



SHAUN•TANNER
ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING

HERITAGE STATEMENT
Grade II, Listed Building
& Conservation Area

1 Saint Peter's Hill
& cnr. The Warren
Caversham, RG4 7AX

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project:

Proposed Landscape Works,
No. 1, Saint Peter's Hill, Caversham, RG4 7AX

1.2 Synopsis

Following some unapproved landscape works to the grounds of a listed Grade II, two storey, Orne Cottage, this application aims to ameliorate the harm to the significance of the property.

1.3 Background

This application seeks to rectify unlawful works to the landscape and setting of a Grade II listed building, which is also within St Peter's Conservation Area in Caversham. An application was submitted for approval for a kitchen extension. It is understood this was approved and a builder was appointed. The new extension works, were not exactly built as approved but are generally as designed.

However, major landscape work in the setting and curtilage of the listed building and which impact on the surrounding were carried out without approval. The works include a large parking space and two new retaining walls on the southern and western side of the listed building. Works on site to the house were completed mid-2022. Unfortunately, the owners were overseas while their builder carried out works that were not approved. The owners terminated their contract with the builder and then contacted the Reading Borough Council (The LPA) for their advice with regards to any rectification that was required.

The LPA (Reading Borough Council) subsequently visited site in February 2023 to discuss the issues surrounding the retaining walls, parking area and general works undertaken that were not in accordance with the approval. Staff from the **Reading Council Planning Team** were going to liaise internally and respond with suggestions for improvement. Unfortunately, this has not happened. The works to rectify required changes to the extension to include replacing a window and flint panelling are now underway with a new contractor. The quality of the flint wall detailing of the new extension were sub-standard and needed to be improved. Also, the storm water system should have been cast-iron to blend it with the original host building.

STL architecture, have now been commissioned to design a sympathetic approach to the external works which form the basis of this application. Council planners have requested a Heritage Statement because the works done without approval, are considered to be harmful on the setting and character of the host building, but also on the surrounding St Peter's conservation area. A listed building consent has not been submitted as the proposed landscape works are not attached to the host building. However, given there are works to the setting of the property, it is considered that a householder application is only required because it would impact on the character and setting of the conservation area. Under the NPPF, the works proposed are a material consideration.

2 SITE LOCATION

2.1 Site and setting of 1 St. Peter's Hill, Caversham.



4. LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING

No. 1 St. Peter's Hill is situated just west of St Peters Church. It stands on the north side of the Thames, located 1km from the centre of the town. It is within Henly Conservation Area and is a Grade II, listed building.

Fig 1: Shows gate across The Warren (Street). No longer there.



2.2 Historic Site and Building

Fig 2: Historic photo: Historic mid-19th century cottage orne, with thatched roof, c.1908.



Fig 3: Photo from the east looking towards St Peter's Hill in the background. The thatched roof has been replaced by Clay (terracotta) shingles. The street boundary has a low flint wall topped by a metal railing. Behind this is part of the green garden character of the conservation area.



Fig 4: View from street. Note the hedge and metal railing has been removed. There is a gate leading to the street.



3 HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE AND SETTING

3.1 Statement of Significance

The Historic England website describes the property as follows:

3.2 1 Saint Peter's Hill

Designation: Listing: Grade II

List UID: 1000504

Fig 5: View from street. Note the hedge and metal railing has been removed. There is a gate leading to the street.



Historic England Listing

Heritage Category: Grade: **II Listed Building**

List Entry Number: 1113575

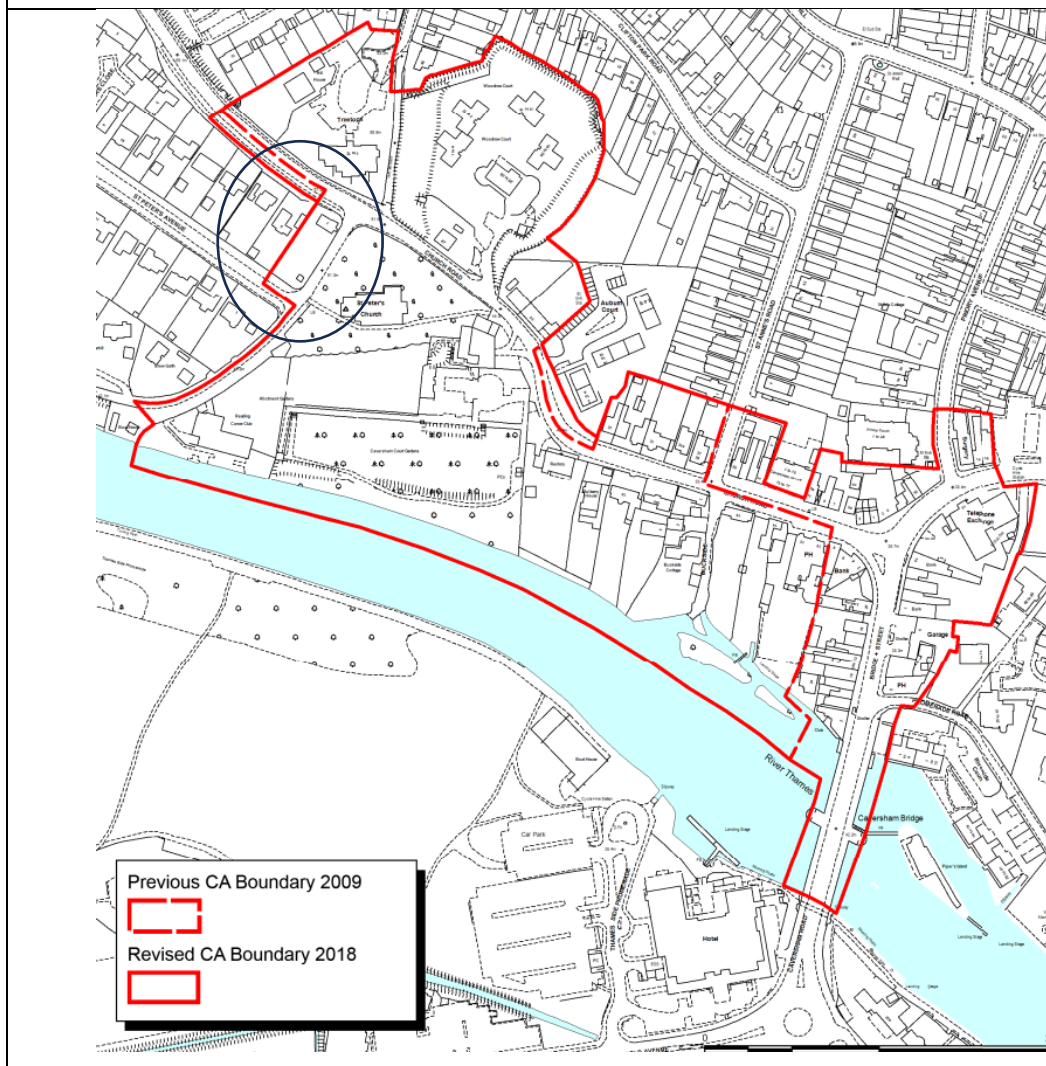
List Entry Name: **LODGE TO THE WARREN, 1, ST PETER'S HILL**

ST PETER'S HILL

"No 1 (Lodge to The Warren) SU 7074 11/564 II 2. Early C19. Cottage orne, picturesque. 2 storeys squared and knapped flint with ashlar quoins and bracket cills. Jettied 1st floor, stuccoed with applied timbering. Tiled roof. Scalloped bargeboards with brackets to verges and pendants. 3 bays to east, on ground

floor 2 cross windows flank 2 storey tower porch whose 1st floor is jettied and supported on octagonal columns with moulded caps, 3 lancets (one replacing door); pointed window 1st floor. To north: gable to left with 3 light bay under jetty. 1½ storey 1938 replica 2 bay extension to right with gabled dormer and central door. South gable also has jetty, supported on thin cast iron colonettes. 2 chimneys with paired octagonal shafts with raised diaper patterning. Formerly thatched with lower eaves.”

Fig 5: View from street. Note the hedge and metal railing has been removed. There is a gate leading to the street.



Conservation Areas Appraisal

Summary of Key Characteristics

The use of red brick and flint for boundary walls down St Peters Hill and into Church Road also serves to unify the area.

Statement of Special Interest

- *SS1 Introduction and Summary St Peters Conservation Area, north of the River Thames in Caversham, includes the church of St Peter, founded in the 12th century, and Caversham Court Gardens, a historic riverside garden refurbished in 2009. It also incorporates the medieval core of the original Caversham village, running from the end of Bridge Street, along Church Road and up St Peters Hill. This was the old pilgrim route from Reading Abbey towards Oxford, and linked the agricultural hinterland with the village, the economy of which was based on the River Thames.*
- *Several listed cottages in the Conservation Area date from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. The late 19th and early 20th century development along Church Road retained the two- and three storey scale, using the traditional local materials of brick, stone and flint, with characteristic architectural features including brick and flint boundary walls. There is a continuous flow of space, architecture and history down from the church along Church Road to the bridge.*
- *The use of red brick and flint for boundary walls down St Peters Hill and into Church Road also serves to unify the area.*

Summary of Property significance

1. Historic England Listing description (1113575) (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1113575>) describes the house as 'Lodge to the Warren' and early nineteenth century with 1938 extension.
2. The origin of the early nineteenth century date is unclear. Sidney Gold's 'A Biographical Dictionary of Architects at Reading' (1999) says that 1 St Peter's Hill is ascribed to A W R Pugin and dates from the 1840s, but that there is no documentary evidence. Pugin made some restorations to Caversham Court for the Simonds family at around that time.
3. The building appears on the OS map of 1882 surveyed 1877-1878. In this map it looks as if the path into The Warren is gated and can be seen in the image on the penultimate page of CADRA's 'Caversham Heritage Map' and this is also confirmed in later newspaper reports.

(https://www.cadra.org.uk/uploads/wysiwyg_editor/files/heritage_leaflet_download.pdf)

4. Development of the area from around 1900 onwards can be seen in the maps below. The Warren Estate was put up for sale in 1896 (Reading Mercury 24 October 1896 p6) and more details could be obtained from the estate plans in the Royal Berkshire Archives (see below).



Fig 6: Extract from 1882 OS map (surveyed 1877-1878) National Library of Scotland

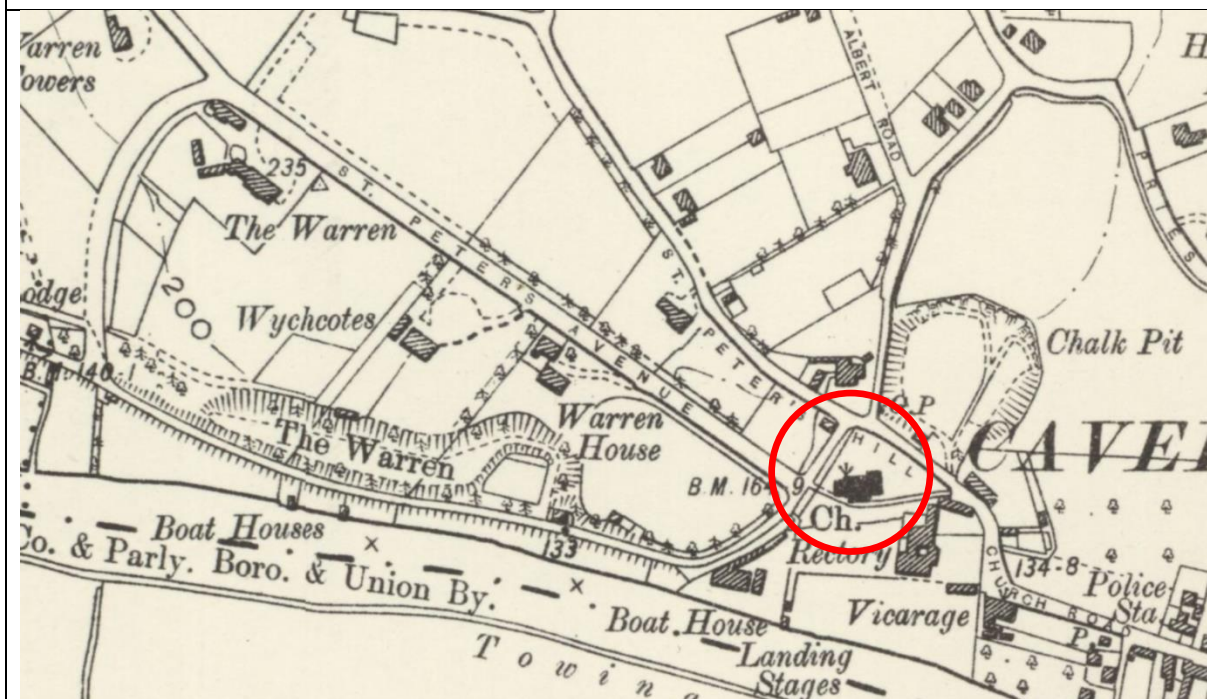


Fig 7: Extract from OS map 1900 (surveyed 1897) National Library of Scotland.



Fig 8: Extract from OS map 1913 (surveyed 1912) National Library of Scotland

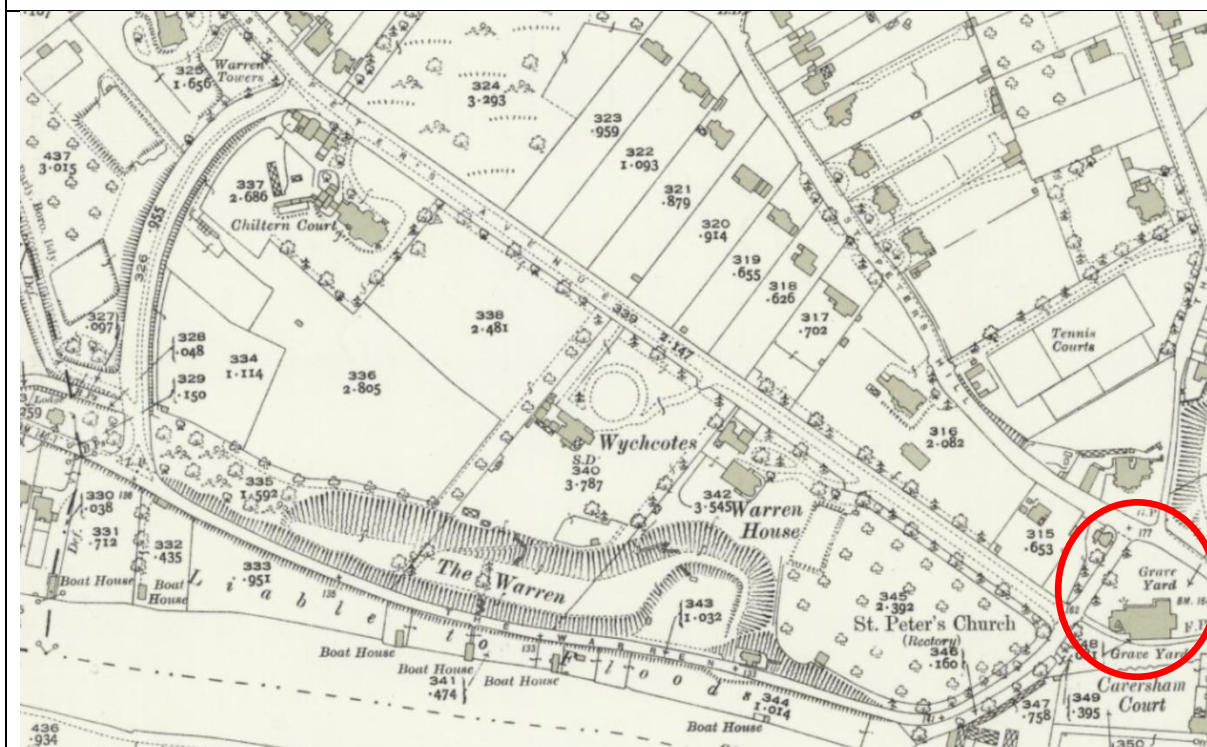


Fig 9: Extract from OS map 1934 (surveyed 1932) National Library of Scotland

3. That the property was extended is confirmed by an advertisement in the Reading Standard 12 February 1937 p2. 'For Sale, Old-World Residence enlarged and modernised, 'Warren Lodge', 1 St Peter's Hill, Caversham'.

4. The property is on the north-western edge of the St Peters CA.

(https://images.reading.gov.uk/2019/12/St_Peters_CA_Appraisal_Final_Version_061118.pdf)

5. The Reading Standard reported (Saturday 24 May 1913 p7) 'Warren Road, How an Ancient Way has been obstructed'. At that time there was some unease about gates being erected along 'the Warren road' running parallel with The Thames from Reading to Crowmarsh. The Footpaths and Commons Preservation Society was considering the case.

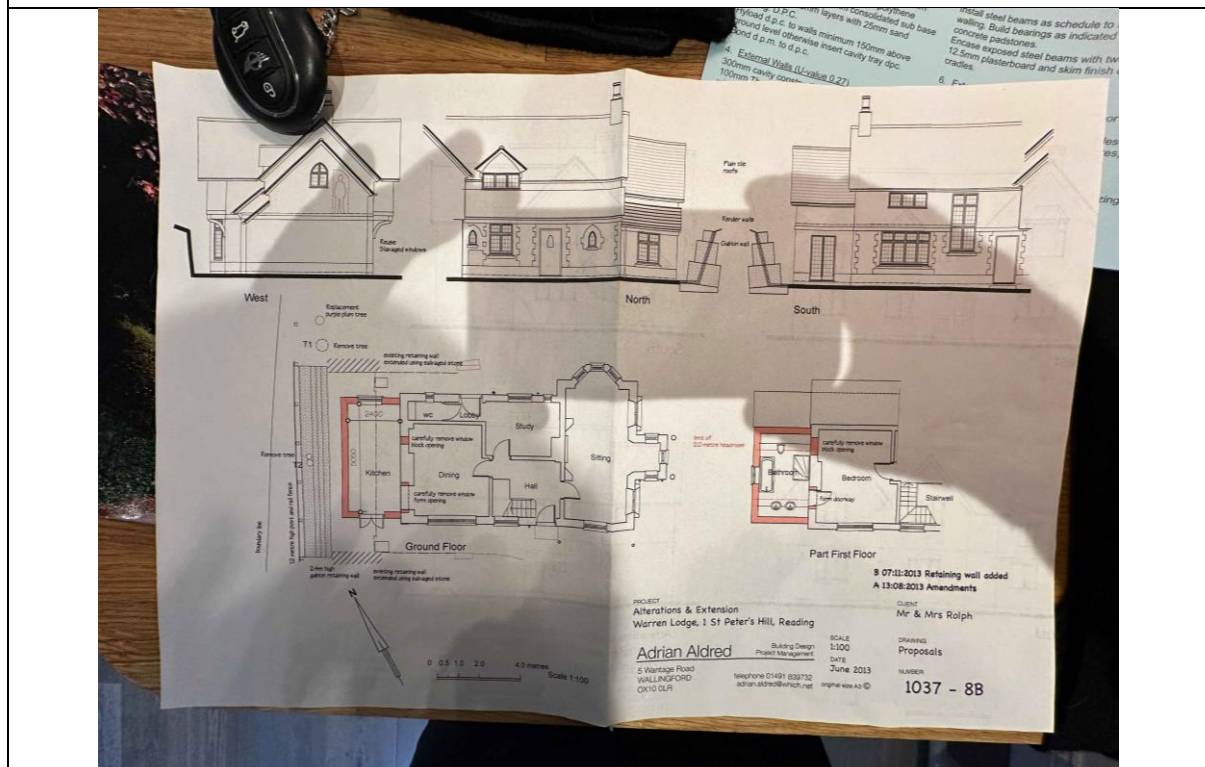
The article goes on to say that the owners of the Mapledurham estate improved the road by making it a carriageway and erected three gates: at the entrance near Caversham Church, near the end of the Avenue, Mapledurham, and at the top of Mapledurham village. After that the only other gate was in Whitchurch.

6. Joan Dils 'From Village to Suburb: Caversham 1840-1911' reproduced on the CADRA website with permission from Oxoniensa is very useful for general background to the growth of Caversham at that time.

(https://www.cadra.org.uk/uploads/wysiwyg_editor/files/dils.pdf)

Approved application

Fig. 10: Listed Building Consent. - Extension shown in red. The retaining walls were meant to be stone gabion cages. A new solution certified by a structural engineer included steel posts with precast infill concrete panels all faced with stained SW timber boarding.





Below is a list of works impacting on the significance of the setting of the listed building & conservation area and proposed new works to ameliorate any harm to the existing heritage assets.

LIST OF HARMFUL FEATURES TO SIGNIFICANCE OF LISTED SITE (The following issues do not have planning approval.)	Photos of site & proposed works.
Fig. 12: Boundary details 1. Loss of original boundary hedges. 2. Loss of cast/wrought iron fence. (It is understood that there is a sample in the front garden.) [Reinstate the missing flint lower wall and metal fencing]. [Reinstate missing hedges behind metal fence]	

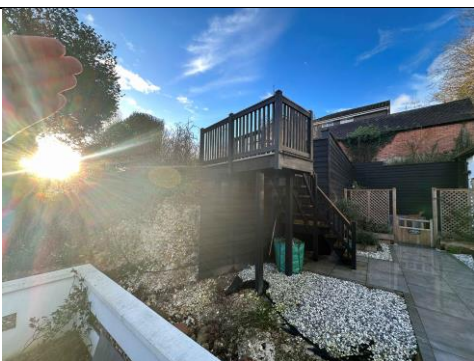
Fig. 13.: New Car space and dwarf walls. 3. Removal of sub soil embankments in southern garden area. New white walls in their present state, are considered Harm in NPPF terms. [Install stepped planters and modify retaining walls to be similar to the original boundary features. ie. Dwarf flint wall with medium hedge behind around new car park spot.]	
Fig. 14.: Car Parking space 4. Excavation of new car parking space. [Reduce the width of car space to a single space for disabled car. Modify stairs and new gate leading to host building. New dwarf flint walls plus black steel railings.]	
Fig. 15. Remove new timber stairs. 5. Removal of embankment and side part of existing rear mound.	
Fig. 16: New timber stair. 6. [Reinstate stone stair and remove modern timber stair.]	

Fig. 17.: Old stone stair removed. 7. [Redo rear garden levels and material finishes.]	
Fig. 18: Retaining wall unsympathetic and needs to be reduced in height. 8. Landscaping of area south of the host building. [Rear Garden – proposed works required. Stepped planters in an appropriate material.]	
Fig. 19: Rear landscaping not approved. 9. [Level out rear garden and install tumbled brown brick paving in southern rear yard and car space.]	
Fig. 20: Boundary column needs moving. 10. Relocate new brick piers to reduce street opening to car park spot.	

4 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 As part of the design and evolution of this project the Architects have recognised the significance of the Host Building, which is a Grade II listed Building set within a listed Conservation Area. It is believed it could have been designed by Pugin, so the significance of the Cottage Orne is not disputed.

4.2 Design methodology

This Heritage Statement should be read in conjunction with the drawings and Design Statement prepared by STL Architecture. The new landscaping works, retaining walls, car space and stairs as well as the materials have been carefully designed to fit with the historic cottage and hedged boundaries. This has been done to ameliorate the impact of the unapproved works on the host building as well as the character and significance of the St Peter's Conservation Area.

4.3 The current landscaped works have been redesigned to be more sympathetic with the listed host building.

Fig 21: Random stone blocks from a dismantled house from another site, beyond the car space along eastern boundary.



Below are a copy of new STL for proposed amelioration of unapproved works

Fig. 22: **Proposed landscape layout**

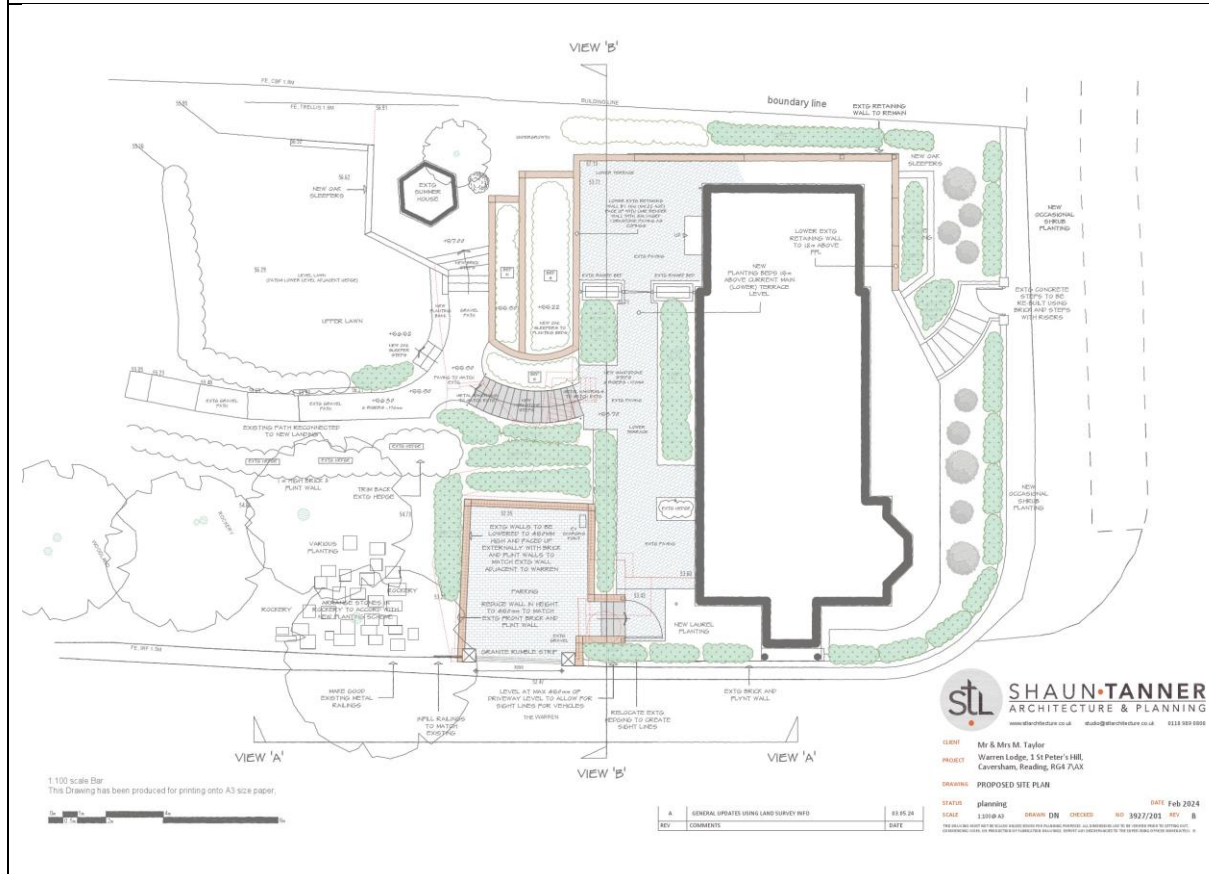
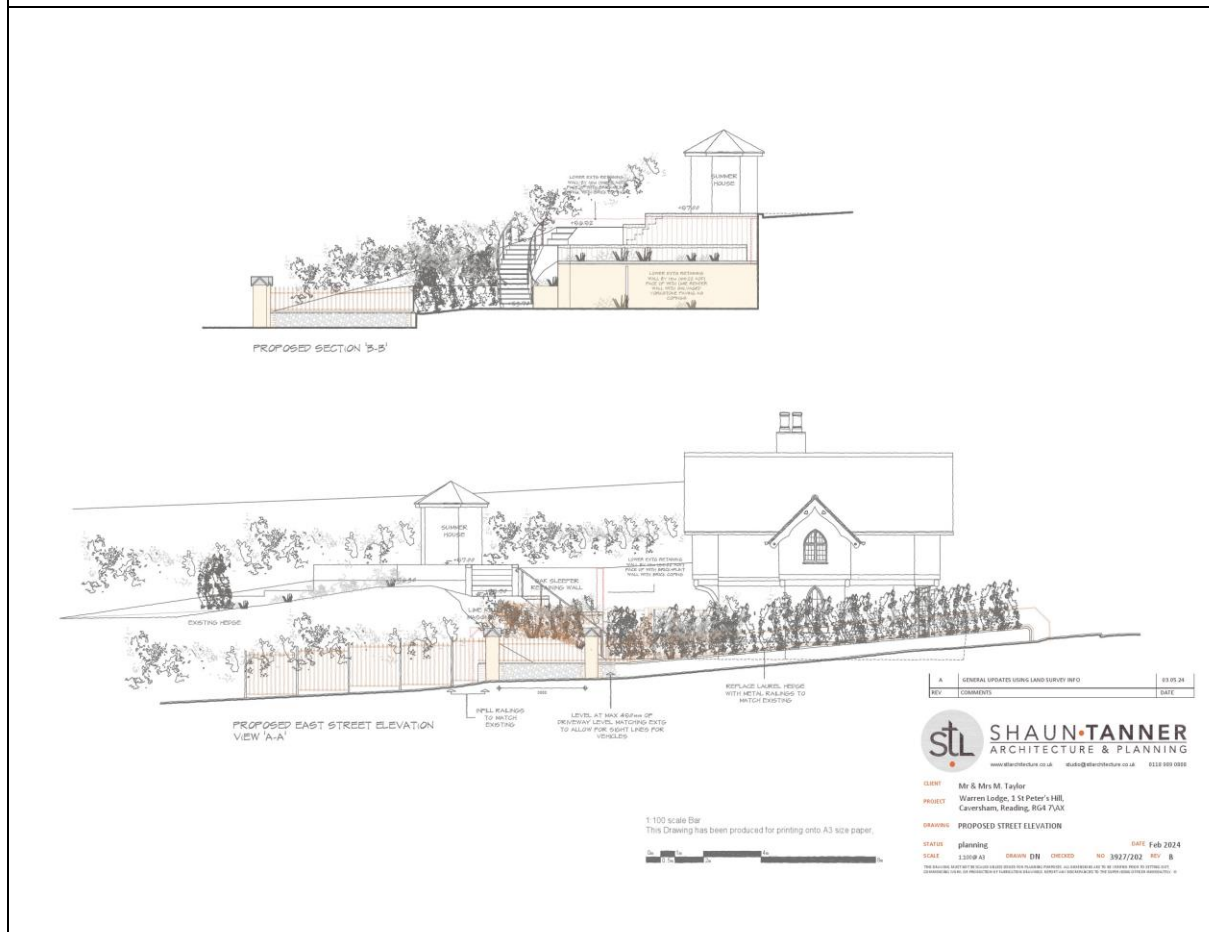


Fig. 23: New section screening hedges.



5 IMPACT ON SIGNIFICANCE

- 5.1 The purpose of this application is to ameliorate and amend the works of the previous builder, who was sacked. The owners appreciate the significance of their listed cottage orne and wish to carry out works that will ameliorate the harm caused by previous unapproved works.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

- 5.2 Under the statutory requirements of Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, special attention is to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Given the nature of the Site, the character and appearance of the Conservation Area is largely preserved through the retention of features of the built environment which relate to its historical development.

- 5.3 **NPPF**
In determining this application, the level of harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals, as per Section 16 of the NPPF (2023).
- 5.4 The new car space is required to provide off street parking and keep the street along The Warren free, as there is no footpath. The edge of the car space needs to be modified so that it is similar to the existing original boundary detailing. Historic photos and extant details show a dwarf flint wall, topped by a metal fence and backed by a medium sized hedge. This has a dual purpose of providing privacy and security in the rear garden.
- In regard to new works required to the existing unapproved car park. It is proposed to partially replace the current white brick wall with a new dwarf flint wall around the edge so it will have less visual impact on the setting and surroundings. This wall will be topped by a black metal railing with a medium high hedge similar to that shown in historic photos. Finally, to finish this area, it is proposed to use brown, tumbled brick paving to help create a more pleasant new material suitable for paving in the garden area.
- 5.5 **Materials and design**
The materials chosen for the new car park are a simple brick/stone plinth with metal fence on top similar to the original design. The aim is to make it blend in with the historic garden, and at the same time be subservient and not compete with main “Cottage Orne” host building.
- 5.6 The amelioration works to reduce the impact of the current car space on the landscaped rear garden and conservation area are considered an improvement on the current situation.
- 5.7 **Rear garden paving and landscaping**
The garden will be simplified and the retaining walls will be reduced and stepped, in accordance with advice from a structural engineer. The rear garden will have new paving with brown tumbled bricks the same as the paving for the car space. There will also be a simple curved stair up the upper level similar concept as the curved stair in Fig. 17.
- 5.8 **Retaining Walls**
Current retaining wall will be lowered by a min of 1.5m and faced up with lime rendered masonry walls sympathetic to the host dwelling.
- 5.7 The new design will ameliorate impact upon as the host building. The scale of any harm has been reduced and screened from the street by reinstating the hedges.

Overall, the current application is considered “Less than Substantial Harm”, in NPPF terms, but are an improvement to the current situation. The view from the street, are similar to the historic photos showing low flint fence with brick copings fence and screening hedges. They are recommended for approval.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The recent unapproved works severely impacted on the significance of the setting and character of the host building. The proposed works make a big change to the way the property will be viewed. Further the existing trees and reintroduced hedges will screen views to and from the host building.
- 6.2 It is considered that this current application proposal, complies and meets aims and objectives of the heritage guidance In the NPPF, and policies within the Reading Local Plan.

BIBLIOGRAPHY & REFERENCES

B.1 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

This assessment has been carried out in line with relevant legislation governing the treatment of the historic environment within the planning process, national and local planning policy and industry standard guidance and best practice set out within the documents listed below:

- Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990
- The National Planning Policy Framework (2023) Section 16, and Planning Practice Guidance
- Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment (English Heritage 2008a)
- Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment: Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2 (Historic England 2015)
- The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Historic England 2017); and