

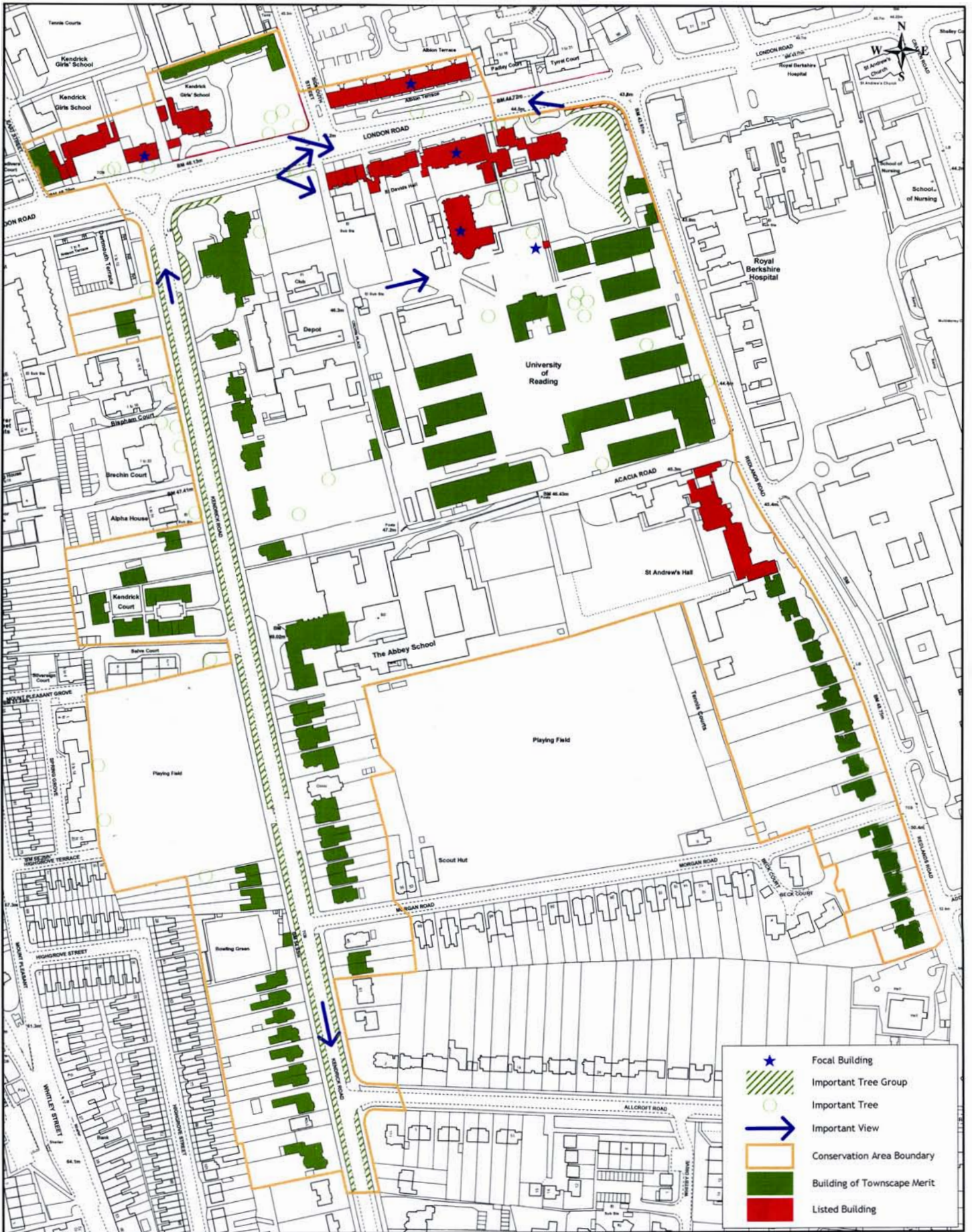
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# Proposed Kendrick Conservation Area Character Appraisal

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## Kendrick Conservation Area Townscape Appraisal Map

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# Kendrick Conservation Area Character Appraisal

## Introduction

The Kendrick Road Conservation Area features a number of historic buildings characteristic of the late 18th century, the 19th century and the inter-war years.

Many buildings, especially in London Road, are listed but others have considerable architectural and historic interest and are Buildings of Townscape Merit. Of particular note are the early 19th century buildings on either side of London Road, the large mid-19th century dwellings in Kendrick Road and Redlands Road and, concealed from the main thoroughfares, a collection of early 20th century university buildings that are part of the only university established in the period between the two World Wars.

## Location, topography and setting

The conservation area lies south-east of Reading town centre, well within urban Reading but just beyond its commercial core. London Road is a wide, level road carrying east-west traffic through the town. Kendrick Road and Redlands Road rise gently southwards from London Road and away from the town centre. North of London Road, outside the conservation area, the land continues to fall almost imperceptibly to the River Kennet.

## Summary of the Character and Appearance of the Conservation Area

The specific interest that justifies designation of the Kendrick Road Conservation Area derives from:

- The architectural and historic interest of the area's buildings, including twelve grade II and two grade II\* listed buildings;
- The diversity of the area's architecture which includes notable exemplars of housing from the late 18th century to the early 20th century;
- The architectural quality and coherence of late Victorian and Edwardian dwellings in Kendrick Road and Redlands Road;
- The historic interest of Kendrick Road, a planned mid-19th century urban road, designed as a tree lined avenue aligning with the spire of Christ Church;
- The early 20th century planned campus of the University of Reading, the only university established between the two World Wars;

- The architectural interest of Kendrick Court, an unusual 1930s housing estate;
- The open space, trees and garden surrounding The Great Hall, still in use for University of Reading graduation ceremonies;
- The area's mature trees and, in particular, the fine avenue of plane trees along Kendrick Road;
- Historical associations with the Palmer family of Huntley and Palmer, famous Reading biscuit manufacturers, and with the author Mary Russell Mitford (1787 -1855).
- Notable red brick boundary walls and historic iron railings.

## Activities and uses

The conservation area contains two secondary schools and part of the University of Reading. Educational uses, for example classrooms, lecture theatre, library and hall, as well as student accommodation in historic buildings, predominate.

In addition, the area contains a small, compact area of housing known as Kendrick Court, private residences in Albion Terrace and a number of detached and semi-detached dwellings in Kendrick Road and Redlands Road.

The area contains a pub (no. 31 London Road), and a health clinic (no. 29 Kendrick Road) but educational and residential uses prevail.

London Road carries three lanes of traffic controlled by a series of traffic lights and this part of the conservation area can be noisy throughout the day. Away from London Road, both traffic and noise levels diminish. Kendrick Road and Redlands Road are used by pedestrians walking into the town and, especially, by students moving around the small campus. Acacia Road, Crown Place and a short alley linking Kendrick Road to Acacia Road increase the permeability of the area but, being away from public view, are not hospitable at night.

## Trees, landscape and open spaces

The area is notable for the long avenue of trees that line either side of Kendrick Road and, despite this being a relatively urban conservation area, trees are a special feature. Two groups of trees, one in the grounds of Mansfield Hall at the junction of London Road and Kendrick Road, the other in the grounds of The Acacias at the junction of London Road and Redlands Road, are prominent in the street scene and make a valuable contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Two areas of open space are notable: the playing fields east of Kendrick Road and landscaped grounds south and east of the Great Hall. The former is an open grassed recreational area devoid of character but important to the setting of Kendrick Road. The latter is an attractive landscaped area of lawn, trees and formal garden that provides a good setting for two listed buildings (The



Great Hall and the War Memorial Clock Tower). This area is used for gatherings as part of university graduation ceremonies.

Late Victorian properties in Kendrick Road and Redlands Road have long rear gardens which, though not visible to the public, make an important contribution to the spacious character of the conservation area.

Those trees, and groups of trees, which are particularly prominent and make a positive contribution to the conservation area are identified on the townscape analysis map. It has not been possible to identify every notable tree and lack of a specific reference does not imply that it is not of value.

## Buildings of Townscape Merit

The townscape analysis has identified a number of unlisted Buildings of Townscape Merit. This follows advice contained within Planning Policy Guidance 15 and in guidance provided by English Heritage, requiring the identification of such buildings as a way of ensuring their protection from demolition and unsuitable alteration.

Most of these buildings are large houses of the mid to late-19th century, which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the conservation area. They are relatively unaltered, or could be reinstated to their original appearance without too much difficulty. Also of note are the early 20th century university buildings, in particular the former library, now an administration centre.

All of these buildings are marked on the townscape analysis map.

## Views and vistas, including focal points

Within the conservation area are a number of landmark buildings that act as important focal points. These are marked on the townscape analysis map.

At the southern end of Kendrick Road, the 164 ft high spire of the grade II\* listed Christ Church (1861-2 by Woodyer) towers above the tall avenue of plane trees, centred directly on the midpoint of the road as part of a deliberate piece of Victorian town planning. At its northern end, the view along Kendrick Road is stopped by no. 39 London Road. Views of these two historic buildings, framed by the mature avenue of street trees, create an urban street of special historic and visual interest.

Albion Terrace's set-back from London Road permits long and wide views of both Albion Terrace and the listed buildings opposite. Such views, made available by the unusually wide distance between terraces, are uncommon in an urban location, adding grandeur to the street.

Within the university campus the War Memorial Clock Tower and, more prominently, the Great Hall are important focal points.

The spire of St John's Church (outside this conservation area) is prominent in views north along Redlands Road beside the Royal Berkshire Hospital.



## Historical associations

The Acacias, London Road, was the home of George Palmer who, in 1841, joined Joseph Huntley to create the world famous Reading biscuit manufacturing business, Huntley and Palmer. George Palmer's son, Alfred, gave the house and adjacent buildings and land to the Reading University Extension College in 1906. St Andrew's Hall in Redlands Road, also in the conservation area, was designed as a home for Alfred Palmer in 1880 by Alfred Waterhouse.

At the beginning of the 19th century no. 39 London Road was the home of Mary Russell Mitford (1787-1855) best known as author of 'Our Village', a series of vividly drawn sketches of village scenes and characters. A plaque on the wall recalls her residence.

### **Townscape: character areas**

Though small in area, the townscape of the conservation area varies and the conservation area may be divided into the following four distinct and definable character areas:

Area 1: London Road

Area 2: Kendrick Road

Area 3: Redlands Road

Area 4: University of Reading, London Road site.

### **Area 1: London Road**

London Road is a historic route appearing on a map of 1761 but considerably earlier in origin. Today, between Kendrick Road and Redlands Road, London Road is a wide and spacious three lane highway sparsely lined with mature and growing trees. Buildings of historical significance sit on each side of, and facing, the road not adhering to any strict building line. Though marred by traffic, this area is distinguished by well preserved 19th century, and earlier, buildings nearly all of which are statutorily listed for their special architectural and historic interest.

This area is not characterised by a single building type but whilst each building, row or terrace in London Road has its own individual character, the cumulative effect of the historic buildings, walls, railings and trees is an area of special historic interest with a distinctive early 19th century appearance.

Nos. 33 and 35 date from the late 18th Century and are constructed in brick under an old clay tile roof with central chimney stack. Well proportioned windows and a fine recessed six panel door with arched radiating fanlight above compliments the 19th century railings to the street boundary. Next door and set back from the road, no. 37 provides a contrast, being faced with stucco and having a first floor gable with bull's eye window in the apex.

No. 39 London Road is of particular significance, providing a focal point for northward views along Kendrick Road. The three storey, plum coloured brick house was once lived in by the early 19th century author, Mary Russell Mitford. The parapetted clay tiled roof is in double pile form with a pair



of gable end stacks each side. Steps and a fine doorcase flanked by Doric columns signify the prestige of this building.



**Photo One: 41 London Road**

Next door eastwards, no 41 London Road (now part of Kendrick Girls School) is another late 18th century brick built three storey building. It has a hipped slate roof and is enclosed by a fine brick wall with moulded stone plinth and coping and tall moulded stone capped piers at intervals. Brick boundary walls are a common feature throughout the conservation area. This wall and the brick boundary wall around The Acacias, London Road are grade II listed.

Further east, on the opposite side of Sidmouth Street to the Kendrick Girls School is Albion Terrace. This is a fine grade II\* listed terrace built by Richard Billing, a local architect and builder, c. 1825-1835. Open space in Kendrick School to the west and modern development (Padley Court) to the east, together with the wide carriage sweep to the front of the property, gives this historic terrace added prominence out in the street scene. The buildings opposite (nos. 16-44) are all listed, rising to between three and four stories in height. They comprise three distinct rows: nos. 16-22, nos. 24-30 (St. Davids Hall) and nos. 32-40. It is possible that nos. 24-30 were built by the same builder/architect as Albion Terrace opposite.

# planning



***Photo Two: Albion Terrace***

This collection of historic terraces and rows provides grandeur to London Road, enhanced by the wide carriageway and set-back of Albion Terrace. The buildings are an important reminder of the early 19th century expansion in Reading and their detailed facades, walls and railings signify that London Road was once a road of character and importance.



***Photo Three: No. 39 London Road***

Continuing eastwards, The Acacias is an early 19th century Bath stone villa set in landscaped grounds and enclosed behind iron railings to the street. It has many fine external and internal features including two ground floor bow windows thought to be alterations designed by Alfred Waterhouse in the late 19th Century. Although the grounds are obscured from public view by a boundary wall, they provide an important and valuable setting to the buildings within the university campus, to the south.



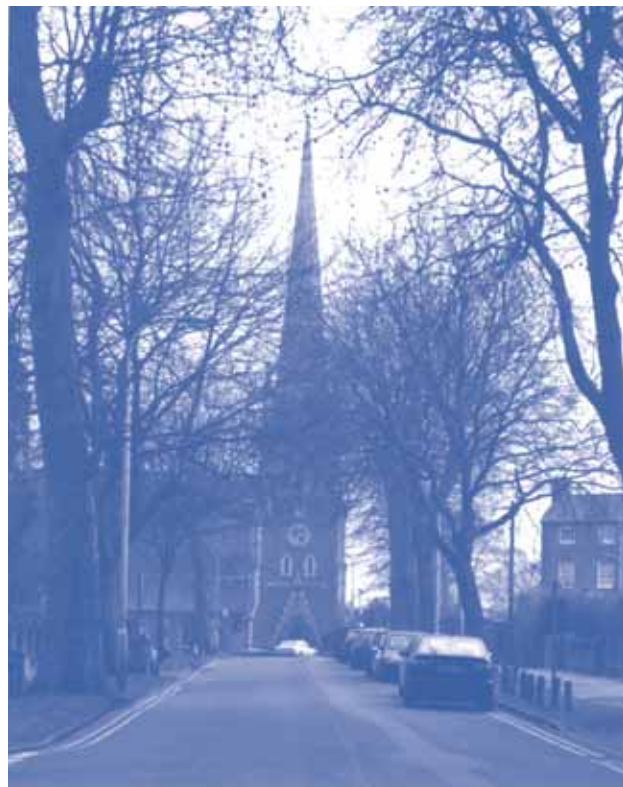


## Area 2: Kendrick Road

In contrast to London Road and Redlands Road, which possibly have medieval origins, Kendrick Road is a planned, straight road laid out c.1850 as part of Reading's post-railway expansion. The trees formed one of the first avenues in the town.

On the east side of the road, dwellings are set back from the wide footway behind small front gardens with much larger gardens to the rear. Houses are typically two-storey with attic or three storey. Those at the northern end of the road are large single dwellings in individual plots (e.g nos. 5-15) whilst further north, semi-detached is the norm with only a small gap between buildings (e.g. nos19-43).

Of particular interest are fine examples of the mid-Victorian eclectic style of domestic architecture. Victorian buildings in Kendrick Road are unusual in retaining most of their original exterior features and they exist in sufficient numbers to create an area of special character and appearance, which should be recognised and preserved.



**Photo Four and Five: Vista to Kendrick Road**

The High Victorian style grew out of revivals of past styles. Fashionable Victorian town-dwellers were bored by the monotonous classical terraces/rows of plain Georgian houses, for example Albion Terrace in London Road, by now encrusted in soot and grime. They wanted colour and animation. Such feelings were not peculiar to the landed gentry. In a period of industrialisation there was a new generation of nouveaux riches, self-made industrialists, boastful of their success, who in the architecture of their houses advertised their achievements in tangible form. Many favoured the mock Gothic style as a romantic fantasy that implied ancient lineage.

# planning

Historically, Kendrick Road catered for upper class living and today many of these residencies retain their original character and status. Beginning at the northern end of the road at its junction with London Road, Mansfield Hall (east side) is notable for its simply detailed but imposing character and for the many mature trees in its grounds.

In contrast to most other properties in the area the property is painted stucco. Large paned sliding sash windows are set in prominent architraves, the second floor ones being arch headed while the first floor ones have flat pediments supported on scroll consoles. Bracketed eaves under generous overhangs complete an imposing corner building.



***Photo Six and Seven: Mansfield Hall***

# planning

Leading from Mansfield Road, the east side of Kendrick Road is characterised by individually designed and imposingly detailed villas displaying many of the fashionable design features typical of the period.



*Photo eight and nine: Detailed Villas*



*Photo ten: properties along western side of Kendrick Road*

# planning

On the west side of Kendrick Road, modern blocks of three to four storey flats of mixed quality (e.g. Brechin Court, Bisham Court and Dartmouth Terrace) lack historic or architectural interest and have been omitted from the conservation area.



### ***Photo eleven and twelve: original brick walls***

Numbers 5 to 15 Kendrick Road are exceptionally well detailed three storey detached properties, mostly in red brick and fine dressed stone and terracotta, typical of the eclectic fashion of late 19th century domestic design. Prominent and ornately detailed chimney stacks predominate and most are complete in every detail. The spaces between nos. 5 to 15 Kendrick Road are as important as the buildings themselves by giving a spacious atmosphere to the lower end of the road.

No. 7 Kendrick Road is a fine example of a property retaining many of its original features including a porch to the rear. Above the front door glazed upper panels and fanlights allow extra light to enter the hallway.

# planning



***Photo thirteen and fourteen: 7 Kendrick Road***

Kendrick Court on the west side of the road is an architecturally interesting and unusual self-contained enclave of 1930s houses designed in what could loosely be termed a 'Modern Movement' style. The houses have white rendered walls, green glazed pantiled roofs and single geometric steel windows, many of which remain in original form. Twelve houses face each other in two banks of six with a communal lawn in the middle. A small asymmetric court continues behind with a further eight properties.

# planning



***Photo fifteen: Kendrick Court***

Opposite Kendrick Court is The Abbey School. The original part of the school boasts an attractive Victorian frontage to Kendrick Road and a large modern extension is an example of the successful integration of new and old. The extension has been successfully broken down into smaller units which are in sympathy with the scale and form of surrounding historic buildings while being unashamedly modern in concept and performance.



***Photo sixteen: Abbey School***



***Photo seventeen: Victorian houses***

On the same side of Kendrick Road and following on from Abbey School is a group of 14 late Victorian houses mostly three storey, semi-detached and slightly smaller and less grand than those further north which were constructed about 25 years earlier. They are perhaps even more 'quirky' in their design and use of late 19th century architectural language. Although several pairs are clearly of the same plan form, they have been 'dressed up' by the builder to differ from each other in their use of materials and add-on details. Again, all have most of their features intact and are seemingly in good condition.

A particularly noticeable feature of these properties are the tall chimneys retaining their original decorative brick work with their accentuated tallness adding height and elegance to the overall house design. Chimneys developed from utilitarian smoke dispensing elements to major architectural features and hence the detail displayed on these chimneys.

The front walls and hedges to these properties have been removed to make way for car parking. In designating sites such as these within a conservation area, potential is created to enhance its character and where appropriate, control and enhance such boundary detailing.

The boundary to the conservation area runs along the rear of nos. 19-43 Kendrick Road, enclosing their rear gardens. The playing field beyond is omitted from the conservation area because its characterless large expanse of mown grass and poor quality boundary treatment make no positive contribution to the conservation area's special character. Modern development south of Acacia Road to the rear of The Abbey School and St Andrew's Hall is included primarily because the northern boundary of the playing field makes a clearly defined boundary, easily visible on the ground.



**Photo eighteen: Bowling green**

Opposite the entrance to Morgan Road is a small bowling green and clubhouse dating from the late eighteenth century. South of the bowling green, nos. 96-112 (even) and nos. 45-49 (odd) Kendrick Road date from circa 1890-1910 and are included within the conservation area because they make a positive contribution to Kendrick Road's late Victorian character and appearance (unfortunately, No.110a is a modern infill dwelling of little architectural merit).

From Morgan Road southwards, a length of Kendrick Road, including trees, grass verge and footway, but excluding late 20th century roadside development, is included within the conservation area so that, in combination with Christchurch Conservation Area, the whole length of Kendrick Road from London Road to Christchurch Road is given the status and protection of conservation area designation.

### **Area 3: Redlands Road**

Redlands Road was known as Rudden Lane in the 16th century, then Red Lane until the 1840s. Its historic origins can be deduced from its non-uniform width, the elevation of the roadside dwellings above the road and the slight curve as it proceeds south beyond St Andrew's Hall. An early O.S. map shows that St Andrew's Hall (1880) was the only significant development on the west side of Redlands Road in 1897. Fifteen years later (O.S. 1912), the west side, between St Andrew's Hall and Allcroft Road, was lined with more than a dozen large brick houses.





***Photo nineteen: St. Andrews Hall***

The most notable building in Redlands Road is St. Andrews Hall; a grade II listed building designed in 1880 by the architect Alfred Waterhouse as a home for Alfred Palmer. The house, originally called East Thorpe, was given a large extension block for student accommodation in 1911 and then became St. Andrews Hall, one of the University's first halls of residence. It is characterised by many original features including steep gables, prominent chimneys and sash windows with terracotta window detailing. The intricate detailing of the eccentric two and three storey building provides an interesting frontage to Redlands Road.

Land immediately to the rear of St. Andrews Hall is currently (2004) being redeveloped by the construction of a new building to house The Museum of English Rural Life.

Nos. 8-40 (even) Redlands Road are large early 20th century dwellings slightly elevated from the road, set back behind boundary wall or railings and a small front garden, often containing evergreen shrubs. Built in a characteristic Edwardian style, they complement the Victorian dwellings to be found in Kendrick Road and add to the area's distinctive stock of late Victorian and Edwardian house building.

On the eastern side of Redlands Road, the Royal Berkshire Hospital (1837-9 by Henry Briant) is an imposing historic building in a classical style. With much modern development to the rear of the site, the hospital site is not considered to retain sufficient architectural or historical significance to be included within the conservation area. Nevertheless, the hospital and environs retain the statutory protection of grade II\* listing.



#### **Area 4: University London Road site**

The area of land bounded by London Road, Redlands Road, Crown Place and Acacias Road forms the London Road site of the University of Reading and has a distinctive character quite different to the rest of the conservation area.

In 1892, the University of Oxford established an extension college at Reading, and in 1902 this was included in the list of universities and colleges receiving Treasury grants. In 1904 Alfred Palmer donated 6 acres of land and several buildings in London Road, including The Acacias (no.44), Greenbank (no. 42) and the 'Old Red Building' (nos.32-40), to the college. The University of Reading received its Royal Charter in 1926.

On the acquisition of the London Road site in 1904, Dr. W.M.Childs, Principal of the college from 1900, set out what was then a novel plan for a residential college with halls for students that would recreate the atmosphere of an Oxford college. A plan of 1913 shows that the plan was for two rows of low buildings, housing laboratories and lecture rooms, linked by cloisters around a 'court' or quadrangle. Realising that "beautiful and stately architecture was beyond our reach...", he aspired to "a type of laboratory and studio which would satisfy in use, be within our means, and not be an affront to the site".



***Photo twenty: Utilitarian buildings***

# planning

By the end of the 1920s this plan was completed as proposed but with the addition of a Jacobean style library (now the main administration block) dominating the central court. This plan, and most of the original buildings survive virtually intact, albeit altered. As constructed, the laboratory buildings may lack the architectural pretension of The Great Hall or the former library building but collectively they create a place of notable character with particular significance to the 20th century development of English universities.



***Photo twenty-one: The Great Hall***

Mature trees, lawn and garden and, to the north, The Great Hall (1905) and War Memorial Clock Tower (1922) enhance the university area and combine to create an area of special architectural and historic interest. The Great Hall and surrounding campus play host to University of Reading graduation ceremonies twice a year.

# planning



**Photo twenty-two: Covered walkways**

## **Negative features and opportunities for enhancement**

- Busy, noisy traffic on London Road;
- Loss of original windows, doors and other architectural features in unlisted Buildings of Townscape Merit;
- Loss of front boundaries and gardens to create car parking;
- Modern development on western side of Kendrick Road;
- Feeling of personal insecurity in Crown Place, Acacia Road and alley.

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ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਯੋਜਨਾ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਪੱਤ੍ਰ (ਪਲੈਨਿੰਗ ਐਪਲੀਕੇਸ਼ਨ) ਦਾ ਫਾਰਮ ਭਰਨ ਲਈ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 0118 939 0587 ਜਾਂ 0118 955 3717 ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ, ਜਾਂ ਸਿਵਿਕ ਸੈਂਟਰ ਦਫਤਰ ਦੇ ਚੌਥੇ ਪੱਧਰ ਤੇ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦਫਤਰ ਵਿਚ ਆਓ।

Punjabi

إذا احتجتم لمساعدة لملى هذه الاستمارة التخطيطية ، الرجاء منكم الاتصال بالأرقام التالية : 0118 939 0587 أو 0118 955 3717 ، أو تقدموا للزيارة مركز الاستعلامات المتواجد في الطابق الرابع للبلدية .

Arabic

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Albanian

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Urdu



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