



Title	LOCAL LISTING REPORT - 2 Mill Green
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report status	Public report
Report author	Burcu Can Cetin, Conservation Officer
Lead Councillor	Councillor Micky Leng, Lead Councillor for Planning and Assets
Corporate priority	Healthy Environment
Ward	Thames
Address	2 Mill Green, Caversham, Reading, RG4 8EX
Recommendations	To agree that 2 Mill Green be added to the List of Locally Important Buildings and Structures

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. To report on a proposal to add 2 Mill Green to the List of Locally Important Buildings and Structures. The report identifies the building as being of local architectural importance and makes an assessment based on the Council's published Local List criteria for inclusion to the list.

2. Policy context

- 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. The criteria for considering additions to the Local List are set out in Appendix 2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (adopted 2019).

3. The proposal

- 3.1. A nomination was received on 07/11/2024 to add 2 Mill Green to the Local List. Consultations have been carried out in accordance with the agreed process, and this report sets out the recommended action.
- 3.2. The nominated building is a two-storey semi-detached house from the 1930s. Constructed of facing red brick under a hipped clay tile roof, it has a curved bay on the ground floor, timber-framed windows with strong horizontal divisions and a detached garage in its rear garden, occupying a spacious corner plot surrounded by low-level brick boundary walls located in Lower Caversham.
- 3.3. The nomination form received for the building identifies the significance of the building as follows:

- 3.4. *“Principle for Selection for the Local List - (c) 1914 - 1939: any building, structure or group of buildings that is/are substantially complete and unaltered and of a high level of significance*

According to available online mapping, the building dates between 1932 and 1936. It is a structure of historic and architectural interest. (...)

The site occupies a corner plot on a once-busy road leading to riverside industrial works now redeveloped.

Style is characteristic of much pre-War suburban development but is unaltered and therefore extremely rare.

Frontage has original small-frame windows and wooden door making up a total unaltered aspect.

It may be among the first to have windows with such a hint of Art Deco style, reflecting economic conditions at the time.

The site was a field, possibly associated with Monkley Court manor house, typical of suburban expansion of Reading.

The house commands the corner of an unmade road on the riverbank that is now busier than for decades since Amersham Road and surrounding areas down river were developed. It is unaltered since being built in the early 1930s while there was still industry on nearby Heron Island - so would have been passed by many thousands - and it survived wartime upheaval. The frontage and its garden surrounds are typical of pre-War architecture and comprise a time capsule that forms a landmark for growing numbers of passersby and a reminder of how people were expected to live and, as it has only recently been vacated, have lived to the present day.”



Image of the nominated asset

4. Consultations

- 4.1. The following were consulted on the proposed addition to the Local List:
- Freda Edith Andrews (landowner);
 - Thames ward councillors;
 - Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee;
 - Reading Civic Society; and
 - Caversham and District Resident's Association (CADRA) and Caversham GLOBE (local community group(s)).
- 4.2. Responses were received from the Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee, Reading Civic Society and Caversham and District Resident's Association.

4.3. Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee

"We support the nomination. As the applicant has stated the exterior of the property appears unaltered since first built in the 1930s. As such it is a rare survival on an important corner plot close to the site of Caversham Mill.

We concur with the approximate dating provided by the applicant and include maps below in case they are helpful. It would appear that the area now bounded by Champion Road, Mill Road, Piggott's Road and Mill Green was partially developed to the north by the end of the nineteenth century. The southern portion was not developed until the 1930s and appears to have been completed by September 1939.

All the other properties in the vicinity (32-36 Mill Road, 4-12 Mill Green and 1-19 Piggott's Road) have been altered to a greater or lesser extent but none of the original windows survive.

They are all of a similar design of semi-detached or terraced houses.

The builder was possibly Frank Alfred Scrivener who in 1937 was fined for leaving building materials in Piggott's Road and Mill Road.

As an excellent example of the style of building of the period in Reading, with many features intact and unaltered, the property is worthy of addition to the local list.



Extract from OS map 1877-1878 (pub 1882)
National Library of Scotland



Extract from OS map 1932 (pub 1934)
National Library of Scotland



Extract from OS map 1938 (pub c1945)

4.4. **Reading Civic Society**

“Good to see this nomination come forward. The nominator highlighted the sale of the property to me and sought advice re a listing process. Thus we guided him to the Local Listing Process. It is good to see a nomination from a local enthusiast. He is not a member of RCS / CADRA or the CAAC.

He has inevitably, given the age of the property, found it difficult to find much information about it.

The front (indeed most of the inside) is barely changed since it was built. This compares dramatically to the inappropriate accretions to the front of the building next door, they may as well have built a new house.

It is so encouraging to see a proposal which concerns a 1930s building. It is a very unusual survival in an important location within Caversham.

We support the nomination.”

4.5. **Caversham and District Resident’s Association**

“CADRA was very pleased to see this nomination come forward and we too were in contact with the nominator.

We very much support the comments set out by Reading Civic Society. This is a highly unusual survival of its time, on a prominent corner and in an important area of Caversham near to the Mill Island which dates back to the Domesday Book.

There is clearly some urgency as the property was sold at auction and we very much hope this application can be processed swiftly.”

5. **Assessment**

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).

5.1. **Exclusions**

- 5.1.1 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. 2 Mill Green is not within any of these existing designations and can therefore be considered against the other criteria.

5.2. **General principles**

- 5.2.1 2 Mill Green dates from the 1930s and therefore needs to be considered against the following general principle:

c. 1914 - 1939: Any building, structure or group of buildings where the elements that contribute to a high level of significance in the local context remain substantially complete.

- 5.2.2 As confirmed from the Ordnance Survey maps, the nominated asset is from the 1930s, which is also read through its surviving and untouched original mass, design and elements of the 1930s house. Although the immediate area includes properties of same period, none of them retain such a significant original and intact elements on architectural scale as well as the layout of the curtilage.

5.3. **Significance**

- 5.3.1 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.*

5.3.2 The nominated asset at 2 Mill Green is not considered to fulfil this criterion.

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.

5.3.3 The nominated asset at 2 Mill Green is not considered to fulfil this criterion as there is no evidence to justify the building's contribution to the social life.

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.

5.3.4 The nominated asset at 2 Mill Green is not considered to fulfil this criterion.

Architectural Interest

a. Sense of place

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

5.3.5 The building is a fine example of the 1930s semi-detached house. However, it does not provide the 'sense' of Reading as there is no distinctive brick bonding, colour or texture within the architecture of the nominee that could be attributed to 'Reading or Caversham style'. Therefore, it is considered that 2 Mill Green fails to meet this criterion.

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.*

5.3.6 The architecture of the nominated asset is aesthetically pleasing and locally representative of a 'moderne' house with influences of Edwardian suburbia. Whilst it is not the work of a local architect or engineer (Frank Alfred Scrivener was active in Gloucestershire and is the possible builder of the building) and the property shows no high quality workmanship or local work it is the only original representative of the 1930s in its retained details: These include a distinctive Art Deco style curving bay with sun trap windows, timber casements with strong horizontal divisions, doors with the upper third glazed and lower section panelled as a standard form, tall hipped roof, plain chimney, rectangular-plan house with reception and service rooms on the ground floor, and continuous porch over bay supported on corner timber post which is the only Edwardian detail.

5.3.7 The perimeter of the plot is marked out with relatively low brick garden walls, while the impact of the car industry is evident in the garage and workshop located in the rear/side

garden of the property. The design of the garage is not only a simple box with a lift-up metal door but also decorated with the same care and attention as the main house that images the technology of the period: metal casement and garage door, concrete lintels and flat roof. As such, the basic design of 2 Mill Green, enhanced by the art Deco features, interesting details and fine setting, leads to a major visual contribution through popular taste with twentieth-century British architectural culture.

- 5.3.8 In other words, the inter-war period housing, which is mainly dominated by semi-detached speculative built houses, featured elements introduced by leading architects working in the international style – ‘moderne’, which are evident at 2 Mill Green that its distinctive and rare elements carry significant weight.

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 exemplify deliberate town planning from before 1947.

- 5.3.9 It is known that there was little consideration for the overall planning of the suburban areas in the interwar period. One type of development, ‘ribbon development’ situated along the main road, appears to be the builder’s location choice for the development of Mill Green. Rather than being a deliberate town planning approach, the subject building and plot resulted from the period’s standard practice: small pockets of land sold off piecemeal to different builders who mixed modernity and tradition. It can be argued that the building characterises a ribbon or piecemeal development. However, these developments were informal interventions, not controlled by a plan that still exists today. In addition, because the building is the one remaining, it does not form a group value or clear visual relationship with other buildings with significant alterations.

5.4. Conclusion of assessment

- 5.4.1 2 Mill Green qualifies for addition to the Local List because it:

- Is not within a conservation area, scheduled monument or area subject to an Article 4 direction relating to historic or architectural interest;
- Dates from between 1914 and 1939 and the elements that contribute to a high level of significance in the local context remain substantially complete;
- Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its innovation and virtuosity;

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

6. Contribution to strategic aims

- 6.1. The Council’s Corporate Plan has established three themes for the years 2022/25. These themes are:

- Healthy Environment
- Thriving Communities
- Inclusive Economy

- 6.2. These themes are underpinned by “Our Foundations” explaining the ways we work at the Council:

- People first
- Digital transformation
- Building self-reliance
- Getting the best value
- Collaborating with others

- 6.3. Full details of the Council’s Corporate Plan and the projects which will deliver these priorities are published on the [Council’s website](#). These priorities and the Corporate

Plan demonstrate how the Council meets its legal obligation to be efficient, effective and economical.

- 6.4. Local listing of buildings and structures helps to achieve the Healthy Environment theme of the Corporate Plan, by helping to retain those buildings that contribute towards making Reading a more attractive place to live and connect Reading's residents to the town's past.

7. Environmental and climate implications

- 7.1. The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 7.2. 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.

8. Community engagement

- 8.1. Details of the consultation carried out are set out in section 4 of this report. The scope of consultation to be carried out on proposals for addition to the Local List was part of the local listing process agreed by Planning Applications Committee on 2nd December 2020 (Minute 56 refers).

9. Equality impact assessment

- 9.1. 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.

10. Other relevant considerations

- 10.1 None of this report.

11. Legal implications

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

12. Financial implications

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

13. Timetable for implementation

- 13.1. Not applicable.

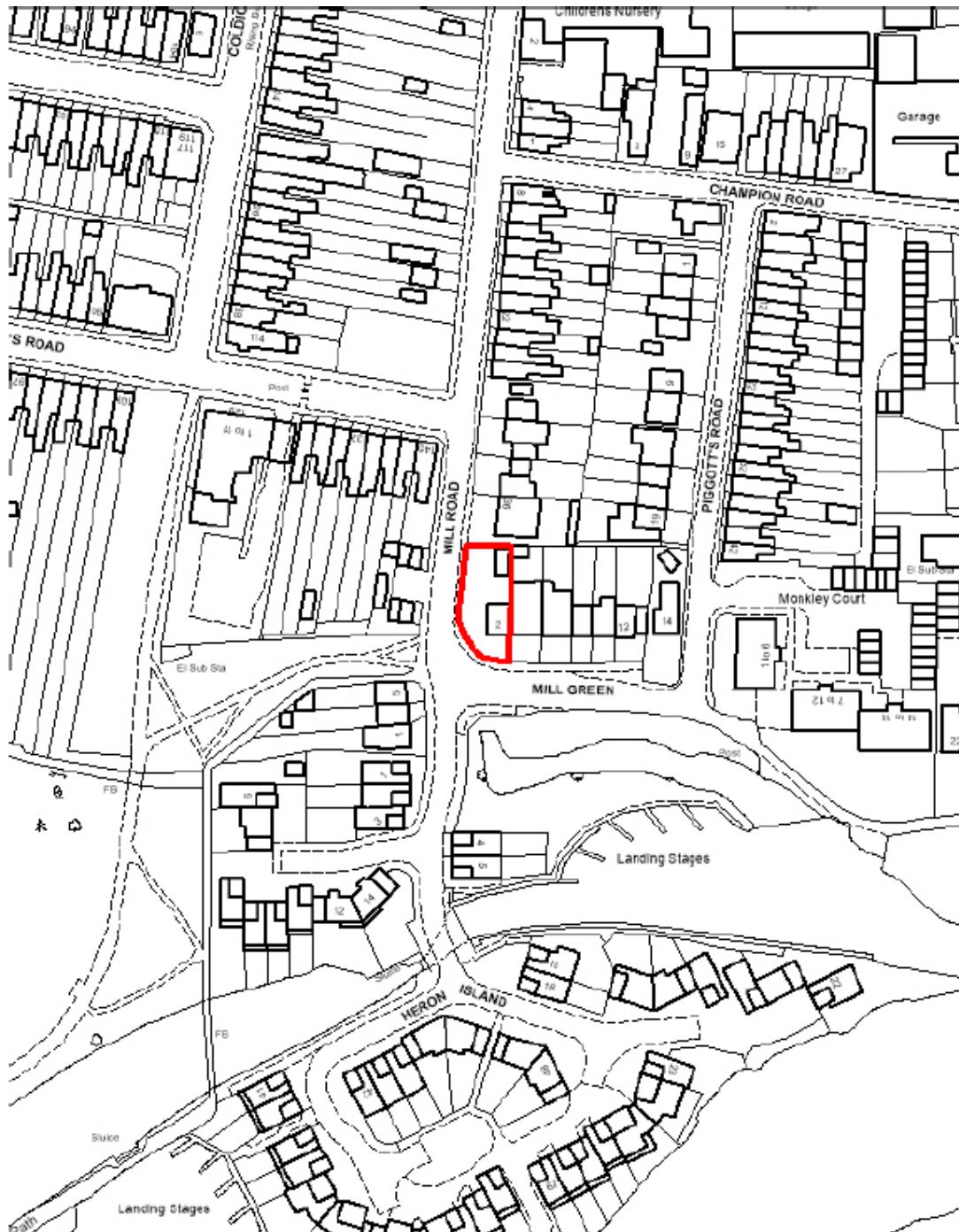
14. Background papers

- 14.1. There are none.

Appendices

1. **Location map**
2. **Relevant photos and illustrations**
3. **Proposed local list text**

Appendix 1: Location plan



2 Mill Green, Caversham

Nominated for inclusion on the Local List

Appendix 2: Relevant photos and illustrations



Figures 1 and 2. Image of the front, side and rear elevations of the property



Figure 3. Image of the garage

Appendix 3: Proposed local list text

This is an exceptional and rare example of unaltered 1930s suburban architecture in the 'moderne' style. Two-storey, semi-detached house constructed from facing red brick under a hipped clay tile roof. The house remains unaltered externally and preserves all of its original features. The semi-detached design positions the main entrance at the far ends of the front elevation, with a distinctive Art Deco-inspired curving bay featuring sun trap windows. The first-floor window design and timber casement windows are defined by strong horizontal divisions, enhancing the style, while the entrance door follows a standard form up to the 1930s, with the upper third glazed and the lower section panelled. Its tall, hipped roof, a plain chimney, and the only Edwardian detail of a continuous porch that extends over the bay, supported by a corner timber post, characterise other original elements of the 1930s house.

The spacious green garden, marked by a low brick wall, creates an attractive setting for the main building and constitutes the detached garage as an impact of the automotive industry. The garage design is also thoughtfully designed, matching the care and attention given to the main house. It features period-appropriate details: metal casement windows, a metal lift-up garage door, concrete lintels, and a flat roof. As such, the design of 2 Mill Green, enhanced by Art Deco elements, distinctive details, and a fine setting, represents the recognised architectural taste of twentieth-century British culture.