The Mount Conservation Area
Conservation Area Appraisal, November 2026

A community-led Conservation Area Appraisal

Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee on behalf of Reading Borough Council



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Foreword by Councillor Micky Leng



[To be added]

Councillor Micky Leng, Lead Councillor for Planning and Assets

Initial Statement

Reading has fifteen Conservation Areas. Each Conservation Area (CA) has an individual Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA).

Historic England (HE) recommends that appraisals should be undertaken for each Conservation Area and that these should be reviewed every five years to ensure that they reflect the up-to-date situation and are continuing to do the job they are designed for – to protect 'the character or appearance of an area which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'.

Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC) is an independent community-led body set up in 2016 to advise Reading Borough Council when reviewing CAAs or policies for the preservation and enhancement of CAs, heritage sites or other features of historic importance.

The Mount Conservation Area was formally designated on 24 April 1987, following a period of public consultation. It was last appraised by the Council's external consultants, The Conservation Studio of Cirencester, in April 2009. Their report was formally adopted by the Council at that time and, as many of that report's findings and recommendations have been found to remain relevant today, they have been carried forward in this Appraisal where appropriate.

This Appraisal has been prepared by the Reading CAAC, using the Reading Toolkit, an adaptation of the Oxford Character Assessment Toolkit, an approach to carrying out appraisals recommended by Historic England.

The Appraisal is preceded by a one page summary of the CA. The first part of the appraisal comprises a Statement of Special Interest, which summarises the key qualities and features which give the area its character and which justify the special protection afforded by a conservation area. This is followed by a more detailed analysis of each of the key elements and areas.

The existing boundaries of the CA have been reviewed and all of the areas currently included merit retention. An extension to the boundary of the CA is not proposed.

A number of changes have been made to the appraisal and the format of the document since the 2009 review:

- The content of the document is in line with current HE guidance;
- We have placed an increased emphasis on trees and green spaces in this appraisal because of our heightened awareness of their importance in an urban area such as The Mount CA;
- An action plan has been included in paragraph 8 to set out recommendations for the future management of the area to maintain its special character;
- National and local planning legislation, frameworks and policies have not been listed in detail but are summarised in paragraph 1.1;
- Photographic appendices have been included listed buildings, buildings of townscape merit, views, trees and green spaces;
- Details of the consultation process are included in Appendix 1;

- A full description of the archaeology and history of development of the area is included in Appendix 2 with a summary in paragraph 3.

Within the body of the document, where there have been significant changes for better or worse to the area since the last review e.g. property renovation or neglect, these have been mentioned.

At the time of the last review The Progress Theatre was not highly valued and was regarded as having a negative impact on the character and appearance of the CA. It was included, not on its own merits, but to "…reasonably round off the area". In this review that opinion has been reassessed for the reasons below.

The Progress Theatre is a landmark building in the CA contrasting with the surrounding nineteenth century residential properties. Its modern 1960s architecture pre-dominates, a style which is increasingly being appreciated today. The origins of the building go back to 1881 when the Mildmay Club, founded by Arthur Warwick Sutton two years earlier, moved into a corrugated iron building on the site. It originally had an ornamental 'Swiss front and porch' to the south designed by prolific local architect F W Albury.

The building has been in community use for almost 150 years. The hall of the club for working men now houses the stage and auditorium of the theatre and is a hidden survival of a metal structure very common in the mid nineteenth-century but much rarer today. Additions were made to the hall during the First World War when it was an extension to Sutherlands war hospital. It had various uses including as a boys' club until it was sold in 1949 and purchased by the Co-operative Society. The Co-op converted it to a theatre which was rented by Progress from 1951. Major improvements for use a theatre, mainly carried out by volunteers took place in the 1960s.

The Progress Theatre has links with notable local and national figures. It was supported by both Albert Cusden and Phoebe Cusden (former Mayor of Reading responsible for the post-war twinning of Reading and Düsseldorf). Famous actors and performers who have taken part in productions at the theatre include Kenneth Branagh and Marianne Faithfull. Vanessa Redgrave visited the theatre in December 1961 to be interviewed about her work by Progress Director, Norman Bishop.

Improvements to the boundary treatment of the site would enhance the appearance of the conservation area.



Figure 1: Progress Theatre from the south east in 1964. A cropped version of this image appeared in the Reading Chronicle. Image courtesy of Reading Museum/Reading Chronicle Collection (Reading Borough Council). All rights reserved.



Figure 2: The Progress Theatre November 2025 (Image Claire Truman)

We are grateful to Berkshire Archaeology, Reading Borough Libraries, Reading Museum and Royal Berkshire Archives for their assistance with producing this revised appraisal and permission to reproduce images and maps as noted in the text.

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Statement of Special Interest

SS1 Introduction and Summary

The Mount Conservation Area is located to the south of the town centre of Reading on a contour ridge that runs east-west. The Conservation Area (CA) comprises two parallel streets running south to north, linked by two shorter streets of the same name running west-east at the northern end and middle of the south-north 'arms'. The majority of the buildings in The Mount itself comprise a unique and distinctive group of buildings of both architectural and local historic value. They form the core of the conservation area. They are listed Grade II. These buildings date from c.1876 and were built for Huntley & Palmers' clerks, foremen and managers. They comprise a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced houses with common design and decorative features. All the properties were constructed of London stock bricks with paler detailing and banding, and with slate roofs.

Below is a summary of elements which create the area's character and justify its designation as a CA to assist key decisions on its development and enhancement. Later sections of this appraisal provide greater detail. The key characteristics are:

- The close-knit street block listed houses purpose-built for Huntley & Palmers' employees;
- The distinctive and unique character of the houses, constructed of London stock bricks with paler brick banding and detailing;
- The consistent retention of much of their original character and appearance with few detrimental changes by way of the addition of inconsistent materials;
- Retention of original brick walls including frontage and railings throughout the area;
- Retention of the urban grain, with few detrimental changes by way of new development;
- Distinctive local details such as the use of Caithness Flagstone Series of stone to form roadside kerbs and channels – only found elsewhere in Reading in Fatherson Road - close to the Eldon Square Conservation Area - and iron drain covers manufactured in Katesgrove;
- Good tree cover within the grounds of individual properties and throughout the area;
- Properties fronting Christchurch Road within the CA are of a similar age, but of a different style, more typical of this area of Reading, and again retaining original walls and/or railings;
- The CA has three character areas distinguished by age, architectural style and building materials:

  Character area 1: The Mount and its Christchurch Road frontage – the 'core' of the CA

  Character area 2: Hillside, Lower Mount/Allcroft Road – green with less urban density

  Character area 3: 53, 53A, Linden Mews, 55 Christchurch Road and the Progress Theatre – to the west of the core of the CA
- The curtilage of the Hillside site is enhanced by its extensive boundary tree cover;

- Together, Hillside and The Mount represent an urban and industrial counterpart of 'the country landowner's estate village and big house'; Suttons' ownership and influence prevail in Character Area 3 where buildings remain that were associated with 'Sutherlands' – the 1840s substantial landmark domestic property that the Sutton family occupied during the 1880s, demolished in the 1970s. These two properties, along with 'Cintra Lodge' directly to the south of Christchurch Road (since demolished), formed a cluster of Sutton family properties in close proximity to The Mount.

SS2 Significance and Key Positive Features

The core of the designated Conservation Area clearly demonstrates a planned form being built specifically for a group of Huntley & Palmers' employees, and formed part of the continuing development spread of substantial suburban villas in this south east direction out of Reading.

Features that make a positive of the conservation area: contribution to the historic character and appearance:

- Retention of original buildings and their settings with few detrimental changes by way of new development and/or addition of non-traditional materials;
- Retention of original brick walls and railings throughout the area;
- Good tree cover within the grounds of individual properties and throughout the area;
- The tranquil nature of area: it is a tranquil environment in the core area, away from Christchurch Road, reflecting the original street pattern and urban development.

SS3 Issues and vulnerabilities

Features that have a negative impact on the historic character and appearance of the conservation area:

- White painted brickwork at number 25 The Mount;
- Some walls in need of repair on the Christchurch Road frontage;
- Some overgrowth of walls and railings with hedges along Christchurch Road obscuring these features;
- Lack of traditional street furniture, including street lighting;
- Poor street and pavement surfaces with little use of traditional materials;
- Mixed 'conservation area' signage;
- Over-reliance on individual telegraph poles throughout the area with attendant wires radiating out to the houses within;
- Whilst there are some localised parking restrictions in The Mount, there are areas without, which leads to daytime parking by commuters and users of the Christchurch Road shopping parade to the east;
- Heavily trafficked route to the south of the conservation area.

SS4 Recommended measures

In order to address the issues and vulnerabilities set out above, Section 8, The Conservation Area Action Plan, sets out in tabular form a series of measures with timescales which should be undertaken to ameliorate these issues.

SS5 The 2026 Boundary

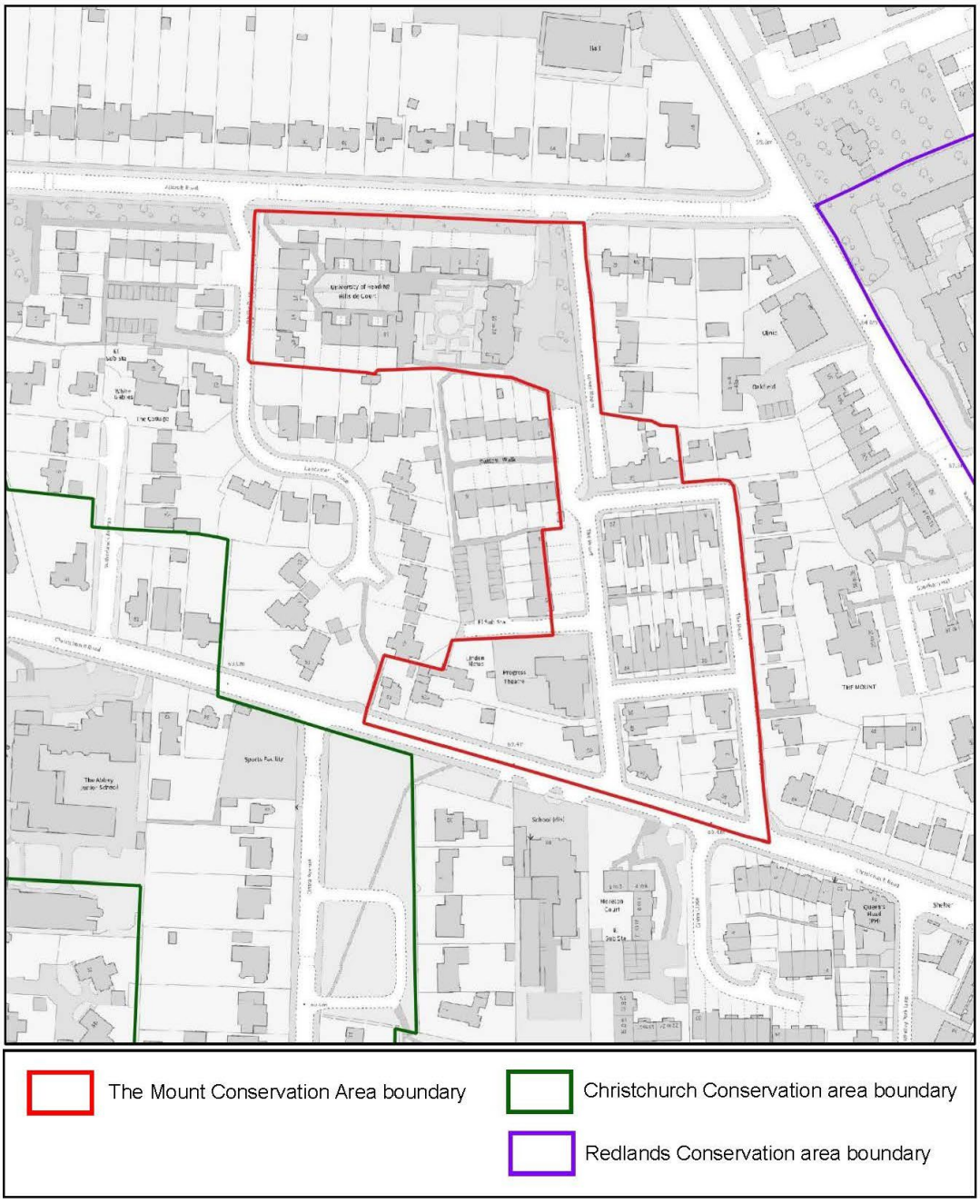


Figure 3: The existing conservation area boundary

Conservation Area Appraisal

1. Introduction

1.1 Policy context

The purpose of an Appraisal document and management plan is to ensure that the special interest justifying designation of the CA is clearly defined and analysed in a written statement of its character and appearance. This provides a sound basis, defensible on appeal, for development plan policies and development management decisions, and also forms the basis for further work on design guidance and enhancement proposals.

This Appraisal describes and defines the particular historical and architectural character and interest of The Mount CA, highlighting those features of its character and appearance that should be preserved or enhanced and identifying negative features that detract from the area's character and appearance, and issues that may affect it in future.

The Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) has been produced within current national and local planning policy guidelines. Policy HE2 of the NPPF (August 2026) states that "*when considering a new or amended conservation area designation, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.*"

Sustainable development

The government has outlined a presumption in favour of sustainable development with economic, social and environmental objectives. In relation to the environmental objective the NPPF states:

"…to support efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy; and to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently and minimising waste and pollution."

New development in conservation areas

In relation to new development in conservation areas the Policy HE2 of the NPPF states:

"To conserve the significance of conservation areas and World Heritage Sites, development plans should: identify opportunities for new development affecting these assets to enhance or better reveal their significance alongside any measures needed to safeguard their importance and long-term future; and reflect these in policies for site allocations and/or accompanying design guides, design codes or masterplans…"

In order to accurately make these judgements, evidence must be laid out detailing the special architectural and historic interest of the conservation area.

Policy HE9 of the NPPF states that *"proposals which conserve those elements of a conservation area and that make a positive contribution to the area (or which better reveal its significance) should be supported."*

Local Plan

Reading adopted a new Local Plan in November 2019 which set out policies for the protection of Reading's historic environment including designated heritage assets such as conservation areas and non-designated heritage assets. A partial update to the plan is expected to be adopted in early 2027.

This Appraisal cannot hope to mention every building or feature within the CA that might be of value. Any omission should not be taken to imply that it is not of any interest or value to the character of the area.

1.2 Public consultation

This Appraisal is in a format recommended by Historic England in its Advice Note 1 (Second edition) 'Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management' (2019). It has been prepared by the Reading CAAC and includes a management plan and photographic appendices. In this CA, there are many local residents to consult with one business and one theatre group. Consultation has been aimed at engaging with residents, businesses and other stakeholders in the area to help define what is of special significance and worthy of protection and/or enhancement.

2. Landscape setting

The Mount CA lies less than 2km south east of Reading town centre. It is centred on The Mount, which lies immediately to the north of the west-east aligned Christchurch Road, which is part of the busy main A327, leading to Shinfield Road and points south out of Reading. Immediately to the north is Allcroft Road, which runs parallel to Christchurch Road. Christchurch Road and Allcroft Road were once linked by The Mount (and the Lower Mount to the north of The Mount), but this through route was closed off as part of a conservation area enhancement scheme implemented shortly after the formal designation of The Mount CA on 24 April 1987.

The geology is similar to Christchurch: a ridge with clay over gravel beds.

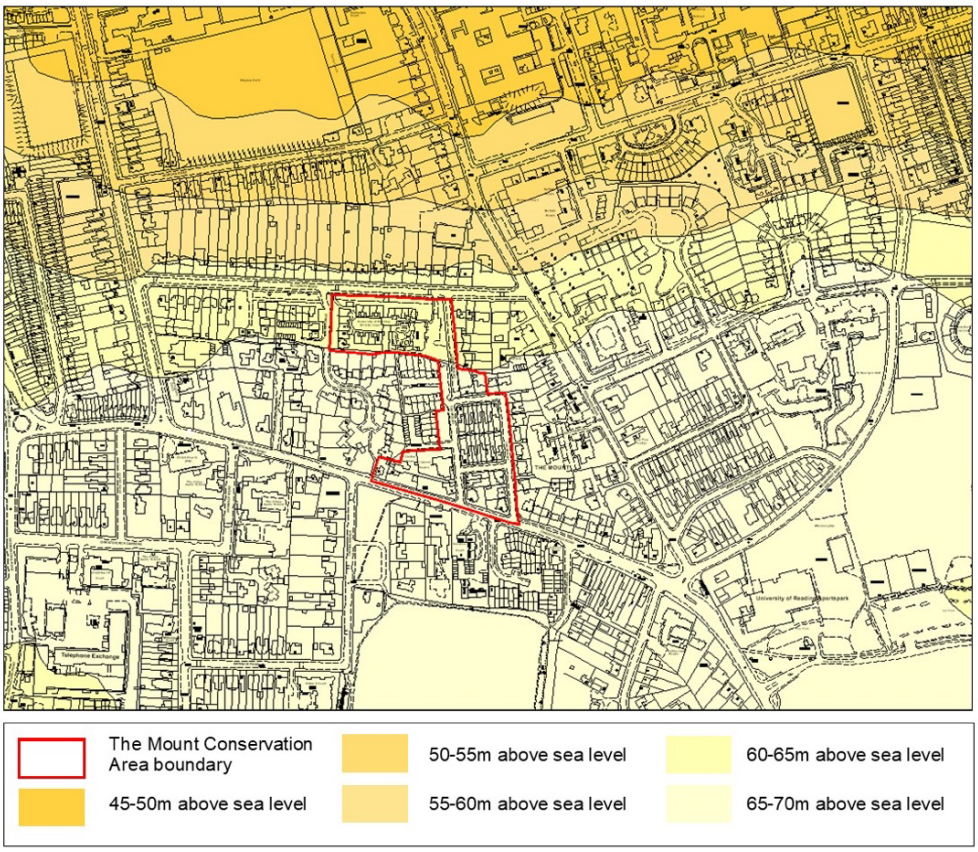


Figure 4: The height above sea level within the conservation area

3. Brief history and development of the area

The Kennet and Avon Canal was opened in 1810 bringing London and Bristol, two major sea ports, into direct communication by water. Of much greater significance, however, was the construction of the Great Western Railway which reached the town in 1840. The coming of the railway resulted in a rapid growth of major industries, notably Huntley & Palmers and Suttons Seeds, which provided work for a rapidly increasing population.

The history of The Mount Conservation Area is inextricably tied up with the growth of Huntley and Palmers in its heyday. William Isaac Palmer (1824 – 1893) developed the estate of 24 properties on The Mount in the 1870s (Character Area 1) and Hillside (Character Area 3) as his own home in the early 1880s. Progress Theatre apart, The Mount Area dates almost wholly from the 1870s, and shows few real changes since that period.

A more detailed history can be found in Appendix 2.

4. Spatial Analysis

4.1 Key characteristics and plan form

The core of the designated Conservation Area clearly demonstrates a planned form being built specifically for a group of Huntley & Palmers' employees, and formed part of the continuing development spread of substantial suburban villas in this south east direction out

of Reading. Unfortunately, in the immediate vicinity of, and except for, the conservation area itself, few of the original Victorian buildings remain, having been redeveloped.

The Conservation Area does not benefit from any obvious open spaces and the once extensive grounds of Hillside were developed in the 1990s to add to the university accommodation. There is however an important linear open strip on the west side of The Mount and Lower Mount containing trees and frontage railings which contributes to softening the general built up feel within the core of the CA as well as defining the edge of this part of the conservation area.

Except for the extensions in the grounds of Hillside, the defined area is not one which has been subject to pressures for significant (re)development in recent years. Although areas immediately outside the defined conservation area have experienced more development pressures, only the aforementioned site within the CA – Hillside – has experienced development in its grounds. However, to quote the list entry description, "…the house retains its entrance drive, gate piers, gates and railings and some of its garden giving it its original sense of scale, space and context", (Historic England, 2026).

Apart from the Christchurch Road frontage and the Progress Theatre site, the area exhibits a certain formality to the layout of the dwellings within it, and in general terms the area has in its core a fairly compact and formal "urban" rather than "suburban" feel to it (also serving to distinguish it from surrounding areas, which includes single storey bungalows facing the CA along the east boundary).

Some alterations and extensions to original dwellings have taken place but these generally reflect the character and appearance of the original buildings by using compatible materials and retaining important boundary wall and railing details. Certainly from the front, the properties appear little changed, but the rear elevations indicate examples of inappropriate additions, including flat-roofed dormers.

The properties in the conservation area have varying depths, but none have particularly large rear garden spaces. Single storey garages at the rear of corner-plot properties open directly onto the road. There is a communal alleyway between the east and west arms of The Mount at the centre of the largest block of properties, secured at each end with a gate. The houses all have front gardens with many retaining their original chequerboard tiling from the street to the front door.

Throughout the area, front boundaries are defined by brick walls and railings - whose design is consistently of a fleur-de-lys style - which are a key element of the character of the conservation area as a whole as well as providing a good setting for individual properties.

As previously stated, there has been little pressure for redevelopment here. Nevertheless there is significant tree cover throughout the area and without, which gives the area some verdant character. There are important trees around the Hillside site, on the west side of The Mount and Lower Mount, on the Christchurch Road frontage and outside the area. These are shown on Map 6, Figure 10.

The Progress Theatre relocated from the centre of Reading to The Mount in 1950 into what had been 'Mildmay Hall', constructed in 1881 in the grounds adjoining Mildmay Cottage. The

Mildmay Hall had been the second venue for Reading's Mildmay Club - established in 1879 by A W Sutton.

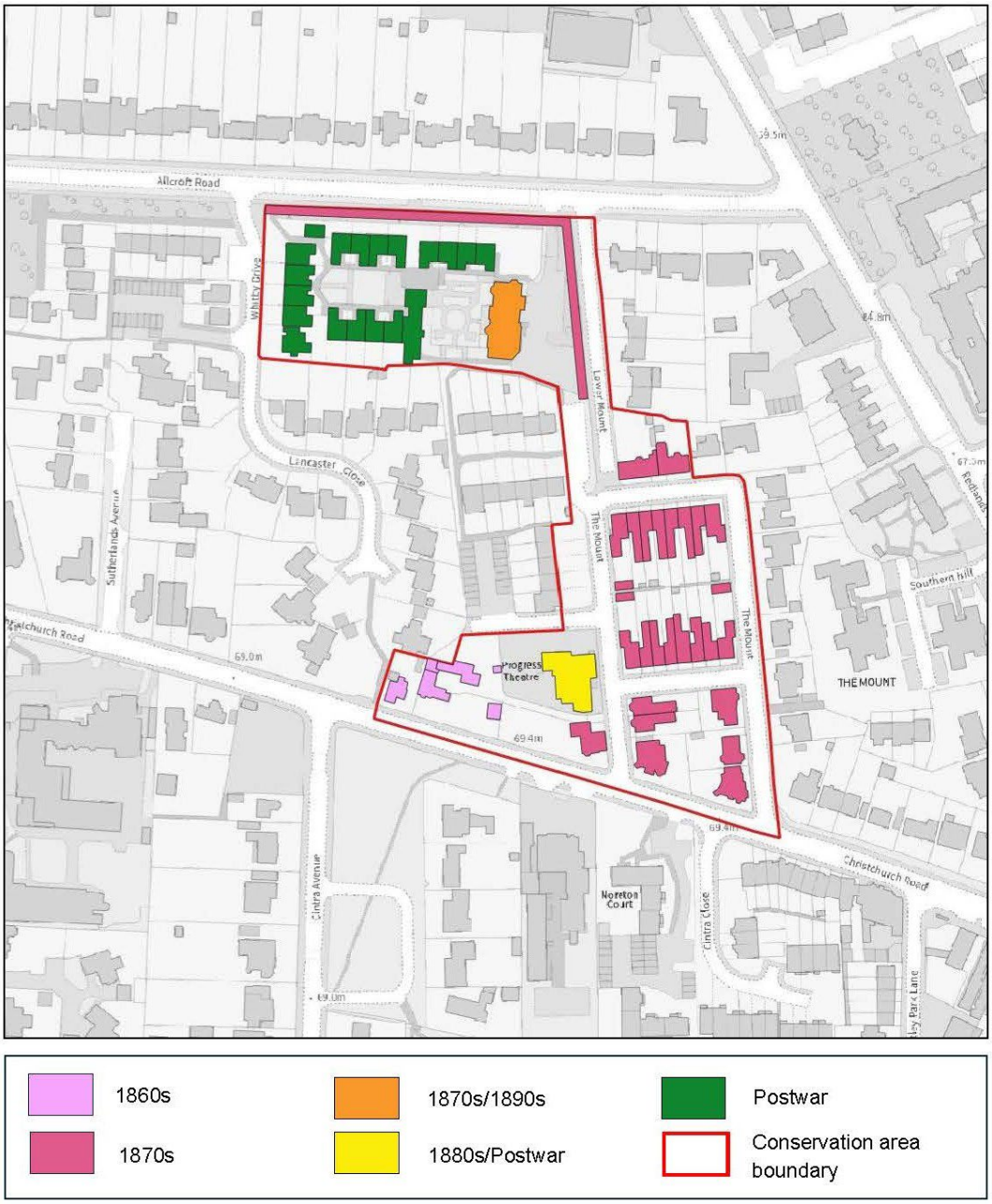


Figure 5: Buildings by age

4.2 Views

Views into, within and out of the CA contribute to its special character. Despite the slight rise from north to south, the conservation area is generally approached ‘on the flat’ from the levels of Allcroft Road to the north and Christchurch Road to the south. The Hillside site is prominent at the Allcroft Road side of the conservation area not only because of its intrinsic size but also prominent tree cover and original surrounding boundary walls and railings. Whilst these trees, walls and railings are visible from along the length of Allcroft Road itself, they (and Hillside itself) are not highly visible from any great distance.

Similarly, the core buildings in The Mount and on its Christchurch Road frontage are more prominent close up than from a distance although, again, these walls and railings, and some trees on the frontage, are visible from along the length of Christchurch Road itself.

4.2.1 Views into the area

These views contribute to the sense of arrival when approaching the CA. Photographs of each of the views can be found in Appendix 5.



Figure 6: View 2 - northwest at the corner of 'The Mount' (east) and Christchurch Road (Image Claire Truman)

Views into the area are north-south along the grid between Christchurch Road (to the south boundary) and Allcroft Road (to the north boundary). The view looking north from the south is from the higher vantage point in the conservation area. The roads forming the north-south/west-west grid are all called 'The Mount':

- Looking north along 'The Mount' (west) road – View 1
- Looking north along 'The Mount' (east) road – View 2
- Looking south from the lower position of Allcroft Road along Lower Mount which rises up toward The Mount – View 3

4.2.2 Views within the area



Figure 7: View 4 – view west towards the Progress Theatre along The Mount (south) (Image Claire Truman)

Views within the area are more enclosed but are enhanced by the landscape setting. Photographs of each of the views can be found in Appendix 5.

Within the area:

- View 4: an interesting stopped-off view looking up the Lower Mount from the north towards number 22 The Mount;
- all the corner properties within The Mount represent key views within the conservation area as these tend to be the larger end-terrace, semi-detached and detached properties;
- open space, trees and railings fronting Sutton Walk to the west of The Mount and Lower Mount are an important visual element and aspect for the properties immediately opposite them. These form part of a conservation area enhancement scheme implemented shortly after designation of the conservation area in 1987.
- View 5: a less attractive internal view is that west along the road in front of numbers 24-36 The Mount towards Progress Theatre and from numbers 38 and 40 opposite.

4.2.3 Views out of the area

There are a limited number of good views out of the area.



Figure 8: View 6 - west along The Mount (north) (Image Claire Truman)

Photographs of each of the views can be found in Appendix 5.

Generally ‘views out’ from the front and rear of properties in the CA, where they are not protected by tree cover, are to 1930s and later dwellings outside the CA.

- View 6: The Mount (north) offers views further afield towards the spire of Christ Church to the west;
- View 7: A distant view to Wantage Hall in the northeast direction.

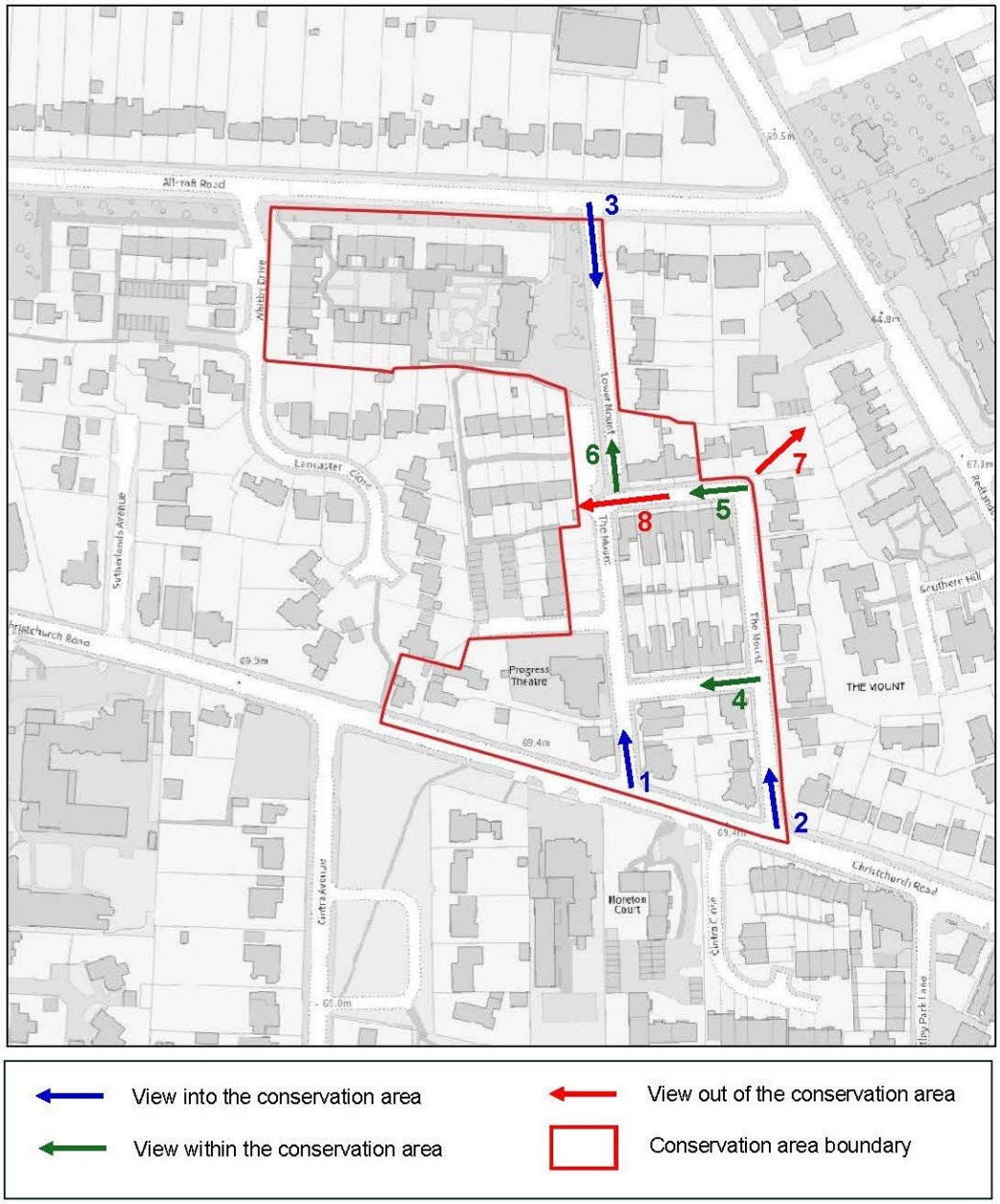


Figure 9: Views into, out and within the conservation area

4.3 Open spaces

The CA benefits from a linear open strip on the west side of The Mount and Lower Mount containing trees and frontage railings, that contributes to softening the general built up feel within the core of the CA, as well as defining the edge of this part of the CA. The large open front gardens without boundaries, laid to lawn along the west boundary facing onto The Mount, also contributes a green and open character to the setting. There are no planned open spaces, such as a park, with the CA.

4.4 Character of massing

The properties in the CA are 2-3 storeys in height with pitched and hipped roof profiles. It is possible to view the rear of some of the properties which reveal some original pitched dormer roofs, and create a regular rhythm to the rear of the large central block. The massing of the corners of the blocks are softened at times with hipped roof profiles, angled wall

planes, turrets and turret roofs to bay windows, and the stepping down of garden walls that flank the end-of-terrace properties. The roofscapes are broken up with regular chimney stacks.

The longer terrace facades are organised into 4-5 bays, articulated with projected semi-detached pitched entrance porch roofs, The building plots are of varying depths with the semi-detached and detached houses having relatively larger rear gardens, albeit none have particularly large spaces.

4.5 Trees and green spaces

The CA generally comprises mature trees, and although these tend to have small gardens (The Mount and Christchurch Road) and/or little garden space around them, there is important tree cover on the Christchurch Road and 'Hillside Court' frontages, which gives a general verdant feel to the area of buildings and trees in harmony. Street trees exist to the west side of The Mount/Lower Mount in front of Sutton Walk which generally make a significant contribution to this urban conservation area's special character and sense of identity (see Appendix 6). Tree cover immediately adjacent to the CA (some protected by Tree Preservation Orders) also contribute to the setting of the CA, and in particular those in the adjacent Christchurch Conservation Area and Redlands Conservation Area. A group of three trees to the south of the CA at the front of Moreton Court, Christchurch Road are under TPO 86/06. Trees therefore make a significant contribution to the CA's special character and sense of identity. Significant tree groups are shown on Map 5, overleaf.

Because of their importance to the character and appearance of a Conservation Area, where they are not already protected by a Tree Preservation Order (TPO), it is necessary to give the local planning authority 6 weeks' notice of any intention to cut down, top or lop any tree in a Conservation Area, which also enables a local planning authority to consider whether the trees should be formally protected by the making of a TPO.

There are currently TPOs covering trees at 55 Christchurch Road (type T2) and 79-81 The Mount (type T1) (part of the Sutton Walk development). The Ash tree outside the Progress Theatre (TPO order number 2/03) was approved for felling in June 2020 (felled in the August) and a replacement was planted - Sorbus 'Autumn Spire' - in 2021. The replacement tree retains the same TPO order number (2/03). Planters to Lower Mount were constructed following Community Infrastructure Levy funding received in 2021 and were first fully planted in 2024. These are maintained by a group of local residents of The Mount and Lower Mount.

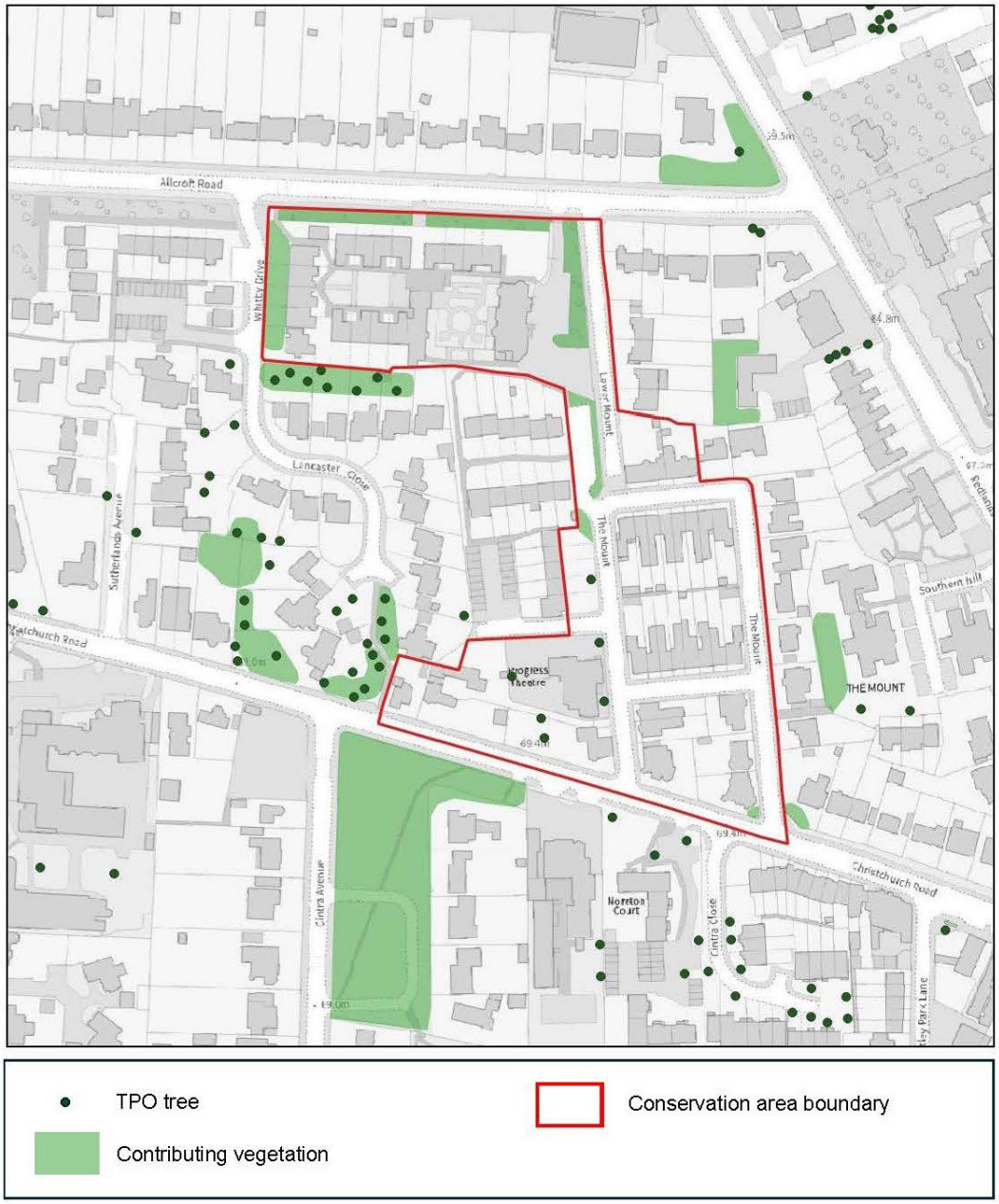


Figure 10: Trees (with TPO trees), other significant trees and green spaces within and adjacent to the CA

4.6 Building Plots

Throughout the area, the front of the building plots are defined by brick walls and railings which are a key element of the character of the conservation area as a whole as well as providing a good setting for individual properties. The terraced houses have low level brick walls and railings to the front, while taller brick boundary treatment is also common on The Mount. These compare to the semi-detached and detached properties which have railings and hedging. These larger properties have their own vehicular entrances while the terraced houses do not - other than four garages serving the end properties.

5. Buildings and Public Realm

5.1 Key positive characteristics

The pre-eminent local detail throughout this CA, and 'unifying' it, is the presence of rich, often unique, examples of traditional polychromatic brickwork from the late Victorian period and of brick walls and railings on property boundaries. Much of the history of The Mount Conservation relates to its connection with the Huntley & Palmers biscuit factory, with housing in The Mount itself provided for senior employees of the factory and 'Hillside' providing a Palmer family house. 'Hillside' is also attributable to the prolific and important local architects, Morris and Stallwood.

5.2 Materials, styles and features

The CA is essentially a residential area, clearly highly prized because of its location close to local amenities, Reading University and the Royal Berkshire Hospital. It contains properties from the late Victorian period.

The buildings in The Mount itself are of slate roof and London stock brick with paler facings, with cast iron fleur-de-lys style railings atop low brick walls. 'Hillside' is built of grey brick with red brick and terracotta dressings. The remaining Victorian properties fronting Christchurch Road are rendered, but all of them possess intricacies of detailing prevalent in the 'richer' houses of the period and reflecting Reading's heritage of Victorian patterned brickwork.

Conceived as an urban block, The Mount's houses are designed as a collective whole: the two main approaches from Christchurch Road are turrets to the two detached properties, whose forms are echoed within The Mount with turret roofs to projecting two-storey bay windows at the ends of the terraces and act as a unifying feature with the remaining properties. Bands of pale brick are used to define a common datum between the properties, and do not step up or down with the differing internal floor levels across the site (refer to Figure 18).

Altogether, these (different) brick built buildings therefore possess the distinguishing features of Reading's architecture and there are examples of good quality brickwork throughout the CA. Brick was a popular building material in the 19th century and the ready availability of different coloured bricks provided the opportunity for the lively polychromatic brickwork found throughout this part of Victorian Reading.

The Progress Theatre presents to the street a 1960s style architecture and largely conceals the pitched roof of the original Mildmay Hall towards the rear. Whilst this is a contrasting style and use of materials, it adds another historic and social layer, not a competing one, to the CA.

5.3 Buildings of local historic interest and positive buildings

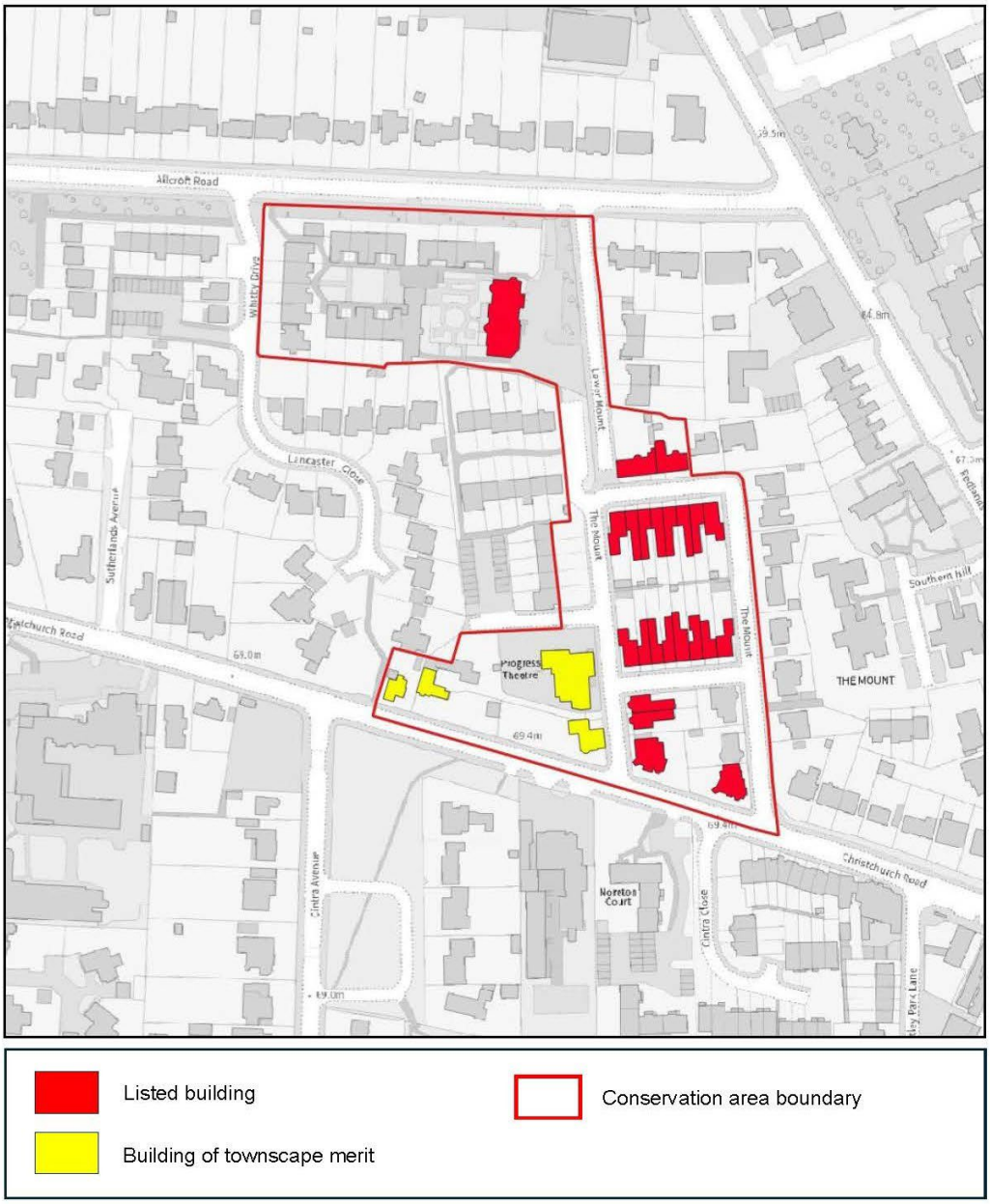


Figure 11: Listed buildings (red) and Buildings of Townscape Merit (yellow) within the CA

5.3.1 Listed buildings

There are 9 listing entries in the CA – many of the buildings are listed as groups. Geographically north to south these are:

- Gatepiers, Walls, Gates and Railings on Allcroft Road and Lower Mount to Hillside, Allcroft Road (List Entry Number 1392868)
- Hillside, Allcroft Road (List Entry Number 1392866)
- 23 and 25, The Mount (List Entry Number 1154876)
- 8- 22, The Mount (List Entry Number 113439)
- 6 and 24- 36, The Mount (List Entry Number 113438)

- 38 and 40, The Mount (List Entry Number 1321967)
- 57 Christchurch Road (List Entry Number 113440)
- 59 Christchurch Road (List Entry Number 1321968)
- Wall Between Nos 57 and 59, Christchurch Road (List Entry Number 1154887)

The buildings and structures are all identified on Map 6 and are also listed in Appendix 3 where images are provided along with a short summary and link to the Historic England listing entry.

5.3.2 Buildings of Townscape Merit

Buildings of Townscape Merit (BTM) in Reading's CAs are measured against the same criteria as locally important buildings outside CAs. The criteria include: age and integrity; historic and architectural interest; social and community importance and association with notable local and national figures.

- There are 6 buildings of townscape merit. The following non-listed buildings are considered to be BTMs:
- 53 and 53A Christchurch Road
- 55 Christchurch Road (Mildmay Cottage)
- 2 and 4 The Mount
- Progress Theatre
- These are identified on Map 6 and listed with a short description in Appendix 4.

5.4 Public Realm

5.4.1 Floorscape, street lighting, street furniture and local detail

Road and footway surfaces are predominantly modern i.e. tarmac and concrete kerbs.

Whilst generally in average condition (there is evidence of repairs by ‘utilities’ throughout the area), these surfaces are not attractive and not ‘traditional’ in conservation area terms.

Street lighting columns, signage and street furniture are modern, and this is another area with considerable potential for improvement. There are no examples of traditional lighting in the CA.

Properties in the CA rely on individual telegraph poles throughout the area with attendant wires radiating out to the houses.

Brick walls and railings are to be found throughout the area and are clearly an essential part of the public realm and character of the CA. The cast iron railing design across the CA is consistently of a fleur-de-lys style. No.6 has lost its double leaf gate: it was one of what was 4 pairs. The other three, at No.s 8 and 22 (opposing pairs) and No. 24 (opposing pair to No.6) remain. It is notable that where the railings have been well maintained and repaired these create a positive enhancement to the wholistic character of the CA. The repair and re-painting of railings is encouraged; conversely, there is a conflict between enlarged tree roots that threaten the integrity and retention of historic railings at the corner of No.59 Christchurch Road (refer to Figure 26B).



Figure 12: (Left) Single leaf gate at No.4 – also at No.s 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 23, 25, 38, 40 and side gates to No. 40 and 57 as a reflected pair. (Right) Figure 13 Double leaf gate at No. 24; and opposing detached houses No.s 22 and 8.

Road and footway surfaces are a mixture of finishes: the original kerbs and channels are a distinctive local detail of the stone 'Caithness Flagstone Series' of stone – only found elsewhere in Reading in Fatherson Road (adjacent to the Eldon Road Conservation Area); iron drain covers are partially retained and were manufactured in nearby Katesgrove (refer to section 5.4.2 below); the surfaces are tarmac.

5.4.2 Local details and features

Original drain covers can be found in The Mount. Reading Ironworks went into liquidation in 1888 and in the same year The Universal Patent Pulley Co Ltd acquired the patent for the Universal Wrought Iron Split Pulley and manufactured it on part of the former ironworks. They also produced castings using the patterns from Reading Ironworks (Mercury 8 September 1888). The company was wound up in 1894.

There are historic wall signs 'The Mount' at first floor level on the north elevation of number 22 and the south elevation of number 24.



Figure 13: Universal Patent Pulley Co drain set within 'Caithness Flagstone Series' gutter and kerb stones (Image Evelyn Williams)



Figure 14: 'The Mount' sign at the north elevation of 22 The Mount



Figure 15: 'The Mount' sign at the south elevation of 24 The Mount

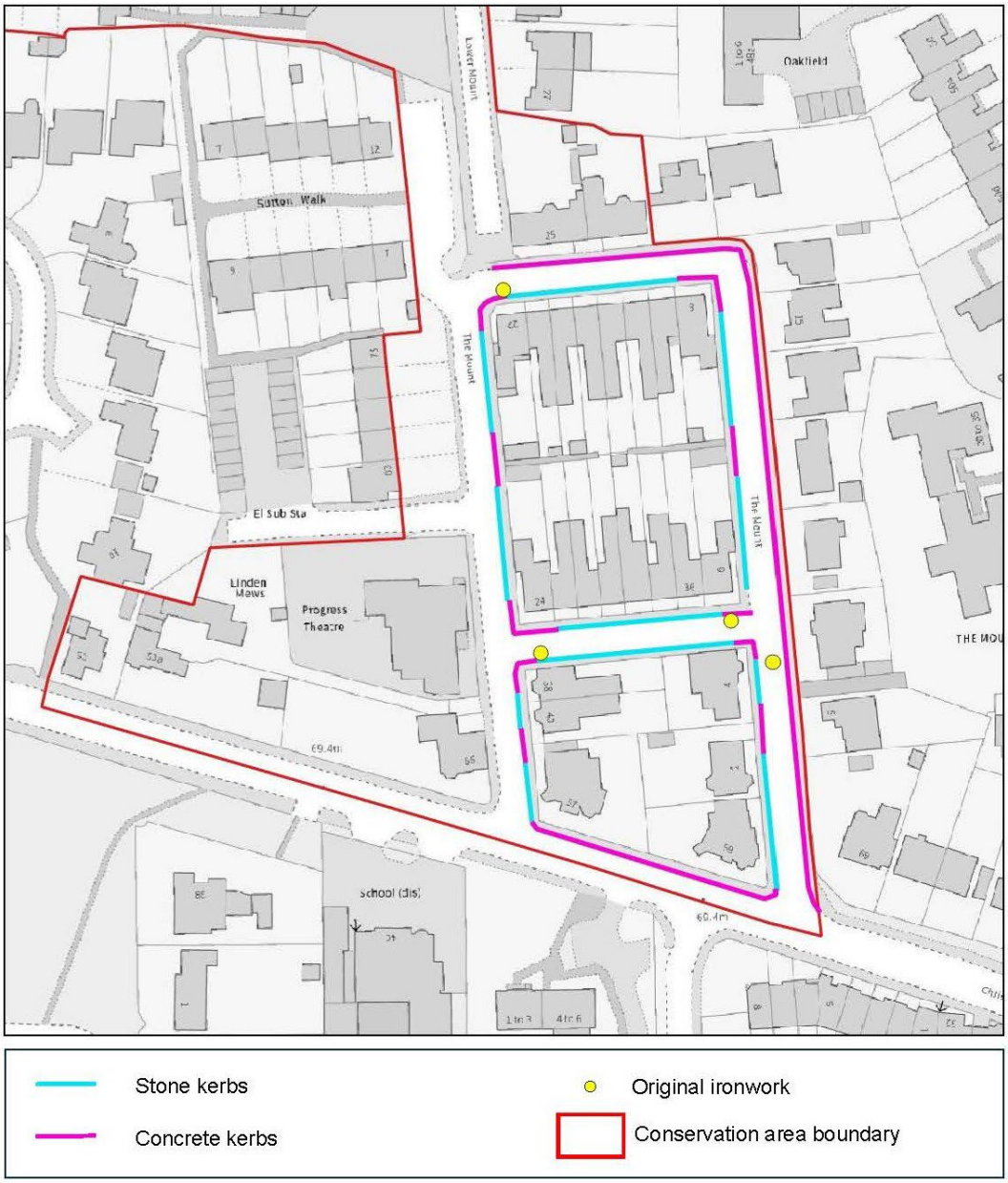


Figure 16: Diagram of location of stone and concrete kerbs, and original ironworks at The Mount (compiled by local resident)

6. Character Areas

The CA divides into three character areas defined according to the predominant age, style of architecture and urban grain.

The CA is a tightly drawn area centred on the Grade II listed properties in The Mount itself and includes adjacent properties of similar age on the Christchurch Road frontage to the south and the listed Hillside to the north fronting Allcroft Road and Lower Mount.

The area is therefore clearly defined as dating from the late Victorian period, specifically circa 1870s. Two anomalies to this historical period are: the Progress Theatre whose modern extension to the 1881 Mildmay Hall is an architectural expression of the late 1960s; and the 1990's development in the grounds of Hillside. Apart from these, the area has generally resisted pressure for (re)development, and in this respect must be considered to

be quite unique. The character of the area therefore remains strong. The area can be divided into the following three character areas:

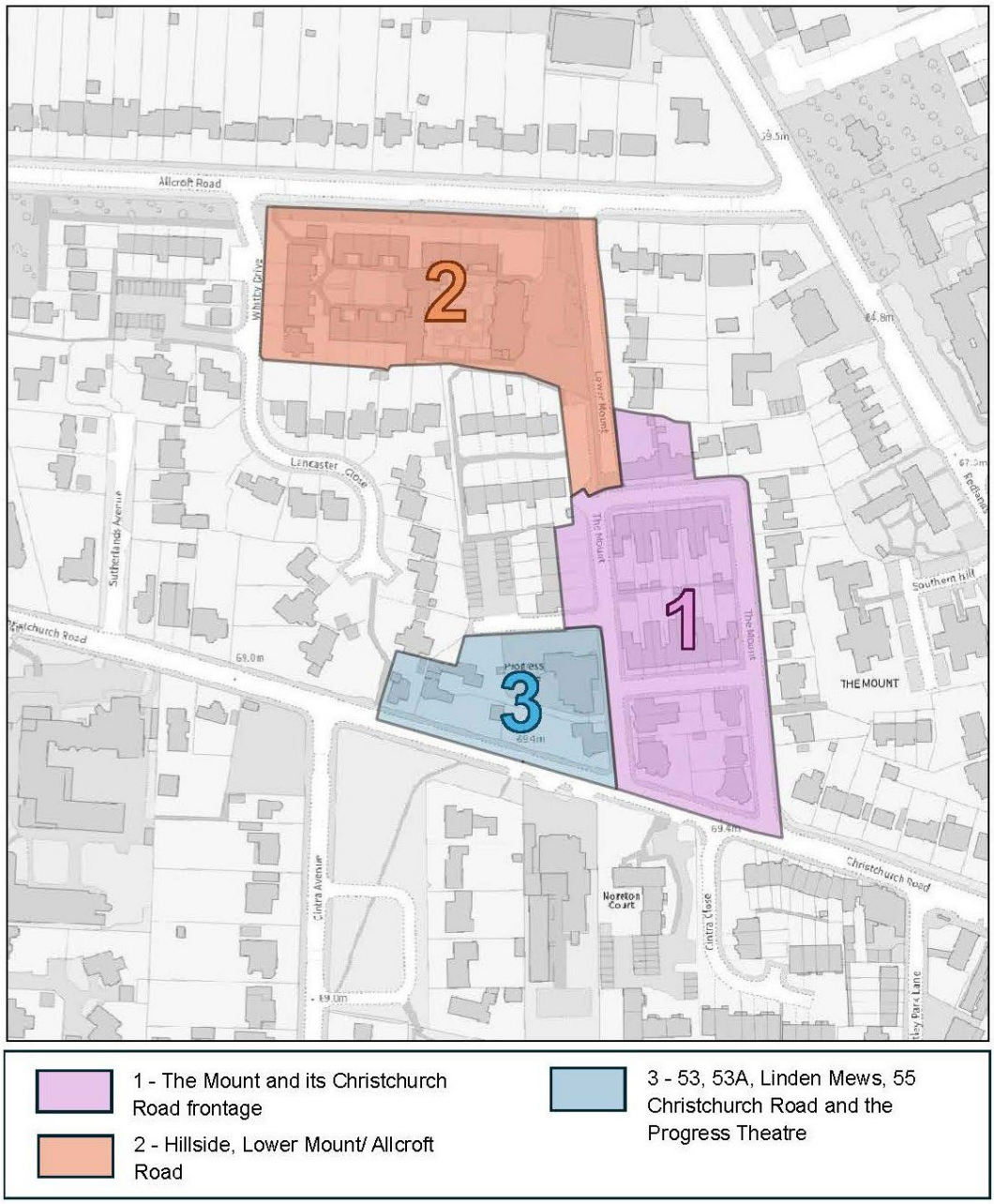


Figure 17: Character Areas 1-3

6.1 Character Area 1 - The Mount and its Christchurch Road frontage

The Mount itself comprises a close knit street block of listed houses with local historic interest being originally built for Huntley & Palmers' employees. These houses comprise a unique and distinctive group of buildings of both architectural and local historic value and form the core of the conservation area. They are listed Grade II. These buildings date from c.1876 and were built for Huntley and Palmers' clerks, foremen and managers, but as set out in Appendix 2 - History and Development of the Area - not all the early residents of the area were linked to the biscuit factory.

The buildings comprise a mix of detached, semi-detached and terraced houses with design and decorative features in common. All the properties were constructed of London stock bricks with paler detailing and banding, and with slate roofs. They retain much of their original character and appearance, including frontage walls and railings. An east-west service alleyway central to the main urban 'block' is located to the rear of these terraced houses.

Common unifying architectural details throughout Character Area 1 are (refer to Figure 16):

- London stock bricks with white brick bands;
- cast iron flower basket guards retained at No.s 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 26, 30, 36 and 38;
- modillion eaves cornice;
- chevron-moulded first floor brick window arches;
- moulded stone lintels to ground floor and some first floors;
- paired doorways with bracketed arch entrance and joint gable over;
- 4-panelled door design with upper panels glazed, cast iron central door knob, scrolled knocker and vertical post box;
- chequerboard black and white encaustic tiles to pathway from entrance gate to door – largely retained at The Mount;
- sash windows, some with margin lights expressing a hierarchy of design for the respective occupants (at No.s 4, 6, 8, 22, 24, 25, 38 and 40, and two upper windows at No.2); at the ground floor windows (only) of No.s 10, 12, 14, 16 and 18);
- slate roofs: some with fish scale courses (e.g. at No. 57 and 57A The Mount), some with geometric shaped courses (e.g. at Uplands and 23 The Mount);
- the inclusion of turret designs at key corner locations;
- prominent brick chimneys with dogtooth brick course details;
- fleur-de-lys railing design on a low brick wall.



Figure 14: Unifying architectural details (Image Claire Truman)

The properties were planned to reflect social hierarchy within Huntley & Palmers' employees. The two substantial properties at the east and west 'entrances' to The Mount – are listed separately: 59 Christchurch Road, list entry no. 1321968, and 57 Christchurch Road, list entry no. 1113440. These may have been designed for managers at the biscuit factory. The architecture of both include a palette of Gothic features, such as turrets, canted bays, diaper brickwork, bespoke to each property.

The Mount was designed as an urban group, and is expressed in a number of ways:

- Unifying walls between properties – such as the enclosing wall with paired garden access between No.s 57 and 40 (refer to Figure 17) illustrate the wholistic urban design.
- The consistent brick band details are located at the same height across the north and south 'blocks' despite the fall in gradient north-south along the road, and internal level changes between rooms and between properties. In particular the band detail carried through between No.6 and No.8 (refer to Figure 18) remains consistent yet the internal floor levels of the two properties differ in their relationship with the banding.
- The unifying architectural details, as listed on the previous page.



Figure 19: Unifying urban design (Image Claire Truman)



Figure 20: Unifying yellow brick bands between properties in the north-south road directions (Image Claire Truman)

The two groups of terraced houses share these unifying architectural details which subtly obscure differences between them: the north terrace has a third ‘attic’ floor with original

dormer windows whereas the south terrace properties have roof lights that align with the roof, however both terraces appear the same from the street elevation.



Figure 21: Original dormer windows to the rear of the north terrace of The Mount



Figure 22: Roof lights to the rear of the south terrace of The Mount

A resident in The Mount who has occupied a home in both terraces has noted in March 2026:

"The North side houses have full height rooms throughout the first and second floors, but the South side do not - our back rooms have a standard ceiling height. The North side houses have additional internal features (servants bells, mouldings in the hallway, different types of marble fireplaces on the ground floor etc.) and fireplaces on the third floor… The tiles on the front paths are also larger on the North side terraces…the terrace houses on both North and South sides become slightly wider as they go from East to West. This also cannot be seen from the street but is noticeable when you compare the inside of number 26 to number 36 for example."

6.2 Character Area 2 - Hillside, Lower Mount/Allcroft Road

Hillside, to the north of The Mount, is a good example of a large Victorian detached house, which also retains its original walls and railings. It is dated 1880 by Morris and Stallwood for

WI Palmer of Huntley and Palmers, and was extended and dated 1898 by the same Stallwood (working alone) for Leonard Goodhart Sutton (1863-1932), grandson of John Sutton founder of Suttons Seed. L G Sutton moved to Hillside after the death of W I Palmer. It is built of grey brick with extensive red brick and terra cotta dressings, slate roofs and red tile cresting. The listing describes it as, "…one of the most opulent buildings of this period in Reading, which has a rich diversity of late C19 housing. Morris and Stallwood were prolific and accomplished local architects, well-tuned to the tastes and trends in public and private building, suited to a wealthy client wishing to invest in a building of the highest quality" (Historic England, 2026). The building is now owned by Turner Property and subdivided into flats. Although the grounds have been built over in part, the house retains its entrance drive, gates and railings and some of its garden, giving it its original sense of scale space and context.

The gate piers, walls, gates and railings form two sides of the boundary to Hillside to Allcroft Road and Lower Mount. These date from circa 1880-1900 and are valuable in putting the house in context, and are listed separately (List Entry Number 1392868). A pair of brick piers with an enriched terracotta frieze of rosettes are located either side of the main driveway, inscribed with 'Hillside'. At the entrance off Lower Mount two less ornate paired brick gatepiers remain: the original timber gates are currently in storage at Hillside awaiting repair and reinstatement. The adjoining wall (Figure 20) was originally that of the stable block (evident in the Ordnance survey maps of 1911 and 1932) and had been much taller. The stable block was lost in a fire and demolished in the 1980s[1], and this east wall retained as the Hillside boundary wall along Lower Mount.

The quality of the Hillside site is also enhanced by its extensive boundary tree cover.



Figure 23: View of the east elevation of Hillside from Lower Mount (Image Claire Truman)

[1] An image of the stable block is held by the Museum of English Rural Life



Figure 24: The brick piers and railings to Hillside are falling into disrepair – view along Lower Mount (Image Claire Truman)

6.3 Character Area 3 - 53, 53A, Linden Mews, 55 Christchurch Road and the Progress Theatre

Nearby properties fronting Christchurch Road are of a similar age, if different style, being of rendered finish, but again retaining original walls and/or railings. 53, 53A, Linden Mews and 55 Christchurch Road are all shown on the 1877 map of Reading and are therefore of the same date or earlier than the properties in Areas 1 and 2. They are included in the CA for their group value and character. Number 53 is a single storey classic lodge building which adjoined the main entrance to 'Sutherlands', which site was redeveloped in the 1970s as Lancaster Close (accessed from Allcroft Road).

Part of the original pierced and decorative wall also remains. 53A and Linden Mews were formed from 'Sutherlands' outbuildings, and although altered and extended, these retain their original spatial pattern. 55 is a prominent two storey white rendered building of classic proportions located at the west 'entrance' to The Mount, however the Georgian style windows to the main elevation have been replaced with uPVC since the last appraisal, which diminishes its status as a building of townscape merit. Original railings enclose the frontage, however their condition is noted as in a deteriorated state.

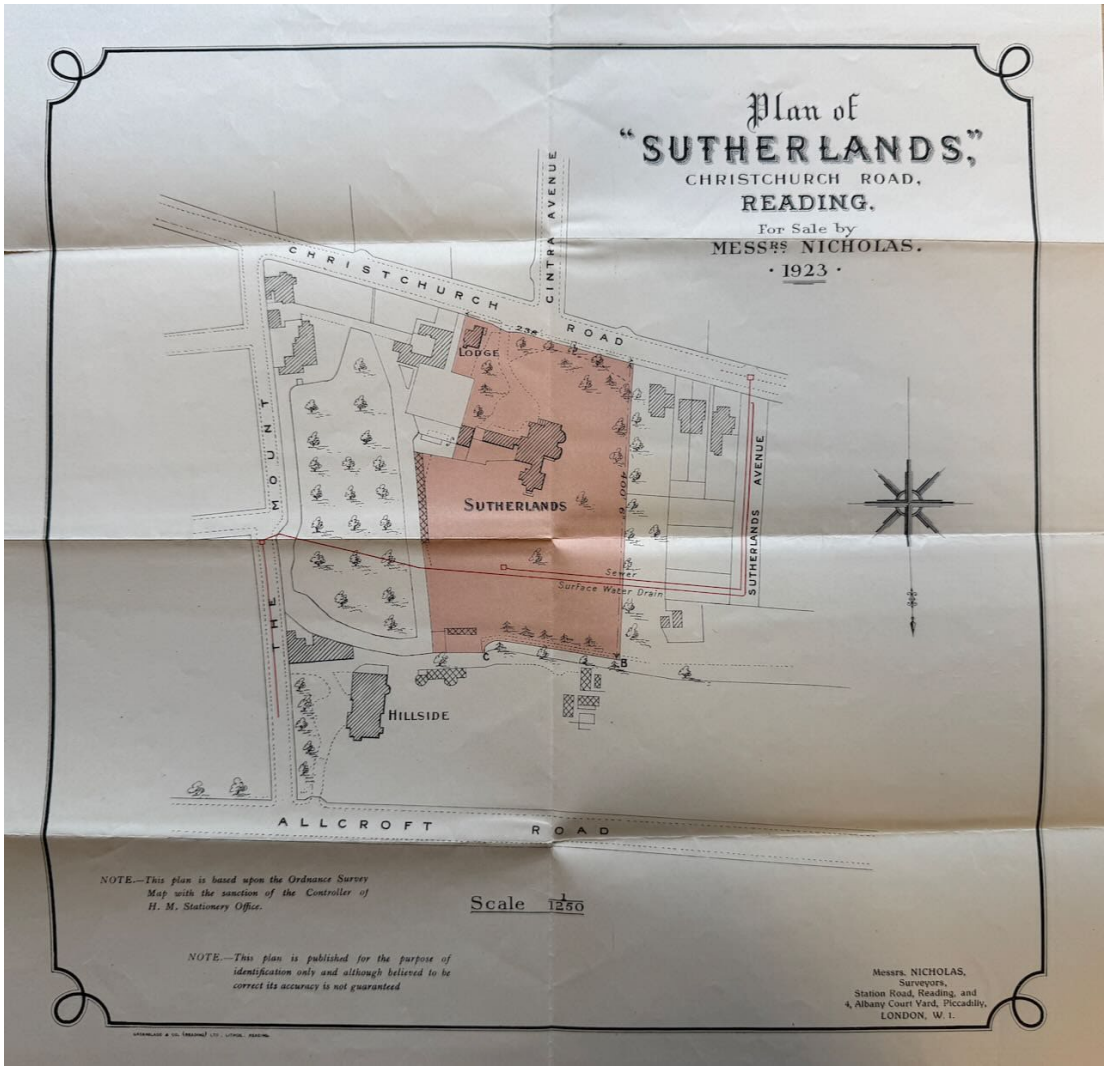


Figure 25: 1923 Sales Particulars map of Sutherlands showing the relationship with 55 Christchurch Road, Mildmay Hall and Hillside. Courtesy Reading Borough Libraries.

The Progress Theatre, founded in 1946, moved in 1950 from the W I Palmer Memorial Hall in West Street to new premises in The Mount which had formerly been the Mildmay Club, a working men's club founded in 1879 by Arthur Warwick Sutton which moved to the newly built hall in 1881, sufficiently large to hold 200 people. The hall has been enlarged in phases since its initial occupation, particularly after the freehold was secured in 1964. The design of the main entrance façade onto The Mount dates from 1968.

The Progress Theatre has social and cultural importance whose origins are directly associated with the Sutton family. Its avant-garde design contributes substantially to the layers of history within the CA, and specifically to the setting of Character Area 1; every effort should be made to keep the property and the associated external spaces well maintained and managed.



Figure 26: The Progress Theatre November 2025 (Image Claire Truman)



Figure 15: The Progress Theatre today (Image courtesy Progress Theatre)

6.4 Contributions to character

Features that make a positive contribution to the historic character and appearance of the CA:

- Retention of original buildings and their settings with few detrimental changes by way of new development and/or addition of non-traditional materials;
- Retention of original brick walls and railings throughout the area;
- Good tree cover within the grounds of individual properties and throughout the area;

Surrounded by much more modern buildings, the CA itself and the buildings within it have generally retained their original character. Although there have been relatively few pressures to redevelop sites in the past, these have generally respected the prevailing character and appearance of the CA.

Positive changes that have occurred since the 2009 appraisal that were identified as opportunities for enhancement:

- Reinstatement of brick wall and railings at 6 The Mount.
- The top of Lower Mount has received attention with new planters installed to reduce incidences of bikes travelling at high speed through The Mount, however the previous bench and rubbish bin were also removed advised as owing to anti-social behaviour.
- New seating has been installed to the front of the Progress Theatre.

6.5 Activities and uses

The area has historically been and currently is a residential area of individual family

houses to the north of Christchurch Road. Hillside – now named Hillside Court - is now home to the offices of Turner Property on part of the ground floor, who acquired the site from Reading University in 2014. Hillside Court offers flat accommodation for private rent within the main house, and halls of residence with a common room to Reading University students within the fifteen 1970s and 1980s houses in the grounds. Turner Property since added two more houses within the grounds. The Progress Theatre is the only building in non-residential use.

It is only on the outside of the area, particularly on the south side of Christchurch Road that non-residential uses have prevailed, but recent (re) developments have introduced more residential uses here. At the time of its original designation there was a car sales/repair garage immediately opposite the conservation area, which was a source of complaint for using The Mount for overflow and visitors car parking. However, its redevelopment for housing has had the effect of removing that problem, to the benefit of the conservation area.

Properties in the area appear to very much in demand and therefore generally fully occupied and in a good state of repair.

Despite its position just north of the busy Christchurch Road the area possesses a quiet (residential) atmosphere, which is helped by the cul-de-sac arrangement of both the Mount and Lower Mount which are separated by bollards introduced as part of a conservation area enhancement scheme implemented shortly after the conservation area was designated. This prevents rat runs through the area between Allcroft Road and Christchurch Road.

6.6 Ambience

During the daytime the ambience is quiet within The Mount, away from Christchurch Road – this contrasts with the ambience in the evenings (refer to section 7.2.6).

7. Negative features, issues and opportunities for enhancement

The general state of repair of the buildings in the CA is good with properties not remaining vacant for any length of time. However, in common with many of Reading's conservation areas, The Mount is lacking in the quality, if not the state of repair of the highway environment (roadways, footways and street furniture).

All of these areas would benefit from continued monitoring, and the seizing of opportunities for improvement as they arise.

Features that have a negative impact on the historic character and appearance of the conservation area:

- flat-roofed dormers appear out of keeping with the roofscape character;
- railings and low wall damaged by overgrown tree at number 59 Christchurch Road – this has dramatically changed since the last appraisal;
- deterioration of original railings;
- white painted brickwork at number 25 The Mount;
- some walls in need of repair on the Christchurch Road frontage;
- over growth of walls and railings with hedges along the Christchurch Road frontage obscures walls and railings and impedes the pavement;
- lack of traditional street furniture, including street lighting;
- over-reliance on individual telegraph poles throughout the area with attendant wires radiating out to the houses within;

Within the CA itself there are few recent developments, but these have generally respected the character, scale of buildings and materials used in the conservation area, thus maintaining its character and appearance. A small number of elements within the conservation area detract from its character. Generally developments immediately outside the CA heed their context adjoining or nearby The Mount Conservation Area and do not have a notably negative effect on its character and appearance. The design of new development within and adjoining/near the conservation area should however be carefully considered.

7.1 Loss of original architectural features and detail



Figure 28: Images of loss or deterioration of details (Images Claire Truman)

A – Deteriorating railings

B – Deteriorating low brick wall and railings

C – uPVC windows to building of townscape merit

D – Chain link fence with unmanaged vegetation forming boundary of CA

E – Pavements and kerbs a 'patchwork' of finishes

In general terms the loss of original features, particularly front elevation and boundary features is very limited. There are few examples of non-traditional windows in the buildings in the conservation area. The worst examples of inappropriate changes tend to be at the rear of properties. There is a clear issue here in terms of respecting the setting of individual buildings as well as enhancing the character and appearance of the conservation area, in accordance with advice contained in the Reading Borough Local Plan.

For unlisted buildings it is recommended that an Article 4 direction is considered to remove permitted development rights within the CA or parts thereof and prevent further erosion of the special character and appearance of the area. The management plan (Table 2) sets out to remedy some of these issues.

7.2 Neglect and opportunities for enhancement

Floorscape (refer to Figure 26E) and street furniture improvements should be considered in this area, including replacing telegraph poles.

Selected examples and opportunities are highlighted below:

7.2.1 Street furniture and surfacing

The boundary treatment of the Progress Theatre car park forms the boundary of the conservation area, adjacent to an access road to garages to the rear of Sutton Walk. The

boundary treatment is chain link fencing and supports the growth of weeds (refer to Figure 26D).

Inconsistent street signage for ‘The Mount’: three different types are in-situ – refer to Figure 27, below. Figure 27B shows the current design consistent to Reading’s conservation areas.



Figure 29: Images of three different conservation area signage styles (Images Claire Truman)

7.2.2 Development pressure and changing skyline

Surrounded by much more modern buildings, the conservation area itself and the buildings within it have generally retained their original character. Although there have been relatively few pressures to redevelop sites in the past, these have generally respected the prevailing character and appearance of the conservation area. However there is clearly scope to redress some quite modest failings apparent in the foregoing list.

7.2.3 Traffic noise and pollution

The character and environmental quality of the CA to its southern edge is impacted by noise and pollution of traffic using the main A327 Christchurch Road running along the southern boundary of the area, particularly during the rush hours, which contrasts with its otherwise tranquil environment.

7.2.4 Ambience

In the evenings, when dark, The Mount (west) is less overlooked than the other roads within The Mount and has become subject to anti-social behaviour, such as damage to parked cars along the street and fast-moving cyclists ‘cutting through’ the urban environment. This specific street is less naturally overlooked by houses and directly links to Lower Mount to facilitate the cut through.

8. Action Plan

Table 1 – All Conservation Areas

Policies, attitudes and actions which need to be applied to all of Reading's Conservation Areas if the town's remaining historic character is to be protected and enhanced as it should be. These apply to the Christchurch Conservation Area as fully as they do to all, particularly with regard to the careful protection of architectural detail in any building alterations. It is acknowledged that these proposals have resource implications, especially for Reading Borough Council, at a time when resources are stretched and limited.

Table 1: Actions for all conservation areas

ISSUE	ACTION	WHO
Loss of original architectural features and details (see 7.1). Insensitive change and development not requiring planning permission, permitted development	**Guidance:** Provide guidance document on 'approved' methods for common small scale alterations **Awareness:** Provide householder information on the added value of 'period detail' and detail on economic alternatives for energy efficiency savings Material prepared by other planning authorities could be used as a model for preparing written guidance	RBC and CAAC Update as at July 2025. A Design Guide to House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was published in March 2021. This has general guidance on and examples of roof dormers, roof lights and extensions which would be acceptable or unacceptable in conservation areas. Update as at March 2026. A guidance leaflet for householders is now available on the council's website as text only by RBC. https://www.reading.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/heritage-and-conservation/conservation-areas-listed-buildings/conservation-areas-guidance-and-advice-for-householders/

ISSUE	ACTION	WHO
Loss or change to original boundary features.	**Awareness:** Provide householder information document on the added value and visual importance of boundary walls and railings **Policy**: Article 4 directions could be implemented as resources allow (see Table 2 for further recommendations on what this should cover in this CA)	RBC and CAAC
Insensitive development undertaken without permission *(see 7.2 e.g. window replacement in listed buildings and those in conservation areas)*	**Guidance:** Provision of property owner guidance on legal requirements for alterations/development/tree works in conservation areas. **Enforcement:** Legal enforcement by RBC to secure reversal of changes	RBC and CAAC Update as at March 2026. This is partially covered in the guidance leaflet for householders and is now available on the council's website as text only by RBC. Enforcement - RBC
Redevelopment within or adjoining the Conservation Area should respect the general height, massing and alignment of existing buildings and use a palette of materials which reflect its existing character.	**Guidance, Policy:** Supplementary Design guidance planning document for development in historic areas. **Support:** Use CAAC to gain informed comment on planning applications affecting Conservation Areas	RBC and CAAC

Table 2 – The Mount Conservation Area

Policies and actions that are specific to this Conservation Area - to retain and enhance its important contribution to the life of Reading as a whole. They may require some limited revenue resources: it is recommended these are given high priority, with little or no public capital expenditure.

Table 2: Actions for The Mount Conservation Area

ISSUE	ACTION	WHO
Low wall at 59 Christchurch Road. is breaking up and railings damaged. Cause: tree roots and also vehicular impact (accident).	**Awareness:** Provide householder information document on the added value and visual importance of boundary walls and railings	RBC and CAAC
Replacement of broken kerbstones especially on corners by concrete. One especially badly placed.	**Awareness:** Provide street care information document on the added value and visual importance of the treatment of the urban materials upon the conservation area's historic qualities and cohesive character.	RBC
Thames Water did not repair gully/kerb correctly after work in The Mount.	**Awareness:** Thames Water to be made aware of its duty to pay particular care and attention to repair work.	RBC
The sign instructing 'Park only in marked bays' is causing confusion; additionally dash white lines are faded.	**Awareness:** Parking wardens to be provided guidance over the use of parking bays where this sign is located.	RBC
Inconsistent 'conservation area' styled street signage (section 7.2.1).	**Awareness:** Replace superseded signage design with current design to achieve consistency within The Mount and across Reading's conservation areas.	RBC

Appendix 1 Public Consultations

Members of CAAC met with a local resident twice to walk together around The Mount; with the owner of Turner Property twice and with the manager of The Progress Theatre.

An initial community meeting was held on 10.12.2025 at The Queen's Head, Christchurch Road, Reading and feedback from that meeting was incorporated into later drafts of the appraisal.

An informal public consultation was launched at a community meeting at the Progress Theatre, The Mount on 25.3.2026 and ended on 13.5.2026. The consultation took place online using surveymonkey and two copies of the draft appraisal were placed in the nearest libraries: the Whitley Library and the Central Library along with questionnaires (below).

READING
CONSERVATION AREA
ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Mount Conservation Area(CA)was first designated in 1987 and was last reviewed in 2009.

The conservation area appraisal describes and defines the particular historical and architectural character and interest of The Mount CA. It highlights those features of its character and appearance that should be preserved or enhanced. It also identifies negative features that detract from the area's character and appearance, and issues that may affect it in future.

Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee (readingcaac.org) are seeking your views on our document, the appearance of the conservation area and how the area should be managed in future to retain its special character.

The results of this survey will inform the next version of the appraisal that we will formally submit to Reading Borough Council who will undertake the final stages of the process to adoption of an updated appraisal document for The Mount CA.

You can also email us at chair.readingcaac@gmail.com.

The survey will close at 11.45 pm on 13 May 2026.

1. Do you agree that the designation of conservation areas is important to protecting the special character of Reading? Please tick the box that applies.	Strongly agree	☐
	Agree	☐
	Neither agree nor disagree	☐
	Disagree	☐
	Strongly disagree	☐

2. Do you agree that current appearance of some of the properties is the biggest challenge to the character and appearance of the conservation area? Please tick the box that applies.	Strongly agree	☐
	Agree	☐
	Neither agree nor disagree	☐
	Disagree	☐
	Strongly disagree	☐

3. Are you satisfied with the appearance and cleanliness of the streets, pavements and signage in the CA? Please tick the box that applies.	Very satisfied	☐
	Satisfied	☐
	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	☐
	Dissatisfied	☐
	Very dissatisfied	☐

4. Do you agree with our recommendation that an Article 4 designation to remove specific permitted development rights is required to protect original exterior features of non-listed properties in The Mount CA? Please tick the box that applies. If other please comment in the box below.	Yes	
	No	
	Other	

Space for comments on Question 4

5. Do you live in or own property in the conservation area? Please tick the box that applies.	Yes	
	No	

6.Do you work in the conservation area? Please tick the box that applies.	Yes	
	No	

7. Do you have any further comments on the appraisal? Please let us know if there are ways in which the document could be improved, if there is anything positive or negative in the area that we should have mentioned or any issues that we have not identified for inclusion in the management plan.

Please use the space below or email chair.readingcaac@gmail.com.

8. How interested are you in the work of Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee?

Please tick the box that applies.

Very	☐
Slightly	☐
Not at all	☐

Thank you for responding to this questionnaire.

Six responses were received to the online questionnaire and none from the copies placed in the libraries. Of the six responses we have omitted one response from the summary below as it was clear that the responder had confused The Mount CA with The Mount in Caversham.

All five responders agreed that CA designation is important to protecting the special character of Reading with three agreeing that an Article 4 direction to remove specific permitted development rights is required to protect original exterior features of non-listed properties. Responses to the question about appearance and cleanliness of streets and signage were evenly balanced. Only one of the respondents lived or worked in the CA. There was one additional comment about emptying of litter bins and lax parking restrictions in the area for non-residents.

The survey results have not resulted in any changes to the draft appraisal. In relation to parking, the management plan reflects the lack of clarity in relation to parking restrictions and any other measures are beyond the scope of a CA appraisal.

Updates have been made to the appraisal arising from correspondence and meetings with individual residents and at the two community meetings. This enabled us to make early enhancements to the document:

- Historic England have updated the addresses for listing entries within The Mount CA character area 1 after we contacted them after a local resident pointed out that the addresses were not correct.
- The participation of The Progress Theatre in the review has meant that the importance of the theatre and character area 3 is better reflected in this revised draft.
- Exploration of why the name 'Mildmay Cottage' was given to No55 Christchurch Road and the 'Mildmay' to the club located in the building that became the Progress Theatre.
- Completing as far as possible the story of the Robin Hood public house, formerly on Christchurch Road.

We are grateful to all everyone who has met with us and assisted in providing documentation and information to assist with our review.

Next steps. This draft of the revised appraisal for The Mount Conservation Area will be presented to Reading Borough Council's Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport Committee on 23 June 2026 for endorsement for public consultation.

Appendix 2 Archaeology and Historical Development of the Area

Archaeology

There have been no archaeological finds clearly identified as within the conservation area (CA). Within the area of 'Southern Hill' which could include the CA, hand axes and an iron age cup have been found.

Within 100 metres of the area, hand axes have been found in Glebe Road (neolithic), in a gravel pit south of Christ Church (unspecified age) and on Morgan Road (neolithic). At 32 Morgan Road there is a mesolithic findspot and in Redlands a neolithic findspot.

Historical Development

Before The Mount



Figure 30: Extract from 1798 map of Reading. The approximate area of The Mount CA circled. The dashed line represents the borough boundary. Courtesy Reading Borough Libraries.

The Mount CA lies north of the east-west road along the ridge to Shinfield. Early development clustered around the junction with what is now Redlands Road, and there was a smaller group of buildings near what is now the Queens Head and Whitley Park Lane. The area was referred to as ‘Southern Hill’ and was within St Giles parish. With the exception of the land on which Hillside was later built it was outside the boundary of the Borough of Reading.



Figure 31: Extract from 1813 map of Reading. The approximate area of The Mount CA circled. The dashed line represents the borough boundary. Note the turnpike and cluster of houses at the top of Red Lane (Redlands Road). Courtesy Richard Bennett.

When St Giles tithe apportionment survey was carried in 1841 there were very few buildings along the road. The fields (55 and 56) on which The Mount estate would be built were owned by Millicent Eaton at that time and the land advertised for auction in 1873 including the Robin Hood public house[2].

The land on which Hillside was built was registered as owned by the trustees of John Kendrick whom were succeeded as a charity by Christ's Hospital.

[2] Reading Mercury 17 May 1873 p3. The occupant of field 55 on the tithe map was Thomas Attwell and 56 was occupied by Joel Patey and the owner was Millicent Eaton. The Patey family ran a public house there for some years and their piggeries caused a nuisance in the area (see Reading Mercury 7 November 1868 p2 and Abbot Cook to Zero Degrees (2021) John Dearing, David Cliffe and Evelyn Williams).

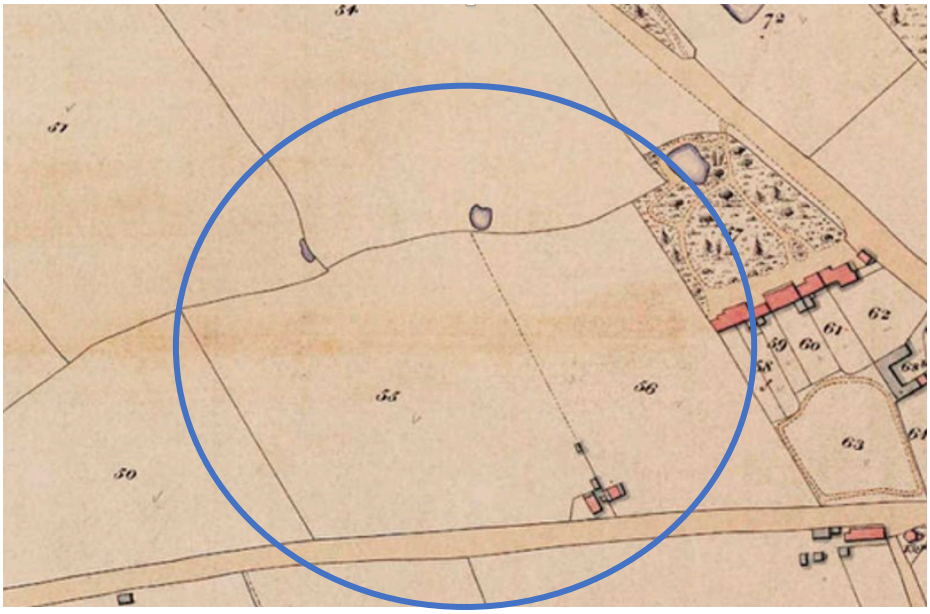


Figure 32: Extract from 1841 tithe apportionment map (1840) for St Giles Parish D/D1/96/1. The approximate area of The Mount CA circled. Courtesy Royal Berkshire Archives.

In the mid nineteenth century large properties began to appear along the ridge: Cintra Lodge; Ashton Lodge; Merton Lodge and Sutherlands. Within The Mount CA the only buildings that definitely survive from this period are: 53 Christchurch Road, the eastern lodge of Sutherlands, and 53a Christchurch Road and Linden Mews both former stables and outbuildings of Sutherlands which are within character area 2. Mildmay Cottage dates from the 1870s. The cottage was built on the site of a public house, named the Robin Hood as above[3]. The Robin Hood was a thatched building demolished c1874[4]. These properties with the later addition of Mildmay Hall (now the Progress Theatre) form Character Area 2 of the CA.

A tank to hold 100,000 gallons of water erected within the grounds of Sutherlands in the 1850s supplied by water pumped from the Bath Road reservoir [5]. It is no longer mentioned in directories from 1920.

[3] Newspaper article 'Progress Indeed!' from 1963 quoting the wife of Noel Sutton thought the pub had been called The Pheasant who was living at Sutherlands at the time. Progress scrapbook D/EX1151/17/4.
[4] Newspaper article with image of the public house Reading Chronicle 21 September 1962 shown to us by a local resident. The photograph was said to have been provided by L Noel Sutton. A follow up article a week later identified the pub as the Robin Hood. The Robin Hood does not appear in licensing records from 1875, the earliest that we could find for Whitley Parish.
[5] O.Kean, Brief history and development of Reading Waterworks (1950). County Borough of Reading Water Department.

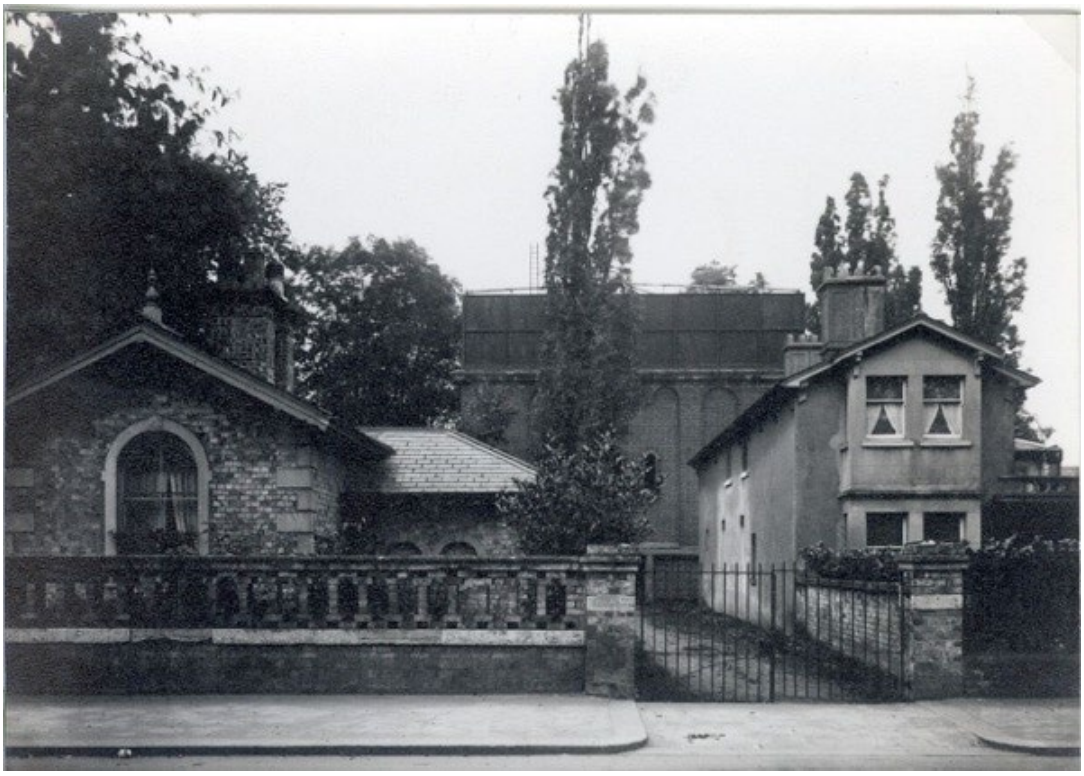


Figure 33: The eastern lodge of Sutherlands, 51 Christchurch Road and 53 Christchurch Road with the water tank behind c1900. Image courtesy Reading Libraries

The Mount Estate, Hillside and W I Palmer

William Isaac Palmer (1824 – 1893) developed the estate of 24 properties on The Mount in the 1870s (Character Area 1) and Hillside (Character Area 3) as his own home in the early 1880s.

The northern border of The Mount follows the pre-1887 borough boundary. It was perambulated in 1874 by the Mayor, members of the Corporation and a large party of officials and other participants. The report of the perambulation gives an indication of the low density development of the area. Having reached Redlands House the perambulating party '…crossed the road, and immediately crawled through the hedge on the opposite side, and by a turn to the south entered the garden of Mr Gregory [Oaklands], who gave the party every assistance. Proceeding along the meadow at the rear of the water tank, a serious obstacle to further progress presented itself in the high wall of Mr Darter's vinery [Sutherlands] a portion only of which was found to be within the boundary.'[6]

The Ordnance survey map of 1877 shows that 22 properties had been built in The Mount. To the west lay Mildmay Cottage and Sutherlands. The small building just behind Mildmay Cottage may have been provided by for use by cabmen and travellers as a replacement for the Robin Hood public house[7].

[6] Reading Mercury 17 October 1874 p6

[7] Reading Chronicle 28 September 1962 possibly confuses this structure with the later and larger Mildmay Club. Follow up to the newspaper article with image of the public house Reading Chronicle 21 September 1962 shown to us by a local resident.



Figure 34: Extract from OS map 1877 showing The Mount which is complete apart from the northernmost two properties. Hillside has not yet been built. Mildmay Cottage had been built. The borough boundary is marked by the long dashed line and BP marks a boundary post. Courtesy Reading Borough Libraries

Listed properties with addresses in The Mount are dated c.1876 by Historic England (HE). Map evidence indicates that nos. 23 and 25, the two most northerly properties, were built slightly later, although both had been built by the time of the 1881 census. The listing for 59 Christchurch Road (Uplands) suggests the moulded brick rosettes are reminiscent of the work of Joseph Morris, but otherwise does not attribute the estate to a named architect.



Figure 35: Nos 8-22 The Mount c1910. Postcard by P O Collier. Courtesy Reading Borough Libraries

Gold cites H Godwin Arnold and this is also repeated in 'Pevsner',[8] in crediting the estate to R Austin the architect of the Shaftesbury Park Estate in Battersea, also a conservation area, built by the Artizans', Labourers', and General Dwellings Company (ALGDC)[9]. The aim of the company and its founder William Austin (no relation to the architect) was "...to build decent accommodation for the working classes, at a time when overcrowding and other related housing matters were a problem amongst the poor in London."[10] 82 and 84 Crescent Road, south of Palmer Park, have some similar features to The Mount. Importantly there is a motif above the porch to the two terraced properties 'RA 1872'. This clearly acknowledges that the architect was Robert Austin. The same motif with a date of 1874 appears at 18 Eversleigh Road in the Shaftesbury Park Estate[11]. Elsewhere the initials of the ALGDC are prevalent.

The use of London stock bricks[12] is exceptional in Reading. It is not currently known where the bricks were sourced but it is unlikely that they were made locally. It is clear that the location, the building materials and the architectural style mark the development out as something special. It is possible that bricks for The Mount were brought from London. W I Palmer's brother Samuel lived in London at 40 College Crescent (Camden). His house 'Northcourt', dating from 1880/81 was designed by Reading architects Morris & Stallwood and constructed of grey and Reading bricks and terracotta[13]. If bricks could travel to London from Reading it represents strong circumstantial evidence that they could travel in the opposite direction.

There is a hierarchical status of buildings. At the centre, facing south, is a terrace of two storey properties with more prestigious properties on the corners, the gardens back on to a similar terrace facing north. There are also semi-detached houses and solid square double-fronted villas. The frontage to Christchurch Road is occupied by two very large and dominating Victorian Gothic fantasies with turrets.

[8] Sidney M Gold, A Biographical dictionary of Architects at Reading (1999). H. Godwin Arnold and Sidney M.Gold in 'Morris of Reading' (1989) state that it was built for staff of Sutton's Seeds. Other sources generally agree on Huntley & Palmers involvement. Tyack et al, The Buildings of Berkshire p276 (2010) also reference R Austin and the Shaftesbury Estate.
[9] The company also developed the Queens Estate in Westminster. Information including a design guide can be found on Westminster Council's website.
[10] Wandsworth Borough Council (2009). Shaftesbury Park Estate, Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy
[11] Referenced in Survey of London, volume 50, chapter 12, Shaftesbury Park Estate, draft online version on UCL, Bartlett School of Architecture website, <accessed 16 July 2025>. The final version was published by Yale University Press in 2013. The chapter includes more information about the story of the ALGDC.
[12] The colour of the bricks of The Mount are variously described as 'gault bricks' in the HE listings and grey brick in Tyack et al, Buildings of Berkshire. We have used 'London stock bricks' as this is what we believe that they are and it is the description used in the Shaftesbury Park Conservation area Appraisal and Management Strategy. The bricks at 82 & 84 Crescent Road, in so far as they have not been painted over, and others on the street are similar in colour.
[13] Historic England Listing entry 1386727 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1386727 (accessed 31 October 2025)



Figure 36: The Mount c1920. Uplands (59 Christchurch Road) in the foreground and Nos 2-8 The Mount, A postcard by H A Giles. Courtesy Reading Borough Libraries

Shaftesbury Park, a forty acre site was on a much, much larger scale than The Mount. When it opened in 1874 it already had 479 houses and a final total of 1,200 was expected although plans and layout were later modified before completion[14]. The Architect reported, "The houses are built in four classes, containing five, six, seven or eight rooms respectively – the latter including a bath room – at moderate rentals with the option of purchase."[15]

The 1911 census records the number of rooms in each property and for the Mount Estate the number of rooms including the kitchen were: one property with ten rooms (57 Christchurch Road), three with nine, two with eight, ten with seven and eight with six[16].

In contrast, Hillside is built from the more typical Reading red and grey bricks. The Architect reported the commencement of the building for William Isaac Palmer in 1879 on land leased from the governors of Christ's Hospital. The architects were Morris & Stallwood and the builders, Wheelers Bros[17].

William Isaac Palmer, who never married, died in 1893.

[14] Shaftesbury Park Estate Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Strategy. Wandsworth Borough Council 2009.
[15] The Architect 25 July 1874 p47
[16] Census records do not include No36 and so we have assumed that it would have 6 rooms. A comparison with the 1911 census for Brassey Square in the Shaftesbury Park Estate shows that many properties had 6 rooms but had been split between two households. Sabine Road had smaller four roomed properties, possibly built later as they are not mentioned in the report in The Architect.
[17] The Architect 11 October 1879

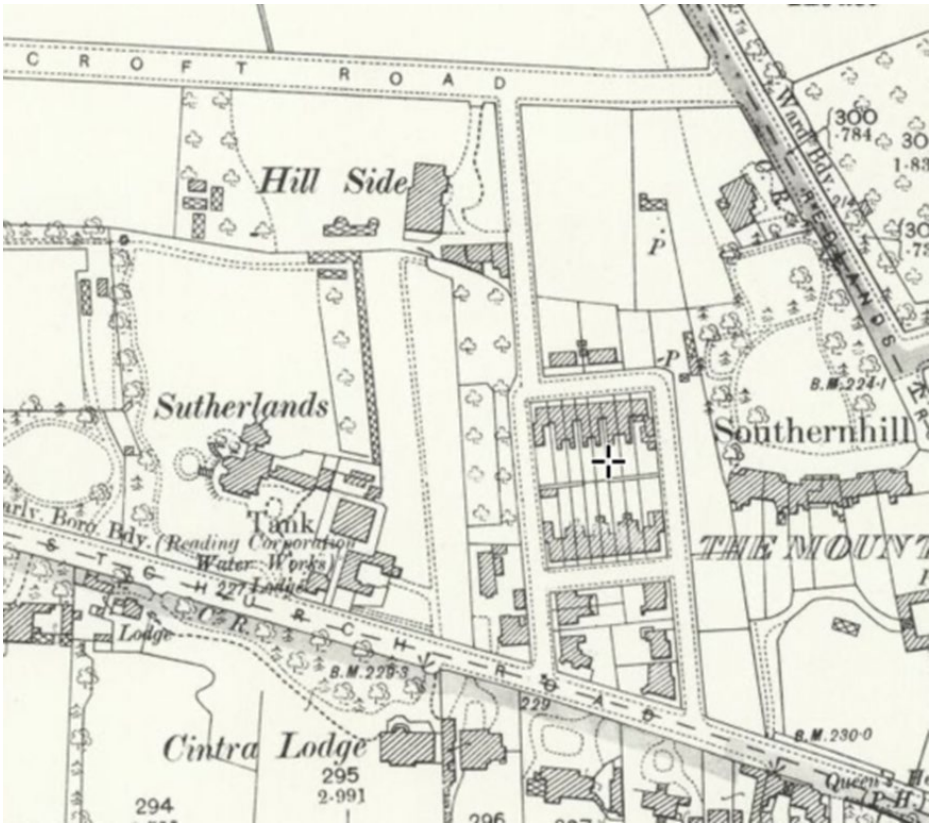


Figure 37: Extract from OS map 1898 published 1899. The Mount and Hillside have been completely built and there is a new building, the Mildmay Club, at the rear of Mildmay Cottage on the corner of Christchurch Road and the Mount. Courtesy National Library of Scotland

Hillside, properties adjacent to Sutherlands and the Sutton family

Arthur Warwick Sutton, second son of Martin Hope Sutton lived at Sutherlands from 1884-1888. His younger brother Leonard Goodhart Sutton (1863-1932), moved to Hillside after the death of W I Palmer and it was considerably extended for him by Spencer Slingsby Stallwood. Their father Martin Hope Sutton (1815-1901) had lived at Cintra Lodge on the south side of Christchurch Road from 1857 until his death when it was sold. Leonard Noel Sutton (1893-1965), son of L G Sutton grew up at Hillside and later lived at Sutherlands until his death. The house was sold when in his wife died in the 1970s and a modern property was built on the site.

Some western portions of the grounds of Sutherlands had been detached and developed before the First World War and Sutherlands Avenue laid out. In 1949 a piece of land off Sutherlands Avenue and eastern parts of the grounds and land owned by the Suttons were sold by order of Leonard Noel Sutton including, 53a Christchurch Road with buildings attached, Mildmay Cottage 55 Christchurch Road, the Mildmay Club and orchard frontage land in The Mount[18].

The name 'Mildmay' may be linked with Mildmay Park in London but it has not been possible to find a direct connection between the Club, founded in 1879 by Arthur Warwick Sutton on the suggestion of Miss Pym[19] which then moved to the newly built hall in 1881[20], and

[18] Reading Standard 14 October 1949, p1
[19] Berkshire Chronicle 26 March 1881 p5 and Reading Mercury 26 March 1881 p5. A W Sutton married Arabella Constance Pym in April 1881.
[20] Reading Mercury 19 November 1881 p5

Mildmay Park in the 1870s or 80s. There is a Mildmay Club on Newington Green in London founded in 1888 as the Mildmay Radical Club which post-dates the Reading Club but the area was well known for 'evangelical, missionary and philanthropic work'[21]. Rev William Pennefather's Mildmay Institutions were particularly well known[22].

By the turn of the twentieth century there are clear links between Reading, the Sutton family and Mildmay Park. Rev Daniel Bell Hankin, vicar of St Jude's Church retired to Reading and from 1905 he was a trustee at St Mary's, Castle Street[23]. On his death in 1915 he was living at Mildmay Cottage. He was one of the officiating clergy at the marriage in 1899 of Martin Hubert Fouquet Sutton, the nephew of Arthur Warwick Sutton, in Kensington in London. M H F Sutton married Eleonora Morton, the daughter of Colonel Morton. He also retired to Reading and on his death in 1915 he was described as having been the superintendent of Mildmay Institutions in north London[24].

The Progress Theatre, founded in 1946 with its first production in 1947, moved in 1950 from the W I Palmer Memorial Hall in West Street to new premises in The Mount which had originally been the home of Mildmay Club.



Figure 38: The north side of the Progress Theatre. (Left) stage door c1950 and (right) today when the corrugated iron club hall has been obscured by later extensions. Images courtesy Progress Theatre

[21] We are grateful for the assistance of the Mildmay Club Archive Group who corresponded with us about the possibility of a link between the two clubs.
[22] William Pennefather https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Pennefather <accessed 19 May 2026>
[23] Information provided by John Dearing.
[24] Reading Mercury 24 April 1915 p5. Colonel Morton lived at 20 Cintra Avenue.



Figure 39: Progress Theatre from the north west in 1964. Image courtesy of Reading Museum/Reading Chronicle Collection (Reading Borough Council). All rights reserved.

A brick wing of two rooms with a bath and kitchen was added during the First World War when the hall was used as an extension to the Sutherlands war hospital.



Figure 40: Sutherlands Auxiliary Hospital. Courtesy Reading Libraries Local Studies Collection

Between the wars its uses included a boy's club. During the Second World War, 16 evacuee children from the East End of London lived there before more suitable accommodation was found. Between then and its sale it was used by the WVS to keep clothing and stores[25].

At first the theatre was rented from Reading Co-operative Society but in the 1960s the freehold was purchased. Over time the theatre has expanded beyond the boundaries of the

[25] Newspaper article 'Progress Indeed!' from 1963 quoting the wife of Noel Sutton who was living at Sutherlands at the time. Progress scrapbook D/EX1151/17/4

Mildmay club but the extensions and additions from the central corrugated hall are still readable within the building.

Reading University

The Reading Extension College was founded in 1892 and based in Valpy Street. By 1906 most of the college had moved to land on London Road, including the Acacias, donated by the Palmer family. By the time Reading gained its own charter in 1926 new buildings had been built within what is now the London Road Campus.

The University acquired Hillside in 1949 and in the 1950 directory it was a Reading University Student Hostel. In 1979 permission was given to build additional student accommodation in the grounds[26]. There had been fears that the house would be demolished. Hillside was only listed in 2005, compared with the 1978 listing for properties in The Mount. The gates, gatepiers, walls and railings were separately listed at the same time. The house is currently owned by Turner Property who use part of the main building as offices with flats above and within the grounds the 1970s low rise student accommodation has been retained. Recent improvements to the site include lounge extensions to student buildings, two new accommodation buildings, a common room and attached to the house, the remodelling of the gardens in 2020-2021 with a memorial to the four sons of Leonard Goodhart Sutton who died in the First World War and a history plaque[27].

Surrounding Developments following the Second World War

The comparatively green but urban situation of The Mount ended as plots on the boundary were gradually developed. Bungalows were built in the mid-1950s land on the eastern edge of The Mount. Sutton Walk on the west side of The Mount and Whitby Drive which has a pedestrian route, Lancaster Close, joining Christchurch and Allcroft Roads, in the 1970s.

First occupants of The Mount

Properties in The Mount are thought to have been built for managers and clerks at the biscuit factory however census information shows that this was not a universal rule with a third of properties in 1881 having a definite connection and a further three a possible connection.

The following properties included residents with a connection to ‘the biscuit factory’:

- Thomas Allen at No 3 (now 30) was a foreman
- William Baskett at No 4 (now 32) was a gardener but his son was a clerk at the biscuit factory
- John Simmance at No 6 (now 36) was a retired Baptist minister but his son was a junior clerk
- John Allen at No 9 (now 10) was a foreman and also housed a boarder who was a clerk
- Arthur Spry at No 11 (now 14) was an invoice clerk
- Edward Maze at No 12 (now 16) was an export clerk

[26] Reading Evening Post 9 February 1979 p4
[27] We are grateful for the information provided by Turner Property and a guided tour of Hillside and its grounds.

- John Broad at Woodhill (now 4) was a legal clerk
- John Waugh at what is now 57 Christchurch Road was a commercial clerk

Others with possible links are:

- Edward Freeman (numbering unclear in 1881) at what is probably now 25 was a commercial traveller
- Thomas Coltman at Uplands (now 59 Christchurch Road) was a commercial traveller
- Cornelius Carr at no 5 (now 34) was a confectioner and in 1891 a biscuit maker

The rate records for 1888 after the area was included within the Borough boundary show that 6 properties were not owned by W I Palmer at that date four of which were owner-occupied[28].

- 2 The Mount owned by W B Williams and occupied by Henrietta Codd
- 4 The Mount owned and occupied by John Broad
- 22 The Mount (Edith House) owned and occupied by James Quelch a coal merchant who carried out business from the address
- 24 The Mount (Kates Villa) owned by J Belcher and occupied George Goodwin
- 57 Christchurch Road owned and occupied by John Waugh
- 59 Christchurch Road owned and occupied by Thomas Coltman



Figure 41: Kates Villa (No 24) and Edith House (No 22) c1915. Courtesy Reading Borough Libraries

Other occupants in 1881 included a surveyor, a schoolmaster, clergymen, an insurance agent, an agricultural engineer, a commercial traveller for 'engineers and agricultural machinery', an inspector and assistant in the education department, a mess master, the high bailiff of the County Court, and a merchant and commission agent. Only one resident, a

[28] Royal Berkshire Archives R/FR2/ 40 - 1888

farmer's widow lived on her own means. It is possible that some of these residents had direct or indirect connections with the biscuit factory or William Isaac Palmer.

University Connections

In 1911 Henry Francis Maze, an accountant at the University College, lived at 4 The Mount and in 1921 he had three physical drill students as boarders. He was probably the son of Edward Francis Maze who had had been a clerk at the biscuit factory in 1881. George Frederick Drew at No 8 in 1911 was an agricultural instructor. In 1921 Professor of Geology Herbert Leader Hawkins lived at No 38. Other residents at this time also had boarders from the college.

Historic Associations

The development of two of Reading's largest family firms Huntley & Palmers and Sutton Seeds is well documented elsewhere and so below are mentioned briefly members of the families with particular connections with The Mount CA.

- William Isaac Palmer was the youngest brother of George Palmer and a partner in Huntley and Palmers from 1857. He was a successful breeder of shorthorn cattle at his estate at Grazeley Court and was particularly involved in the temperance movement in Reading and more widely.
- Arthur Warwick Sutton (1854-1925), brother of Leonard Goodhart Sutton (see below) founded the Mildmay Club and was involved in many similar organisations such as the Grovelands Club[29] and the Silver Street Fireside Club and Mission[30].
- Leonard Goodhart Sutton (1863- 1932) was Mayor of Reading three times and was involved in many civic, religious and sporting organisations.
- Leonard Noel Sutton (1893-1965) like his father was involved in many civic and religious organisations.

Other notable residents:

- Edith Mary Routh lived at 23 The Mount, previously No13, and was related to Dr Martin James Routh rector of Tilehurst, giving his name to the Routh Lane Conservation Area. Her obituary in the Reading Standard in 1940 recorded her work with the Red Cross including at Sutherlands Hospital during the First World War. After the war she nursed an ex-serviceman who had been shot in the spine at Salonika. The serviceman was probably Frederick William Hill who in 1921 moved in to Sutherlands Cottage, 41 Northumberland Avenue which had been built for him and was opened by Leonard Goodhart Sutton[31]. She left her house in The Mount to Christ Church where she was a member of the congregation[32].
- Alice Constance Miller lived at 2 The Mount, often referred to as Belvoir Lodge, and died in 1946[33]. She was associated with the University and in 1936 had donated

[29] Reading Mercury 26 March 1881 p5
[30] Reading Standard 23 September 1905 p8
[31] Reading Standard 27 August 1921 p7
[32] Reading Standard 23 February 1940 p6 and 12 July 1940 p7
[33] Reading Standard 1 November 1946 p9

Broadfield, 16 Northcourt Avenue, to the University as a sanatorium when she moved to The Mount. It is now used as student accommodation[34].

- Alice Moxhay lived at 15 The Mount and was also a nurse and a superintendent at the Queen Victoria Institute until 1923[35]. She lived with her sister Gertrude who appears in advertisements for a fundraiser for the Zenana Missionary Society in 1908[36].
- Rev Daniel Bell Hankin former vicar of St Jude's Mildmay Park was living at Mildmay Cottage when he died in 1915[37].

Bibliography

As well as the specific references above the publications below have been an invaluable source of information about the area and its occupants with particular thanks to Dennis Wood, author of Views from the Hill, for his insights.

T A B Corley, Quaker Enterprise in Biscuits: Huntley and Palmers of Reading 1872-1972 (1972)

Earley Local History Group, Suttons Seeds – A history 1806-2006 (2006)

Sidney M Gold, A Biographical Dictionary of Architects at Reading (1999)

Dennis Wood, Views from the Hill, The Story of Whitley (2017)

Archives of the Progress Theatre. Royal Berkshire Archives reference D/EX1151

Newspapers and censuses via findmypast.

Street directories

[34] Penny Kemp, Northcourt Avenue: it's history & people (second edition 2024)
[35] Reading Standard 3 March 1923 p8
[36] Reading Standard 1 February 1908 p5
[37] Berkshire Chronicle 21 January 1915 p6

Appendix 3 Listed buildings

Table 3: Listed buildings in Character Area 1

Address of building	HE listing number	Image 1	Image 2	Brief description mainly derived from listing entry
Wall between No.57 and 59 Christchurch Road	1154887 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1154887			Grade II (Group Value). Circa 1876. In 2 sections. Gates missing and opening widened. About 6 foot 6 inches high. Brick with 3½ and 2½ paler yellow diaper patterns and cogged courses below moulded capping. End piers with moulded capping.
59 Christchurch Road	1321968 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1321968			Uplands on corner with Christchurch Road. House for manager at Huntley and Palmers Factory. Decorative features face approach from Christchurch. 1876. 2 storeys gault brick with yellow brick cill and lintel bands and patterning to square corner turret. Elevation to The Mount (east) altered to the detriment of its historic character.

57 Christchurch Road	1113440 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1113440			Grade II (Group Value). House for manager of Huntley and Palmers. On corner of Christchurch Road and The Mount estate. Angle turret towards Christchurch. Circa 1876. 2 1/2 storeys. Gault brick with paler brick bands at cill and lintel levels.
38 and 40, The Mount	1321967 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1321967			Grade II (Group Value). Circa 1876. 2 storey pair, similar position to Nos 2 and 4. Gault brick with paler bands at cill and lintel levels. Linked to No 57 by garden entrances - a pair of gables breaking short length of wall with moulded cope
6 (Image 1) and 24-36, The Mount	1113438 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1113438			Grade II (Group Value). Circa 1876. A 2 storey terrace for the clerks at Huntley and Palmers Biscuit Factory with foremen's end terrace houses. Gault brick with white brick bands and chevron-moulded 1st floor brick window arches.

8-22, The Mount	1113439 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1113439			Grade II (Group Value). Circa 1876. A 2 storey terrace for the clerks at Huntley and Palmers Biscuit Factory with foremen's end terrace houses for foreman. Gault brick with white brick bands and chevron moulded 1st floor brick window arches.
23 (Image 2) and 25 (Image 1), The Mount	1154876 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1154876			Reflected pair circa 1876. Gault brick (No 25 previously painted) with white brick bands at cill and lintel levels, cogging to porch and modillion eaves cornice. Probably for under-managers of the Huntley and Palmers Biscuit Factory.

Table 4: Listed buildings in Character Area 2

Address of building	**HE listing number**	**Image 1**	**Image 2**	**Brief description mainly derived from listing entry**
Entrance to Hillside from Allcroft Road	1392868 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1392868			Grade II Gatepiers, walls, gates and railings forming two sides of the boundary to Hillside. Circa 1880-1900. Two entrances with gates: from Allcroft Road and Lower Mount. The gateways, gates and railings are valuable in putting the house in context.
As above	As above			As above

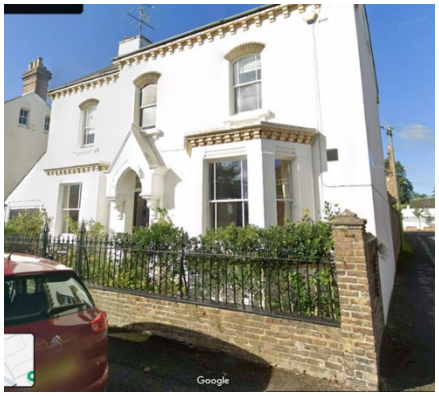
Address of building	HE listing number	Image 1	Image 2	Brief description mainly derived from listing entry
Hillside, Allcroft Road	1392866 https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1392866		None	Grade II Large house, now flats, dated 1880 by Morris and Stallwood for W I Palmer of Huntley and Palmers, extended and dated 1898, by S.S. Stallwood. Grey brick, slate roofs with red tile cresting, extensive red brick and terracotta dressings.

There are no listed buildings in Character Area 3.

Appendix 4 Buildings of townscape merit

Table 5: Buildings of townscape merit

Address of building	Image 1	Image 2	Comment
53a Christchurch Road		None	View of property largely obscured from the public realm. Appears to be of Italianate Villa style, stucco finished. 53A and Linden Mews were formed from “Sutherlands” outbuildings, and although altered and extended, these retain their original spatial pattern Image from Google Maps, October 2020
55 Christchurch Road			Prominent 2-storey white rendered building of classic proportions framing a key view, with No.57, into The Mount. Original railings enclose the frontage. Original timber sash windows replaced with uPVC since previous CA appraisal in 2009 to the detriment of its historic character and contribution to the historic significance of the conservation area. Image 1 January 2025 (Image Claire Truman) Image 2 April 2025 (Image Claire Truman)

Address of building	Image 1	Image 2	Comment
The Mount, 2, The Mount		None	Substantial detached property, which appears to have been constructed as a reflected pair with No. 4 – if so the entrance door pediment has been lost and the bay window has been extended to 2-storeys. Original gate, railings and low boundary wall have all been replaced. Sash windows to the three bay windows have all been replaced. Entrance door retained. Image January 2025 (Image Claire Truman)
The Mount, 4, The Mount		None	Substantial detached property, which appears to have been constructed as a reflected pair with No.2. Retains original gate, railings and low boundary wall, sash windows, entrance door and pediment and brick cornicing Image from Google Maps September 2024

Address of building	Image 1	Image 2	Comment
Progress Theatre			The theatre's architectural composition and appearance demonstrates how it has evolved since its origins as a corrugated iron-clad meeting hall from 1881, and has been incrementally extended to its latest iteration: the 1960's modernist envelope. The corrugated iron-clad structure is rare for Reading. It has strongly contributed to Reading's cultural and social development with notable nationally important figures visiting in the past. Image 1 January 2025 (Image Claire Truman) Image 2 November 2025 (Image Claire Truman)

Appendix 5 Conservation Area Views

See the text of the appraisal for the significance of these views

Table 6: Views into the Conservation Area

Location of view	Image
View 1: North along The Mount (west) from Christchurch Road. (Image Claire Truman)	
View 2: North along The Mount (east) from Christchurch Road, looking northwest. (Image Claire Truman)	

Location of view	Image
View 3: South (uphill) along Lower Mount, from the junction of Lower Mount and Allcroft Road. (Image Claire Truman)	

Table 7: Views within the Conservation Area

Location of view	Image
View 4: West along The Mount (south) towards The Progress Theatre, from The Mount (east) (Image Claire Truman)	

Location of view	Image
View 5: West along The Mount (north) from The Mount (east) (Image Claire Truman)	
View 6: North along Lower Mount from The Mount (Image Claire Truman)	

Table 8: Views out of the Conservation Area

Location of view	Image
View 7: East along The Mount (north) towards Wantage Hall (Image Claire Truman)	
View 8: West along The Mount (north) towards Christ Church (Image Claire Truman)	

Appendix 6 Conservation Area Trees and Green Spaces

Table 9: Trees with a Tree Preservation Order

Location of tree	Image 1 if available	Image 2 if available	TPO details and number if applicable
55 Christchurch Road	None	None	Order No. 119/06, type T2
79 and 81 The Mount	None	None	Order No. 24/03, type T1
Progress Theatre		None	Order No. 2/03 The Ash tree outside the Progress Theatre (TPO order number 2/03) was approved for felling in June 2020 (felled in the August) and a replacement was planted - Sorbus 'Autumn Spire' - in 2021. The replacement tree retains the same TPO order number

Table 10: Trees with Tree Preservation Orders immediately adjacent to the CA (see map for all TPOs)

Location of tree	Image 1 if available	Image 2 if available	TPO details and number if applicable
51 Christchurch Road	None	None	Order No. 155/01, type T10
1-4 Lancaster Close	None	None	Order No. 154/01, type T8

Location of tree	Image 1 if available	Image 2 if available	TPO details and number if applicable
11,12,14,15,16 Lancaster Close	None	None	Order No. 152/01, type T10
9 and 10 Lancaster Close	None	None	Order No. 153/01, type T4
17-20 Lancaster Close	None	None	Order No. 151/01, type T5
40 Christchurch Road	None	None	Order No. 8/19, type T2
42 Christchurch Road, Moreton Court			Order No. 86/06, type T5
9,10,11,12,14,16,21,22,23,24,28 and land adjacent Cintra Close	None	None	Order No. 8/21, type T11

Table 11: Other significant trees and green spaces

Location of tree or space	Image
Vegetation to west, north and east boundaries of Hillside (Whitby Drive, Allcroft Road and Lower Mount respectively)	
Trees and vegetation between Lower Mount and Sutton Walk	

Location of tree or space	Image
Cintra Avenue – to the south of the conservation area	