

EDGARS

Heritage Statement

Dining Hall, Linacre College, Oxford

Prepared for: Linacre College

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Edgars on behalf of Linacre College (hereafter the College). The report is to accompany a full planning application for 'erection of single storey extension to the southern elevation, replacement rooflights and internal and external alterations' at the dining hall and O C Tanner building at Linacre College, Oxford.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to identify the heritage values and significance of the relevant heritage assets including Central Oxford Conservation Area and the University Parks Registered Park and Garden and the site's contribution to this significance. The report also examines the heritage significance of the O C Tanner building, which is not listed but makes a positive contribution towards the Central Conservation Area.
- 1.3 The report then describes the proposed development and assesses the potential impact of the scheme on the O C Tanner building, the character and appearance of the Central Oxford Conservation Area and its heritage significance, and on the setting of the University Parks Registered Park and Garden and other listed buildings in the area.
- 1.4 The report has been produced in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), National Planning Policy Guidance, and the Historic England Good Practice and Advice Note "Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment". These require applicants to make an assessment of the significance of Heritage Assets and their settings, the level of detail of which should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.
- 1.5 The statement demonstrates to the Council that the significance of the historic environment has been fully assessed and understood and that the heritage impacts of the proposed scheme have been properly considered as an integral part of the proposals and have informed the accompanying design process.
- 1.6 Following this assessment of significance and impact, it is our professional view that the proposed scheme would accord with the policies contained in NPPF and NPPG, the relevant sections of the Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide and Local Plan Policies of Oxford City Council.
- 1.7 Overall, it is considered that there will be no harm to the heritage significance of the Central Conservation Area, the University Parks Registered Park and Garden, other listed buildings in the area or to the O C Tanner building.



2 The Site and Surrounding Area

Linacre College

- 2.1 Figure 1 shows the location of Linacre College which lies north east of the centre of Oxford on the intersection of South Parks Road and St Cross Road. The site lies within the Central (University and City) Conservation Area and immediately abuts the southern boundary of The University Parks (Grade II Registered Park and Garden). None of the buildings on site are listed or included on the Oxford Heritage Asset Register. The site is within the Historic Core Area and within a view cone - North Eastern Hills (Elsfield). No other planning designations apply to the site.
- 2.2 Linacre College represents an enclosed pocket of College development, east of the University Science area with green space surrounding it on all other sides. The New College Recreation Ground wraps around the site from the south and east, while University Parks is located north and north east, moving further east is Green Belt land and more college playing fields.



Figure 1 - Location Plan

- 2.3 The College contains a number of buildings as shown in figure 2 which provide student accommodation, teaching and study space and administrative functions on site. Linacre House was first established in 1962, became Linacre College in 1967 and moved to this site, formerly known as Cherwell Place in 1977. The O C Tanner building was built in the late 19th century, with other buildings progressively added by the College in the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s and 2000s including the dining hall, Abraham Building, Bamborough Building, Griffiths Building



Figure 2 - Site Plan

The Dining Hall

- 2.4 The application site relates to the College dining Hall. The dining hall is one of the later buildings within the college campus and was a late 1970's extension to the north east corner of O C Tanner building. Planning permission was granted for two additional rooflights on the southern elevation of the dining hall in 2019 (reference: 19/00483/FUL).
- 2.5 The dining hall is the central facility for the College serving daily meals for members of the College. The College also runs formal and informal guest nights on a weekly basis. At the current time this service is limited due to COVID-19 restrictions. The College also host a range of functions throughout the year for which the dining hall is used. Due to the size and configuration of the dining hall only one function can take place at once and marquees often have to be used for larger events. The dining hall as a facility is outdated and requires both improvements and maintenance work.
- 2.6 The dining room is part single and part 1.5 storeys, of linear form running east-west parallel to Mesopotamia Way. By contrast, the adjoining College entrance buildings, the O C Tanner building and Abraham Building to the west and east respectively are four storeys high.
- 2.7 Figures 3 - 6 show photographs of the dining hall. It is distinguishable from OC Tanner building by its comparatively diminutive stature and through its more modern detailing and materials. The building is constructed of red brick and a clay tiled roof. The roof is steeply pitched roof with roof lights on the northern and southern elevations. Brick detailing can be found below the eaves. The southern elevation facing the courtyard has four floor to ceiling windows - white timber framed with single glazed glass. The single storey element is also of red brick, with a flat roof with three rooflights



and double timber doors in the eastern elevation existing into the courtyard. Overall, the structure is considered to be of limited architectural or historic interest. A small courtyard is formed in the space to the south of the dining hall between it and the adjacent four storey O C Tanner building to the south and single storey dining hall element to the west. The application site is located within this courtyard and is shown on figures 3 and 6. The fire escape door to be replaced is also shown on figure 6.



Figure 5 - Photograph of southern elevation of dining hall and eastern elevation of O C Tanner building



Figure 6 - Photograph of eastern elevation of dining hall and northern elevation of O C Tanner building showing existing fire escape door



Figure 4 - Photograph of northern elevation of dining hall from Mesopotamia Walk



Figure 3 - Photograph of southern and eastern elevations of dining hall



- 2.8 The O C Tanner building is built in the Queen Anne style, and comprises the original house built in 1886 and extensions added in 1908-9 designed by Basil Champneys. The external walls are of red brick with dressed stone details, Dutch gables and oriel windows. The existing windows are primarily sash windows or casements with white timber frames. The library (former chapel) on the second floor of the southern side of the building contains larger stone mullioned windows. The fire escape door facing the application site is located on the northern elevation of the eastern, later wing of the O C Tanner building. This door is modern and low quality. The eastern elevation of the eastern wing of the O C Tanner building has four sets of sash windows on the ground and first floor with two central oriel windows on the second floor flanked with sash windows and two central oriel windows on the third floor. Neither the dining hall or O C Tanner building are listed buildings but are located within the Central (University and City) Conservation Area and south of the Grade II Registered Park and Garden – University Parks. The O C Tanner building is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset, but the dining hall is not.



3 Legislation and Planning Policy

- 3.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) requires that planning applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This is echoed in paragraph 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published in February 2019, which is itself a material consideration.
- 3.2 The development plan comprises Oxford Local Plan 2036.
- 3.3 The decision maker is required by sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting. The general duty as regards Conservation Areas is set down within Section 72 of the Act, which states that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas. The setting of Conservation Areas is not identified within the legislation however is protected under the provisions and policies relating to heritage assets contained within the NPPF.
- 3.4 The Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 authorises Historic England to compile a register of “gardens and other land” situated in England that appear to be of special historic interest. There is no separate consent regime for registered park or gardens, but applications for planning permission will give great weight to their conservation and they are defined as designated heritage assets in the NPPF. Registration is a 'material consideration' in the planning process, meaning that planning authorities must consider the impact of any proposed development on the landscapes' special character.
- 3.5 The NPPF and the Historic England Good Practice Advice Notes (advice note 2) are relevant to the content of this report and the consideration of the applications. The government objective is that heritage assets (which includes conservation areas and registered parks and gardens) should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 3.6 Paragraph 10 states that at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 11 sets out that for decision taking, the presumption means:
- Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
 - Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i. The application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - ii. Any adverse impact of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.
- 3.7 The following chapters of the NPPF are relevant to this proposal:
- 3.8 **Chapter 12 ‘Achieving well-designed places’.** Paragraph 124 states that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should



achieve. Good design is identified as a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

- 3.9 **Chapter 16 ‘Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment’.** This states that heritage assets should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.
- 3.10 **Paragraph 189** states that when determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.
- 3.11 **Paragraph 190** identifies that local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.
- 3.12 **Paragraph 192** sets out that in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:
- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
 - c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 3.13 **Paragraph 193** states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
- 3.14 **Paragraph 196** states that where a proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
- 3.15 **Paragraph 197** sets out that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
- 3.16 **Paragraph 201** states that not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance.



3.17 **Annexe 2** – Significance (for Heritage Policy) is defined as “The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.”

Oxford Local Plan 2036

3.18 **Policy DH2: Views and building heights** - The City Council will seek to retain significant views both within Oxford and from outside, in particular to and from the historic skyline. Planning permission will not be granted for any building or structure that would harm the special significance of Oxford’s historic skyline.

3.19 Planning permission will be granted for developments of appropriate height or massing, as demonstrated by the following criteria, all of which should be met:

- a) design choices regarding height and massing have a clear design rationale and the impacts will be positive; and
- b) any design choice to design buildings to a height that would impact on character should be fully explained, and regard should be had to the guidance on design of higher buildings set out in the High Buildings Study TAN. In particular, the impacts in terms of the four visual tests of obstruction, impact on the skyline, competition and change of character should be explained; and
- c) it should be demonstrated how proposals have been designed to have a positive impact through their massing, orientation, the relation of the building to the street, and the potential impact on important views including both in to the historic skyline and out towards Oxford’s green setting.

3.20 The area within a 1,200 metre radius of Carfax tower (the Historic Core Area) contains all the buildings that comprise the historic skyline, so new developments that exceed 18.2 m (60 ft) in height or ordnance datum (height above sea level) 79.3 m (260 ft) (whichever is the lower) are likely to intrude into the skyline. Development above this height should be limited in bulk and must be of the highest design quality. Applications for proposed development that exceeds that height will be required to provide extensive information so that the full impacts of any proposals can be understood and assessed.

3.21 Any proposals within the Historic Core Area or View Cones that may impact on roofscape and the foreground part of views (including proposals where they are below the Carfax datum point, for example plant) should be designed carefully, and should meet all the following criteria:

- they are based on a clear understanding of characteristic positive aspects of roofscape in the area; and
- they contribute positively to the roofscape, to enhance any significant long views the development may be part of and also the experience at street level;

3.22 Planning permission will not be granted for development proposed within a View Cone or the setting of a View Cone if it would harm the special significance of the view.

3.23 **Policy DH3 - Designated heritage assets** – Planning permission will be granted for development that respects and draws inspiration from Oxford’s unique historic environment (above and below ground), responding positively to the significance character and distinctiveness of the heritage asset and locality.



- 3.24 For all planning decisions for planning permission or listed building consent affecting the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight will be given to the conservation of that asset and to the setting of the asset where it contributes to that significance or appreciation of that significance.
- 3.25 An application for planning permission for development which would or may affect the significance of any designated heritage asset, either directly or by being within its setting, should be accompanied by a heritage assessment that includes a description of the asset and its significance and an assessment of the impact of the development proposed on the asset's significance. As part of this process full regard should be given to the detailed character assessments and other relevant information set out any relevant conservation area appraisal and management plan.

Conservation Area Appraisal: Central (City and University)

Central (City and University) Conservation Area Appraisal

- 3.26 Linacre College is included in the Central Conservation Area. An updated conservation area appraisal and management plan are in preparation. At a broader level the historic centre of Oxford is described as being “one of the masterpieces of European architectural heritage. It is also a major regional commercial centre. Many of its historic buildings still function for the purpose which they were built and provide accommodation for the University of Oxford and its colleges.” (Oxford City Council).
- 3.27 A change to the boundary to incorporate the University Science Quarter and St Thomas' was approved by the Council's Cabinet on 29 May 2019, following public consultation. The University Science Quarter (abutting South Parks Road) is described as “a physical demonstration of the university's commitment to the promotion of scientific research within the city during the mid-19th century, and beyond. Each building in the area is of its time and designed to reflect its use, which is continuously changing as the field adapts. Changes in building styles and types is expected and encouraged in this area in order to maintain the university's place as a world leader in scientific excellence” (Oxford City Council, 2020).
- 3.28 A draft Conservation Area Appraisal was prepared by the City Council and Alan Baxter Associates and was open for public consultation in September/October 2018. The CPRE and the Oxford Civic Society were among those who submitted comments. This document has not been adopted by the City Council, nor has it been subject to further consultation, however it provides a useful resource for identifying the significance of the Conservation Area.
- 3.29 There is currently no formal commentary within the draft Conservation Area Appraisal in respect of the relative significance/value of Linacre College.

PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment Practice Guide (English Heritage, 2010)

- 3.30 The 2012 NPPF superseded Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5) as Government Policy, however the policies in the NPPF are very similar and the intent is the same, so the Practice Guide remains almost entirely relevant and useful in the application of the NPPF.
- 3.31 Paragraph 58 of the Practice Guide and the Historic England Good Practice Notes 2 and 3 advocate the methods of investigating the significance of a heritage asset. In particular, it advocates that three steps should be carried out when preparing an assessment including:



1. Check the development plan, main local and national records including the relevant Historic Environment Record, statutory and local lists, the Heritage Gateway, the NMR, and other relevant statutory sources of information that would provide an understanding of the history of the place and the value the asset holds for society.
 2. Examine the asset and its setting.
 3. Consider whether the nature of the affected significance requires an expert assessment to gain the necessary level of understanding.
- 3.32 A number of other steps are suggested as appropriate subject to the nature of the asset and the proposed works.
- 3.33 In the case of this application the records which have been investigated include:
- The Heritage Gateway
 - Historic Mapping
 - The online planning records of Oxford City Council
 - Historic England website.

Historic England Good Practice Advice Notes

- 3.34 Advice Note 2 titled 'Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment' is relevant to the consideration of this application.
- 3.35 Advice Note 2 highlights that there are 4 types of Conservation Principles that an asset may hold, which are aesthetic, communal, historic and evidential value. The Assessment of Significance at Section 4 identifies the value attached to setting and significance of the surrounding heritage assets.
- 3.36 The application is therefore considered to meet the requirements of the NPPF and Practice Guide in terms of the level of information researched, the information extracted from this process and the conclusions outlined in this report.



4 Assessment of Significance

- 4.1 This section identifies relevant heritage assets and their significance, both of the site itself and within the surrounding area where this site may be considered part of the setting of heritage assets. Figure 7 below illustrates the nearby designated heritage assets.

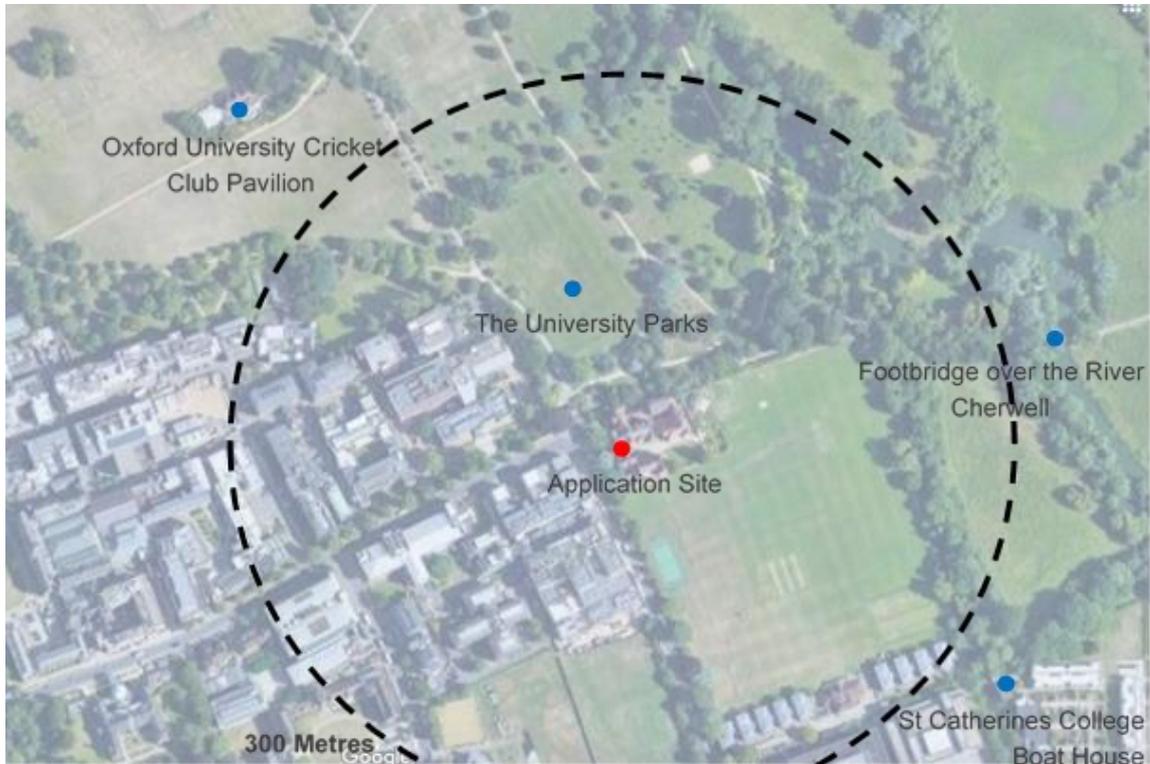


Figure 7 - Map of nearby heritage assets

Application Site – Dining Hall

- 4.2 The dining hall is an extension of the O C Tanner building, built in the 1970's. It is a linear 1.5 storey structure constructed from matching materials to other buildings on site, red brick which a tiled roof with single storey element with flat roof. It is not associated with an architect of note and has no other historic interest, perhaps aside from being the first new building to be built on the site after Linacre College moved in. The dining hall has little architectural value, being simple and functional in design with modern openings and rooflights. It is not a designated heritage asset, nor is it considered to be a non-designated heritage asset. The delegated report for the planning application for 2 rooflights in 2019 (reference: 19/00483/FUL) did not identify any heritage significance attached to the dining hall building itself.
- 4.3 The application site itself has very limited heritage significance, it is a courtyard space enclosed by the dining hall, O C Tanner building and entrance buildings. It is a small open space within a larger courtyard which has no particular function.

O C Tanner Building

- 4.4 The O C Tanner building is not a listed building, nor is it included on the Oxford Heritage Asset Register. Internal alterations to the building can therefore be made without requiring planning permission. It has not been specifically identified as a non-designated heritage asset in Oxford City Council reports for previous planning applications, however it was stated in the delegated report for the conversion of the loft to student accommodation that it 'comprises heritage significance, both



architectural and historic'. In the recent planning committee report for the 'Life and Mind' building planning application opposite the College (20/02471/FUL), the impacts on the heritage interest of the O C Tanner building and the rest of Linacre College were not assessed specifically. For the purposes of this application, the building will be treated as a non-designated heritage asset. Paragraph 197 of the NPPF states that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application.

4.5 The O C Tanner building was originally known as Cherwell Edge. It was built in 1886 and reportedly designed by J W Messenger, with extensions later designed by Basil Champneys from 1908-9. It is significant for:

- Association with the architectural work of J W Messenger, a local Oxford architect who designed a number of houses in North Oxford.
- Association with the architectural work of Basil Champneys, and architect of National significance, and an example of his use of the Queen Anne Dutch gable style.
- As an example of the Queen Anne Style of Architecture.
- Example of a speculative Mansion set in a generous garden, designed to attract middle and upper-middle class residence to the expanding city of Oxford in the 1880s.
- Example of the type of large houses built along South Park Road on long leases from Merton College Oxford, which together with St John's and other Oxford Colleges were seeking to realise the value of its extensive land holdings.
- For its long association (1905-1969) with the Society of the Holy Child Jesus, that in 1907 established a hall for Catholic women, and the role it played in female Catholic University education.
- Its association since 1977 with Linacre College.

Central (University and City) Conservation Area

Overview

4.6 The College is located within the Central Conservation Area which was designated in 1971. There is currently no up-to-date Conservation Area Appraisal, however the brief overview of the area from Oxford City Council's website does provide some context and detail of the area which covers a large area of central Oxford and a huge variety of aspects of significance. Overall, the historic centre of Oxford is described as one of the "masterpieces of European architectural heritage". Many of its historic buildings still function for the purpose which they were built and provide accommodation for the University of Oxford and its colleges (Oxford City Council). A draft Central Conservation Area Appraisal was prepared by the City Council and Alan Baxter Associates and was available for public consultation in September/October 2018.

4.7 A change to the boundary of the Central Conservation Area to incorporate the University Science Quarter was approved by the Council's Cabinet on 29 May 2019. The College is adjacent to this recently included area which includes areas north and south of South Parks Road. The University Science Quarter is described as "a physical demonstration of the university's commitment to the promotion of scientific research within the city during the mid-19th century, and beyond. Each building in the area is of its time and designed to reflect its use, which is continuously changing as the field adapts. Changes in building styles and types is expected and encouraged in this area in order to maintain the university's place as a world leader in scientific excellence" (Oxford City Council).



- 4.8 The current built form and layout of the area in and around Linacre College is largely a result of development from the mid-19th century onwards with the Science Area and University Parks both having their origins at this time. This was driven by the purchase of land by the University in this area for the laying out of University Parks and the expansion in science as an area of study within the University requiring dedicated buildings. For example, the University Museum was built in 1855-1860 and followed by other scientific buildings spreading either side of South Parks Road, latterly with the demolition of residential dwellings south of South Parks Road.
- 4.9 The draft Central Conservation Area Appraisal identifies a number of character areas within the Central Conservation Area. Linacre College is included within the 'Colleges' character area which is described as 'of many dates but sharing the characteristics of formal planning around a quad, grand architecture, spacious grounds and isolation from the surrounding city'. The site is adjacent to the 'flood plain' character area which is described as 'historic meadows which still fulfil a vital function in the City's flood defences, provide a clearly defined edge for Oxford, a place for recreation and relaxation and a picturesque foreground for views from east and south'. The draft Conservation Area Appraisal was prepared prior to the inclusion of the Science Area within the Conservation Area but it is considered that this would also constitute a separate character area.
- 4.10 The draft Conservation Area Appraisal identifies several key characteristics which together contribute to the significance of the Conservation Area including:
- Contrasts and continuity
 - Land ownership
 - Streets and plots
 - County town
 - Layers and details
 - Water
 - Green Oxford
 - Setting and skyline
 - A humane City
- 4.11 This part of the Conservation Area and the College exemplify a number of these key characteristics including contrasts and continuity with the built-up and large buildings of the Science Area, the College buildings and recreational areas all coming together; land ownership with longstanding University and College land ownership in this area; and green Oxford with the University Parks, New College recreation ground, Green Belt land and the River Cherwell to the north and east of the Science Area.
- 4.12 The later sections of the draft Conservation Area Appraisal set out a detailed assessment and analysis of the identified character areas. For the Colleges, key characteristics are exemplified as:
- Function and organisation.
 - Privacy behind a controlled perimeter.
 - The quadrangle plan.
 - Extensive gardens and lawns.
 - The use of golden limestone ashlar.
- 4.13 The other aspects which contribute to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area are noted as:
- Townscape and architecture:



- A harmonious and picturesque balance of, on the one hand, commonality - materials, plan form, lawns and gardens – and, on the other, variety – age, style, scale, detail.
- A world famous roofscape and skyline, arguably the most delightful in the UK.

History:

- Exceptional academic and scientific advancement across eight centuries.
- Association with historically significant figures and acclaimed literature and art.

4.14 Neither Linacre College, dining hall or the O C Tanner building are specifically mentioned in the draft Conservation Area Appraisal but the College is considered to fall within the group of 'More recent colleges inserted into the expanded city'. It is noted that these Colleges were typically inserted into the expanding city, and therefore occupy constrained plots with little opportunity for further expansion. The College shares many characteristics of the 'Colleges' character area identified including a frontage onto a main street with otherwise inward-looking buildings, landscaped areas and gardens, a mix of educational and residential uses and a strong and distinctive roofscape. It is missing more 'traditional' features of other Colleges such as a quadrangle, tower/spire, or Chapel, and in the absence of any limestone buildings. Linacre College moved into the site when it only comprised the O C Tanner building with other buildings purpose built for the College around it. There is no mention of the building in terms of key views or landmark features within this character area.

4.15 The College is enclosed by another character area - the flood plain and contrasts with this green setting. Key characteristics of the flood plain area which contribute to the significance of the Conservation Area include:

- The extent and quality of accessible green space in the centre of the city, which has inspired Oxford residents and students for centuries, and has substantial aesthetic, communal and historical value.
- The ecological value of so much green space in the heart of a city.
- The survival of the meadows allows understanding of the original siting of the city by the Saxons on dry ground adjacent to river crossing points.
- These crossings survive as Folly Bridge and Magdalen Bridge, which are therefore of exceptional importance to understanding the origins, history and layout of Oxford, and for understanding it as a riverside settlement that derived livelihood and prosperity from the river and river borne trade.
- The different characters of the Isis and Cherwell are part of the distinctive personality of Oxford: the Isis is broader, more urban and busy with pleasure craft; the Cherwell is more gentle, intimate and more rural. The playing fields are another distinctive type of green space – ordered and highly manicured.
- The views across the meadows are exceptionally important: both the panoramas of the famed towers and spires rising above the meadows, and the views looking outwards towards the greensward, which appears to be unbroken because east Oxford is hidden from view.
- Vehicles and bicycles are restricted in most of these areas and are not permitted in the University Parks or Christ Church Meadow. This is vital to maintaining the characteristically tranquil atmosphere.

4.16 The University Parks is a key part of this character area and the River Cherwell and playing fields are also mentioned. Linacre College is not mentioned as a part of a key landmark or view adjoining this area.



- 4.17 As set out above, the heritage significance of the Science Area which lies to the west of the College is derived from its historical interest as a continuously evolving collection of University of Oxford buildings which are all devoted to science teaching and research. The buildings invoke functionality and collaboration and have helped propel the University of Oxford to the forefront of global scientific and medical development. The association with education and pursuits of scientific excellence are very significant. Its architectural interest lies in its variety as the individual buildings reflect their function and the time in which they were designed and built. The buildings share some characteristics, they were all built from the 1850s onwards and are on the whole large-scale academic buildings containing suitable sized and designed facilities for teaching and research. The need for the continuing expansion of this area through the 20th century was exemplified by the demolition of the Edwardian villas on the southern side of South Parks Road and replacement with large buildings such as the Tinbergen building, built in 1970.
- 4.18 The character of this part of the Conservation Area is set to change again with the demolition of the Tinbergen building which was located opposite Linacre College and the redevelopment of the site to provide the substantial Life and Mind Building. This will be home to the Department of Experimental Psychology and a new Department of Biology.
- 4.19 The above characteristics all contribute to the architectural, historic and artistic interest which makes up the heritage significance of the Central Conservation Area. There is also high archaeological interest.

Contribution of the Site

- 4.20 The application site is located at the rear of the College within the main Linacre Campus. Linacre College is situated at the intersection of South Parks Road and St Cross Road, to the south-east of the University Science Quarter. The concentration of historic science buildings along the north side of South Parks Road together with the green front curtilages and lime tree-lined pavements contribute to the significance of the streetscape at South Parks Road. The red brick College buildings contrast with the surrounding recreational green space at University Parks and New College recreation ground and with the Science Area which contains large scale academic buildings in a range of styles. The northern elevation and roof of the dining hall is visible from Mesopotamia walk and makes a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of this part of the Conservation Area.
- 4.21 The College is an example of one of the more ‘modern’ Colleges of the University, having only been established in the 1960s. Aside from the O C Tanner building the rest of the buildings on the site were built from the 1970s onwards. As a group, however the buildings are all constructed in similar materials – red brick with clay tile roofs and are of similar scale and design to each other. This gives it a coherence which overall contributes positively to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 4.22 There is considerable greenness to the wider setting of the site to the east, south and north. The juxtaposition of University and College built form and greenness is a characteristic seen elsewhere in the Conservation Area. New College Recreation Ground (south), the University Parks (north and east) and water meadows (east) together form a green buffer which separates this part of the city from the eastern parts of the City and the historic collegiate area to the south. The balance between built form and open space is a significant contributor to the significance of the Conservation Area.
- 4.23 The corner upon which the College is located is a convergence of routes including cycle and pedestrian pathways from University Parks and Mesopotamia Walk and vehicular routes along South



Parks Road and St Cross Road. Being located on a corner makes the College buildings along its boundaries especially visible, although they are set back behind the high boundary wall and trees. The application site is in the centre of the College and therefore not visible in these views.

- 4.24 The College contributes to the architectural interest of the Conservation Area largely through the older O C Tanner building but also as a group of Collegiate buildings and to the historic interest through exemplifying the development of a more 'modern' College within the centre of Oxford. The application site and the dining hall contribute to this in a minor way, however, are considered in isolation to have neutral significance in the wider context of the Conservation Area. The dining hall is a modern, functional structure, sympathetic to its surroundings but has no particular architectural merit. The application site is a small functional area within a larger courtyard, not visible in the wider street scene.

The University Parks – Grade II Registered Park and Garden

- 4.25 The University Parks lie at the northern edge of the centre of Oxford. The circa 30ha parkland forms an important buffer between the city's central area and parts of the city to the north and east. The University Parks is designated in recognition of its origins as a recreational space created by the University in the 19th century. It was laid out by the University to provide recreational space in the form of playing fields, and parkland principally for University staff and students but with access also for the residents of Oxford. The land was purchased from Merton College and the Parks developed over a number of years.
- 4.26 Linacre College abuts the eastern section of the southern boundary of University Parks, with the application site to the rear of the dining hall. The Parks is bounded by the University Science Area buildings along much of its southern edge. The Parks' boundary is marked largely by iron railings and gates, except to the east where the river forms the boundary. The east end of the south-east corner is marked by Linacre's main campus and the New College Sports Ground, divided from the University Parks by the north-west end of Mesopotamia Walk leading from South Lodge to a bridge over the Cherwell. The dining hall is directly adjacent to Mesopotamia Walk.
- 4.27 A number of designers are thought to have contributed and been involved in the early development of the layout for the University Parks and its laying out including James Bateman, who had laid out his own garden at Biddulph Grange, Sir William Hooker of Kew, William Baxter of the University Botanic Garden amongst others. Part of the southern area of the Parks were built upon in the mid-late 20th century with the development of the Science Area.
- 4.28 The Parks are of a simple design with walkways and some landscaping and limited formal planting, and contain a small arboretum, Mesopotamia Walk and sports pitches as well as the Cricket Pavilion (listed in its own right and designed by the architect TG Jackson) and two lodges at entrance points. The planned layout comprising these elements forms part of its heritage significance.
- 4.29 The significance of the Parks lies in its openness and carefully managed recreation and parkland, with surrounding residential uses to the west and Collegiate/University to the north and south respectively and rural to the east, with views in this direction across the water meadows towards Marston and Headington Hill.
- 4.30 The South Lodge, which is not listed, is located to the north west of the application site at the intersection of South Parks Road and St Cross Road and is a significant 'checkpoint/marker' which signifies the transition from the built urban environment to the green and rural setting of the University Parks. The north-west end of Mesopotamia Walk extends east from South Lodge.



- 4.31 The designated walks, sports facilities and open space of University Parks are a significant recreational asset to the wider area. The Parks are a tranquil green setting providing an escape from the urban hustle of central Oxford. The green open space in juxtaposition with the surrounding built form, and its historic, social, cultural and recreational value comprise the Parks' heritage significance within the locality.

Oxford University Cricket Club Pavilion – Grade II Listed

- 4.32 Designed by Sir T G Jackson, the cricket pavilion is constructed of distinctive red brick with tile hung gable ends. The pavilion is located 350 metres north-west from the application site. It has architectural, historic interest, and the isolated building is key indicator of the parks use for University sports and recreation. Views between the pavilion and the application site are heavily limited by intervening development (western edge of the University Science Area) and mature vegetation which lines the north-west end of Mesopotamia Walk.
- 4.33 Due to the site's distance from this building, intervening trees and built form the application site is not considered to comprise part of the building's setting which contributes to its significance.

Footbridge over River Cherwell at Parsons Pleasure Punt Rollers – Grade II Listed

- 4.34 The Footbridge over the River Cherwell, crossing the tail of the Parson's Pleasure weir and now part of the Marston cycle track is located 300m east from the application site. The bridge is the first statically indeterminate prestressed concrete bridge in Britain and may be the first prestressed fixed arch in the world (Historic England). The bridge provides continuation of walks and cycle paths east over the river Cherwell expanding the usable and functional area of the University Parks. It has historic and some architectural interest. The bridge is enclosed on all sides by mature woodland which consequently obscures all views to and from Linacre College.
- 4.35 Due to the site's distance from this building, intervening trees and built form the application site is not considered to comprise part of the building's setting which contributes to its significance.

St Catherines College, Boat House – Grade II

- 4.36 This building is the College boathouse with a flat above which was built in 1961-66 and designed by Arne Jacobsen who comprehensively designed the rest of St Catharines College buildings. It is two storeys and made of brick and painted metal with a flat roof. It has architectural and historic interest largely through its connections with the architect and the College. Any glimpsed views of Linacre College are intersected and obscured by New College Weston Buildings.
- 4.37 Due to the site's distance from this building, intervening trees and built form the application site is not considered to comprise part of the building's setting which contributes to its significance.



5 Proposed Development

- 5.1 The development proposals comprise a single storey extension to the southern elevation of the Linacre College dining hall. It also includes the replacement of rooflights on the northern roofslope, replacement of flat roof structure on the single storey element, and internal and external alterations, some of which do not require planning permission but are included for completeness. The accompanying Design and Access statement provides full details and outlines the rationale behind the proposal.
- 5.2 Linacre College has in excess of 550 postgraduate students. It strives to accommodate as many as possible on its main campus and has a number of student accommodation blocks. The dining hall is open to students both off and on campus and serve daily meals as well as guest nights. The dining hall is also used for special functions and due to the current configuration can only hold one private function at once. The proposed extension is to provide additional dining space for general use for the existing student and staff population but will also provide additional space for special functions and the ability to provide a separate space for private dining.
- 5.3 The proposal involves infilling a courtyard between the O C Tanner building and the existing dining hall. The proposal is for a single storey flat roofed extension off the south and east elevations of the existing dining hall. It will have glazed timber windows in the eastern elevation, similar to the existing windows, and glazed timber double doors in the southern elevation. It will be constructed in matching materials to the existing dining hall. The existing flat roof form will extend over the new extension and the existing bitumen flat roof finish will be replaced with a single-ply membrane flat roof.
- 5.4 The extension will block off an existing fire escape door in the northern elevation of the O C Tanner building, this will be re-provided on the eastern elevation along with an adjoining paved access ramp.
- 5.5 The dining hall is in need of general maintenance and improvements to enhance its functionality. The proposal also seeks to replace the existing metal framed rooflights located on the north of the dining hall with new powder-coated, steel framed rooflights matching others elsewhere on the campus. It is further proposed that the small polycarbonate rooflights in the existing flat roof area be replaced with new Plateau rooflights with a shallow kerb. A larger Plateau rooflight is proposed for the roof of the new extension to allow light into this area.
- 5.6 Inside the dining hall an extending screen will be inserted to subdivide the dining hall into two areas as required.



6 Assessment of Impact

- 6.1 This planning application seeks planning consent for 'erection of single storey extension to the southern elevation, replacement rooflights and internal and external alterations' at the dining hall and O C Tanner building at Linacre College, Oxford.
- 6.2 The principle of development and other planning and technical matters are assessed within the submitted Planning Statement. This section assesses the impact of the proposal on the significance of the heritage assets outlined above.

Heritage Asset Affected	Assessment	Impact on Significance
O C Tanner Building	<p>The proposals are adjacent to the northern and eastern elevations of the rear eastern wing of the building, in a less prominent and significant part of the building. The proposal will not interfere with the key elements of architectural interest such as the Dutch gables, roofscape, oriel and mullioned windows.</p> <p>The proposal does not affect the architectural distinction between the original house of 1886 designed by J W Messenger and the Basil Champneys extension to the south and east of 1908-9.</p> <p>The single storey extension extends an existing single storey element adjacent to the northern elevation of the eastern wing of the O C Tanner building which already partly obscures this elevation. It remains a subservient extension to the O C Tanner building. This small change will not affect the overall significance of the building.</p> <p>The design and materials used in the extension ensure it is clearly a new addition, while continuing elements of the existing single storey element of the dining hall, a design approach adopted with previous extensions and additions to the site.</p> <p>The replacement fire escape door in the O C Tanner building is required as the extension will block the existing door. It comprises the removal of a low quality door and inserts a new door in the eastern elevation. The existing fire escape door does not contribute strongly to the significance of the building. There will be a loss of some brickwork to insert the new door which will match other doors and will be higher quality than the existing fire escape door. This is not considered to impact the overall significance of the building.</p> <p>The ramp will not obscure the windows or other key features on the eastern elevation of the building.</p>	None



Central Conservation Area	<p>The impact of the proposals will be limited to the parts of the Conservation Area immediately around the College.</p> <p>The extension will not be visible in views from the wider Conservation Area. Due to its discrete and subservient design which continues the existing single storey form it will not affect the character of this part of the College or Conservation Area. The contrast between the College buildings, academic buildings in the Science area and the backdrop of the green recreation areas remains appreciable.</p> <p>The College will remain a coherent group of buildings which positively contribute to this part of the Conservation Area, representing a relatively modern College in the Central Conservation Area.</p> <p>In the context of the recently approved Life and Mind Building opposite the College, the extension and alterations comprise a very minor change in the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and one which will not harm its architectural and historic interest.</p> <p>The replacement of the rooflights on the northern roofslope will be visible from Mesopotamia Walk, however they will be the same size as the existing and match others on the site. This will not affect the significance of the Conservation Area.</p>	None
The University Parks	<p>The small, single storey extension to an existing College building within the setting of the Parks will not alter this element of setting such that it impacts upon the heritage significance of the University Parks. The key elements of the Parks – its layout, openness and importance as a recreational green space remain unchanged.</p> <p>The replacement of the rooflights on the northern roofslope will be visible from Mesopotamia Walk, however they will be the same size as the existing and will match others on the site. This will not adversely affect the setting of the University Park such that its significance would be affected.</p>	Minimal
Oxford University Cricket Club Pavilion	No impact on aspects setting which contribute to heritage significance due to distance and intervening features.	None
Footbridge over River Cherwell at Parsons Pleasure Punt Rollers	No impact on aspects setting which contribute to heritage significance due to distance and intervening features.	None
St Catherines College Boat House	No impact on aspects setting which contribute to heritage significance due to distance and intervening features.	None



7 Evaluation and Conclusions

- 7.1 This Heritage Statement has assessed the heritage significance of the relevant designated and undesignated heritage assets and the potential impact of the proposed development at the Linacre College dining Hall and O C Tanner building on this significance in accordance with national and local planning policy.
- 7.2 In conclusion, it has been found that the proposed scheme will preserve the heritage significance of the designated heritage assets. As such, it is considered to comply with all relevant planning policy relating to the protection and conservation of the historic environment.