



HERITAGE STATEMENT

ON BEHALF OF

ROYAL NATIONAL COLLEGE FOR THE BLIND & VENN'S LANE LTD

**PROPOSAL: PROPOSED MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT COMPRISING NEW
CONVENIENCE STORE (RETAIL) ON GROUND FLOOR AND 6 No.
2-BEDROOM FLATS AT FIRST FLOOR WITH ASSOCIATED ACCESS, CAR
PARKING AND LANDSCAPING**

SITE: 56 VENN'S LANE, HEREFORD, HR1 1DT



NOVEMBER 2022

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by PJS Development Solutions Ltd on behalf of THE Royal National College for the Blind (RNCB) and Venn's Lane Ltd (the joint applicants). It supports a proposal to construct a mixed use development on a site at Venn's Lane in Hereford. It specifically addresses the heritage implications of the proposal.

2.0 THE SITE

- 2.1 The site is situated on the north-east side of Venn's Lane and about 1.4 kilometres from Hereford city centre. The application area includes No 56 Venn's Lane, a dwelling house adjacent to the Royal National College for the Blind (RNCB). The site also includes the RNCB service road, which runs around the north and east of No 56 and an area to the north-west of the service road junction with Venn's Lane.
- 2.2 The dwelling house itself (No 56) is set well back from Venn's Lane behind a deep front garden. The house itself appears to date from the 1960's and is of no architectural or historic merit and could be described as unremarkable. There is a blanket Tree Preservation Order (TPO) covering the site.

3.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 The proposal is to redevelop the site to create a mixed use scheme comprising a convenience store, with residential accommodation (6 flats) above.
- 3.2 The proposed 2-storey building would be set back from Venn's Lane behind a landscaped car park. The shop frontage would face Venn's Lane. The ground floor would comprise the convenience store with an associated plant room/store and a 12 space cycle store.
- 3.3 At the first floor level, 6 No 2-bedroom flats are proposed. The flats would be served by windows in all four sides of the building, although the windows on the south-east elevation are one directional splayed windows, to avoid overlooking of No 54 (notwithstanding the significant tree screen). The building would be of a sleek and simple modern design, with a flat roof.
- 3.4 The landscaped car park to the front of site would comprise 8 car parking spaces, including one disabled space and a cycle parking area. A further 10 parking spaces are proposed in the north-western part of the site. Adjustments would be made to the service road to enable two way vehicular movements.

4.0 HERITAGE ASSETS AND ASSESSMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT

Heritage Assets

- 4.1 There are no designated heritage assets within the application site area and it is not within a Conservation Area. There are also no buildings or structures that could be regarded as non-designated heritage assets for policy purposes.
- 4.2 However, to the north-west of the site, and on the other side of Venn's Lane, is the Grade II Listed C19 Royal National College for the Blind. The official List entry states:

College. c1881. By FR Kempson. Brick; plain tile roof; various brick stacks. E-shaped plan, with wings to returned sides. EXTERIOR: 3 storeys; 7-window range: central 2 tier oriel to tower, flanked by groups of 3 plain lights. Right advanced wing has 4 stone mullion and transom lights, under pointed arches, and tier of 2 similar lights to returned side, with staircase tower; left advanced wing has 1 single mullion and transom light, with similar light to returned side; various lights, and semi-dormers with armorial finials, over; tower with steep stepped gables and wrought-iron finials. Central entrance: plank double doors in chamfered ashlar pointed arch, flanked by 3-light stone mullion and transom windows, under pointed brick arches. Wing to left with various lights; left returned side has timber-framed porch with herring-bone brick infill, ornamental side-lights and framing, and scalloped barge-boards. Various ranges to rear. Much polychrome brick, ashlar and terracotta detailing and decoration. INTERIOR: 3 open-well staircases with turned balusters and acorn finials; winder stair to turret. 1st floor: ceiling cornices; 6 and 9-panel doors; various stone fireplaces; chamfered ceiling beams. Ground floor: chamfered returns; chamfered 9 and 6-panel doors with architraves; ceiling cornices; pointed arch; various stone fireplaces. Chapel: strapped trusses; brick lancets, some blind; screen to hall.

Significance

- 4.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) recommends that applicants should be required to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting (paragraph 194).
- 4.4 The significance of a heritage asset is defined in terms of their value to this and future generations because of their heritage interest, deriving not only from their physical presence, but also from their setting. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic (Annex 2 of the Framework).

- 4.5 The significance of the Listed RNCB derives from a range of these significance factors. It has architectural and artistic interest deriving from the design, decoration and craftsmanship of the features, which exemplify Victorian institutional architecture. It also has significance in terms of historic interest deriving from the ways in which past people, events and aspects have treated, cared for and educated, blind and partially sighted members of the community.
- 4.6 For the above reasons, the Listed RNCB has 'high' heritage significance.

Setting

- 4.7 Annex 2 of the Framework defines 'setting' as: *"The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral."*
- 4.8 The primary aspect of the setting of the Grade II Listed college building comprises its immediate surroundings and grounds on the south-east side of Venn's Lane. Whilst the application site might be regarded as falling within the wider geographical setting of the Listed college, it does not play any tangible contribution to its setting.
- 4.9 This is because there is a substantial range of twentieth century buildings and additions between the historic college building and Venn's Lane, along with a tree screen on the south-west side of Venn's Lane, the width of the road and further trees (one of which is very large) on the north-east side of Venn's Lane.
- 4.10 There is therefore no meaningful inter-visibility between the site of the proposed building and the heritage asset. As a result, the site does not contribute to the understanding and/or appreciation of the interests that embodies the heritage significance of the Grade II Listed college building. The site therefore makes a 'neutral' contribution to the heritage asset's significance.

Impacts

- 4.11 The heritage significance of the Grade II Listed RNCB is defined by its architectural, artistic and historic interest. This interest is manifested in its detailing, composition and integrity of design and appearance, and this will not be harmed by the proposed development. The function of the heritage asset as a college, which enables an understanding of this historic interest, will be unchanged.

- 4.12 The proposal would not result in any change to the immediate setting of the Listed building. Whilst the proposed scheme would result in a new building within the wider geographical setting of the Listed building, there is a significant intervening distance, which contains mature trees, a main road, and substantial C20 buildings, such that there is little inter-visibility or connection between the site and the heritage asset. Moreover, the position, scale and mass would not draw attention away from the Listed building or otherwise impact upon it.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This assessment has identified no instance of harm to the heritage significance of the Grade II Listed RNCB building. The proposed scheme would preserve the setting of the Listed building, in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and is compliant with both national and local policy. The proposal is considered to accord with national and development plan heritage policies.

P.J. STADDON BSc, DIP, MBA, M.R.T.P.I.

NOVEMBER 2022