



1 Example Street London SW1A 1AA

HERITAGE STATEMENT

On behalf of Example Developments Ltd

Wren

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Regulated by the Royal Town Planning Institute

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Executive Summary

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement accompanies a full planning application for the change of use of the vacant upper floors of 1 Example Street, London SW1A 1AA, to four residential units, together with a single-storey rear extension, the repair and reinstatement of the front elevation, and associated works. The Site lies within a conservation area and comprises an early-nineteenth-century terraced building that, while not itself listed, makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of that area. The conservation area is the principal designated heritage asset engaged by the proposals.
- 1.2 The significance of the conservation area is assessed below by reference to the archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic interest of its planned nineteenth-century terraces and the coherent townscape they create, and by reference to the evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal values through which that interest is experienced. The building's own significance, and its contribution to the wider asset, are found to reside principally in its front elevation, its unbroken front roof slope and the regular rhythm of its openings — the elements most legible from the public realm.
- 1.3 The scheme has been designed to conserve that significance. The front elevation is retained and repaired, no alteration is made to the front roof slope, the previously refused rear dormers are omitted, and the additional accommodation is taken within the existing roof volume and within a subordinate single-storey rear extension confined to the private rear. On the calibration set out in Section 6, the proposals would give rise to a low level of less than substantial harm at the lower end of the spectrum, arising solely from the rear extension, and would deliver identified heritage benefits — the repair of a front elevation that presently detracts through disrepair, and the securing of an optimum viable use for long-vacant floorspace. Applying the heritage balance in Section 7, those benefits, with the wider public benefits, clearly outweigh the low harm identified.

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Introduction

2.1 Purpose and scope

- 2.1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Wren on behalf of Example Developments Ltd ("the Applicant") in support of a full planning application at 1 Example Street, London SW1A 1AA ("the Site"). Its purpose is to identify the heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals, to describe and assess their significance, and to assess the impact of the proposals upon that significance, so that the decision-maker can discharge the statutory duties and apply the relevant policy identified in Section 3. It is a material consideration in the determination of the application and should be read alongside the Planning Statement and the Design and Access Statement.

2.2 Assessment method and competence

- 2.2.1 The assessment has been prepared by a chartered member of the Royal Town Planning Institute with experience in the management of change to heritage assets, working to the standards expected of the profession. It follows a significance-led method: significance is established first, on the basis of evidence, and the assessment of impact and of the heritage balance then follows from it, rather than the reverse.

2.3 Sources

- 2.3.1 The assessment draws on an external inspection of the Site and its surroundings; the Council's conservation area appraisal and management proposals; documentary and cartographic sources, including a regression of the historic Ordnance Survey mapping (Section 4); the local historic environment record; and the relevant online heritage registers. Significance and the effect of the proposals on setting have been assessed having regard to Historic England's guidance on the assessment of the significance of heritage assets and on the setting of heritage assets, and to the four heritage values (evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal) through which the guidance frames the interest of a place.
- 2.3.2 This is a specimen document; all names, figures, dates, references and details are illustrative and do not relate to any real site, building or heritage asset.

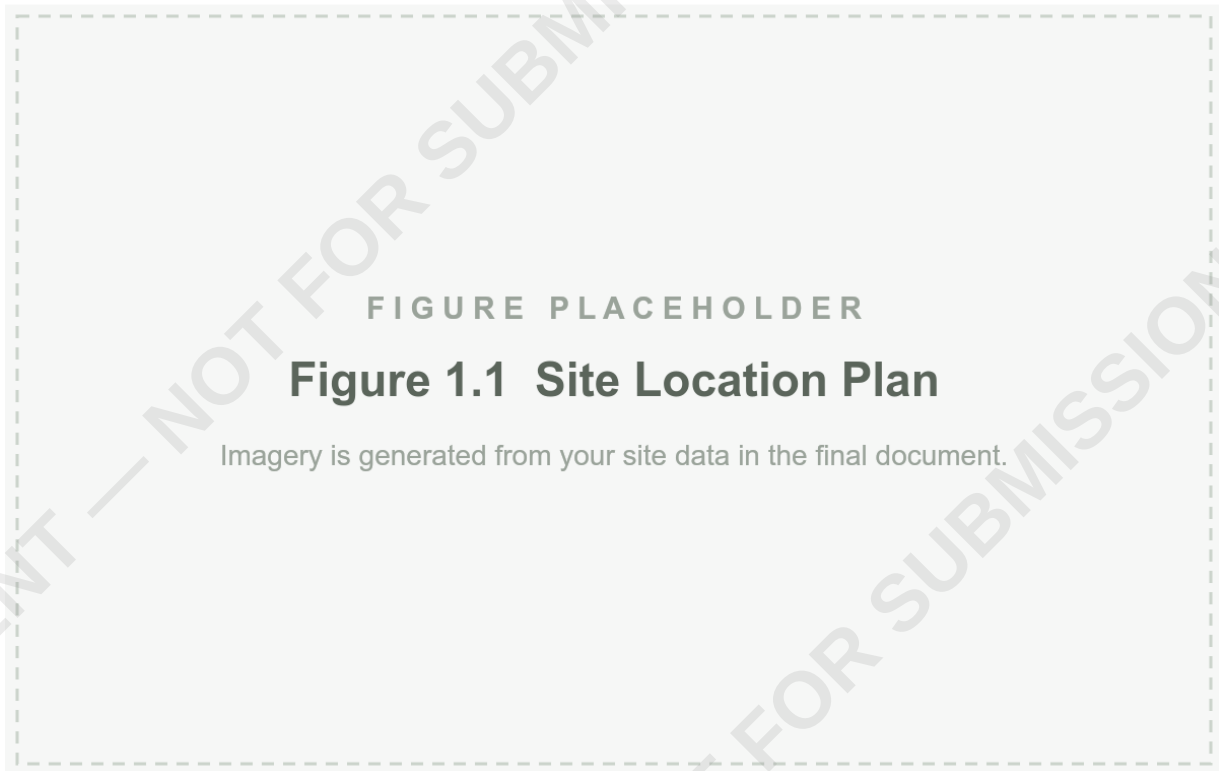


Figure 1.1 Site Location Plan

Source: Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database rights 2026

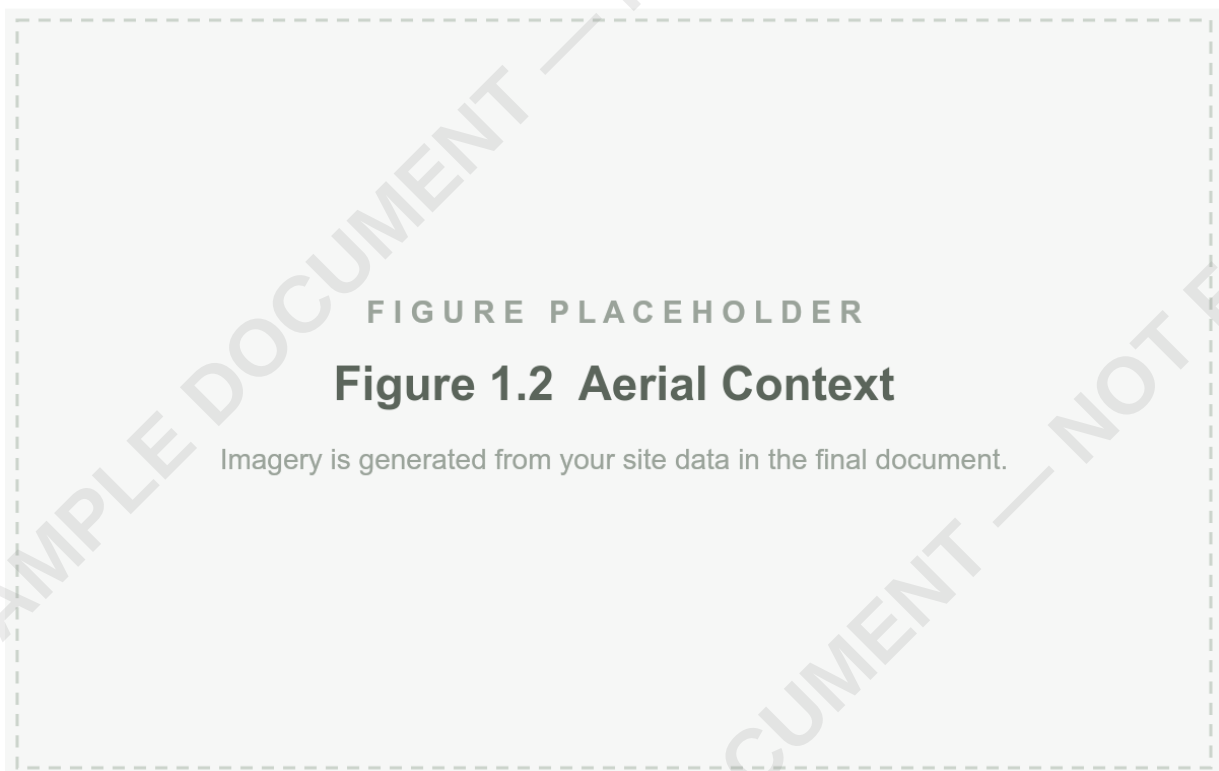


Figure 1.2 Aerial Context

Source: Mapbox / Maxar

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Legislation and Policy

3.1 The statutory duties

- 3.1.1 Because the Site lies within a conservation area, section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special attention be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. The building is not listed, so the section 66(1) duty in respect of listed buildings and their settings is not engaged; were a listed building or its setting affected, that duty would apply and is noted here for completeness. The courts have held that the section 72(1) duty is not a mere material consideration to be given such weight as the decision-maker sees fit: considerable importance and weight must be attached to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area, and to any harm that would arise. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the application to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

3.2 National policy

- 3.2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework is an important material consideration. It requires an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage asset affected, including any contribution made by its setting, to a level of detail proportionate to the asset's importance and sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on that significance. The Framework attaches great weight to the conservation of a designated heritage asset, irrespective of the level of any harm, and requires any harm to be justified by a clear and convincing rationale. Where a proposal would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, paragraph 215 of the Framework requires that harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. The Planning Practice Guidance on the historic environment supplements the Framework and is applied throughout this assessment.

3.3 Guidance and the local plan

- 3.3.1 The assessment applies Historic England's Good Practice Advice on the assessment of significance and on the setting of heritage assets, and the value-based approach to significance set out in its Conservation Principles. The relevant development plan policies are, for the purposes of this specimen, illustrative: Policy HC1 (conservation areas and the historic environment) and Policy D1 (design quality and local character), which together give effect at the local level to the statutory duty and to the Framework. The Council's conservation area appraisal is a material consideration and is treated as evidence of the character and appearance the section 72(1) duty protects.

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Historical Development

4.1 Origins and early development

- 4.1.1 The building is understood to date from the early nineteenth century and forms part of a coherent terrace laid out as a single speculative phase as the surrounding fields were developed for building. The terrace was constructed in yellow stock brick with a natural slate roof and painted stucco detailing to the ground floor, in the restrained classical manner typical of speculative development of the period, with a regular vertical rhythm of openings and a consistent building line and parapet height maintained along the street.

4.2 Cartographic regression

- 4.2.1 A regression of the historic Ordnance Survey mapping illustrates the development of the Site and its context and is reproduced at Figures 4.1 to 4.3. The First Edition of the 1870s shows the terrace already established to its present frontage line, with long rear garden plots and a modest closet wing to the rear of the Site — the pattern of a residential terrace with the deep back-land characteristic of the area's first phase of development. By the edition of the 1890s the rear plots have begun to be built up with ancillary outbuildings, and the ground floor of the Site is shown in a use consistent with the commercial frontage that survives today, reflecting the parade's shift to a mixed-use character. The edition of the 1930s records the consolidation of that mixed-use pattern and the enlargement of the rear closet wing, but no change to the principal frontage, roofline or plot width, which remain as first laid out. The regression therefore confirms two points of significance: the frontage and roofscape are of the terrace's primary phase and are substantially unaltered, whereas the rear of the plot has been the location of successive, lower-value change throughout its history.

4.3 Later alterations

- 4.3.1 The building has been subject to further alterations that are legible in the surviving fabric and consistent with the cartographic evidence. These include the twentieth-century replacement of the ground-floor shopfront, the subdivision of the upper floors in connection with their use for storage, and the addition of a single-storey rear extension in the early 2000s. Internally, elements of the original plan form and joinery survive, though much has been lost or altered. These interventions are distinguished, in the significance assessment that follows, from the surviving historic fabric of primary interest — principally the front elevation, the front roof slope and the rhythm of openings — and, being of the rear and of later date, they are found to make a limited or neutral contribution to significance.

FIGURE PLACEHOLDER

Figure 2.1 Historic Ordnance Survey Map, 1870s

Imagery is generated from your site data in the final document.

Figure 2.1 Historic Ordnance Survey Map, 1870s
Source: National Library of Scotland

FIGURE PLACEHOLDER

Figure 2.2 Historic Ordnance Survey Map, 1890s

Imagery is generated from your site data in the final document.

Figure 2.2 Historic Ordnance Survey Map, 1890s
Source: National Library of Scotland

FIGURE PLACEHOLDER

Figure 2.3 Historic Ordnance Survey Map, 1930s

Imagery is generated from your site data in the final document.

Figure 2.3 Historic Ordnance Survey Map, 1930s
Source: National Library of Scotland

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Significance

5.1 Approach and heritage values

- 5.1.1 Significance is assessed by reference to the four interests identified in the Framework — archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic — and, following Historic England's Conservation Principles, by reference to the evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal values through which those interests are held and experienced. The assessment addresses in turn the designated asset (the conservation area), the contribution of the building to it, and the contribution of setting, before drawing the threads together in a summary of significance.

5.2 Significance of the conservation area

- 5.2.1 The conservation area is a designated heritage asset of high significance at the local level. Its architectural interest lies in its substantially intact nineteenth-century terraces, of consistent scale, plot width, materials and detailing, and in the coherent townscape those terraces create through a continuous building line, a uniform roofscape and a regular rhythm of openings and frontages. Its historic interest lies in the legibility of its planned, speculative development and in the survival of the mixed-use frontage — active commercial uses at ground floor with residential accommodation above — that has characterised the parade since the nineteenth century. Aesthetically, the value of the area is experienced in the disciplined uniformity of the street scene; its evidential value lies in the survival of original fabric and plan form across the terraces; and its communal value lies in the area's continuing role and familiar local identity. The Council's conservation area appraisal identifies these attributes as the positive characteristics the designation exists to protect.

5.3 Significance of the building and its contribution

- 5.3.1 Considered individually, the building is an undesignated heritage asset whose significance derives principally from its architectural interest as a substantially intact early-nineteenth-century terraced building and from its historic interest as part of the planned development of the area. Within that significance, the elements of primary importance are the principal front elevation — its proportions, its traditional shopfront, its sash windows and detailing — the unbroken front roof slope, and the regular rhythm of openings, all of which are legible from the public realm and are the elements through which the building contributes to the conservation area. The rear elevation, the later closet wing and the early-2000s rear extension are of secondary or neutral interest, and the present disrepair of parts of the front elevation is a detracting element rather than a positive one. The building therefore makes a positive contribution to the significance of the conservation area, concentrated in its frontage and roofscape.

5.4 Setting and key views

- 5.4.1 The contribution of setting has been assessed following the staged approach in Historic England's guidance: identifying the assets affected, defining their settings, assessing the contribution setting makes to significance, and then (in Section 6) assessing the effect of the proposals upon it. The setting in which the significance of the conservation area is principally experienced is the public realm of its streets, and in particular the sequential views along Example Street in which the disciplined building line, uniform roofscape and rhythm of frontages are read as a coherent whole. The Site is experienced as one bay within that sequence. The rear of the Site, by contrast, is enclosed by boundary walls and the backs of surrounding properties and is not part of any public or designed view; it makes no material contribution to the significance of the conservation area and has been the location of change throughout the Site's history. Setting therefore contributes to significance chiefly through the frontage and roofline as seen from the street, and hardly at all through the enclosed rear.

5.5 Summary of significance

- 5.5.1 Drawing these threads together, the significance engaged by the proposals is concentrated in the frontage and roofscape of the building as experienced in the street scene of the conservation area. It is there that the architectural and historic interest, and the aesthetic and evidential values, of the asset are principally held. The enclosed rear of the plot, and the later fabric within it, hold limited significance and have low sensitivity to change. This calibrated understanding of where significance lies — and where it does not — is carried into the assessment of impact that follows.



Figure 3.1 *Listed Buildings in the Vicinity*

Source: Historic England / Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database rights 2026

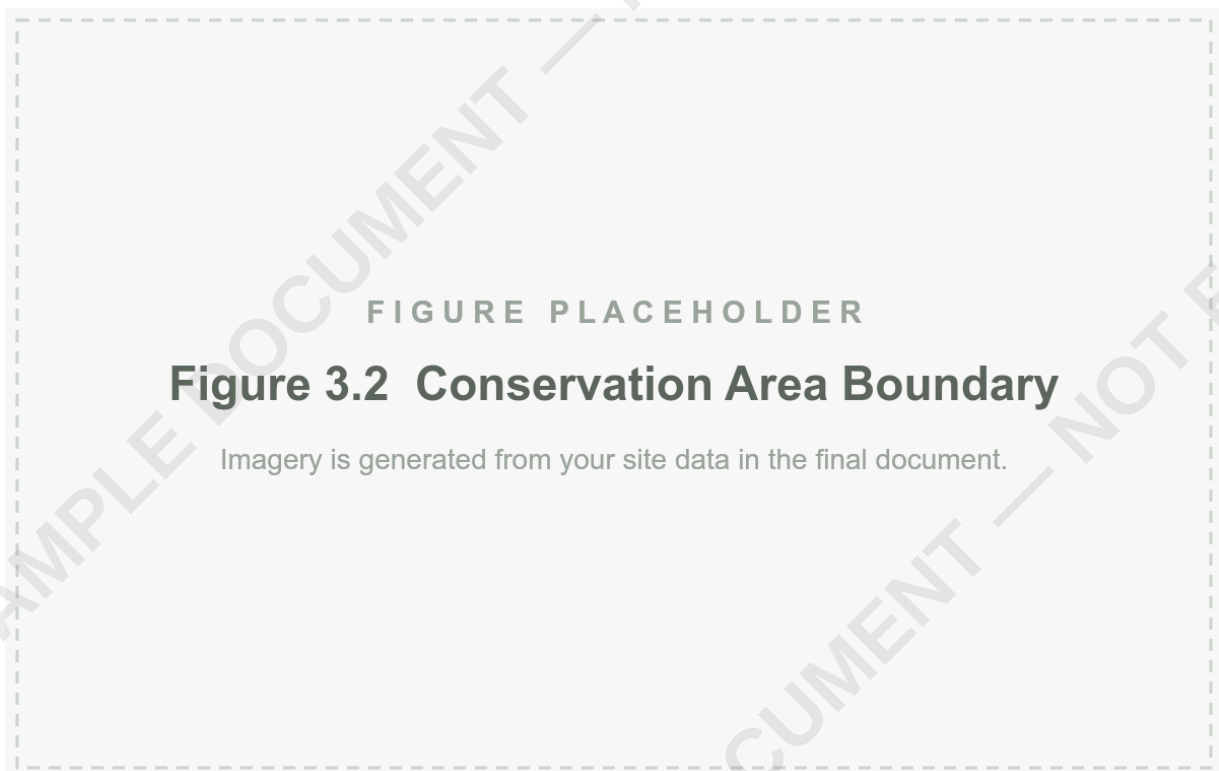


Figure 3.2 *Conservation Area Boundary*

Source: planning.data.gov.uk / Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database rights 2026

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Assessment of Impact

6.1 Direct physical impact on the building

- 6.1.1 The proposals conserve the elements identified as being of primary significance. The principal front elevation is retained in its entirety, with its shopfront, sash windows and detailing repaired and reinstated where necessary using appropriate materials and traditional methods; no alteration is made to the front roof slope; and the additional accommodation within the roof is lit by discreet conservation rooflights to the rear slope only, so that the roofscape as seen from the street is unchanged. The previously refused rear dormers have been omitted altogether. The physical intervention to the fabric of primary significance is therefore limited to repair and reinstatement, which sustains rather than harms significance.

6.2 Impact on the setting and character of the conservation area

- 6.2.1 The one element giving rise to harm is the single-storey rear extension. It is subordinate in scale to the host building, sits below the level of the neighbouring boundary walls, and is legible as a later addition in complementary materials. Because it is confined to the enclosed rear of the plot — the part of the Site found in Section 5 to make little or no contribution to the significance of the conservation area — its effect is not appreciable from Example Street or from any of the sequential public views in which the significance of the area is experienced. The building line, roofscape and rhythm of frontages that give the street its character are wholly unaffected. The extension nonetheless represents new fabric within the curtilage of a positive contributor to the conservation area, and on a properly cautious assessment it gives rise to a limited degree of harm to significance, addressed in the calibration below.

6.3 Cumulative and construction-stage considerations

- 6.3.1 No other application affecting the significance of the conservation area is understood to be in prospect at the Site such that a cumulative heritage impact would arise. Construction-stage effects on the retained historic fabric — in particular the protection of the front elevation and roof during the works — can be controlled by a condition requiring a method statement for the repair and reinstatement works, ensuring that the conservation benefits identified below are secured and that no inadvertent harm arises during construction.

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Heritage Balance and Conclusion

7.1 Level of harm

- 7.1.1 Applying the Framework, the proposals would give rise to less than substantial harm to the significance of the conservation area, at the lower end of that spectrum, arising solely from the single-storey rear extension. That characterisation follows from Section 5: the harm affects the enclosed rear of the plot, which holds limited significance and is not part of the setting through which the significance of the area is experienced, while the frontage and roofscape that carry that significance are conserved and, in part, enhanced. The finding of less than substantial harm does not diminish the weight the harm carries: great weight attaches to the conservation of the asset, and, under section 72(1) of the 1990 Act, considerable importance and weight must be given to the desirability of preserving the character and appearance of the conservation area and to the harm identified.

7.2 Heritage benefits

- 7.2.1 The proposals also deliver identified heritage benefits. The repair and reinstatement of the front elevation would remedy a present state of disrepair that detracts from the significance of the conservation area, returning the element of primary significance to good condition — an enhancement of the character and appearance of the area of the kind the statutory duty positively invites. Securing a viable long-term residential use for floorspace that is currently vacant would deliver the optimum viable use of the building recognised by the Framework as a heritage benefit, sustaining the asset and its maintenance into the future. These are heritage benefits properly weighed on the same side of the balance as the wider public benefits.

7.3 The heritage balance and conclusion

- 7.3.1 The public benefits of the scheme are set out in full in the Planning Statement and include the delivery of four homes on previously developed land in a highly accessible location, the return of long-vacant floorspace to use, and the support this gives to the vitality of the parade; to these fall to be added the heritage benefits identified above. Weighing those benefits against the low level of less than substantial harm arising from the rear extension — and giving that harm the considerable importance and weight the statute and the Framework require — the balance under paragraph 215 of the Framework falls clearly in favour of the proposals. The clear and convincing justification for the limited harm is made out: the harm is confined to the least significant part of the Site, it is the by-product of a scheme that conserves and repairs the most significant part, and it is outweighed by the heritage and public benefits delivered. The proposals accordingly preserve, and in respect of the front elevation enhance, the character and appearance of the conservation area, and accord with the statutory duty, the development plan and the Framework.

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