

02 October 2024



Reading
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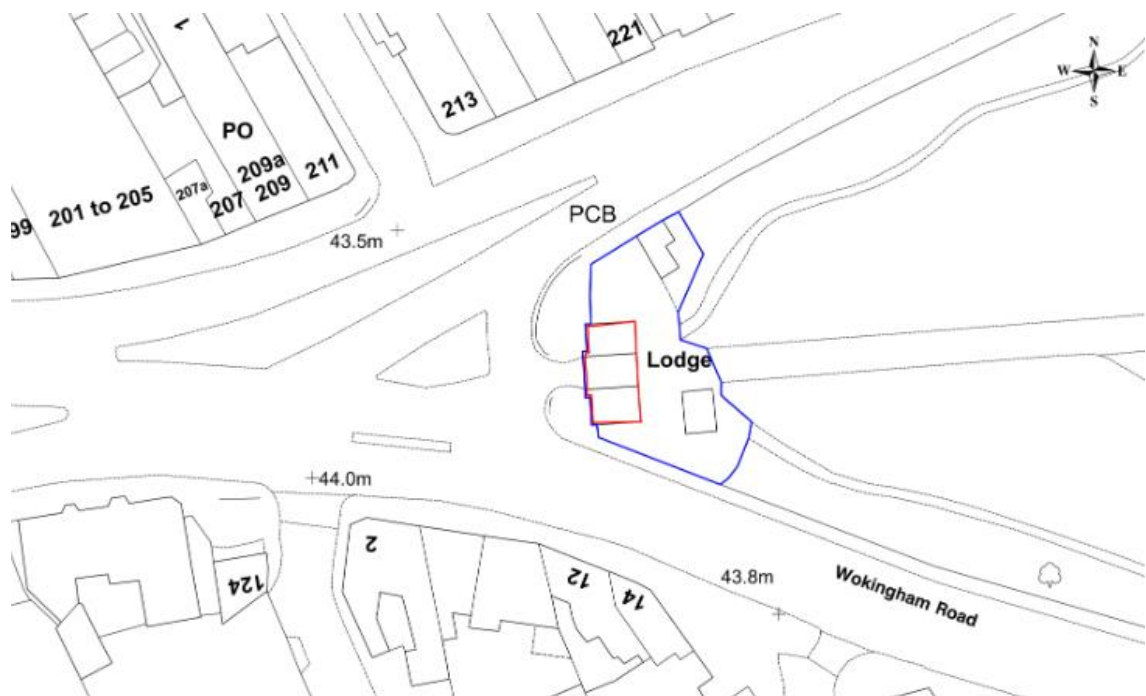
Title	PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT
Ward	Park
Planning Application Reference:	PL/24/0868
Site Address:	Reading Cemetery Arch, London Road, Reading
Proposed Development	Structural and fabric improvement following a Structural Engineer's surveys and following recent damage.
Report author	Marcie Rejwerska
Applicant	Reading Borough Council
Deadline:	4 th October 2024 (Extension of Time)
Recommendations	Grant Listed Building Consent, subject to conditions as follows:
Conditions	1. Time Limit Standard three years (LBC) 2. Approved Plans 3. Schedule of works to be submitted prior to commencement to include details of fixing and renewal of stonework which must match the existing stonework. 4. Prior to commencement of gate repair work, detailed recording of their appearance and damage to be submitted for record keeping ensuring the repairs are carried out in a sympathetic manner. 5. Testing of the proposed cleaning method to be carried out in inconspicuous but relevant location and results submitted to LPA before proceeding to assess whether the method proposed is appropriate.
Informatives	1. Terms 2. Complaints about construction 3. Positive and proactive - approval

1. Executive summary

- 1.1. This report explains the proposal for remedial structural work and fabric improvements to the western (front) façade of the Reading Cemetery Arch, including the iron entrance gates. The proposed works are to comprise the first phase of remedial works to the Arch lodges, as a result of a structural inspection completed recently which identifies a number of structural and non-structural concerns. The proposed works will address the most significant issue identified, the leaning pediment at the front elevation and the works are considered to be both urgent and appropriate and approval of consent is recommended.

2. Introduction and site description

- 2.1. The application is referred to Committee due to being a Council-own application.
- 2.2. The application site is at Cemetery Junction and comprises two entrance lodges attached via an arched gateway on the west entrance to Reading Cemetery, which are Grade II Listed. Reading Cemetery is also listed as a Grade II historic park and garden, including Grade II listed Andrews and Barrett family monuments. The site is also in close vicinity to the South Park Conservation Area.
- 2.3. The listing for the entrance lodges reads as follows: *"LONDON ROAD 1. 5128 (South Side) Entrance Lodges and gates to Cemetery (Formerly listed under Cemetery) SU 7373 8/77 22.3.57. II 2. Circa 1840 by William Brown (local architect). (Attributed to Nathaniel Briant however). 2 storeys. Bath stone. Arched entry with moulded architrave and keystone in centre of rectangular block with Doric pilasters with moulded entablature and pediment over. Flanking lodges with entablature and blocking course. Hipped slate roof with flanking chimneys. Each lodge 1 window, glazing bar sashes, with architrave surround. Rear: parapet; recessed centre; sides have shallow pediments to parapets. Contemporary gates, cast iron with a row of roses below spearhead rails. Listing NGR: SU7318873187"*
- 2.4. Site location plan:



3. The proposal

- 3.1. Listed building consent is sought for urgent structural repairs and limited fabric improvements, as identified within a structural inspection assessment carried out specialist conservators for the applicant, which identifies a number of concerns on site and makes recommendations for remedial works and additional assessments required. This proposal for consent includes remedial works to the west (front) façade only at this stage, due to limited financial resources.
- 3.2. Submitted plans and documentation:
 - Design and Access Statement, dated July 2024
 - Structural Inspection, Clive Hudson Associates Ltd, dated Nov. 2023
 - Heritage Statement, dated 30/05/2024
 - Location Plan, dated 06/06/2024

0109-001-M Existing Floor Plan, dated 05/03/2010

Received by the LPA on 09/07/2024

3959-202B – Roof Plan and Internal Elevations, dated Sept. 24

3959-201B – External Elevations, dated Sept. 24

Received by the LPA on 10/09/2024

4. Planning history

- 4.1. 970504 - Alterations and change of use of cemetery Lodge to Community / Police use – Application permitted
- 4.2. 970899 - Refurbishment and alterations including new rear window. – Application withdrawn
- 4.3. 980050 - Two free standing, non-illuminated, aluminium signs 3.05m x 1.52m displaying art work advertising a new police facility – Advert consent granted
- 4.4. 991948 - Erection of detached single storey building accommodating disabled toilet, changing room and shower room – Application permitted by Planning Applications Committee
- 4.5. 020368 - Building to house equipment for the continuous monitoring of ambient air pollutants – Application permitted
- 4.6. 231435/LBC – Alterations comprising internal reconfiguration, redecoration and recommissioning works. – Listed building consent granted on 8 January 2024 but not implemented.

5. Consultations

- 5.1. RBC Conservation Officer – No objections raised subject to conditions.
- 5.2. RBC Building Control – No comments received.
- 5.3. Site notices were also displayed on site.

6. Legal context

- 6.1. Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the LPA to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.
- 6.2. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF paragraph 12).
- 6.3. In this regard, the NPPF states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Plan 2019 according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).
- 6.4. Accordingly, the latest NPPF and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

National Planning Policy Framework (Section 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment)

Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

Policies:

CC1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CC7 Design and the Public Realm

EN1 Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment

7. Appraisal

- 7.1. The inspection assessment identifies a number structural and non-structural defects of which the majority appear to be resulting from long-standing issues which have not been addressed, such as significant structural cracking as a result of a movement issue as a result of the structure's proximity to a busy highway, identified in 2016.
- 7.2. The proposed works would comprise the first phase of remedial work to the Cemetery Arch including addressing the most significant concern which is the leaning pediment at the front elevation (see area circled on the photograph below).
- 7.3. The works will include:
- Repair of the cast iron gates, repair gate fixings and cracks internally within the archway.
 - Cleaning of the entire western façade.
 - Dismantling the south end of the pediment to enable fixing of the stone and re-pointing.
 - Fixing of various cracks on the stonework on the western elevation.
 - Replacement and repair of damaged jambs around ground floor right-side window at west elevation.
- 7.4. Overall, whilst the listed building has structural problems and needs further work, the proposal is described as the first phase of a more comprehensive structural improvement to be continued. The cleaning would inevitably result in very minor damage to the external surface appearance, and the details for the gate repairs would be necessary; however, the proposed works overall would preserve the significance of this Grade II Listed building.

8. Equality implications

- 8.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
- 8.2. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues, and priorities in relation to this particular application.

9. Conclusion & planning balance

- 9.1 The proposed works are considered necessary to ensure the longevity of the heritage asset and to ensure that the west elevation pediment is made safe and does not pose a risk to the public. The works methodology is considered appropriate and reasonable to address the immediate concerns and issues identified in the structural survey undertaken. The application is therefore recommended for approval, subject to conditions, as set out in the recommendation above.

Case Officer: Marcie Rejwerska

Plans

1. Site photo taken by case officer in November 2023 (Pediment to be repaired circled in red)



2. Proposed western elevation plan



West elevation