

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 30 March 2022

Ward: Park

Address: Palmer Park Pavilion and associated building, Palmer Park, Wokingham Road, Reading, RG6 1LF

Proposal: To add Palmer Park Pavilion and associated building, Wokingham Road, Reading, to the List of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures.

RECOMMENDATION

That Palmer Park Pavilion and associated building and entrance gates, Wokingham Road, Reading, be added to the List of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures.

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

1.1 To report on a proposal to add Palmer Park Pavilion and associated building, Wokingham Road, Reading, to the List of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures.

1.2 Appendices:

Appendix 1: Location map

Appendix 2: Relevant photos and images

Appendix 3: Proposed Local List text

Appendix 4: Nomination Form

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Reading Borough Council maintains a List of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures ('the Local List'). Its purpose is to recognise the buildings and structures which do not meet the criteria for national listing, but are nonetheless significant to the heritage of the local area. It was agreed by Planning Applications Committee on 2nd December 2020 that decisions on additions to the Local List should be made at PAC.

2.2 A nomination was received on 23rd September 2020 to add Palmer Park Pavilion (and associated building) to the Local List. Consultations have been carried out in accordance with the agreed process, and this report sets out the recommended action.

2.3 The nomination form received for the building identifies the significance of the building as follows:

"Palmer Park Pavilion, Keepers residence and associated building close-by within the park when the Park itself was opened to the people of Reading in 1891. They

are substantially complete and unaltered and of definite significance to the people of Reading.

The Pavilion itself, designed as a refreshment house for users of the park, is as of June 2020 occupied by Tutu's Ethiopian Café, the Keeper's residence still in residential use, and the associated building found close by (within the children's play area) is unused, and has sadly been allowed to fall into some disrepair.

Historic Association

Opening of park by George Palmer (and others, including then Mayor, Cllr Daniel Heelas of Heelas & Sons Ltd) - land and buildings donated and commissioned by Palmer.

Social Importance

The importance of Victorian parks through to the modern day (buildings now in use as residential and community café - Tutu's - although associated building remains unused) has never been more acute with the arrival of Covid in the community.

Relates to tradition or historic industrial process

Huntley & Palmers was originally founded in Reading in 1822 by Thomas Huntley, with George Palmer joining in 1841. They continued to trade until the early 1990's; their association with Reading being so strong that it was known as the biscuit town. George Palmer gave the land and buildings of Palmer Park to the people of Reading.

The park and buildings relate to the Victorian parks tradition. Motives for the Victorian parks tradition varied widely, including adding value to new housing developments, to give a green space to the urban sprawl, and even to try to regulate the leisure activities of the working classes. Free to use, they were viewed as expressions of civic pride or as examples of desirable behaviour valuing fresh air, exercise, and walking. Residents of Reading need these values now more than ever.

Sense of Place

The day after the opening of Palmer Park, the Daily Graphic newspaper (Thursday, Nov 5th, 1891) reported the fete held to mark the opening of the park and the granting of the freedom of the town to George Palmer. The paper says: "In the new park is a handsome pavilion" with "large public refreshment bar and room." These buildings epitomise the Victorian philanthropist's lasting legacy to Reading.

Local/National Architect

Nationally known local architect William Ravenscroft designed buildings.

Ravenscroft (b: Reading 1848, d: 1943. Lived: 6 Market Place, Reading and 22 The Forbury, Reading. First practice: Reading, 1875 to 1908) also known locally for Reading University Great Hall, Nos 2-3 Gun Street, Chiltern Court and the Wyecliffe Baptist Church. Considered to design in a mixture of Arts & Crafts and Gothic Style.

Townscape Value

Designed to be the view through the gated entrance on the Wokingham Road these buildings are fundamental to Palmer Park, and to East Reading. Visible on the higher section overlooking the Wokingham Road these provide a strong focal point for the park."

3. RESULTS OF CONSULTATION

3.1 The following were consulted on the proposed addition to the Local List:

- Reading Borough Council, Parks (landowner);
- Ward councillors;
- Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee; and
- Reading Civic Society

3.2 Responses were received from RBC Parks, CAAC and Reading Civic Society.

3.3 RBC Parks

The lodge (currently a café/restaurant) and adjacent house would originally have framed the main entrance to the Park along with the ornate entrance gate, railings and pillars adjacent to the Wokingham Road and St Bartholemew's Road junction. These clearly provide a link to the past and add to the sense of place also complementing the changed landscape within which they now sit. Consideration should be given to including these gates within the listing along with the gates of the same design at what would have been the other main entrance on London Road.

The old disused toilet block is contemporary with the lodge and keepers house and of similar style. They are in a poor state of repair and situated within a children's play area and have attracted antisocial behaviour. Their small size, location, limited access and need to consider safeguarding issues relating to their location has prevented a sustainable use to be found for them, without which decline will continue and will detract from other facilities. Toilets are available at the adjacent café and new supervised toilets going to being provided at the redeveloped Leisure centre next year including a changing place that could not be accommodated within the old block. Without a prospect of constructive use we do not support listing.

3.4 Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee - (02 November 2021)

CAAC supports the local listing but has requested that the listing be increased to include the entrance gates and the 1930s Library.

Group value. *Taken together the buildings have group value and from a distance the refreshment room and residence appear as one integrated unit (see image Appendix 2).*

Architecture description of Pavilion. *Originally the large open shelter between the refreshment rooms and the house had a ventilating turret which also contained a bell for clearing the park. (Reading Observer 7 November 1891 p3 & 4 with image).*

There is a clear differentiation in some of the features and materials between the public and domestic buildings. The residence has wooden window frames but those of the pavilion and public conveniences are stone. The park keeper's house also has a bay window and porch.

The half-timbered style is reminiscent of others of the time linked with philanthropic and enlightened industrialists such as Lever at Port Sunlight, housing from 1888 onwards (Philip Wilkinson and Peter Ashley (2006). The English Buildings Book: an Architectural Guide. English Heritage) and Cadbury's Bournville housing of this era. There is also a much grander, larger and slightly later, listed Men's Pavilion at the Bournville Club of 1902. (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1075715>).

The builder was Mr Margretts of Brunswick Street (Reading Observer 7 November 1891, p3 & 4).

History of the park. *The donation of land for the park came in two parcels. A letter from George Palmer to his son, Mayor of Reading, George William Palmer, on 28 October 1889 offered 21 acres of land between St Bartholomew's Church and the railway line for a 'public pleasure and recreation ground'. The land came with £300 for the Corporation to make improvements but would be fenced off before handed over. (Berkshire Chronicle 2 November 1889 p8.) Additional land was promised in 1890 by which time the first parcel was already in use. (Mercury 5 April 1890 p5.) At this time George Palmer understood that there was a demand for facilities for tennis, football and cricket grounds that could be hired by the hour. He had made inquiries and was aware of such facilities in Birmingham. He withdrew the £300 offer and added additional land and agreed to fence it all and put up a suitable building with lavatories etc. near the junction of Vicarage and Wokingham Roads. A condition of the gift was that no intoxicating drinks were to be sold on the ground. (Letter from George Palmer to the Mayor J T Dodd 2 April 1890 reproduced in the Reading Observer 7 November 1891 p3).*

Official Park opening. *The official opening of the park on 4 November 1891 was the same day as George Palmer (1818 - 1897) was made freeman of the borough and his statue by George Blackall Simonds (now in Palmer Park) was unveiled in Broad Street.*

Historic maps - OS map extracts published 1883 and 1900 in Appendix 1.

On Wokingham Road there are two adjacent gateways and three pillars and on London Road, one gateway and two pillars. The pillars show the arms of the Borough of Reading and Mr George Palmer.

The Reading Observer press report (7 November 1891) of the opening of the park says that the gate piers are chiefly Yorkshire and Portland stone, with wrought iron gates. The works were carried out by J H Margretts, builder of Brunswick Street and the lamps and gates by Messrs Barford and Norkett of Maidenhead, supervised by the architect W Ravenscroft.

In addition, in our opinion Palmer Park Library (1937) is worthy of local listing. Whitley Library (1935) is already included on the local list.

3.5 Reading Civic Society

The committee of Reading Civic Society has reviewed, and support, Palmer Park Pavilion being added to the Local List.

- 3.6 Councillor Josh Williams, Park ward Councillor, made the initial nomination and therefore did not make any comment on the proposal for local listing.

4. ASSESSMENT

- 4.0.1 The proposal to add a building or structure to the Local List should be considered against the criteria in Appendix 2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (adopted 2019).

4.1 Exclusions

- 4.1.1 The Local Plan specifies that a building should not be considered for the Local List where it is already part of a conservation area, scheduled monument or subject to an Article 4 direction relating to historic or architectural interest. Palmer Park

Pavilion and the associated building are not within any of these existing designations and can therefore be considered against the other criteria.

4.2 General principles

4.2.1 The Pavilion and associated structures date from around 1891, when the park was opened and therefore need to be considered against the following general principle:

b. 1840 - 1913: Any building, structure or group of buildings that is/are of clearly-defined significance in the local context and where elements that contribute to its/their heritage significance remain substantially complete.

4.2.2 The significance of the Pavilion and associated buildings and structures in the local context is described under 'significance' below. The elements that contribute to the heritage significance, at least externally, remain substantially complete, although in the case of the disused toilet block, some elements are in poor condition.

4.3 Significance

4.3.1 To be added to the Local List, a building or structure must fulfil at least one of the defined significance criteria, which fall into two categories - historic interest and architectural interest. These are assessed below.

Historic Interest

a. Historical Association

i. The building or structure has a well authenticated historical association with a notable person(s) or event.

ii. The building or structure has a prolonged and direct association with figures or events of local interest.

4.3.2 The park is linked in particular with George Palmer (1818-1897), of Reading's well-known Huntley & Palmers biscuit manufacturers. Huntley & Palmers had a long association with Reading for more than 150 years, between 1822 and 1976, and as a result biscuit manufacture became almost synonymous with Reading. Other buildings and structures associated with Huntley & Palmers have recently been added to the local list. Palmer also served as mayor of Reading and a member of parliament.

4.3.3 Palmer donated the land for the park, initially 21 acres, in 1889, and it was extended in 1891 to cover 49 acres. A statue of Palmer stands at the heart of the park. The Grade II listed bronze statue by George Blackall Simmonds dates from 1891, the time of the park's opening, and was originally erected in Broad Street, but was moved to this location in the park in 1930. As the statue is nationally listed, it would not be covered by any local listing, but it provides a clear illustration of the historical association with a figure of particular local importance.

4.3.4 All of the buildings and structures proposed to be covered by the local listing stem from this period and enjoy the direct association with Palmer.

b. Social Importance

The building or structure has played an influential role in the development of an area or the life of one of Reading's communities. Such buildings/structures may include places of worship, schools, community buildings, places of employment, public houses and memorials which formed a focal point or played a key social role.

- 4.3.5 Palmer Park clearly fits into the Victorian tradition of creation of public parks, which started in the 1840s, with Birkenhead Park in 1847 an early example. These parks were created in response to concerns about the health and well-being of the workers of the growing industrial towns and cities, a description which clearly applied to 19th Century Reading, including a parliamentary select committee report in 1833 that emphasised the importance of access to recreation. Palmer Park was in close proximity to large amounts of Victorian worker housing, and has therefore fulfilled an extremely important social role in eastern Reading and beyond for more than a century.

c. Industrial Importance

The building or structure clearly relates to traditional or historic industrial processes or important businesses or the products of such industrial processes or businesses in the history of Reading or are intact industrial structures, for example bridges.

- 4.3.6 Although the park and buildings relate to the industrial history of Reading through the connection to George Palmer, an important industrial figure, they are not associated with the business itself in the same way as other buildings and structures recently added to the list, and it is not considered that the Pavilion and associated building fulfil this criterion.

Architectural Interest

a. Sense of place

i. The building or structure is representative of a style that is characteristic of Reading.

- 4.3.7 The buildings and structures include elements of Arts and Crafts and Gothic styles, both of which are to be found elsewhere within Reading. The architect, William Ravenscroft, designed a number of buildings in and around the Reading area which remain, some of which display a similar mix of styles.

b. Innovation and virtuosity

i. The building or structure has a noteworthy quality of workmanship and materials.

ii. The building or structure is the work of a notable local/national architect/engineer/builder.

iii. The building or structure shows innovation in materials, technique, architectural style or engineering.

- 4.3.8 The park and its main buildings and structures were designed by local architect William Ravenscroft (1848-1943). Ravenscroft designed a number of local late Victorian buildings in the local area, including a number of buildings on the national list. These include Chiltern Court at 37 St Peter's Avenue, Caversham; the Great Hall of the University of Reading on London Road; Stable Cottages in Tidmarsh; and a group of cottages at Maidenhatch near Pangbourne. Other significant buildings in Reading include the former Central Boys School (now part of Katesgrove Primary School), whilst Ravenscroft was also responsible for a number of arts and crafts houses and buildings elsewhere in England.

c. Group value

i. The buildings/structures form a group which as a whole has a unified architectural or historic value to the local area.

ii. The buildings/structures are an example of deliberate town planning from before 1947.

4.3.9 The opening of extensive public parks during the Victorian era was a clear example of deliberate town planning, and as a response to concerns about public health it shares the same underpinning as the modern planning system. The two buildings, together with the entrance gates and pillars together clearly form a group value as the main original remaining built features within the park. The pavilion building is visible as part of the same view as the entrance gates from Wokingham Road and, once within the park, there is a clear group relationship between the pavilion and former toilet block.

4.4 Other matters

4.4.1 The landowner (RBC Parks) has suggested including the ornate entrance gate, railings and pillars adjacent to the Wokingham Road and St Bartholemew's Road junction within the local listing. These features are also echoed at the London Road entrance to the park, and it is therefore suggested that, if they are to be included, then both sets of gates and pillars should be included. It is considered that further consultation on this proposal would not be needed as it is a suggestion from the landowner. These features have been referred to in the assessment where relevant, and it is considered that they are worthy of inclusion in the local listing.

4.4.2 The response from CAAC has suggested adding the 1930s Palmer Park library to the local listing, as well as the entrance gates. However, this is perhaps best considered separately for a number of reasons. Firstly, our processes would require consultation with the landowner, which has not been carried out for that building. Secondly, as a 1930s feature it would need to be determined against a different local listing criterion. Finally, as it is not one of the original park features, it does not belong to the same group linked to the opening of the park. If a nomination is received, it can be considered at a future point.

4.4.3 The landowner has also objected to the proposal to include the disused toilet block within the local listing, with particular reference made to their condition and the difficulty of finding an alternative use. However, the criteria to be considered when considering a nomination for the local list are limited to those considered in this report, which are around its historic significance. It would be at planning application stage that this historic significance would need to be judged against other material considerations if the building is proposed to be lost in full or in part.

4.4 Conclusion of assessment

4.4.1 Palmer Park Pavilion (and associated buildings/assets, including toilet block and entrance gate and pillars) qualifies for addition to the Local List because it:

- Is not within a conservation area, a statutory listed building, a scheduled monument or area subject to an Article 4 direction relating to historic or architectural interest;

- Dates from between 1840 and 1913 and is of clearly-defined significance in the local context and elements that contribute to its heritage significance remain substantially complete;
- Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its historical association;
- Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its social importance;
- Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its sense of place;
- Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its innovation and virtuosity; and
- Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its group value.

4.4.2 A description of the significance of the building for inclusion in the Local List is included in Appendix 3.

5. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Local listing of buildings and structures, where it leads to the retention of those buildings or structures, can help to address the climate emergency by negating the need for demolition and new development, which are processes that use significant amounts of energy and result in emissions. However, in the long-term, it can be more difficult to achieve high levels of energy performance in older buildings than in new builds. There are therefore potentially either positive or negative effects, and schemes will need to be assessed at the application stage in terms of their compliance with the Council's policies.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 It is not expected that there will be any significant adverse impacts on specific groups due to race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age or religious belief as a result of the recommendations of this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Addition to the Local List is not a statutory process, and there are no legal implications of the recommendations of this report.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Consideration of this nomination and any resulting amendments to the Local List will be accommodated within existing budgets.

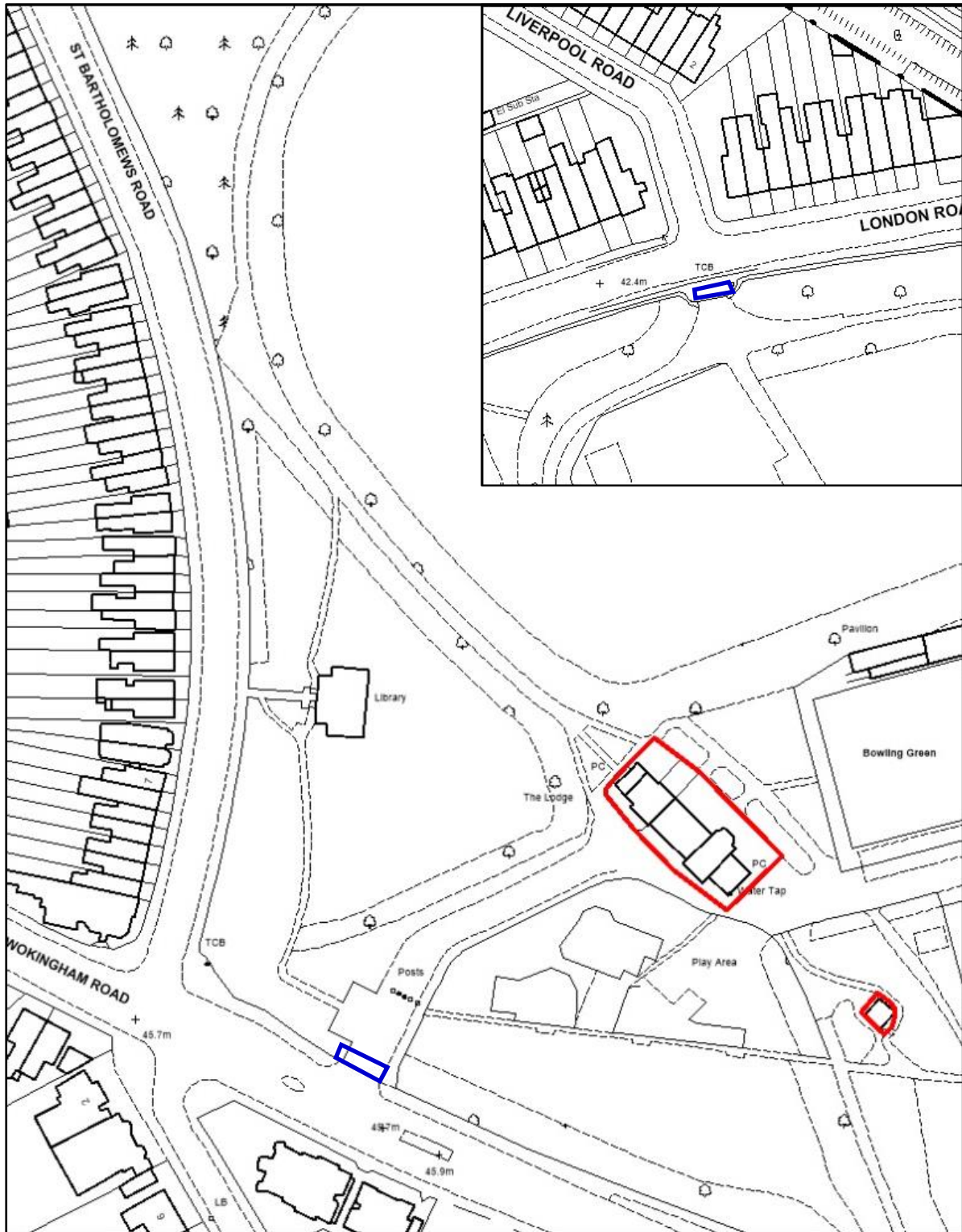
9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted November 2019)

Bruce Edgar, Conservation and Urban Design Officer

APPENDIX 1: LOCATION PLAN

Original nomination shown bounded in red. Proposed addition of gates shown bounded in blue.



APPENDIX 2: RELEVANT PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig: 1. Recent photos were taken as part of a site visit by Reading Borough Council's Conservation and Design officer on 15 March 2022.
Shot looking west, showing the group value of the late 19th century nominated buildings, within the setting of the community park.



Fig. 2: Caretakers residence (c.1891) on the left and restaurant on the right



Fig: 3. Pavilion buildings (c.1891), café on the right.



Fig: 4. Toilet block, one of the associated buildings (c.1891). Needs some maintenance, to repair the lower roof.



Fig. 5: Entrance gate to park from Wokingham Road.



Fig. 6: Extract from OS Map published in 1900, show Palmer Park layout.
(CAAC Letter 02 Nov, 2021)



Fig. 7: Entrance gate to park from London Road



APPENDIX 3: PROPOSED LOCAL LIST TEXT

Palmer Park was opened for the people of Reading in 1891. The land was gifted and buildings and structures commissioned by George Palmer, of Huntley & Palmers biscuit manufacturers, a major contributor to Reading's 19th Century industrial expansion, who were present in Reading between 1822 and 1976.

The day after the opening of Palmer Park, the Daily Graphic newspaper (Thursday, Nov 5th, 1891) reported the fete held to mark the opening of the park and the granting of the freedom of the town to George Palmer. The paper says: "In the new park is a handsome pavilion" with "large public refreshment bar and room." These buildings epitomise the Victorian philanthropist's lasting legacy to Reading.

The Victorian tradition of public, free to access urban parks was characteristic of the period, addressing concerns about the need for the working and middle classes to access space for leisure and recreation. As is the case with Palmer Park, such parks provided a welcome relief to areas with substantial amounts of worker housing. Palmer Park has fulfilled a role as a vital area of open space for the people of Reading and beyond for over a century.

The buildings and gated entrance were designed by local architect William Ravenscroft, also responsible for a number of other buildings of historic significance in and around Reading, and show features of both Arts & Crafts and Gothic styles.

The Pavilion and associated structures are substantially complete and unaltered and of definite significance to the people of Reading. The Pavilion itself, designed as a refreshment house for users of the park, is as of June 2020 occupied by Tutu's Ethiopian Table. On the western side, the Caretaker's / Keeper's residence is still in residential use. However, the associated toilet block, found close by (within the children's play area) is currently unused, and has been allowed to fall into some disrepair. The gated entrances, comprising ornate railings, gates and pillars bearing the arms of the Borough of Reading and George Palmer.

The local listing covers the following elements:

- The Pavilion and keeper's residence;
- Former toilet block;
- Gated entrance from Wokingham Road; and
- Gated entrance from London Road.

APPENDIX 4: Listing Nomination Details

Assessment form for locally listing buildings in Reading Borough November 2012

CRITERIA AND CONSIDERATION FOR LOCALLY LISTING BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES IN READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

Background and explanation: Heritage assets cannot be replaced once lost. They include both nationally and locally listed buildings. Harm to an asset's significance can cause a loss of value to society and a loss of public benefit.

The criteria for assessment of locally listing buildings/ structures are set out below and are taken from the adopted Sites and Detailed Policies Document. These criteria and the accompanying explanation of how a particular building or structure meets these criteria will be used to assess whether that building or structure merits designation as a locally listed heritage asset.

The assessment will be based purely on the evidence provided with this form (unless the authority has access to further evidence).

Identification of buildings or structures for local listing: Buildings or structures worthy of being locally listed will mainly be identified through the process of considering and determining planning proposals and applications.¹

Exclusions

Buildings and structures will not be considered for the Local List when they are already part of a Conservation Area², Scheduled Monument, or subject to an article 4 direction relating to historical or architectural interest.

Address of building/ structure: Palmer Park Pavilion (and associated bldgs)
Palmer Park
Wokingham Road
Reading

Postcode: RG6 1LE

¹ Buildings or structures identified outside the application process will be considered as resources become available.

² Buildings that warrant local designation in a conservation area are awarded a 'Buildings of Townscape Merit' designation. For the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2012), Buildings of Townscape Merit will be considered to warrant conservation and where appropriate enhancement in accordance with the NPPF.

Selection for the Local List

For any building, structure or group of buildings to be included in the Local List it must clearly meet the relevant age and integrity criteria:

	Please tick relevant box ³
(a) pre-1840: Any building, structure or group of buildings where its/ their style, form and construction are easily identifiable.	
(b) 1840 - 1913: Any building, structure or group of buildings that is/are substantially complete and unaltered and of definite significance.	✓
(c) 1914 - 1939: Any building, structure or group of buildings that is/are substantially complete and unaltered and of a high level of significance.	
(d) post 1939: Any building, structure or group of buildings that is/are of exceptional significance and wholly complete and unaffected by inappropriate changes.	

Please provide comments/ further explanation of above:

Palmer Park Pavilion, Keepers residence and associated building close-by within the park were opened in 1891 when the Park itself was opened to the people of Reading. **They** are substantially complete and unaltered and of definite significance to the people of Reading.

The Pavilion itself, designed as a refreshment house for users of the park, is as of June 2020 occupied by Tutu's Ethiopian Café, the Keeper's residence still in residential use, and the associated building found close by (within the children's play area) is unused, and has sadly been allowed to fall into some disrepair.

³ Note - if none of the above boxes are ticked, the building/ structure will not qualify for consideration as a locally listed building.

In **addition** it must also be shown that it contributes to the character of an area and is valued by local people in accordance with at least one of the criteria detailed below under the headings of historic interest, architectural interest and townscape value.

Historic interest

Please tick the relevant box/es

(a) Historical Association i. The building or structure has a well authenticated historical association with a notable person(s) or event.	✓
ii. The building or structure has a prolonged and direct association with figures or events of local interest.	
(b) Social Importance The building or structure has played an influential role in the development of an area or the life of one of Reading's communities. Such buildings/structures may include places of worship, schools, community buildings, places of employment, public houses and memorials which formed a focal point or played a key social role.	✓
(c) Industrial Importance The building or structure clearly relates to traditional or historic industrial processes or important businesses or the products of such industrial processes or businesses in the history of Reading or are intact industrial structures, for example bridges	✓

Comments/ further explanation of this should be provided in the box at the end of this section.

Architectural interest

(a) Sense of place i. The building or structure is representative of a style that is characteristic of Reading.	✓
(b) Innovation and Virtuosity i. The building or structure has a noteworthy quality of workmanship and materials.	
ii. The building or structure is the work of a notable local/national architect/engineer/builder.	✓
iii. The building or structure shows innovation in materials, technique, architectural style or engineering	
(c) Group Value i. The buildings/structures form a group which as a whole has a unified architectural or historic value to the local area.	
ii. The buildings/structures are an example of deliberate town planning from before 1947	

Comments/ further explanation of this should be provided in the box at the end of this section.

Townscape Value

The buildings/structures have prominence and a landmark quality that is fundamental to the sense of place of a particular locality.



Please provide comments/ further explanation of above

Historic Association

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Social Importance

The importance of Victorian parks through to the modern day (buildings now in use as residential and community café - Tutu's - although associated building remains unused) has never been more acute with the arrival of Covid in the community.

Relates to tradition or historic industrial process

Huntley & Palmers was originally founded in Reading in 1822 by Thomas Huntley, with George Palmer joining in 1841. They continued to trade until the early 1990's; their association with Reading being so strong that it was known as the biscuit town. George Palmer gave the land and buildings of Palmer Park to the people of Reading.

The park and buildings relate to the Victorian [parks](#) tradition. Motives for the Victorian [parks](#) tradition varied widely, including adding value to new housing developments, to give a green space to the urban sprawl, and even to try to regulate the leisure activities of the working classes. Free to use, they were viewed as expressions of civic pride or as examples of desirable behaviour valuing fresh air, exercise, and walking. Residents of Reading need these values now more than ever. (Ref: https://mhm.hud.ac.uk/digitalvictorians/the-intriguing-history-of-public-parks-during-the-victorian-era-and-the-craze-for-exotic-botanicals/#_ftn4)

Sense of Place

The day after the opening of Palmer Park, the Daily Graphic newspaper (Thursday, Nov 5th, 1891) reported the fete held to mark the opening of the park and the granting of the freedom of the town to George Palmer. The paper says: "In the new park is a handsome pavilion" with "large public refreshment bar and room." These buildings epitomise the Victorian philanthropist's lasting legacy to Reading.

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Townscape Value

Designed to be the view through the gated entrance on the Wokingham Road these buildings are fundamental to Palmer Park, and to East Reading. Visible on the higher section overlooking the Wokingham Road these provide a strong focal point for the park.

Recommendation made by (name of Proposer) : Cllr Josh Williams (RBC, Park Ward)
Date : September 2020

General notes and any other relevant information on the building/ structure by Proposer⁴ making recommendation for local listing including reasons for recommendation⁵

All the above information is in the public realm and readily available on the internet, as are images of the buildings, ranging from 1904 (<https://www.francisfrith.com/reading/reading-palmer-park-1904-52023>) through to the present day.

Newly taken images are included below, but if any information/details require references, please request: Cllr Josh Williams josh.williams@reading.gov.uk

Source of all information and details of any supporting document used to support the recommendation to locally list the building or structure⁶.

Detail of evidence/ document (including photographs)

Source/ reference of information



Associated building to Pavilion.
Photo#1. Cllr Williams

⁴ The 'Proposer' is anticipated to normally be the Planning Case Officer given that the identification of most buildings or structures will currently be identified through the process of determining planning applications, however, the 'Proposer' could also be a member of the public or another organisation' group.

⁵ Failure to meet the requirements for a building or structure to be locally listed at a particular point in time does not rule out future re-consideration of that building or structure if significant new evidence is produced.

⁶ Any supporting documentation provided cannot be returned and will be kept on file as part of the supporting documentation should the building be locally listed. Please only send photocopies (subject to relevant copyright) should you wish to keep a copy of any documentation.



Associated building to Pavilion. Photo #2. Cllr Williams



Pavilion building, Palmer Park. Photo: Cllr Williams



Pavilion building, Chimney detail. Photo: Cllr Williams



Keepers building, Chimney detail.
Photo: Cllr Williams



Park keepers and Pavilion building,
Palmer Park. Photo: Cllr Williams



Buildings from Wokingham Road
entrance way, Palmer Park.
Photo: Cllr Williams

Continue on separate sheet if necessary

For official use only.

Recommendation confirmed/rejected by Conservation Officer:

Date:

Conservation Officer signature confirming recommendation:

Position:

Print name:

Reasons that the recommendation for locally listing the building/ structure have been confirmed/ rejected

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Any additional comments regarding the building/ structure

--

Building/ structure identification :

Grid reference:

UPRN:

Signature of Manager accepting recommendation: _____

Date: _____

Position: _____

Print name: _____