



RIDGEWAY
HERITAGE CONSULTANCY

St Joseph's College, 64 Upper Redlands Road, Reading RG1 5JT

A Heritage Statement



Client: St Joseph's College

Project No: RHC 2024-33

Date: 14/08/2024

St Joseph's College, 64 Upper Redlands Road, Reading RG1 5JT

A Heritage Statement

RHC Project No. 2023-33

August, 2024

Document Control Grid			
Revision	Date	Author	Status
A	14.08.24	RWM	Internal Review Draft
B	14.08.24	RWM	Client Draft
C	03.09.24	RWM	Final version

Front cover: View, looking north-east, of the principal, south frontage of the college buildings, on Upper Redlands Road.

This report is confidential to the client. Ridgeway Heritage Consultancy accepts no responsibility or liability to any third party to whom this report, or any part of it, is made known. Any such party relies upon this report entirely at their own risk. No part of this report may be reproduced by any means without permission.

CONTENTS

SUMMARY	1
1. INTRODUCTION	2
2. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT AND GUIDANCE	6
3. METHODOLOGY	11
4. THE HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT AND SIGNIFICANCE OF ST JOSEPH'S COLLEGE	16
5. THE PROPOSED REPAIRS AND THEIR POTENTIAL IMPACTS	25
6. CONCLUSIONS	31
REFERENCES	34

LIST OF FIGURES

- Fig. 1: Location Plan (approximate scale 1:50,000).
- Fig. 2: Location Plan of St Joseph's College (approximate scale 1:2000).
- Fig. 3: Aerial image of St Joseph's College and surrounding buildings on Upper Redlands Road (Geoinformation Systems).
- Fig. 4: View, looking north-east, of the front elevation of Broad Oak House, with the later buildings of St Joseph's College to the right (Historic England).
- Fig. 5: Extract from the six-inch Ordnance Survey map of 1872-77 (National Library of Scotland).
- Fig. 6: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 25-inch England and Wales 1842-1952 series map of 1910 (National Library of Scotland).
- Fig. 7: Photograph of Broad Oak House in c. 1920 (St Joseph's College).
- Fig. 8: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 25-inch England and Wales 1842-1952 series map of 1933 (National Library of Scotland).
- Fig. 9: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 1:2500-scale map of 1971 (National Library of Scotland).
- Fig. 10: View, looking north-west, of the western and middle ranges of early twentieth-century school buildings to the east of Broad Oak House.
- Fig. 11: View, looking north-east, of the south, front elevation of B Block.
- Fig. 12: View, looking south, of the south elevation of B Block, with details of fenestration.
- Fig. 13: View, looking south-west, of the east and north, rear elevations of B Block.
- Fig. 14: View, looking north-east, of the middle range of school buildings and the adjoining former hall.
- Fig. 15: Existing elevation drawings of B Block at St Joseph's College (The Bush Consultancy).
- Fig. 16: Ground and first-floor plans of B Block, with location of window openings (Warner Surveys).
- Fig. 17: Detail of ground-floor window of B Block, with evidence of advanced decay of window frames.
- Fig. 18: Photographs of defective areas of tiled roof on B Block (St Joseph's College).
- Fig. 19: View, looking north-west, of the south elevation and south-facing roof of B Block.
- Fig. 20: Proposed elevation drawings of the B Block (The Bush Consultancy).

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Criteria used to determine the level of impact.

Table 2: Criteria used to determine the significance of impact.

SUMMARY

St Joseph's College was established on its present site, in association with Broad Oak House a substantial Grade II-listed dwelling of 1870. The early twentieth-century expansion of the school comprised three imposing brick ranges, which are distinguished by their consistency of form and architectural detail. They incorporate plain brick facades, but with highly regular and distinctive fenestration, incorporating multi-hung windows of unusual pattern, set within openings with decorative stone lintels. Roofs comprise a mix of gable and hipped forms, with dormers and upstanding gable forms at eaves-level. Roof tiles are of historic Bridgewater pattern, which contribute to the character of the buildings. The early twentieth-century school blocks are considered to be of a moderate level of significance.

It is proposed to replace the existing windows of B Block which are badly affected by decay. Replacement windows would incorporate UPVC frames of the same pattern as the existing timber frames, but would be triple-glazed. The Bridgewater tiles on the roof of B Block are in deteriorating condition, with a number broken, displaced and missing. It is proposed to replace these with modern examples of appropriate pattern, in conjunction with improvements to the thermal properties of the roof-space. It is also proposed to install an array of photovoltaic panels on the south-facing roof of B Block, to provide a source of renewable energy.

Replacement of defective timber-framed windows with UPVC-framed examples of appropriate design would retain the current external appearance and character of the building. These and proposed triple-glazing would not adversely affect the wider appearance of the building. Similarly, modern replacement tiles of an appropriate pattern would not result in any appreciable effect on the external appearance of B Block, and the accompanying improvements in the thermal performance of underlying roof-space would enhance overall energy efficiency. The proposed installation of photovoltaic panels on the south-facing roof of B Block would marginally affect the appearance of the building in northward views, and would have little visibility from adjoining areas, due to intervening built form. Neither these, nor the proposed repairs, would be directly visible from Grade II-listed Broad Oak House, and would not result in any impact to its wider setting or significance. Any harm resulting from the installation of the roof-mounted photovoltaic panels would be balanced by the public benefit of establishing a sustainable source of renewable energy. Overall, the magnitude of impact to the buildings of St Joseph's College associated with these proposed measures is assessed as Minor, and the resulting significance of impact as Negligible. The level of resulting harm would be minimal.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In July, 2024, Ridgeway Heritage Consultancy was commissioned by The Bush Consultancy, on behalf of St Joseph's College, to prepare a Heritage Statement to support a planning application for repairs to the roof and windows of Block B1 of the College, and the installation of roof-mounted photovoltaic panels. The College is located at 64 Upper Redlands Road, Reading RG1 5JT (NGR 473228 172424) (Figs. 1 and 2), within an area characterised by the later nineteenth-century expansion of the town.

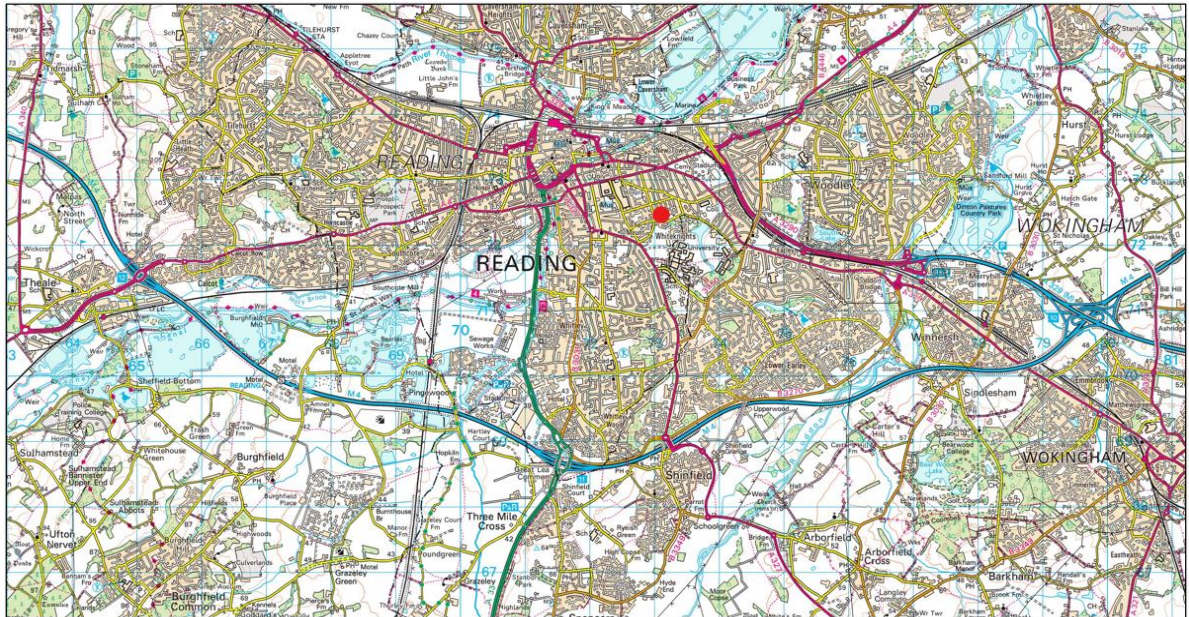


Fig. 1: Location Plan (approximate scale 1:50,000).

Location and Context

- 1.2 The buildings of St Joseph's College comprise a series of early twentieth-century additions and extensions, which have resulted in a series of elongated east/west ranges, running eastwards from the Grade II-listed Broad Oak House. The buildings include two southward projecting ranges on the front south elevation (Fig. 3). The college buildings, which include B1 Block at the eastern end, face onto Upper Redlands Road on their southern side, with intervening open space and surfaced car parking. The college is bounded to the south by the course of Upper Redlands Road, with Wessex Hall, and the Whiteknights campus of the University of Reading, beyond (Figs. 2 and 3). A grassed sports ground is located just to the east, with resident streets located to the north and east. Reading town centre is located some 2km to the north-west. The site is situated on

level ground, at an elevation of 60m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), with land sloping gently down to the north.

Heritage Constraints

- 1.3 The Grade II-listed house of Broad Oak House was constructed in c. 1870-80, and comprises an imposing, detached red-brick house of two and a half storeys and five bays (NHLE 1157100) (Figs. 4 and 7). Its architectural interest is enlivened by stone dressings and detail, and by a highly articulated, asymmetrical front elevation, with its mix of gables and window forms. The adjoining brick-built ranges of the College partly reflect the material palette and architectural style of Broad Oak (Figs. 10-14), and have a close functional and historical association with this listed building. On this basis, they are deemed to be curtilage-listed.
- 1.4 No other listed buildings are present within 300m of St Joseph's College, with the single exception of No. 11 Elmhurst Road (NHLE 1113471), which is located 110m to the south-west. The boundaries of the Redands Conservation Area are located 300m to the south-west, at the closest point, and those of the Christchurch Conservation Area, some 800m to the south-west.

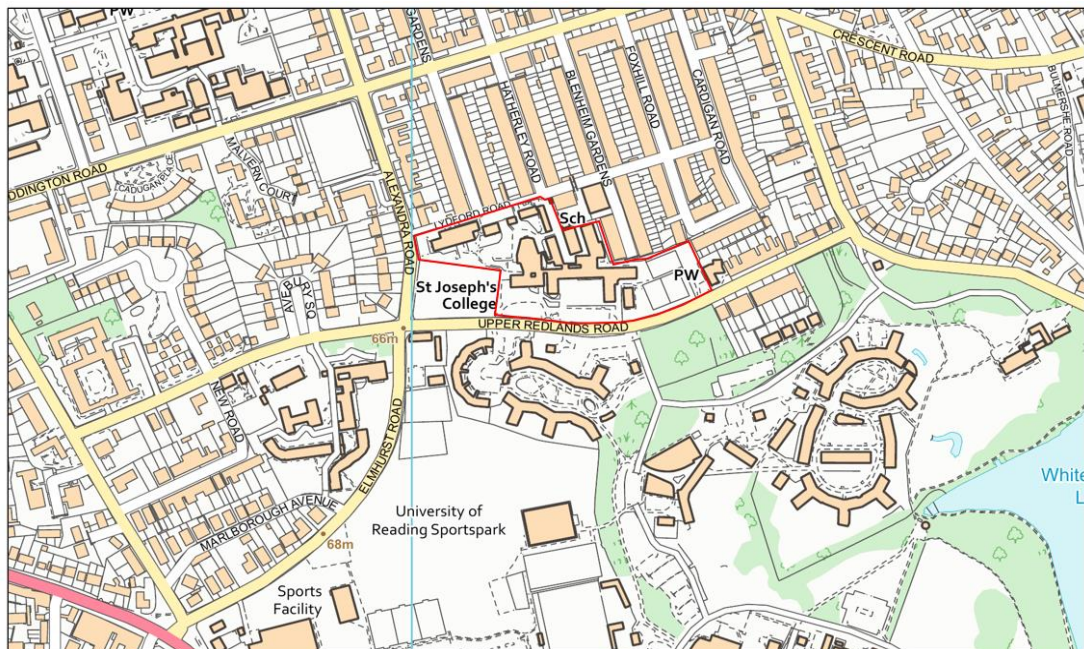


Fig. 2: Location Plan of St Joseph's College (approximate scale 1:2000).

The scope of the Heritage Statement

- 1.5 The aims of this Heritage Statement are to identify the historical development, character and significance of the buildings of St Joseph's College, together with the effects on that character and significance resulting from the proposed works. These comprise repairs to the roof and windows of Block B1, and include the installation of photovoltaic panels on the south-facing roof of the block. This Statement will provide adequate supporting heritage information and justification for any harm resulting from these proposals, in accordance with Paragraph 200 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act) 1990.



Fig. 3: Aerial image of St Joseph's College and surrounding buildings on Upper Redlands Road (Geoinformation Systems).

- 1.6 In considering applications for development which results in impacts to listed buildings, the statutory duty, under Sections 16 (2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, is to 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”. It will also be necessary to articulate the significance of this heritage asset and to assess the impact of the proposed works upon that significance, in accordance with Paragraph 200 of the National Planning Policy Framework:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

1.7 This Heritage Statement will therefore provide detailed assessments of the following:

- The historic and architectural interest and significance of the buildings of St Joseph's College;
- A description and appraisal of the proposed repair work to Block B1;
- The potential impact of the proposed repairs and solar panels on the form, historic character and significance of the college buildings;
- The potential impact of the proposed repairs on the setting and significance of Grade II-listed Broad Oak House;
- The potential degree of harm resulting from the proposed repairs, and the justification for such harm;
- Where appropriate, recommendations for the mitigation of any resulting harm.

1.8 A site visit, including an external assessment of the buildings of St Joseph's College was made on August 7th, 2024, in sunny conditions. The assistance of Rachel Sheridan, College Estates Manager, during the site visit is gratefully acknowledged.

2. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT AND GUIDANCE

2.1 This Heritage Statement has been compiled in accordance with the following statutory, planning policy and guidance documents:

- National Heritage Act 1983 (amended 2002);
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990;
- National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (amended December, 2023);
- National Planning Practice Guidance: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (2016 revised 2021);
- English Heritage guidance: 'Conservation Principles; policies and guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment' (2008);
- Historic England guidance: 'Historic Environment good practice advice in planning: Note 2: Managing significance in decision-taking in the historic environment' (2015a); and
- Historic England guidance: 'Historic Environment good practice advice in planning: Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets' (2015b).

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990)

2.2 The 1990 Planning Act states that:

'in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall, 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 that it possesses (Section 66).'

National Planning Policy Framework (2012, rev. December, 2023)

2.3 The Framework sets out national planning policy relating to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. It defines the historic environment as: "all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscape and planted or managed flora." Individual components of the historic environment are considered to constitute heritage assets: "buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree

of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of their heritage interest”.

2.4 Key tenets of the Framework are that:

- when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater that weight should be (Paragraph 205).
- heritage significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset, or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to, or loss of, a Grade II-listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to, or loss of, designated assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, Grade I or II*-listed buildings, registered parks and gardens and World Heritage Sites should be wholly exceptional (Paragraph 206).
- where a proposed development 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 (Paragraph 208).
- With regard to non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having due regard to the scale of any harm or loss, and to the significance of the heritage asset affected (Paragraph 209).
- 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 212).

2.5 Local Planning Authorities are urged to request applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposed development, including any contribution made to significance by their setting. The level of detail required in the assessment should be “proportional to the assets’ importance, and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance”.

Planning Practice Guidance

- 2.6 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (MHCLG, 2021) clarifies the above NPPF requirement under the heading 'What is the main legislative framework for planning and the historic environment?' where it states that:

'In addition to the normal planning framework set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.....the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides specific protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest.'

- 2.7 Any decisions relating to listed buildings and their settings, and Conservation Areas, must address the statutory considerations of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (see in particular sections 16, 66 and 72) in addition to satisfying the relevant policies within the National Planning Policy Framework and the Local Plan.

- 2.8 PPG states that local planning authorities may identify non-designated heritage assets, and in some areas these heritage assets may be identified as 'locally-listed' (DCLG et al. 2014, para. 39). These identified heritage assets may include buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes, which have a degree of value meriting consideration in planning decisions but which are not formally designated heritage assets.

- 2.9 The PPG states under 'Why is 'significance' important in decision-taking?' that:

'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 proposals'.

- 2.10 Under the discussion of 'How to assess if there is substantial harm?' the PPG offers:

'What matters in assessing if a proposal causes substantial harm is the impact on the significance of the heritage asset. As the National Planning Policy Framework makes clear, significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting'.

- 2.11 The PPG states under 'What is the setting of a heritage asset and how should it be taken into account?' that:

‘A thorough assessment of the impact on setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset under consideration and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it. Setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced and may therefore be more extensive than its curtilage. All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not. The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each’.

Local Planning Policy

The Reading Borough Council Local Plan 2016-2036

- 2.12 Policies for the protection and conservation of the historic environment are included within the Reading Borough Council Local Plan, which was adopted in November, 2019, and is intended to manage development within the Borough up to the year 2036. Within the Local Plan, Policy EN1 relates to the protection and enhancement of the Historic Environment.

Policy EN1: The protection and enhancement of the historic environment

- 2.13 Historic features, areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their settings, will be protected and, where possible, enhanced. This will include Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, Historic parks and gardens and other features with local or national significance, such as sites and features of archaeological importance, and assets on the Local List. All proposals will be expected to protect, and where possible enhance, the significance of heritage assets and their settings, the historic character and local distinctiveness of the area in which they are located.

- 2.14 Proposals should seek to avoid harm in the first instance. Any harm to or loss of a heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification, usually in the form of public benefits. Applications which affect Listed Buildings will not have an adverse impact on those elements which contribute to their special architectural or historic interest including, where appropriate, their settings. Applications which affect Historic Parks and Gardens will safeguard features which form an integral part of the special character or appearance of the park or garden. Development will not detract from the enjoyment, layout, design, character, appearance, features or setting of the park or garden, key views out from the park, or prejudice its future restoration. Applications which affect, or have the potential to affect, the significant features of heritage assets should be justified by a Heritage Statement.
- 2.15 The Council will monitor buildings and other heritage assets at risk through neglect, decay or other threats, proactively seeking solutions for assets at risk, including consideration of appropriate development schemes that will ensure the repair and maintenance of the asset, and, as a last resort, using its statutory powers. Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect or of damage to a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.

3. METHODOLOGY

Historic England Guidance

- 3.1 The methodologies employed in this assessment are in accordance with the relevant current historic guidance on the interpretation and implementation of NPPF, including:
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking (Historic England, 2015a);
 - Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England, 2017); and
 - Historic England Advice Note 12 Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets (Historic England 2019).
- 3.2 The Historic England *Planning Note No 3* (Historic England 2015b) provides key stages of consideration in regard to assessing the impact of a proposal on the setting of a designated heritage asset (listed building) as follows:
- Identify the degree to which setting makes a contribution to the significance or the heritage asset or allows its significance to be appreciated;
 - Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it;
 - Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm; and
 - Make and document the decision.
- 3.3 Paragraphs 9 and 10 of *Note Number 3* also provide an overall and general understanding of 'Setting'. Paragraph 9 states 'Setting is not itself a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, although land comprising a setting may itself be designated. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate that significance'. While Paragraph 10 states 'The contribution of a setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views, a purely visual impression of an asset or place which can be static or dynamic, long, short or of lateral spread, and include a variety of views of, from, across, or including that asset.'

General

- 3.4 The methodology employed by this assessment is in accordance with key professional guidance, including the *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment* (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2014), the Historic England guidance *Conservation Principles* (2008) and Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment* (Historic England 2015). Impacts to heritage settings were assessed using the methodology detailed within the current Historic England guidance *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: the setting of heritage assets* (2015).

Sources

- 3.5 This Heritage Statement has involved detailed consultation of readily-available historical information drawn from documentary and cartographic sources. The major repositories of information consulted have comprised:
- National Heritage List for England (EH);
 - Published and unpublished documentary sources;
 - Reading Borough Council online information relating to the historic environment;
 - Historic maps and photographs;
 - English Heritage Archives (EHA) and AMIE (Archives and Monuments Information, England) data;
 - Online sources, including Local Plan policies and information.
- 3.6 A bibliography of documentary, archive and cartographic sources consulted is included in the References section of this report.

The Significance of Heritage Assets

- 3.7 Heritage assets are defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (henceforth, 'the Framework'; revision of December, 2023) as 'a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of its heritage interest'. The term Heritage Asset includes both designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority as possessing heritage significance (including locally- listed structures)'. Designated

heritage assets include: World Heritage Sites; Scheduled Monuments; Listed Buildings; Protected Wreck Sites; Registered Parks and Gardens; Registered Battlefields; and Conservation Areas. Non-designated heritage assets include sites held on the Historic Environment Record, in addition to other elements of the landscape understood to have a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions.

- 3.8 The assessment of the heritage value (significance) of a site determines the ways in which particular aspects of a place and different periods in its evolution contribute to, or detract from, those identified heritage values associated with the asset.
- 3.9 Heritage significance is defined in Planning Practice Guidance (Annex 2, 2021) 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 fabric, but also from its setting’
- 3.10 Current national guidance for assessing the significance of heritage assets is based on the criteria provided by Historic England (formerly English Heritage) in *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* (English Heritage 2008). Within this document, significance is weighed by the estimated potential for the asset to demonstrate the following criteria:
- Evidential value derives from ‘the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity’ (ibid, 28). It is primarily embodied by physical remains or historic fabric, but also includes buried archaeology;
 - Historical value derives from ‘the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present’ (ibid, 28). Illustrative historical values depend on visibility in a way that evidential value does not; and ‘have the power to aid interpretation of the past [...] through shared experience of a place’ (ibid, 29). Associative historical values relate to historical connections with a notable family, person, event or movement;
 - Aesthetic values derive from ‘the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place’ (ibid, 30). Aesthetic value might be generated through conscious design and artistic endeavour, fortuitous and organic change, and the relationship of structures and materials to their

setting; • Communal value is tied to historical (associative) value and aesthetic value, deriving from 'the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory' (ibid, 31);

- Communal values may be commemorative, symbolic or social. The latter is typically 'associated with places that people perceive as a source of identity, distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence,' and might only be articulated when the resource is under threat (ibid, 32).

- 3.11 Further information on good practice in implementing historic environment policy in the NPPF is provided within the guidance Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (Historic England 2015a). This document provides advice on the assessment of the significance of heritage assets in support of applications for planning permission, and emphasises that the information required regarding heritage significance should be no more than would be necessary to inform the planning decision.

Assessing levels of Impact

- 3.12 Impact assessment addresses predicted changes in the existing condition of the environment, as a result of a proposed development. The significance of an impact is generally determined as the combination of the 'sensitivity and/or value' of the affected receptor, and the predicted magnitude of change. In this case, heritage receptors comprise a group of Grade II-listed buildings, which may be considered both as individual structures and as a coherent group of related assets. These are considered to represent receptors of medium to high sensitivity and/or value.

Magnitude of Impact

- 3.13 The determination of the magnitude of change is based on the current level of survival, or condition, of the receptor. The variable factors which determine the magnitude of change include the vulnerability or sensitivity of the site or feature to change. The criteria commonly used to determine the magnitude of impact are as described in the following table:

Magnitude of Impact	Description
Major	The proposed development would cause a large change to existing environmental conditions. Complete destruction of the site or feature. Change resulting in a fundamental change to the ability to understand or appreciate the asset and its context and setting.
Moderate	The proposed development would cause noticeable change to existing environmental conditions. Change resulting in appreciable change to the ability to understand or appreciate the asset and its context and setting.
Minor	The proposed development would cause small change to existing environmental conditions. Change resulting in small change to the ability to understand or appreciate the asset and its context and setting.
Negligible	The proposed development would result in no discernible change to existing environmental conditions. Negligible change or no material change to the site or feature. No change to the ability to understand or appreciate the asset and its context and setting.

Table 1: Criteria used to determine the level of impact.

Significance of Impact

3.14 The significance of impact and environmental effect is determined by two variables:

- The importance or significance of the receptor; and
- The magnitude of change affecting the receptor.

Environmental effects may be either adverse or beneficial, depending on the nature of the impact.

Receptor sensitivity/value	Magnitude of Impact			
	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
Very high	Substantial	Substantial	Moderate	Slight
High	Substantial	Moderate	Slight	Negligible
Medium	Moderate	Slight	Negligible	Negligible
Low	Slight	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Table 2: Criteria used to determine the significance of impact.

4. THE HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT AND SIGNIFICANCE OF ST JOSEPH'S COLLEGE

- 4.1 Broad Oak House was added to the National List, at Grade II, on December 14, 1978, in view of its historic and architectural interest (NHLE 1157100). The listing description is given as follows:

'Broad Oak SU 77 SW 17/588 II 2. Now incorporated in a Convent. Circa 1870-1890s. 2½ storeys, red brick with stone bands to plinth, ground floor lintel and 1st floor cill. Stone dressings and coped verges. Ball finials to kneelers. Asymmetrical plan with two slight end gable breaks and a further gable to right. Five bays in all : Two-storey bay to left triple lancet and oculus-type stair window left of centre. Thicker panel of masonry for arched entrance (with "Broad Oak" inscribed in relief on lintel). Three snail foiled lights over. Two right hand windows have mullion and transom windows. Tiled roof with Joseph Morris-type dormers:- two gables with triangular moulded verges and two lights. Interior: not outstanding. Tiled hall with staircase to left, unusual balustrade and pendants. Chimneypieces circa 1890 with pigeon-hole over-mantels'.



Fig. 4: View, looking north-east, of the front elevation of Broad Oak House, with the later buildings of St Joseph's College to the right (Historic England).

A Brief History

- 4.2 St Joseph's College was originally founded by four nuns of the Congregation of Sisters of St Marie Madeleine Postel, a noted educational pioneer, who made a journey from Normandy in 1894. First located in Bracknell, the school later moved to Castle Hill, Reading, and then, in 1908, to Broad Oak House, Upper Redlands Road. The Convent

was opened on this site in 1910. The six-inch Ordnance Survey map of 1872-77 depicts Broad Oak House in its original plan, then set in spacious grounds on a largely undeveloped road which skirted the northern margins of Whiteknights Park (Fig. 5). Prior to the opening of the Convent, the house had been owned by Alfred Sutton, the founder of the well-known Reading seed company. The map suggests an earlier date for the house than suggested by the listing description, and this is unlikely to be any later than 1870.

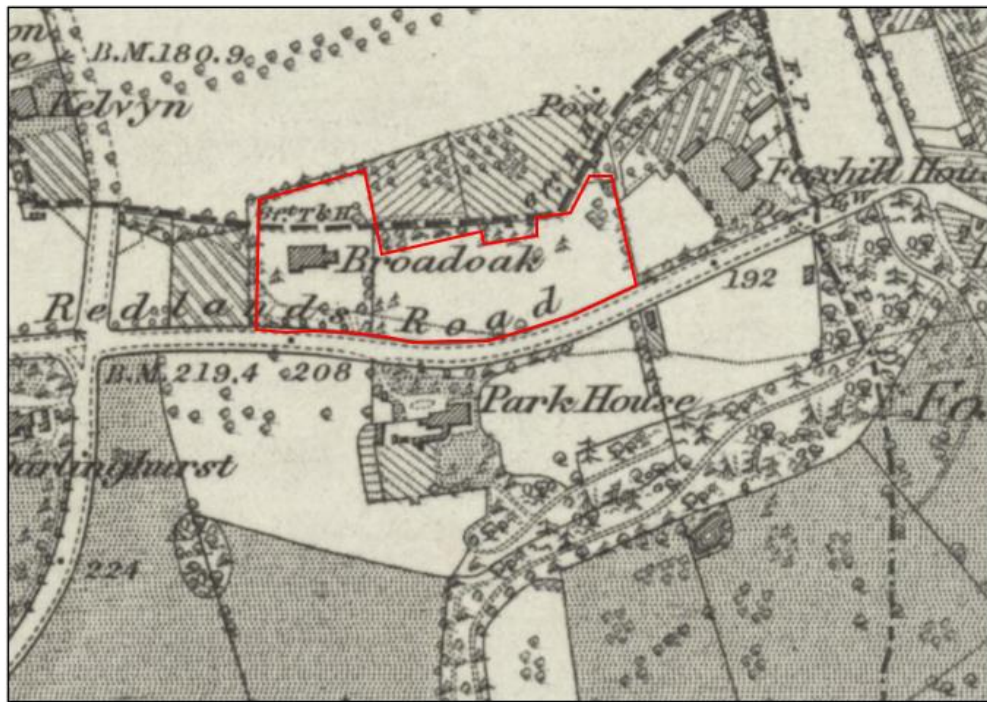


Fig. 5: Extract from the six-inch Ordnance Survey map of 1872-77 (National Library of Scotland).

- 4.3 The 25-inch map of 1910 depicts no significant change from that of 1872-77, although the school and Convent had presumably been established on the site by this time (Fig. 6). The 1910 map depicts a building of rectangular plan just to the east of Broad Oak House, which may have been associated with developments at this time, although this appears to have disappeared by the time of the map of 1933. It may be the tall building located on the east side of Broad Oak House, which is shown in the photograph of c.1920 (Fig. 7).
- 4.4 Construction of the school block adjacent to Broad Oak House commenced shortly after the move of 1910, with boarders accommodated within this block by the following year. A chapel and gymnasium were added after 1918, after which a further programme of expansion included a large hall, music room, a domestic science block and classrooms. This period of expansion is depicted on the Ordnance Survey map of 1933, by which

time the principal brick ranges to the east of Broad Oak House, including B1 Block, had assumed their current extent and form (Figs. 8 and 10-14). By 1936, it was reported that all day pupils and boarders were occupying the same site. Further developments in the 1950s and 1960s included science laboratories, swimming pool and a new Chapel (Fig.9).

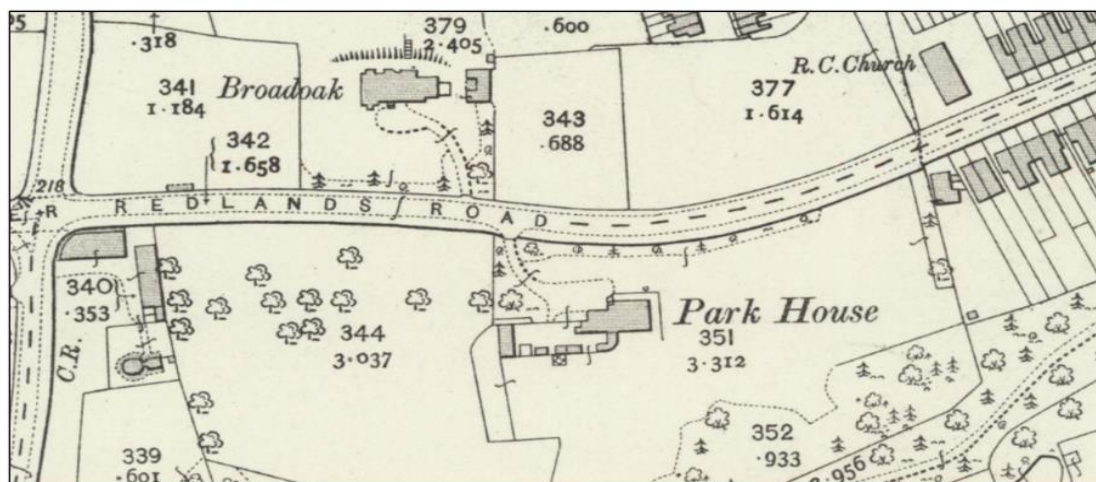


Fig. 6: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 25-inch England and Wales 1842-1952 series map of 1910 (National Library of Scotland).

- 4.5 The old hall was subsequently converted to the current theatre, and a new college hall constructed (Fig. 9). In 1947, St George's Hall, now part of the University of Reading, was purchased by the Convent as a preparatory school. This was replaced in 1988 by a new preparatory school, which was built within the orchard of the Convent.



Fig. 7: Photograph of Broad Oak House in c. 1920 (St Joseph's College).

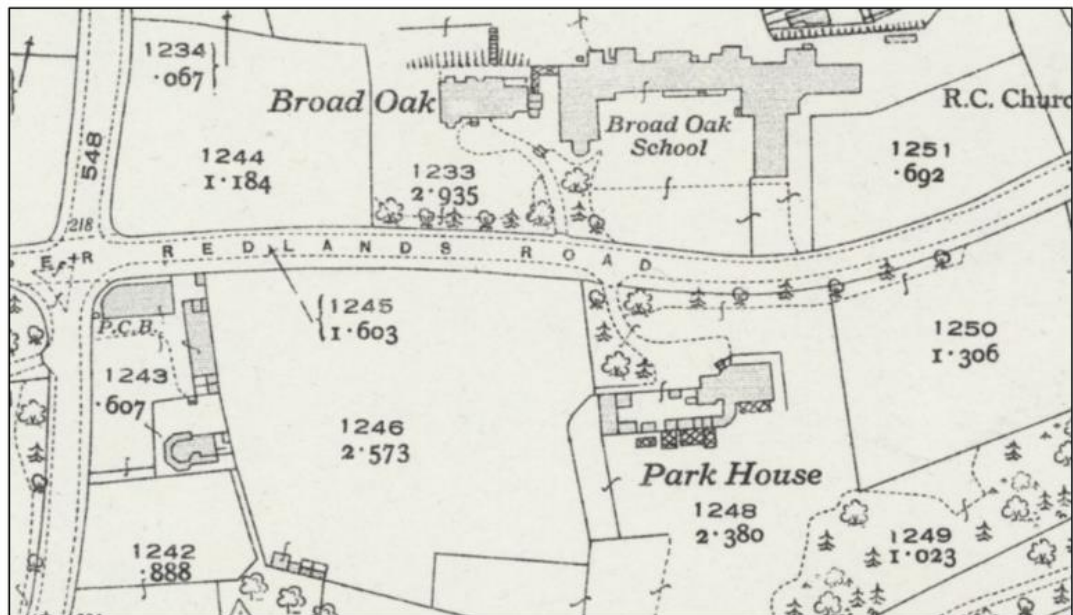


Fig. 8: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 25-inch England and Wales 1842-1952 series map of 1933 (National Library of Scotland).

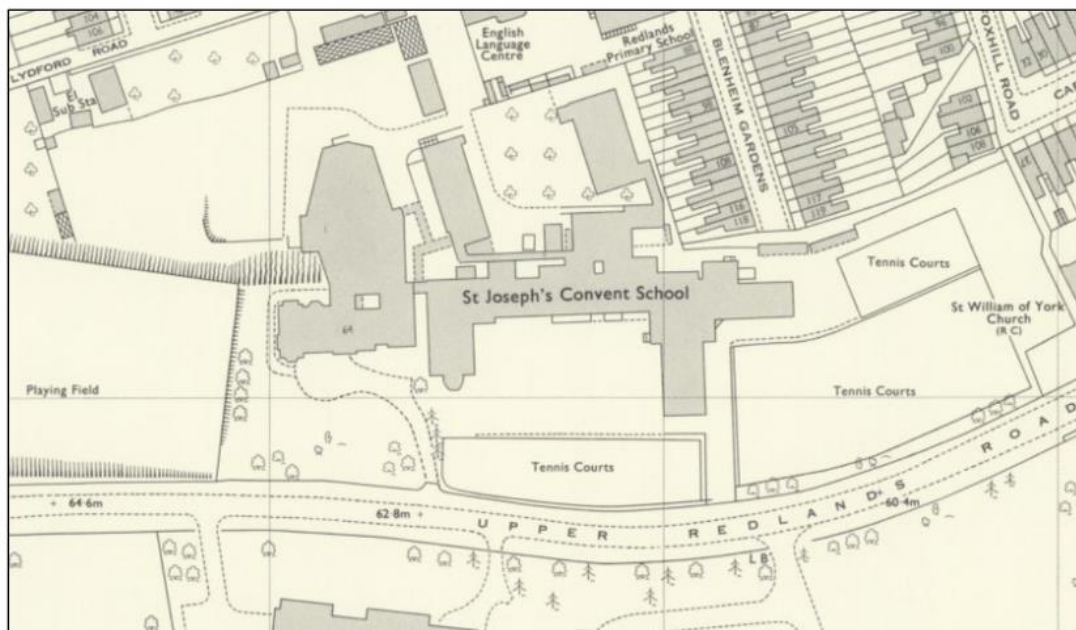


Fig. 9: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 1:2500-scale map of 1971 (National Library of Scotland).

The School Buildings

- 4.6 The series of imposing brick-built ranges to the east of Broad Oak House represent a sequence of early twentieth-century phases of construction, which appears to have been completed within a relatively short time-span, and before the Ordnance Survey map of 1933 (Fig. 8). These comprise three principal blocks, which progressively diminish in scale

from west to east (Figs. 10-14 and report front cover). The earliest and most westerly of these is of three storeys, with an attic stage, and is distinguished by a gabled cross-wing and three attic dormers on the south elevation (Figs. 3 and 10). Immediately to the east of this, the middle range is of notably lower roof-ridge height, and is of three storeys, with no attic level. B-Block, the furthest to the east, beyond the former hall, is of only two storeys, but in a comparable architectural style (Figs. 11-13).



Fig. 10: View, looking north-west, of the western and middle ranges of early twentieth-century school buildings to the east of Broad Oak House.

- 4.7 The three principal ranges display remarkable consistency of form and detail, implying the work of a single architect. Facades are in plain, unornamented red brick, with prominent fenestration providing a defining feature. Windows throughout feature stone cills with identical stone lintel beams which are flush to the brick façade and supported on embedded corbels with scalloped profiles. The slightly earlier western block has simple four-pane sashes, whereas the middle and B blocks have complex multiple-hung, timber-framed awning windows, of unusual type (Figs. 10-15 and report front cover). The windows of B Block have four multiple-hung awnings at the ground floor, and three at the first floor (Figs. 11 and 12). The tall, closely-spaced windows are arranged in groups of two on the middle block, and groups of the three on the B Block. These arrangements provide a sense of rhythm and form within what are otherwise plain, institutional facades.

- 4.8 Additional interest is provided by the regular spacing of gabled forms at eaves-level, within which first or second-floor windows are of greater height. The heights of window openings diminish proportionally from ground floor to first or second-floor level on each block. The middle block features a pointed-arch, 'gothic' doorway with roll-mouldings, to the left of the south elevation (Fig. 10), which adds an ecclesiastical touch, although the B Block has a plain doorway opening to the west of the front elevation. The eastern end of B Block is of plain brick, with no fenestration, whereas the rear elevation is of less imposing character, with wide, camber-headed window openings on both floors which incorporate pairs of the same multiple-hung awning windows found on the front elevation (Fig. 13). This elevation is partly obscured by fire-escape stairs, and other later accretions.



Fig. 11: View, looking north-east, of the south, front elevation of B Block.

- 4.9 The highly regular and consistent fenestration design across the south elevations of both middle and B Blocks, with white-painted frames and glazing bars, makes an important contribution to the character and architectural interest of the college buildings. The existing windows appear to be original features, but are of a complex form, and in an exposed location, which is not conducive to their preservation. A number appear to be incapable of being opened, and others display advanced decay of timber frames (Figs. 12 and 17).



Fig. 12: View, looking south, of the south elevation of B Block, with details of fenestration.

- 4.10 There is some variation in roof forms, with the middle block and adjoining former hall featuring hipped roofs, while the western and B blocks have gabled roofs of simple type (Figs. 10 and 14, and report front cover). Roof-lines throughout are enlivened by upstanding gable forms and the use of dormers. The general consistency of architectural treatment is strengthened by the use of Bridgewater tiles throughout, which add texture to the overall composition.



Fig. 13: View, looking south-west, of the east and north, rear elevations of B Block.

The Significance of the Buildings of St Joseph's College

- 4.11 The buildings, including B Block, comprise part of an integrated scheme, which is distinguished by its consistency of form and detail, in which the component ranges collectively comprise an imposing and aesthetically satisfying composition. While the buildings themselves are of a somewhat austere and institutional character, they are enlivened by their bold and highly regular fenestration. The buildings are therefore associated with design aesthetic heritage values of some importance, which partly relate to the architectural interest of Broad Oak House (Figs. 4 and 7).
- 4.12 The architect of the buildings is not known at the time of writing, although it is evident that these represent a planned scheme of school buildings from the early twentieth-century onwards. They are therefore illustrative of early purpose-built school buildings, and of the pioneering work of the Congregation of Sisters of St Marie Madeleine Postel. The buildings also have a physical and historical functional association with Broad Oak House, which remains integral to the college, and is a building of considerable significance in its own right. In view of this association, the buildings are considered to be curtilage-listed. As such, they are intrinsically of only a moderate level of significance overall, which principally derives from their architectural interest.



Fig. 14: View, looking north-east, of the middle range of school buildings and the adjoining former hall.

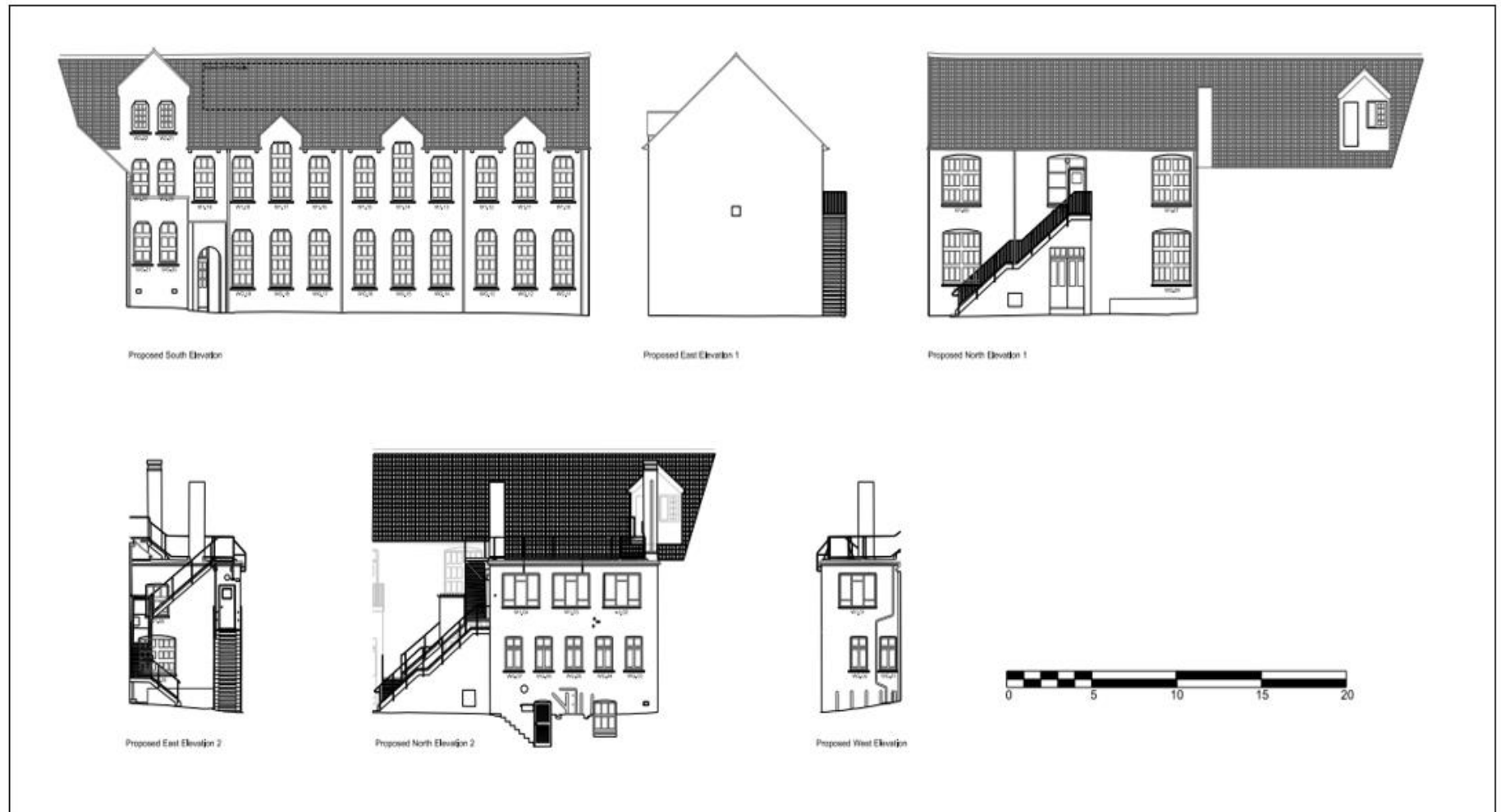


Fig. 15: Existing elevation drawings of B Block at St Joseph's College (The Bush Consultancy).

5. THE PROPOSED REPAIRS AND THEIR POTENTIAL IMPACTS

- 5.1 A full planning application has been submitted for the provision of replacement windows on the eastern wing of the college, otherwise known as the B1 English Block, together with the replacement of roof tiles and the installation of photovoltaic panels on the south-facing side of the roof of this block.

Replacement of Windows

- 5.2 A recent building condition survey has identified that the timber-framed windows of B Block are in urgent need of replacement, and detract from the external appearance of the building (Figs. 12 and 17). The existing windows feature white-painted frames and glazing bars, which in a number of observed cases are in an advanced state of decay. In some cases, this prevents the opening and closing of individual awning lights, with detrimental effects on the ventilation and energy efficiency of the building.

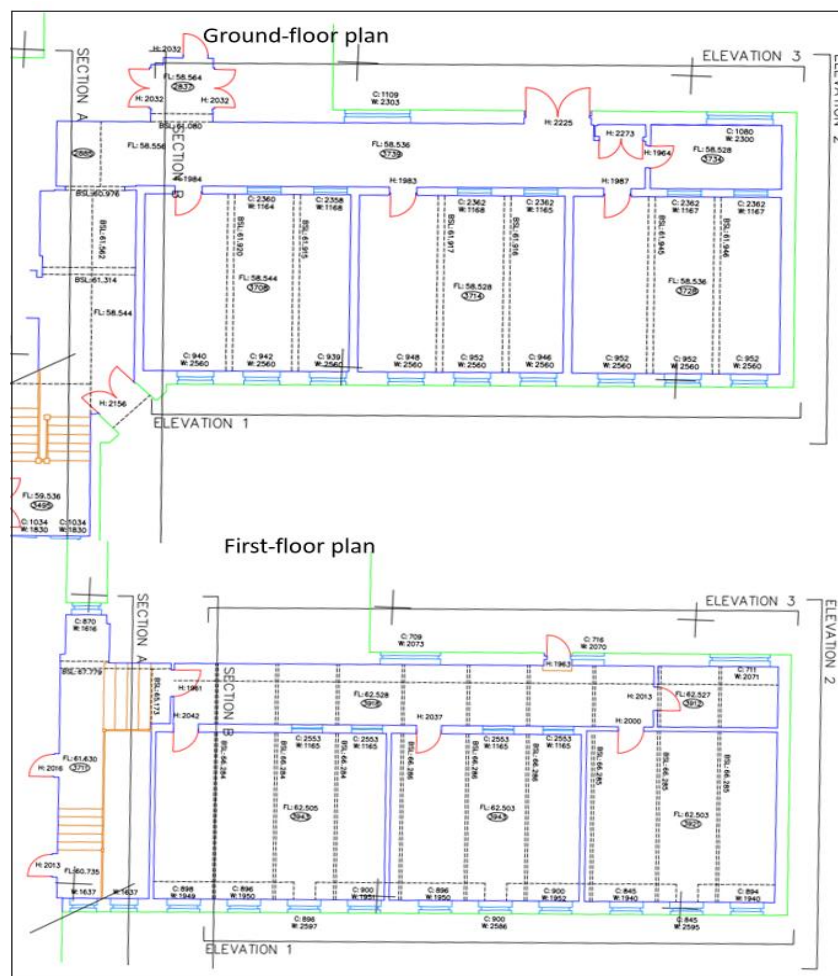


Fig. 16: Ground and first-floor plans of B Block, with location of window openings (Warner Surveys).



Fig. 17: Detail of ground-floor window of B Block, with evidence of advanced decay of window frames.

- 5.3 It is proposed to install UPVC-framed, triple-glazed windows, with glazing bars and detail of appropriate historic pattern, to match the existing fenestration on the school buildings (Figs. 12, 13, 15 and 16). The proposed replacement windows would considerably enhance the energy efficiency of the building, while maintaining its external appearance and character.

The Roof Tiles

- 5.4 The original roof-tiles are of Bridgewater 'Roman' type throughout, and these contribute to the appearance and character of the school buildings (Fig. 14). A significant number of tiles have become broken, or have deteriorated due to the effects of weathering, and

some are missing (Fig. 18). These tiles are no longer manufactured, and it is not possible to replicate their precise historical pattern on an economic basis. Similarly, sourcing salvaged historic tiles would not be economically feasible. Accordingly, it is now proposed to re-roof B Block with modern replacement tiles of similar type, which would provide an acceptable substitute for the originals. In conjunction with the re-roofing of B Block, it is proposed to improve the thermal performance of the roof-space of this building, and to further enhance its energy efficiency.



Fig. 18: Photographs of defective areas of tiled roof on B Block (St Joseph's College).

The Photovoltaic Panels

- 5.5 It is proposed to install photovoltaic panels on the southern side of the gable roof of B Block (Fig. 20). These would be visible within the northward views from Upper Redlands Road which incorporate the principal south elevation of the school buildings. The solar panels would provide the school with a valuable source of renewable energy, and reduce overall energy costs.



Fig. 19: View, looking north-west, of the south elevation and south-facing roof of B Block.

Assessing the Impact of Proposed Repairs

- 5.6 The current condition of window frames on B Block is such that they now represent a serious defect which has implications for the long-term use and conservation of the building (Fig. 17). Their replacement is therefore urgent and necessary. The replacement of the existing timber-framed windows with UPVC-framed examples of appropriate design, with individual awning frames and glazing bars, would retain the current external appearance and character of the building (Fig. 20).
- 5.7 The use of UPVC window frames would not be apparent in longer-range views, nor would the incorporation of triple glazing in the replacements affect the wider appearance of the building. Within views from ground-level, the use of modern replacement tiles, of similar form and profile as the existing would not result in any appreciable effect on the external appearance and character of B Block. The replacement of the existing tiles is a wholly necessary measure, which will enable the long-term conservation of the fabric of the building. In addition, the accompanying improvement of the thermal performance of the roof-space would enhance the overall energy efficient of the building.

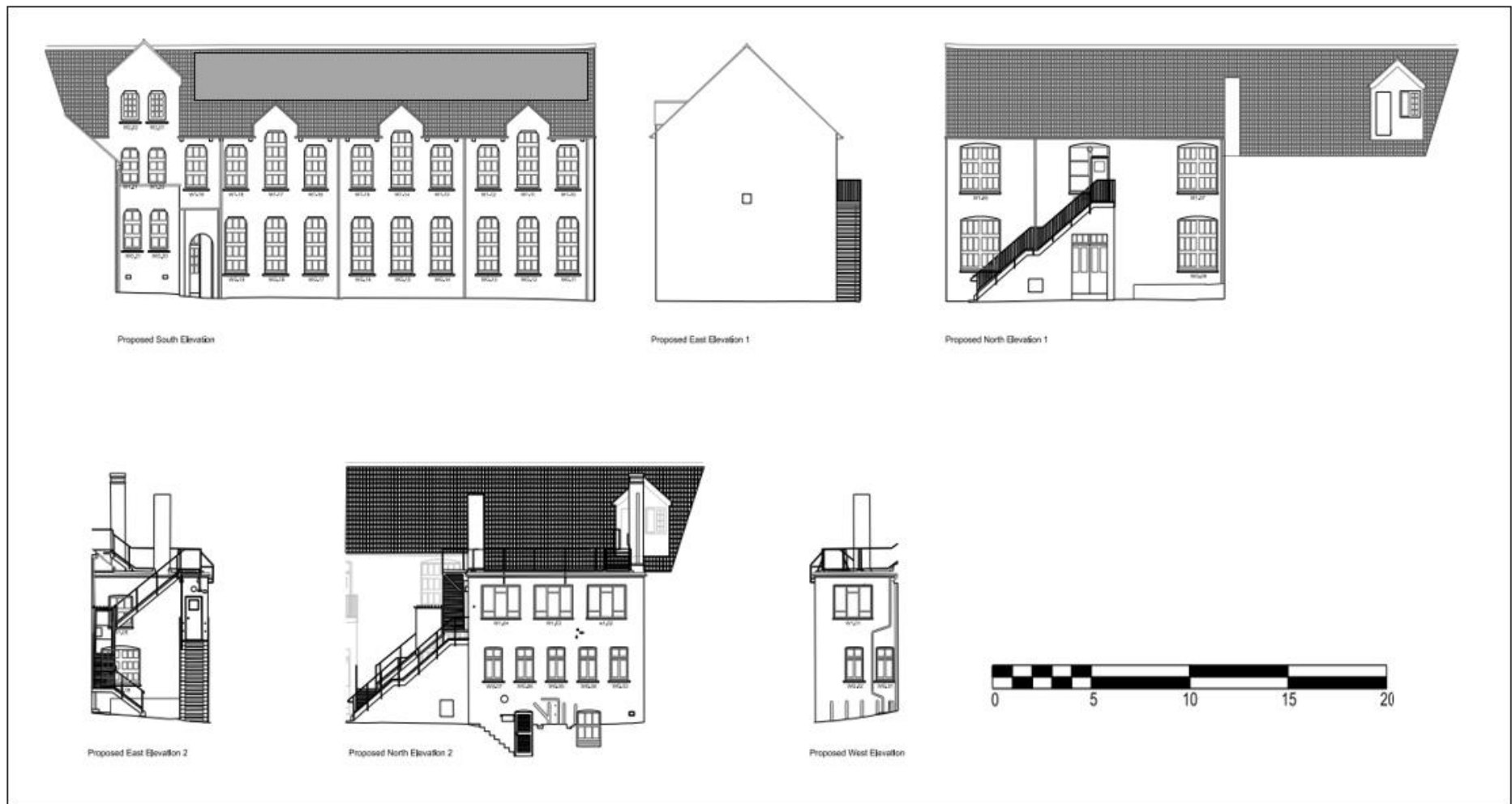


Fig. 20: Proposed elevation drawings of the B Block (The Bush Consultancy).

- 5.8 The proposed installation of photovoltaic panels on the south-facing roof of B Block would affect the external appearance of the building in northward views from Upper Redlands Road (Fig. 20), but would have comparatively little visibility within the school complex, due to the intervening built form of the former hall on the western side of B Block (Figs. 14 and 19). The photovoltaic panels would not be visible from Grade II-listed Broad Oak House, and would therefore not result in any impact to its wider setting or significance. Similarly, the proposed window replacements and re-roofing of B Block would have a minimal effect on the setting and significance of Broad Oak House. The proposed repairs would not affect the settings or significance of any other heritage assets, including Grade II-listed No. 11 Elmhurst Road, located 160m to the south-west. It is argued that any harm resulting from the installation of roof-mounted photovoltaic panels in this case would be balanced by the public benefit of establishing a source of renewable, carbon-free energy.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 St Joseph's College is a co-educational private day school, which was established on its present site in 1908, in association with a Convent. The original building on this site was Broad Oak House, a substantial red-brick and stone dwelling of 1870, which is listed at Grade II. The school expanded rapidly during the early twentieth century, with the addition of three imposing brick-built ranges, and other buildings, to the east of Broad Oak House. These represent three successive phases of construction, and are distinguished by their consistency of form and architectural detail. Collectively, they comprise an imposing composition within views from Upper Redlands Road, to the south, and are considered to be curtilage-listed in view of their physical and historic association with Broad Oak House. The buildings incorporate plain brick facades, but with bold and highly regular fenestration, which is their outstanding feature.
- 6.2 While the windows on the western range comprise simple sash types, the middle and B Blocks feature complex, multi-hung awning types, with timber frames and glazing bars. Window openings on the south elevation all have stone cills and stone lintel-beams supported by corbels of scalloped profile. This has resulted in a repetitive and highly distinctive arrangement across the south elevation of all blocks, which conveys a clear sense of architectural unity and which contributes to the interest and significance of these buildings. Window openings and fenestration diminish proportionally with successive floor levels. Roofs throughout are a mix of gable and hipped forms, with the use of dormers and upstanding gable forms at eaves level. Roof tiles are of historic Bridgewater pattern, which contribute to the appearance and character of the buildings. The early twentieth-century blocks are considered to be of a moderate level of significance, in view of their architectural interest and their illustrative value, in representing early examples of purpose-built school buildings.
- 6.3 It is proposed to replace the existing windows of B Block, which are badly affected by the decay of timber frames. Replacement windows would be of the same pattern as the existing, but would be triple-glazed and incorporate UPVC frames. This would greatly enhance the energy efficiency and ventilation of the building, and is considered to be urgently necessary. In addition, a recent building condition survey has identified the

deteriorating condition of the tiled roof of B Block, with a number of tiles broken, displaced and missing, with important implications for underlying fabric. It is therefore proposed to replace the existing tiles with modern examples of appropriate pattern, as tiles of the historic Bridgewater pattern are no longer available. Replacement of roof tiles would be undertaken in conjunction with improvements to the thermal properties of the roof-space of B Block, thus further enhancing the energy efficiency of this building. It is also proposed to install an array of photovoltaic panels on the south-facing roof of B Block, to provide a source of renewable energy.

- 6.4 The replacement of the existing timber-framed windows with UPVC-framed examples of appropriate design, with individual awning frames and glazing bars, would retain the current external appearance and character of the building. These would not be apparent in longer-range views, nor would triple glazing in replacement windows affect the wider appearance of the building. Within ground-level views, modern replacement tiles, of a similar pattern as the existing, would not result in any appreciable effect on the external appearance and character of B Block. The replacement of existing roof-tiles is a wholly necessary measure, which will secure the long-term conservation of the building. In addition, the accompanying improvement of the thermal performance of the roof-space would enhance its overall energy efficiency.
- 6.5 The proposed installation of photovoltaic panels on the south-facing roof of B Block would marginally affect the appearance of the building in northward views from Upper Redlands Road. However, this would have little visibility from adjoining areas on the southern side of the school, due to the intervening built form of the former hall on the western side of B Block. The proposed repairs and photovoltaic panels would not be directly visible from Grade II-listed Broad Oak House, and would therefore not result in any impact to its wider setting or significance. It is argued that any harm resulting from the installation of roof-mounted photovoltaic panels in this case would be balanced by the public benefit of establishing a sustainable source of renewable energy. Overall, the magnitude of impact on the buildings of St Joseph's College associated with these proposed measures is assessed as Minor, and the resulting significance of impact as Negligible (Tables 1 and 2).

- 6.6 The current repair proposals for B Block at St Joseph's College represent a pragmatic and necessary approach, which will be necessary for the long-term sustainable conservation and use of this building. These proposals would enhance the appearance and character of B Block, which is currently compromised by the deteriorating condition of its roof and windows. Such measures would not affect the wider setting of Grade II-listed Broad Oak House on the site, due to the effects of distance and intervening built form. The proposed photovoltaic panels on the south-facing roof of B Block would result in some limited change to its appearance in wider views, but any associated harm would be outweighed by the public benefits involved, and by the beneficial effects of the proposed repairs to the building. Such proposed changes would result in a minimal level of overall harm, and would therefore be in accordance with Policy EN1 of the Reading Borough Council Local Plan 2016-2036. They would also be in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, with particular reference to Paragraphs 205 and 212:

205. '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'.

and

212. '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'.

REFERENCES

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2015 *Standards and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment*.

Department for Communities and Local Government 1990 *Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act*,

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/part/VIII/chapter/I/crossheading/trees-in-conservation-areas>. [accessed 27.10.21].

Department for Communities and Local Government 2012 (rev. 2021) *National Planning Policy Framework*.

Ditchfield, P. H. and Page, W. (eds) 1923 'The Borough of Reading', *A History of the County of Berkshire*, Vol. 3, Victoria County History, London, pp. 342-364.

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

Historic England 2015a *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Making in the Historic Environment*.

Historic England 2015b *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets*

Historic England 2016 *Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice*.

Historic England 1978 [2024] 'Broad Oak, Upper Redlands Road,' National List No. 1155931, *National Heritage List for England*, <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1157100> [retrieved 28th July, 2024].

Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government 2016 [rev. 2021] *Planning Practice Guidance: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment-decision-making-historic-environment

Reading Borough Council 2007 *Redlands Conservation Area Appraisal*, Conservation Studio.

Reading Borough Council 2019 *Reading Borough Council Local Plan 2016-2036*, https://images.reading.gov.uk/2019/12/Local_Plan_Adopted_November_2019.pdf [accessed 22.3.22].



RIDGEWAY
HERITAGE CONSULTANCY

West End Farm, Mortimer, Reading RG7 2HT

0118 9333 147 | www.ridgewayheritage.com | richard@ridgewayheritage.com