

Heritage Assessment

The Cornstores, 10 Forbury Road, Reading

REF: P17-2153

DATE: 19th September 2018

Introduction

1. The following has been prepared by Pegasus Group on behalf of Rarer Properties Limited in order to assess the impact of the proposed installation at new signage and amendments to the previously approved plant and extraction at The Cornstores, 10 Forbury Road, Reading. This Statement considers the potential impact upon the historic and architectural significance of the Grade II Listed Building in the context of the previously approved renovation scheme (LPA refs: 180536 and 180537).
2. A full Heritage Assessment was prepared in support of the previously approved applications and which are in the process of being implemented, and this Assessment should be read in the context of the detail previously submitted. Given the scale of the proposals to which this new application relates, and the previous assessment provided, it is considered proportionate that the following assessment will not repeat the detailed description and history of the building, rather it will rely on the detail of the previous submission.

Proposed Development

3. The proposals to which this application relate comprise the following works:
 - Installation of new projecting sign on the existing metal bracket, with new linear lamps to be installed over sign;
 - Installation of new sign mounted on existing transom window of laser cut metal letters with associated linear trough uplighter; and
 - Installation of chiller cold room condensing unit.

Methodology

4. The following assessment has been informed by *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment*¹ (henceforth referred to as *GPA 2: Managing Significance*) and English Heritage's Conservation Principles.²

¹ Historic England, 2015, *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment*

² English Heritage, 2008, *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*

5. In order to relate to key policy, the following levels of harm may potentially be identified when assessing potential impacts of development on heritage assets, including harm resulting from a change in setting:
 - **Substantial harm or total loss.** It has been clarified in a High Court Judgement of 2013³ that this would be harm that would 'have such a serious impact on the significance of the asset that its significance was either vitiated altogether or very much reduced';
 - **Less than substantial harm.** Harm of a lesser level than that defined above; and
 - **No harm** (preservation). A High Court Judgement of 2014 is relevant to this⁴, in which it was held that with regard to preserving the setting of Listed building or preserving the character and appearance of a Conservation Area, preserving means doing no harm.
6. Preservation does not mean no change; it specifically means no harm. *GPA 2: Managing Significance* states that "*Change to heritage assets is inevitable but it is only harmful when significance is damaged*". Thus, change is accepted in Historic England's guidance as part of the evolution of the landscape and environment, it is whether such change is neutral, harmful or beneficial to the significance of an asset that matters.
7. With specific regard to the content of this assessment, Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states:

"...The level of detail should be proportionate to an assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance..." (our emphasis)
8. Full details of the methodology adopted are provided at **Appendix 1.**

Planning Policy Context

9. The Cornstores is a Grade II Listed Building and thus a designated heritage asset of less than the highest significance as defined by the NPPF. The property is not located within a Conservation Area, nor are there any other Listed Buildings within the vicinity of the site.
10. Legislation relating to the Historic Environment is primarily set out within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which provides statutory protection for Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas.
11. Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that:

³ EWHC 2847, R DCLG and Nuon UK Ltd v. Bedford Borough Council

⁴ EWHC 1895, R (Forge Field Society, Barraud and Rees) v. Sevenoaks DC, West Kent Housing Association and Viscount De L'Isle.

“In considering whether to grant planning permission [or permission in principle] for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State, shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”

12. A judgement in the Court of Appeal ('Mordue') has clarified that, with regards to the setting of Listed Buildings, where the principles of the NPPF are applied (in particular paragraph 134 of the previous draft of the NPPF, the requirements of which are now given in paragraph 196 of the revised NPPF), this is in keeping with the requirements of the 1990 Act.
13. Notwithstanding the statutory presumption set out above, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Local Planning Policy

14. Planning applications within Reading Borough are currently considered against the policy and guidance set out within the adopted Core Strategy and Sites and Detailed Policies Document.
15. The Core Strategy was adopted in January 2008 in order to set out the planning strategy for the Borough. The Core Strategy was altered and subsequently adopted on 27th January 2015.
16. Policy CS33 sets out the strategic Policy Guidance in relation to the protection and enhancement of the Historic Environment and reads as follows:

“Historic features and areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their settings, will be protected and where appropriate enhanced. This will include:-

- *Listed Buildings;*
- *Conservation Areas;*
- *Other features with local or national designation, such as sites and features of archaeological importance, and historic parks and gardens.*

Planning permission will only be granted where development has no adverse impact on historic assets and their settings. All proposals will be expected to protect and where appropriate enhance the character and appearance of the area in which they are located.”

17. The Core Strategy goes on to confirm that this will be delivered through the development control process.

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18. The original adoption of the Sites and Detailed Policies Document in October 2012 followed the adoption of the Core Strategy in 2008, and contains detailed policies to help guide decisions on planning applications, as well as identifying a number of sites and areas for different purposes.
19. Section 9 of the Document relates to the Built and Natural Environment, and it confirms that there are no specific detailed policies within the document as “*national planning policy provides an appropriate framework for considering proposals for development that affects historic assets in Reading⁵*”, and that “*the historic environment is addressed strategically by Policy CS33⁶*”.
20. Details of the full policy context are provided at **Appendix 2**.

The Site

21. The application site comprises the former Cornstores public house at 10 Forbury Road, Reading. The site is currently in the progress of being renovated in line within the previously approved Listed Building Consent and Planning Permission. The site is a two bay, four storey property of brick construction with stone detailing.
22. The property is Grade II Listed and fronts on to Forbury Road, where the only accesses are located. The property is ‘land locked’ to the east, west and south, by modern office development which has been constructed over the last 30 years.
23. The property has a number of existing signs attached to the front elevation, including the large ‘Walter Parsons Corn Stores’ text painted within the gable at the top of the building. A hanging sign is centrally located at first floor level between the two windows.
24. Various plant and extraction is currently located on the main roof of the building and the flat roof extension to the rear. Consolidation and replacement of this plant and extraction equipment has previously been approved in line with the approved renovation scheme.

Relevant Planning History

25. There is an extensive planning history with the building, including various applications for replacement signage. However, as noted above, the following applications have recently been approved and are in the process of being implemented:
26. **180536** – Planning Permission for internal and external works to facilitate the refurbishment of the property, including installation of new plant and extraction equipment, entrance doors and demolition of the outbuilding. Approved 29th June 2018.
27. **180537** – Listed Building Consent for internal and external works to facilitate the refurbishment of the property, including installation of new plant and extraction equipment, entrance doors and demolition of outbuilding. Approved 29th June 2018.

⁵ Paragraph 9.1.9, Sites and Detailed Policies Document, reading Borough Council, October 2012

⁶ IBID

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28. Details of the full planning history are provided at **Appendix 3**.



Figure 1: The Cornstores

Heritage Assets

10 Forbury Road

29. The property at 10 Forbury Road was added to the statutory List on the 5th November 1993, at Grade II, with the following description:

“Corn merchant's warehouse. Built in 1890 for Walter Parsons, corn merchants. Purple brick with yellow brick and ashlar dressings; slate roof with parapeted gable to front. PLAN: Rectangular plan with carriageway through left side and office on right with front entrance and loading bay behind; and with three storage floors above. EXTERIOR: 4 storey 2-bay gabled north front. The ashlar ground floor has panelled pilasters and segmental arches to office front on right, with panelled and glazed door and 3-light window with overlights above and carriageway on left with plank double doors. Storeys above with moulded brick stringcourses at floor and cill levels and the two bays divided by brick pilasters corbelled at top with ball finials flanking the gable [one ball missing]. Wide 4-light mullion-transom windows with segmental arches. Plain red brick rear elevation with sash windows. INTERIOR: The floors are supported on timber joists with iron beams and iron columns. Collar truss roof with struts. The office has glazed and boarded screen to carriageway. Simple ladder stairs in corner to each floor. Hoist hatch over carriageway and through floors above. Machinery includes winch mechanism on first floor, threshing machine on second floor and hoppers on third floor.”

30. A full copy of the Listing Description is included at **Appendix 4**.
31. Originally constructed as corn stores, the property at 10 Forbury Road was subject to a full programme of renovation during the mid 1990s to facilitate the conversion of the property to a public house. This saw the insertion of a new staircase, mezzanine floor, partitioning of the floors, relocation of equipment, the creation of a separate pedestrian access to provide access to the upper floors, and the construction of a new extension into the rear yard area.
32. The property is currently being renovated as per the recently approved scheme, the approved details of which form the context against which the current proposals should be considered.

Assessment of Impact

33. The proposals seek the installation of new signage associated with the refurbishment of the property for which consent has previously been granted.
34. The existing signage which is to be replaced is of no historic interest and the proposed replacement is considered to be of an appropriate scale and design so as to compliment to refurbished building.

35. The new hanging sign will utilise the existing bracket and there will be no loss of, or significant impact on the historic fabric of the building.
36. As discussed, the principle of the installation of new plant and extract equipment at the rear of the building has already been accepted by virtue of the previous permissions and this application simply seeks the installation of an additional condenser on the modern flat roof extension.
37. It has previously been accepted that the rear façade of the property does not have the same status or historic interest as the more formal front elevation and would have historically been associated with the service function of the property. The new condenser unit will be seen in the context of the approved units in a location which is generally shielded from the public realm.
38. The installation of the plant and extract equipment in this location is associated with the package of investment into the building which will secure its long-term future, and its placement on the modern extension will ensure that no historic fabric is impacted by its installation.
39. To summarise, it is considered that the proposed works will preserve the historic and architectural interest of the building and will cause no harm to its significance. As such, the proposals will thus accord with the statutory requirements set out within the 1990 Act and also the policy guidance set out at both national and local level.

Appendix 1 – Methodology

Assessment of significance

In the NPPF, heritage significance is defined as:

“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site’s Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance⁷”

Historic England’s *Historic Environment Good Practice advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment*⁸ (henceforth referred to as ‘GPA 2: Managing Significance’) gives advice on the assessment of significance as part of the application process. It advises understanding the nature, extent, and level of significance of a heritage asset. In order to do this, *GPA 2: Managing Significance* also advocates considering the four types of heritage value an asset may hold, as identified in Historic England’s *Conservation Principles*⁹; **evidential**, **historical**, **aesthetic** and **communal**. These essentially cover the heritage ‘interests’ given in the glossary of the NPPF, which comprise archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic interest.

Conservation Principles provides further information on the heritage values it identifies:

- **Evidential value:** the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity. This value is derived from physical remains, such as archaeological remains, and genetic lines.
- **Historical value:** the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present - it tends to be illustrative or associative. Illustrative value is the perception of a place as a link between past and present people and depends on visibility. It has the power to aid interpretation of the past through making connections with and providing insights into past communities and their activities through shared experience of a place. By contrast, associative value need not necessarily be legible at an asset, but gives a particular resonance through association with a notable family, person, event or movement.
- **Aesthetic value:** the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place. Aesthetic values can be the result of conscious design or fortuitous outcome or a combination of the two aspects. The latter can result from the enhancement of the appearance of a place through the passage of time.
- **Communal value:** the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. This can be through widely acknowledged commemorative or symbolic value that reflects the meaning of the place, or through more informal social value as a source of identity,

⁷ NPPF, DCLG, 2018

⁸ Historic England, 2015, *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment*

⁹ English Heritage 2008 *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*

distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence. Spiritual value may also be part of communal value.

Significance results from a combination of any, some or all of the values described above.

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas are generally designated for their special architectural and historic interest. Scheduling is predominantly, although not exclusively, associated with archaeological interest.

Setting and significance

As defined in the NPPF:

“Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting¹⁰”

Setting is defined as:

“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”¹¹

Therefore, setting can contribute to, affect an appreciation of significance or be neutral with regards to heritage values.

It is also important to note that whilst a physical or visual connection between a heritage asset and its setting will often exist, it is not essential or determinative.

Assessing change through alteration to setting

How setting might contribute to these values has been assessed within this report with reference to *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The setting of Heritage Assets*¹² (henceforth referred to as *GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets*), particularly the checklist given on page 11. This advocates the clear articulation of ‘what matters and why’.

In *GPA 3: The setting of Heritage Assets*, a stepped approach is recommended, of which Step 1 is to identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected. Step 2 is to assess “whether, how and to what degree settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated”. The guidance includes a (non-exhaustive) check-list of elements of the physical surroundings of an asset that might be considered when undertaking the assessment including among other things: topography, other heritage assets, green space, functional relationships and degree of change over time. It also lists points associated with the experience of the asset which might be considered, including: views, intentional indivisibility, tranquillity, sense of enclosure, accessibility, rarity and land use.

¹⁰ NPPF Annex 2, DCLG, 2018

¹¹ IBID

¹² Historic England, 2017, *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets*

Step 3 is to assess the effect of the proposed development on the significance of the asset(s). Step 4 is to explore ways to '*maximise enhancement and minimise harm*'. Step 5 is to '*make and document the decision and monitor outcomes*'.

Descriptions of significance will naturally anticipate the ways in which impacts will be considered. Hence descriptions of the significance of Conservation Area will make reference to their special interest and character and appearance, and the significance of Listed Buildings will be discussed with reference to the building, its setting and any features or special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Levels of significance

In accordance with the levels of significance articulated in the NPPF, three levels of significance are identified:

- Designated heritage assets of the highest significance, as identified in paragraph 132 of the NPPF comprising Grade I and II* Listed buildings, Grade I and II* Registered Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Monuments, Protected Wreck Sites, World Heritage Sites and Registered Battlefields (and also including some Conservation Areas) and non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to Scheduled Monuments, as identified in footnote 63 of the NPPF;
- Designated heritage assets of less than the highest significance, as identified in paragraph 194 of the NPPF, comprising Grade II Listed Buildings and Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens (and also some Conservation Areas); and
- Non-designated heritage assets. Non-designated heritage assets are defined within the Government's Planning Practice Guidance as "*buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which are not formally designated heritage assets*"¹³.

Additionally, it is of course possible that sites, buildings or areas have no heritage significance.

Assessment of harm

Assessment of any harm will be articulated in terms of the policy and law that the proposed development will be assessed against, such as whether a proposed development preserves or enhances the character or appearance of a Conservation Area, and articulating the scale of any harm in order to inform a balanced judgement/weighting exercise as required by the NPPF.

In order to relate to key policy, the following levels of harm may potentially be identified:

- Substantial harm or total loss. It has been clarified in a High Court Judgement of 2013¹⁴ that this would be harm that would "*have such a serious impact on the significance of the asset that its significance was either vitiated altogether or very much reduced*"; and
- Less than substantial harm. Harm of a lesser level than that defined above.

¹³ DCLG, Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 039 (ID: 18a-039-20140306, Revision date: 06 03 2014)

¹⁴ EWHC 2847, R DCLG and Nuon UK Ltd v. Bedford Borough Council

It is also possible that development proposals will cause no harm or preserve the significance of heritage assets. A High Court Judgement of 2014 is relevant to this¹⁵. This concluded that with regard to preserving the setting of a Listed building or preserving the character and appearance of a Conservation Area, 'preserving' means doing 'no harm'.

Preservation does not mean no change; it specifically means no harm. *GPA 2: Managing Significance* states that "*Change to heritage assets is inevitable but it is only harmful when significance is damaged*". Thus, change is accepted in Historic England's guidance as part of the evolution of the landscape and environment. It is whether such change is neutral, harmful or beneficial to the significance of an asset that matters.

As part of this, setting may be a key consideration. For an evaluation of any harm to significance through changes to setting, this assessment follows the methodology given in *GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets*, described above. Again, fundamental to the methodology set out in this document is stating '*what matters and why*'. Of particular relevance is the checklist given on page 13 of *GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets*.

It should be noted that this key document states that:

"setting is not itself a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation" ¹⁶

Hence any impacts are described in terms of how they affect the significance of a heritage asset, and heritage values that contribute to this significance, through changes to setting.

With regards to changes in setting, *GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* states that "*conserving or enhancing heritage assets by taking their settings into account need not prevent change*".

Additionally, it is important to note that, as clarified in the Court of Appeal¹⁷, whilst the statutory duty requires that special regard should be paid to the desirability of not harming the setting of a Listed Building, that cannot mean that any harm, however minor, would necessarily require Planning Permission to be refused.

Benefits

Proposed development may also result in benefits to heritage assets, and these are articulated in terms of how they enhance the heritage values and hence significance of the assets concerned.

¹⁵ EWHC 1895, R (Forge Field Society, Barraud and Rees) v. Sevenoaks DC, West Kent Housing Association and Viscount De L'Isle

¹⁶ Historic England, 2017, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets

¹⁷ Palmer v Herefordshire Council & Anor [2016] EWCA Civ 1061 (4th November 2016)

Appendix 2 – Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (July 2018)

National policy and guidance is set out in the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in July 2018. This is an amended version of the original published NPPF from 2012, which replaced the previous suite of national Planning Policy Statements, Planning Policy Guidance notes and some Circulars, including those related to heritage, with a single streamlined document. The NPPF needs to be read as a whole, and is intended to promote the concept of delivering sustainable development.

The NPPF sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policies for England. Taken together, these policies articulate the Government's vision of sustainable development, which should be interpreted and applied locally to meet local aspirations. The NPPF continues to recognise that the planning system is plan-led and that therefore Local Plans, incorporating Neighbourhood Plans, where relevant, are the starting point for the determination of any planning application, including those which relate to the historic environment.

The overarching policy change applicable to the proposed development is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. This presumption in favour of sustainable development (the 'presumption') sets out the tone of the Government's overall stance and operates with and through the other policies of the NPPF. Its purpose is to send a strong signal to all those involved in the planning process about the need to plan positively for appropriate new development; so that both plan making and development management are proactive and driven by a search for opportunities to deliver sustainable development, rather than barriers. Conserving historic assets in a manner appropriate to their significance forms part of this drive towards sustainable development.

The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and the NPPF sets out three 'dimensions' to sustainable development: an economic role, a social role, and an environmental role. The presumption is key to delivering these ambitions, by creating a positive pro-development framework which is underpinned by the wider economic, environmental and social provisions of the NPPF. The presumption is set out in full at paragraphs 10 and 11 of the NPPF and read as follows:

"10. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).

11. For plan-making this means that:

- *local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area;*
 - *Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change, unless:*
 - o *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole;*
 - or
 - o *specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.*
-

For decision-taking this means:

- *approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and*
- *where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting planning permission unless:*
 - o *any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or*
 - o *specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted."*

The NPPF continues to recognise that the planning system is plan-led and that therefore, Local Plans, incorporating Neighbourhood Plans, where relevant, are the starting point for the determination of any planning application.

Heritage Assets are defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as:

"A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets include designated heritage assets and assets identified by the Local Planning Authority (including Local Listing)"

The NPPF goes on to define a Designated Heritage Asset as a:

"World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under relevant legislation¹⁸" (our emphasis)

As set out above, significance is also defined as:

"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance. ¹⁹"

Section 16 of the NPPF relates to 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' and states at paragraph 190 that:

"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 assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise conflict

¹⁸ NPPF Annex 2, DCLG, 2018

¹⁹ IBID

between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal"

Paragraph 192 goes on to state that:

"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."*

With regard to the impact of proposals on the significance of a heritage asset, paragraphs 193 and 194 are relevant and read as follows:

"193. 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.

194. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;*
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional."*

In the context of the above, it should be noted that paragraph 195 reads as follows:

"Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply::

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
 - b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
-

*c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use."*

Paragraph 196 goes on to state:

"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."

The NPPF also provides specific guidance in relation to development within Conservation Areas, stating at paragraph 200 that:

"Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably."

Paragraph 201 goes on to recognise that "not all elements of a World Heritage Site or Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance" and with regard to the potential harm from a proposed development states:

"Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole." (our emphasis)

With regards to non-designated heritage assets, paragraph 197 of NPPF states that:

"The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset."

Overall, the NPPF confirms that the primary objective of development management is to foster the delivery of sustainable development, not to hinder or prevent it. Local Authorities should approach development management decisions positively, looking for solutions rather than problems so that applications can be approved wherever it is practical to do so. Additionally, securing the optimum viable use of sites and achieving public benefits are also key material considerations for application proposals.

National Planning Guidance

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) launched the planning practice web based resource in March 2014, accompanied by a ministerial statement which confirmed that a number of previous planning practice guidance documents were cancelled.

This also introduced the national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) which comprised a full and consolidated review of planning practice guidance documents to be read alongside the NPPF.

The PPG has a discrete section on the subject of 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' which confirms that the consideration of 'significance' in decision taking is important and states:

"Heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals²⁰"

In terms of assessment of substantial harm, the PPG confirms that whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgement for the individual decision taker having regard to the individual circumstances and the policy set out within the NPPF. It goes on to state:

"In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting²¹."

*While the impact of total destruction is obvious, partial destruction is likely to have a considerable impact but, depending on the circumstances, it may still be less than substantial harm or conceivably not harmful at all, for example, when removing later inappropriate additions to historic *buildings* which harm their significance. Similarly, works that are moderate or minor in scale are likely to cause less than substantial harm or no harm at all. However, even minor works have the potential to cause substantial harm" (our emphasis)*

With regard to design the PPG states at paragraph 02 that:

"Good design should:

- ensure that development can deliver a wide range of planning objectives*

²⁰ PPG, paragraph 009 (ID: 18a-009/20140306 revision date 06.03.2014)

²¹ PPG, paragraph 017 (ID: 18a-017-20140306 revision date 06.03.2014)

- *enhance the quality of buildings and spaces, by considering amongst other things form and function; efficiency and effectiveness and their impact on well being*
- *address the need for different uses sympathetically²²."*

²² PPG, paragraph 02 (ID: 26-002-20140306 revision date 06.03.2014)

Appendix 3 – Planning History

- LPA ref: **900198** – Use of premises as Class B1 (section 53 determination). Approved 22nd March 1990.
 - LPA ref: **930173** – Planning Permission for the change of use to Class A3 with ancillary accommodation. Approved 30th March 1993.
 - LPA ref: **93/0739/FD** – Planning Permission for alterations to shop front and new single storey extension to the rear. Approved 2nd March 1994.
 - LPA ref: **93/0920/LBC** – Listed Building Consent for change of use to public house with ancillary accommodation. Internal alterations including forming of new stairwells. New shopfront. Single storey rear extension. Approved 2nd March 1994.
 - LPA ref: **940752** – Face fixed block lettering and cartouche. Projecting hanging sign. Amenity boards. Signwriting to gates. Decals to windows. Approved 4th July 1994.
 - LPA ref: **940751** – Removal of existing signs. Fixing of new signs to advertise new business on the premises. Approved 4th July 1994.
 - LPA ref: **01/00983/LBC** – Listed Building Consent for changes to lobby area to provide separate entrance to ground floor. Alterations to ground floor bar and second floor kitchen layout. Decorative changes to first floor restaurant area. Approved 4th September 2001.
 - LPA ref: **011296** – Painting on west facing wall of restaurant name. Change to picture on existing hanging sign. Approved 25th October 2001.
 - LPA ref: **010128** – Painting of west facing flank wall with base coat and hand painted sign. Fixing of sodium lamps to illuminate sign. Change to image on projecting hanging sign. Approved 25 October 2001.
 - LPA ref: **010592** – Installation of cartouche and individual letters. Approved 6th February 2002.
 - LPA ref: **010206** – Installation of cartouche and individual letters. Approved 6th February 2002.
 - LPA ref: **07/00935/LBC** – Listed Building Consent for replacement signage. Approved 17th June 2008.
 - LPA ref: **07/00934/ADV** – Advertisement Consent for replacement signage. Approved 17th June 2008.
 - LPA ref: **12/01456/LBC** – Listed Building Consent for rebuilding of unstable pediment at the top of front wall. Approved 14th November 2012.
 - LPA ref: **180536** – Planning Permission for internal and external works to facilitate the refurbishment of the property, including installation of new plant and extraction equipment, entrance doors and demolition of the outbuilding. Approved 29th June 2018.
 - LPA ref: **180537** – Listed Building Consent for internal and external works to facilitate the refurbishment of the property, including installation of new plant and extraction equipment, entrance doors and demolition of outbuilding. Approved 29th June 2018.
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Appendix 4 – 10 Forbury Road List Entry

WALTER PARSONS CORN STORES

List Entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: WALTER PARSONS CORN STORES

List entry Number: 1248738

Location

WALTER PARSONS CORN STORES, 10, FORBURY ROAD

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County:

District: Reading

District Type: Unitary Authority

Parish:

National Park: Not applicable to this List entry.

Grade: II

Date first listed: 5th Nov 1993

Date of most recent amendment: Not applicable to this List entry.

Legacy System Information

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System: LBS

UID: 430486

Asset Groupings

This list entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

List entry Description

Summary of Building

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Reasons for Designation

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

History

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

Details

The following building shall be added to the list:

READING FORBURY ROAD SU 7173 NE (South side)

1/10002 No. 10 Walter Parsons Corn Stores - II Corn merchant's warehouse. Built in 1890 for Walter Parsons, corn merchants. Purple brick with yellow brick and ashlar dressings; slate roof with parapeted gable to front. PLAN: Rectangular plan with carriageway through left side and office on right with front entrance and loading bay behind; and with three storage floors above. EXTERIOR: 4 storey 2-bay gabled north front. The ashlar ground floor has panelled pilasters and segmental arches to office front on right, with panelled and glazed door and 3-light window with overlights above and carriageway on left with plank double doors. Storeys above with moulded brick stringcourses at floor and cill levels and the two bays divided by brick pilasters corbelled at top with ball finials flanking the gable [one ball missing]. Wide 4-light mullion-transom windows with segmental arches. Plain red brick rear elevation with sash windows. INTERIOR: The floors are supported on timber joists with iron beams and iron columns. Collar truss roof with struts. The office has glazed and boarded screen to carriageway. Simple ladder stairs in corner to each floor. Hoist hatch over carriageway and through floors above. Machinery includes winch mechanism on first floor, threshing machine on second floor and hoppers on third floor.

Listing NGR: SU7167473704

Selected Sources

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details

National Grid Reference: SU 71674 73704

Map

