral one. As highlighted in paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6, there will

be minimal glimpsed views of a small section (circa 900mm) of the top of the proposed new building in oblique views along Kings Road.

- 4.11** The historic interest of the conservation area comes from its association with historic figures such as the French poet Arthur Rimbaud and architect brothers Arthur and Nathaniel Briant. The historical connection will be unaltered by the proposal. The conservation area's link to Reading's expansion as a result of canal communication and the introduction of the Great Western Railway is an important one. The proposal does not undermine this as the area will continue to reflect this historical connection.
- 4.12** The addition of a new building in the conservation area will bring a change to the setting of the conservation area's 19th century street pattern. The proposal is not part of a terraced building that is typical of the area, and the application site is in the context of many late 20th and early 21st century buildings situated behind the 19th century Kings Road buildings. As the proposed new building is residential, it is broadly in keeping with the use of nearby buildings. It has also been designed to ensure it does not detract attention from the size of the terraced buildings in its vicinity to reduce the effect on the conservation area as much as possible.

Summary of effects

- 4.13** The proposals have taken account of recommendations from the Reading Council and Historic England following the refusal of Planning Application 180795 on 13 December 2018. The height and bulk of the proposed building has been reduced. There will be an effect on the setting of 173-183 Kings Road as the connection between the existing terraced building and the rear ground (former garden) may be lost, though as this has been a hard surfaced parking area for many years, the association to the former garden is not readily identified at present. There will also be an effect on the setting of the nearby listed buildings as a modern building will be placed in their Regency context. However, the proposal does not undermine the architectural significance of these buildings, nor does it remove their historical connection to Reading's past. The Eldon Square conservation area will be similarly affected in that a new building will be built in an area largely dating to the nineteenth century. However, many of the rear elevations among 173-183 have undergone substantial changes, and the many modern extensions to buildings in the wider surrounds of the application site have

further obscured the legibility of the mid-19th century architecture to the rear of 163-185 Kings Road. As such the character of the application site is not as sensitive to change as the front elevations to Kings Road, and the proposed new building responds sensitively to the heritage context of the site.



5.0

5. Conclusion

- 5.1** The proposal site to the rear of the listed 173-183 Kings Road is for the erection of a three storey building comprising six residential units on the existing car park.
- 5.2** The proposal for a three storey, six unit apartment building will result in a change to the setting of the listed building 173-183 Kings Road and other identified nearby listed buildings.
- 5.3** The proposal will be visible from 173-183 Kings Road as these buildings will overlook it. Similarly, the proposal will be visible from the rear part of 185 Kings Road.
- 5.4** However, the proposal does not alter the architectural or historic significance of the listed buildings. They will remain examples of Regency era buildings in a classical style built in Bath stone. Their connection to a time when Reading was expanding with a growing population will not be altered. Their setting will be changed, but not their significance.
- 5.5** The proposal is in keeping with Eldon Square conservation area insofar as it will be residential units in materials responsive to the character of the area. The proposal has been designed to be visually sympathetic to the conservation area by reducing its height and bulk to ensure it does not draw attention away from the terraced houses facing Kings Road, and is a sympathetic addition to the heritage context.



Figure 1 – Aerial view of the proposal site with indicative placement of building shown by red line.



Figure 2 – Eldon Square Conservation Area, listed buildings in red, locally listed in green and key views shown by arrows. Proposal site circled in blue.



Figure 3 – listed buildings (indicated in blue) surrounding the site (in red, indicative of placement only).



Figure 4 – Proposed new building (indicated in blue wash) site layout.



Figure 5 – 177-179 Kings Road. Note later side extensions to 175 (left of image) 177-179 (centre) and 181 (right of image).



Figure 6 – 173-183 Kings Road group context.



Figure 7 – Rear elevations of listed buildings: 181 to left of image, 177/179 (with full height bows) centre of image, 173/175 and 169/171 (not listed) to right of image.



Figure 8 – Rear of 177 Kings Road. The building retains the original full height bow, though additions have been made as evident to the right of image.



Figure 9 – Rear of 173/175 Kings Road. The back of this pair has been entirely rebuilt.



Figure 10 – The rear of 181/183 Kings Road. The rear of this pair has also been entirely rebuilt.

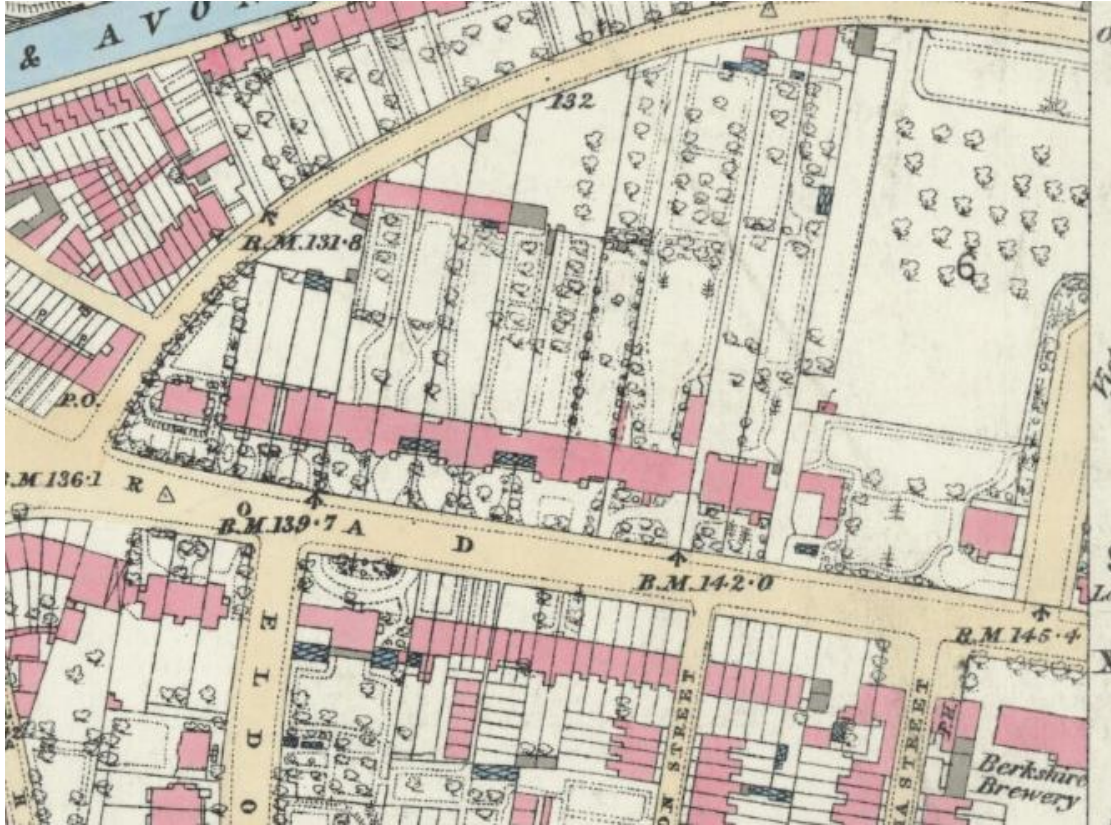


Figure 11 – Ordnance Survey County Series Reading 1879 map.

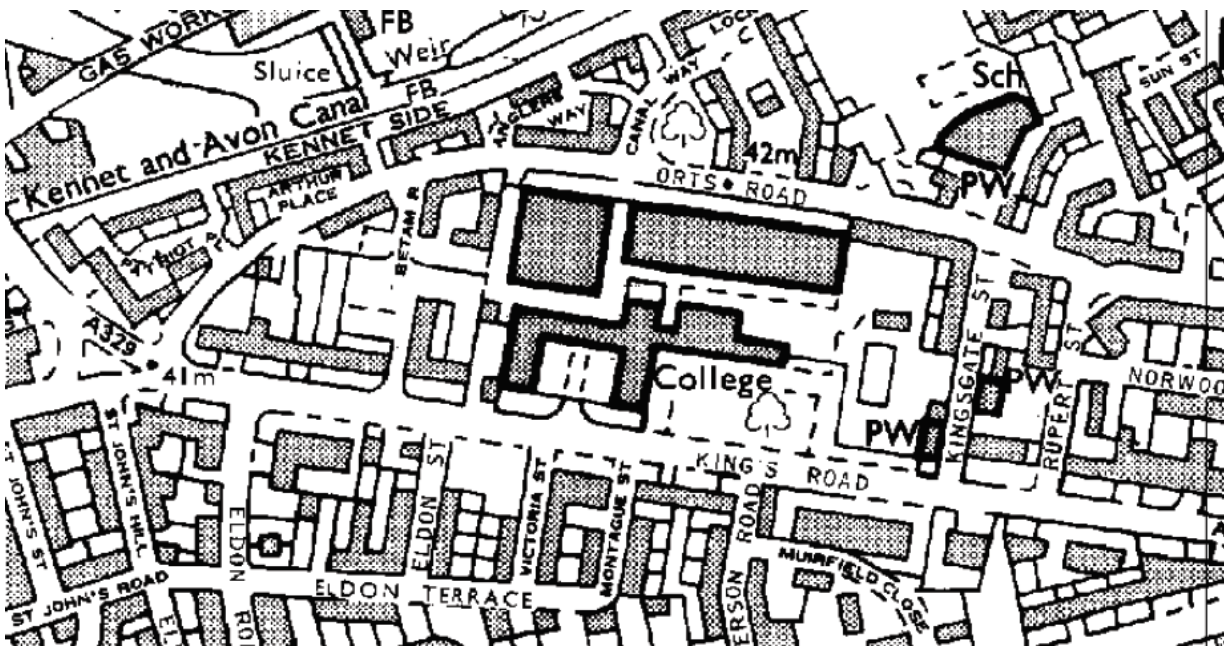


Figure 12 – Ordnance Survey map of Reading, 1995

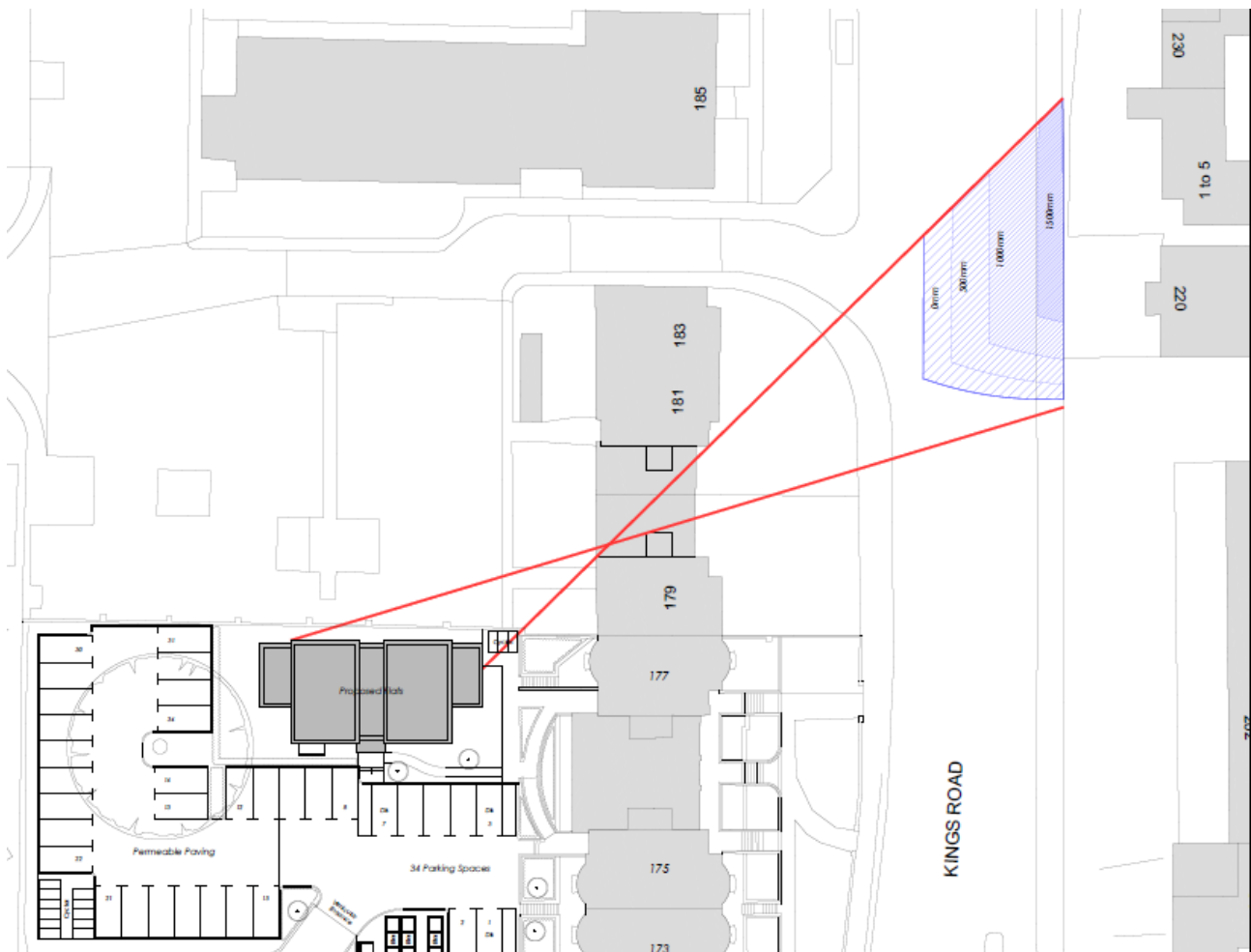


Figure 13 – Kings Road glimpsed view diagram

