



Hubbard Conservation



Heritage Impact Statement

34 Park Town

Oxford

OX2 6SJ

February 2021

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Figure 1, Front cover 34 Park Town, Oxford

Figure 2. Page 2, front elevation of 34 Park Town, Oxford.



Job reference. 070-21. Date: February 2021.

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1. Introduction and methodology.

Victoria Hubbard MSc, of Hubbard Conservation, on behalf of Mr. and Mrs. Parr, has written this Heritage Impact Statement. This is in relation to the proposed renovations to aspects 34 Park Town, Oxford, beyond that already approved by application no: 20/02846/LBC.

A full and detailed Heritage Statement was submitted with application no: 20/02846/LBC ¹.

This application will concern works not given consent in 20/02846/LBC:

- Minor changes to the lower ground floor.
- Removal of a section of wall on the ground floor.
- Single roof light to the former garage.
- Two roof lights to the rear slope of the main range.

The report will take the form of two parts in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Section 16, paragraphs 189: *'In 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'*. And 190 *'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.'* Therefore, Part One will comprise a **Statement of Significance** and Part Two will comprise an **Impact Assessment**.

As referred to above, this report first sets out the historic background of the setting and heritage asset, and investigates its 'significance' – **Statement of Significance**, in accordance with Historic England's Conservation Principals, Policies and Guidance' 2008, which advocates the understanding of 'significance' taking place before moving on to assess the impact of potential change on that 'significance'.

¹ Heritage Statement no: 056-20

I have a Master's degree in Historic Conservation from Brookes University, Oxford. Having been project coordinator for The Early English Fabric project in Chipping Norton on behalf of Historic England (2013- to date) I have much experience in the historic environment, as well as the experience gained from commissioned Heritage Impact Statements for various buildings and projects. In 2012 I became one of the founder members of the Chipping Norton Buildings Record, working in association with the Oxfordshire Buildings Record.

34 Park Town, was statutory listed as Grade II on the 29th January 1968 (**appendix I**) and is the southern crescent of the 1853-5 development of Park Town. Park Town is character area 2 of the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area Appraisal.²

Historic planning applications are as follows:

- **85/00898/L**, dated 4th December 1885: Listed Building Consent for alterations of existing double hung sash windows to the rear main elevation for the access doorway to rear addition roof and for provision of balustrading to parapet of extension to provide balcony area (retrospective). Permitted on appeal.
- **49/00676/A_H**, dated 17th August 1949: Addition of first floor kitchen. Permitted.
- Application no: **20/02846/LBC**.

Part Two of this report will assess the possible impact of the proposal – **Impact Assessment**, in accordance with Historic England's Conservation Principals, Policies and Guidance' 2008 and paragraph 193 of the NPPF. '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 report will also reflect upon primary legislation Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Historic England's guidance document 'The Setting of Heritage Assets, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3', Historic England's Advice Note 12, 'Statement of Heritage Significance', October 2019 and Planning Practice Guidance.

² North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area Appraisal; Area 2, Park Town, p. 26

The planning system expects reports such as these to be based on evidence. Therefore, this report is based on a site inspection that took place on August 28th 2020 for the first application, where a photographic and building/setting survey was conducted.

This report has been prepared with care, diligence and as an objective assessment based on the information provided, discovered, or known at the time. This report has been produced for the sole use of the client and their professional advisors in connection with this application and should not be relied upon by any other party or any other context.

With regards to orientation: for simplicity the gable end of the property will be described as east, the rear as south, the front as north. Please refer to plans for exact orientation.

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2. Part One: Statement of Significance.

Location, historic context, and setting.

Location-

Park Town is situated approximately 1 mile north of the city center of Oxford, and to the eastern side of the Banbury Road (A4165) with Summertown to its north: at Listing NGR: SP5138407825.

The Banbury Road is the eastern of two busy northern trunk roads into the city; however, the surrounding area was mostly undeveloped prior to the mid-19th century. The area around the Banbury Road is now densely populated, to the west in particular, where it meets the parallel trunk road; the Woodstock Road (A4144), after which the density continues west until it terminates abruptly at the railway-line (**fig.3**).

The eastern extreme of Park Town has The Dragon School to its east, before the landscape opens up to fields before reaching the River Cherwell; beyond which the city spread with other districts with their own identities.

Park Town is distinctive on a map or aerial view due to its formal site layout (**figs. 3- 8**).

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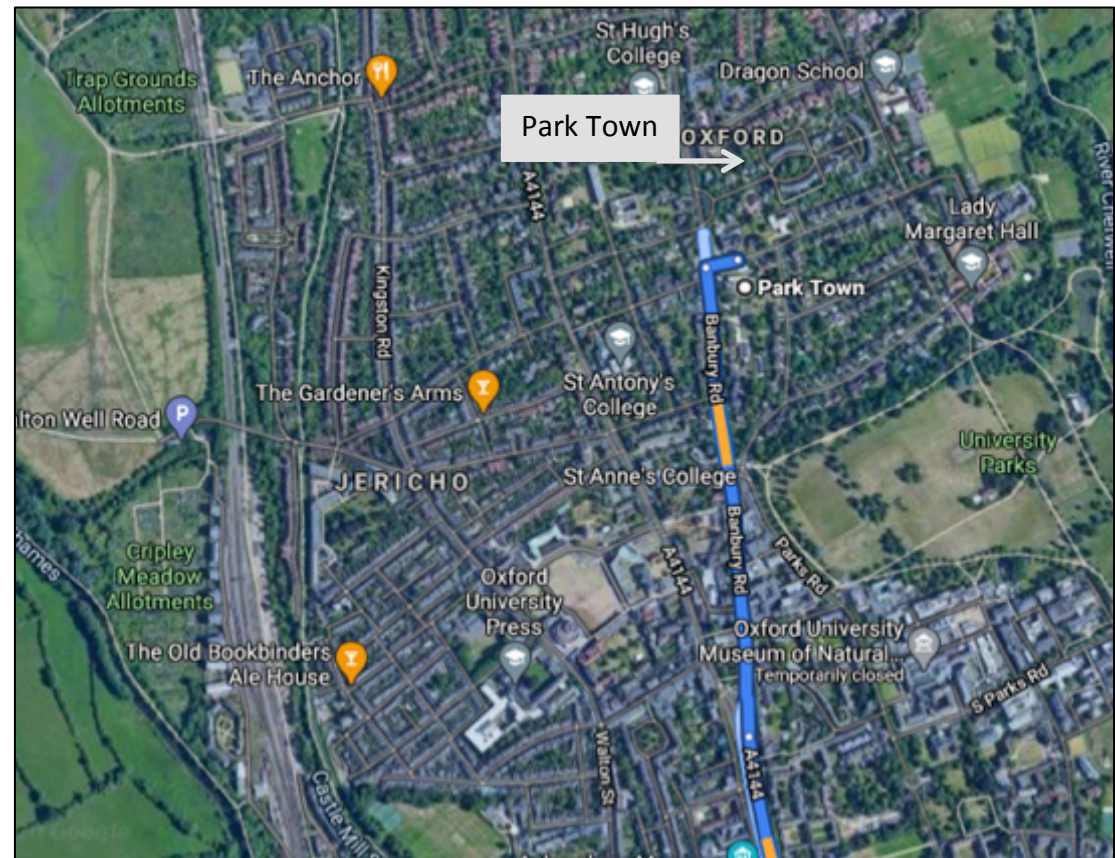


Figure 3: Aerial image of North Oxford.



Figure 4: Historic map of Oxford, Oxford (outline sheet 236). Revised: 1893, published 1896. OS one inch 1885 – 1900. Arrow indicates Park Town. Source: National Library of Scotland.

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Figure 5: Extract from a historic map of Oxford, Oxford (outline sheet 236). Revised: 1893, published 1896. OS one inch 1885 – 1900. Arrow indicates Park Town. Source: National Library of Scotland.

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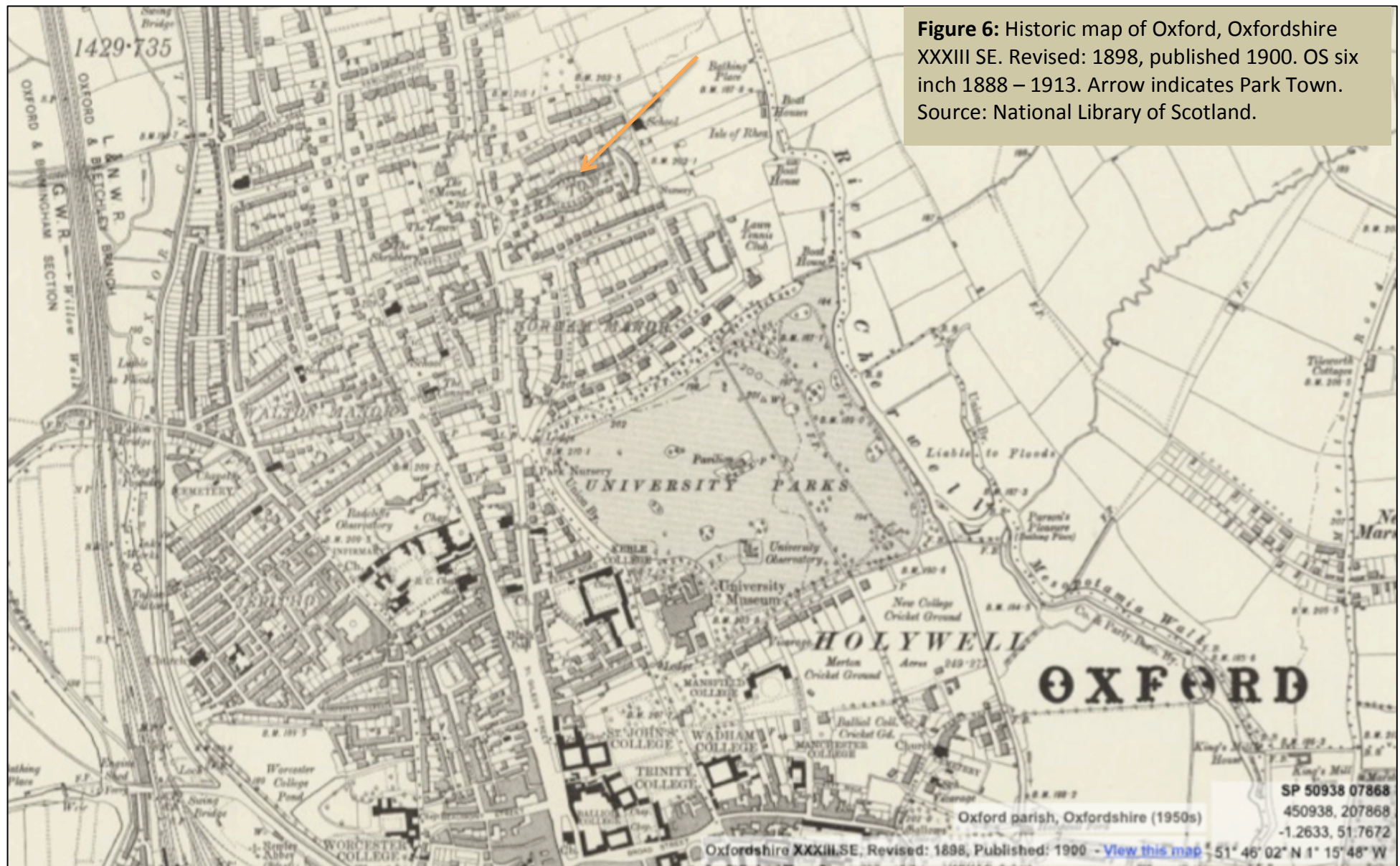


Figure 7: Extract from a historic map of Oxford, Oxfordshire XXXIII SE. Revised: 1898, published 1900. OS six inch 1888 – 1913. Arrow indicates Park Town. Source: National Library of Scotland. The arrow indicates no. 34 Park Town.



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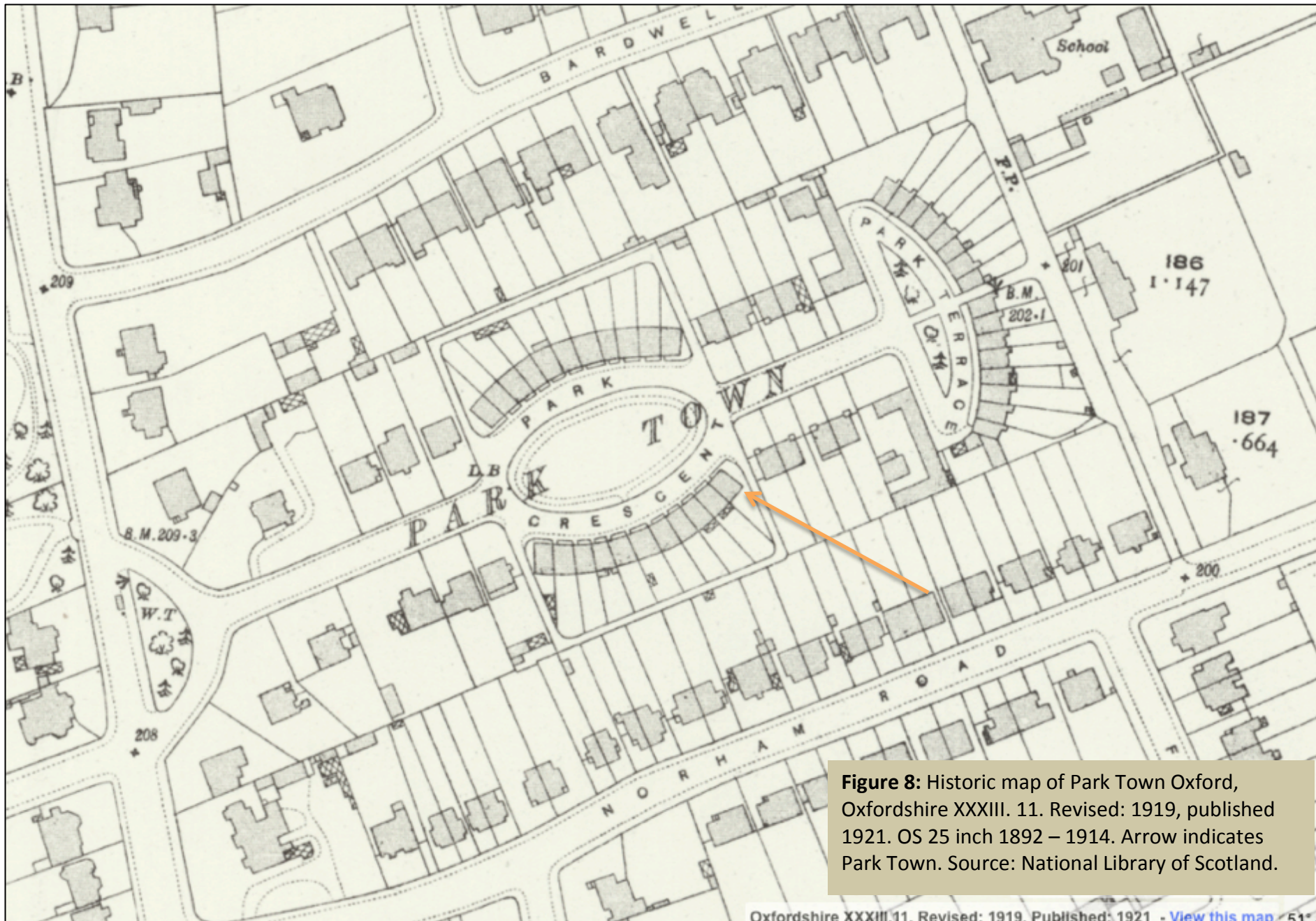


Figure 8: Historic map of Park Town Oxford, Oxfordshire XXXIII. 11. Revised: 1919, published 1921. OS 25 inch 1892 – 1914. Arrow indicates Park Town. Source: National Library of Scotland.

Historic context and Setting-

During the 19th century the building of new houses was preferred outside the city's boundary. There had been some building on freehold land in North Parade and at Summers Town (Summertown),³ otherwise the lands to the north of the town and St Giles remained undeveloped. Prior to the 16th century the land was known as Walton field and St Giles' field, before being acquired by St John's College during the 16th century.

Development began on the eastern side of the Banbury Road in 1820 steadily spreading west across to the Woodstock Road. By 1832 there were approximately 125 houses⁴.

The first attempt at a planned residential suburb development was proposed for an isolated slice of land to the east of Banbury Road. The land had belonged to New College, but was bought by the Oxford Board of Poor Law Guardians in 1849 as designated site for a workhouse⁵. At the time the site was remote and isolated from the city; supposedly an ideal site for a 19th century workhouse, however, the site was to prove unsuitable so the decision was made for the site to become a development to attract the middle-classes to the northern suburb of Oxford⁶.

In 1853-5 The Park Town Estate was laid out under the watch of Samuel Lipscomb Seckham, who was City Surveyor at the time (eventually architect for St John's College), later becoming the principal speculative developer of the site. The intention was to build and provide housing suitable to attract middle and upper-middle class residence. The apportioned land was narrow and presented an issue with regards to design. The composition of a pair of crescents forming a shallow ellipse occupied the narrow site well. Detached and semi-detached villas were provided in large plots to the east and the west of the crescent, all of which provided a hierarchical variety of housing. Remaining plots for detached and semi-detached villas were

³ VCH, A History of the County of Oxford: Volume 4, the City of Oxford, modern Oxford, p. 181 – 259

⁴ VCH, A History of the County of Oxford: Volume 4, the City of Oxford, modern Oxford, p. 181 – 259

⁵ N. Pevsner and J. Sherwood, 1974, p.320

⁶ VCH, A History of the County of Oxford: Volume 4, the City of Oxford, modern Oxford, p. 181 – 259

slow to sell; two of the plots were never developed. The Park Town Estate Company had been founded in 1857, however, went into liquidation in 1861 resulting in an auction to sell off the remaining houses/plots.⁷

Today, Park Town is part of the North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area Appraisal; Park Town is character area 2.⁸ The significance of the area is as follows:

- Its formal layout.
- Its Grade II registered Park and Garden, which takes the form of an elliptical residential garden set centrally between the northern and southern crescent.
- The aesthetic of being exclusively residential, with historic street furniture, and narrow plot lay-outs (to the crescent), which are enclosed and defined to the rear (brick wall to the crescent buildings) and the front (iron railings).
- Park Town is uniform in materials, scale, form, floor plans, and design.
- A level of status was defined by zones: detached, semi-detached and the terraced properties, all of which had their own uniformity of materials, scale, floor plan and design.

The historic significance of 34 Park Town is two-fold:

- 1: As part of the formal and uniformly designed 19th century plan of Park Town; a purposefully designed development to attract the middle-classes, with deliberate zones of status, all of which was executed by surveyor, architect and principal speculative developer Samuel Lipscombe Seckham.
- 2. As an individual building of the 19th century, belonging to the southern terrace of the crescent. The property will be described later in the report, however, the rooms, floors, fabric detailing, and laid-out are of a typical design for the period. All of which defined the room function and depict the etiquette expected of the middle-classes during the 19th century.

⁷ VCH, A History of the County of Oxford: Volume 4, the City of Oxford, modern Oxford, p. 181 – 259

⁸ North Oxford Victorian Suburb Conservation Area Appraisal; Area 2, Park Town, p. 26

The entrance into the estate from the Banbury Road provides a view of two orderly rows of Italianate Villas; detached and semi-detached in generous plots, before reaching the crescent at the heart of the development. This comprises two terraces; one to the north and opposing to the south, both of 11 houses each, which flank a central elliptical residential garden (fig.9). Pevsner deliberates that the style of Park Town is late Classical; pre-Ruskinian and likely based on Papworth's work in Cheltenham⁹. This aesthetic most certainly contrasts to the masculine Victorian Gothic architecture found frequently in the North Oxford Suburb. The crescent itself presents as an elegant Regency development akin to the spa towns of Cheltenham and Leamington Spa.

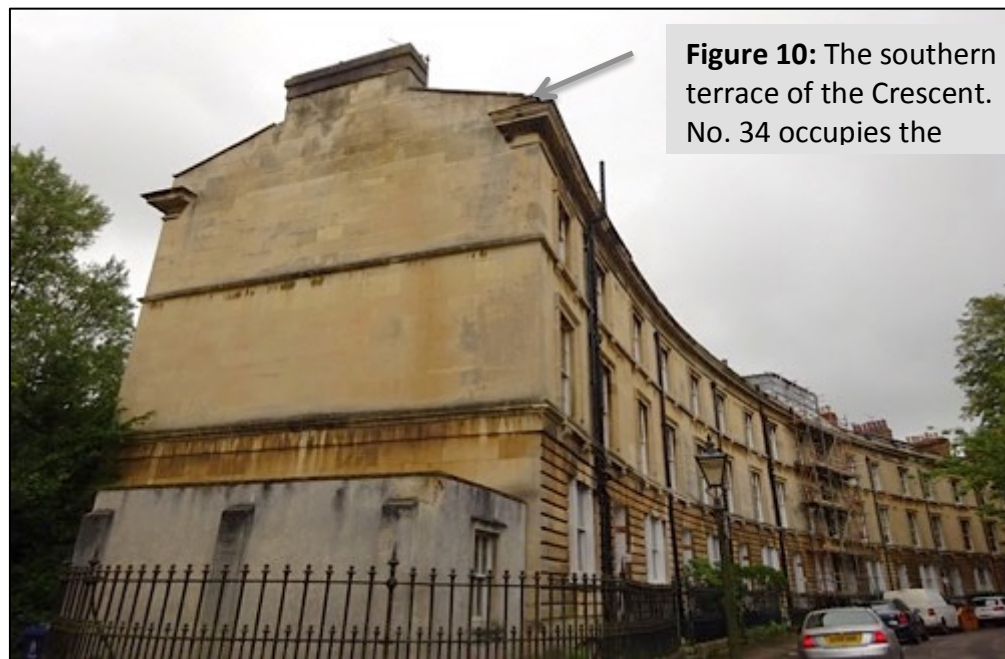
Figure 9:

The crescent of Park Town comprising a northern and southern elliptical terrace with a central communal garden.

No.34 is indicated by the arrow.



Figure 10: The southern terrace of the Crescent. No. 34 occupies the



⁹ N. Pevsner and J. Sherwood, 1974, p.320

Building description.*External details.*

The two curved terraces (which includes no.34) comprise three stories plus attic and basement (or lower ground floor). Constructed from ashlar bath stone to the façade and rustication to the ground floor. There are recessed sash windows of 2/2 to the first floor and 1/2 to the second floor with horizontal glazing bars (but absent of vertical members), which provide a distinctive appearance. The fenestrations to the basement, ground floor, and rear elevation are more typical of the mid-19th century with 2/2 (with vertical glazing bars) tripartite sashes to the ground floor and basement, with thin 19th century glazing bars.

Iron railings define the front boundary to the street and the 'front' door is in-set with steps to the threshold. There is a continual moulded cornice and a parapet with small balustrades. The property is a two-window unit, with consoles to the cills of the first floor, being more ornate than that of the second floor.

The upper floors and gable are stucco (**fig. 11**), with ashlar stone quoins to the southeast corner.



Figure 11: No. 34 Park Town; Gable end of the southern terrace.

Figure 12:

Left – the façade
of No. 34.

Right – the
second floor of
the rear
elevation.



The rear of no.34 presents as the main range with a two-storey brick extension (**fig. 13**), which appears to pertain to the end of the 1940s according to planning application: 49/00676/A_H, which simply says 'addition of a first floor kitchen', which is still in existence as room F3. On top of the brick extension is a balcony or roof terrace, which according to application: 85/00898/L was granted retrospective permission in 1985. There is a door leading from the stairs onto this balcony (replacing a former sash window), which appears to have been part of this application stating 'alteration of existing double hung sash window to rear main elevation for access doorway to rear addition roof'. The eastern elevation of this extension has wooden steps to a room at ground floor level, which does not appear to be accessible internally. There is a large concrete lintel spanning the opening, and has an odd window and extremely slender doorway into a room (**fig.13**). Above, this to the first floor, is 2-light crittal window. The southern elevation has a timber arch providing an opening to access the basement steps, which descends sharply. Above this is a 6-light window lighting the aforementioned room, under another concrete lintel spanning the elevation (**fig.13**). Above this, and to the first floor, is a 3-light crittal window.

To the main range, there are double doors from the ground floor to access the rear garden. The brick segmental arch comprises two rows of headers with a stone wedge, and differs in character to that above on the main range. This feature resides in a very shallow extension off the main range; approximately 1 metre or so in depth (**fig. 14**). The garden is overgrown making surveying difficult, however, this extension and that of the rear range, form an uncomfortable arrangement with the basement below. It is difficult to make out the chronology but the arrangement does not sit well as three steps straddle from the door threshold to the garden. A window in the basement can be seen below, and yet the steps cover the majority of natural light source, suggesting this is a secondary intervention.

To the main range there is a 6/6 sash window to the first floor, and a 3/6 to the second floor, both of which are under slightly segmental stretcher arches. Both windows are without horns, with thin glazing bars and panes of primary glass; coeval to the primary build (**fig.14**).

The garden itself is small, and very overgrown so the extent is not clear¹⁰. The red brick boundary wall appears primary to the mid-19th century and arcs to the southeastern corner. No.34 and its opposing property to the western end of the terrace appear to have the smallest garden plots (**fig.8**). There is a 20th century single storey garage to the eastern gable, which appears to be a rendered brick construction (**fig.12**).

¹⁰ Garden area cleared by second visit. Please refer to pages 31 – 36 of the Impact Assessment for updated information.



Figure 13.

Above- southern elevation of the rear extension.

Right – eastern elevation of the rear extension.



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Figure 14.

Left – first and second floor windows to the rear of the main range.

Right – ground and first floor door and window to the rear of the main range.



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The following pages will examine the interior of the building, floor by floor, with room codes to assist the understanding of orientation. The report will begin at the Lower ground floor, moving on to the first and third floors.

Internal details.

The following pages will examine the interior of the building, floor by floor, with room codes to assist the understanding of orientation.

Basement/Lower Ground Floor (fig. 15) .

The basement comprises: straight flight stairs with top winder descend from the ground floor. There is a principal room to the front **LG2**, which has a doorway leading into a 20th century garage to the east **LG1**. There is a small partitioned room to the west **LG3**. To the rear of **LG2** is **LG4** (another principal room), which has a small extension (very shallow in depth) to the south that echoes that of the floor above. To the west of this is a passage leading to the rear garden and a small WC to the side.

LG1 – brick cellar with brick floor and coal shoot accessed from the side elevation (east), underneath the 20th century garage.

LG2 all the walls are covered in a 20th century corrugated finish. The doorway cuts away the corner of the room; presumably a 20th century change. The doorway into **LG1** is a 20th century addition. The blocked fireplace has retained its primary moulded surround with corner concentric circles; typical to the Regency period. The tripartite window is primary with a 2/2 central sash and 1/1 flanking side lights (**fig.16**). There is no cornice or door architrave, and the slim skirting is a modern intervention. There is an opening into **LG3**.

LG3 Two cupboards/rooms, presumably a former larder that would have been accessed from the point adjacent to the stairs. There is a stud partition wall, which

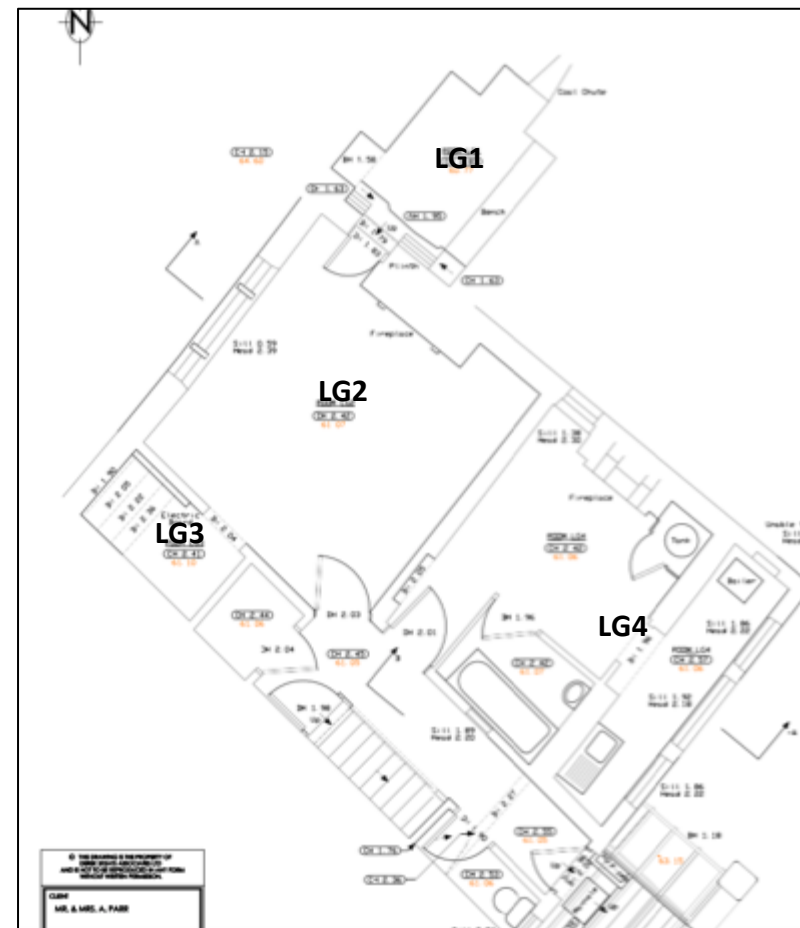


Figure 15: Existing basement/Lower ground floor plan.

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separates this space into two cupboards; one accessed from **LG2** and the other from its primary entrance at the foot of the stairs. There are no obvious features of historic significance remaining.

There is a passage adjacent to the stairs with no features of historic significance. This area provides access to the rear garden and is plastered boarded with shelving to the eastern wall. To the right (west) is a small WC, again, no obvious features of significance to report (**fig. 16**).



Figure 16: Above room LG2, with the doorway into LG1 in the corner.

Right – the passage to the rear garden.

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LG4 blocked doorway into **LG2** to the left (north). The room has been partitioned to the western side to provide a small-unlit bathroom. To the east is a 6-paned hinged timber casement window, and what-remains of the primary hob-grate; the central grate of which is missing. This is flanked to the south by a small cupboard housing a hot-water tank. To the south is a shallow room, possible just over a metre in depth, providing a kitchenette. Small, high windows dimly light the room; none of which appear typical of the mid-19th century. This peculiar room is mirrored on the floor above (**fig.14**), which forms a shallow extension to room **G2**.



Figure 17: Left – window to the east of room LG4. Right – remains of the hob-grate in room LG4.

Ground Floor (fig.18).

The two-paneled timber double doors have a narrow rectangular overhead (all of which appear primary). This provides access into the entrance hallway, which in turn provides access to the two principal rooms of the house, (**G1** and **G2**), stairs, and to the rear of the hall which is presently a WC.

G1 This principal room retains its tripartite window of 2/2 central sash with flanking 1/1 sashes; all absent of horns. Beneath are three beaded paneled shutter boxes; although it is not clear whether the shutters remain. The room curves to the southwestern corner. The cornice, pine four-paneled door and architrave, skirting and marble fire surround all appear primary, as too the pine floor. The picture rail is sharp in detail providing doubt as to its authenticity, as a century of re-painting tends to round-off sharp edges. The bracketed shelf appears to be secondary (**fig. 19**).

G2 is to the rear of the house, and has a primary marble fire surround and hearth against the eastern wall flanked by 20th century shelving, the southern of which is shallow as it conceals modern pipes. The cornice and skirting are primary, as too the four-paneled pine door and architrave. The same debate arises regarding the picture rail (see G1). (**Fig.20**)

Towards the back of the room (south) there is an area which is shallow in depth that relates to that of the basement or lower ground floor; of approximately 1 metre in depth. At ground floor level it appears as though a wall has been all-but removed with only its eastern and western returns retained (**fig.20**). As previously explained on pages 22 this area is peculiar in that it is shallow with no obvious purpose. The external detail of the door lintel (**fig.14**), (to the ground floor), differs in character to that of the main range, suggesting a later addition, although the nature of a double-row of brick headers still

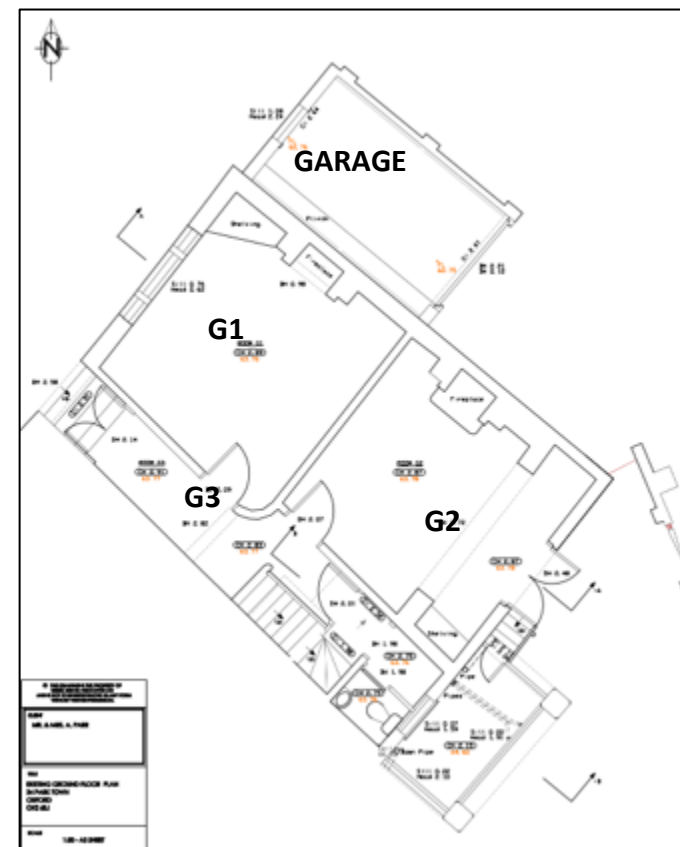


Figure 18: Existing ground floor plan

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relates happily to the late 19th early 20th century. The double French doors have the fine glazing bars of the 19th century, in particular the Regency period, and are presently behind modern metal security shutters.

Based on floor plans and photographs of another property in the crescent, it appears the shallow extensions to both the basement and the ground floor are likely early 20th century additions. To the ground floor it is likely that the French-doors were positioned central to the room (as now) but set within the removed (and primary rear) wall. Based on the aforementioned photographs, it appears these French doors may well be primary, but the room has lost its pocket shutters unfortunately.



Figure 19: G1 – tripartite window, marble fire surround and curved corner and door of the room, with pine door, architrave, skirting and cornice.



Figure 20: Left – marble fire surround and hearth. Centre – truncated wall before the former veranda area. Right door, architrave and skirting.

GARAGE. This single storey structure is to the eastern gable and was built in the 20th century comprising a flat roof and grey render (**fig.21**). The structure has no historic significance.

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Figure 21: Garage.

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Third Floor/Attic, fig. 23.

This floor comprises two rooms to the front **A1** and **A2** (north) and a roof void to the rear **A3** (south) with a lander and stairs **A4**.

A3 is a roof void, with exposed brick, carpeted and the rafters concealed by insulation (**fig. 22**).

A4 is the top of the stair well and landing area.



Figure 22: Above left – room A2. Right – room A3

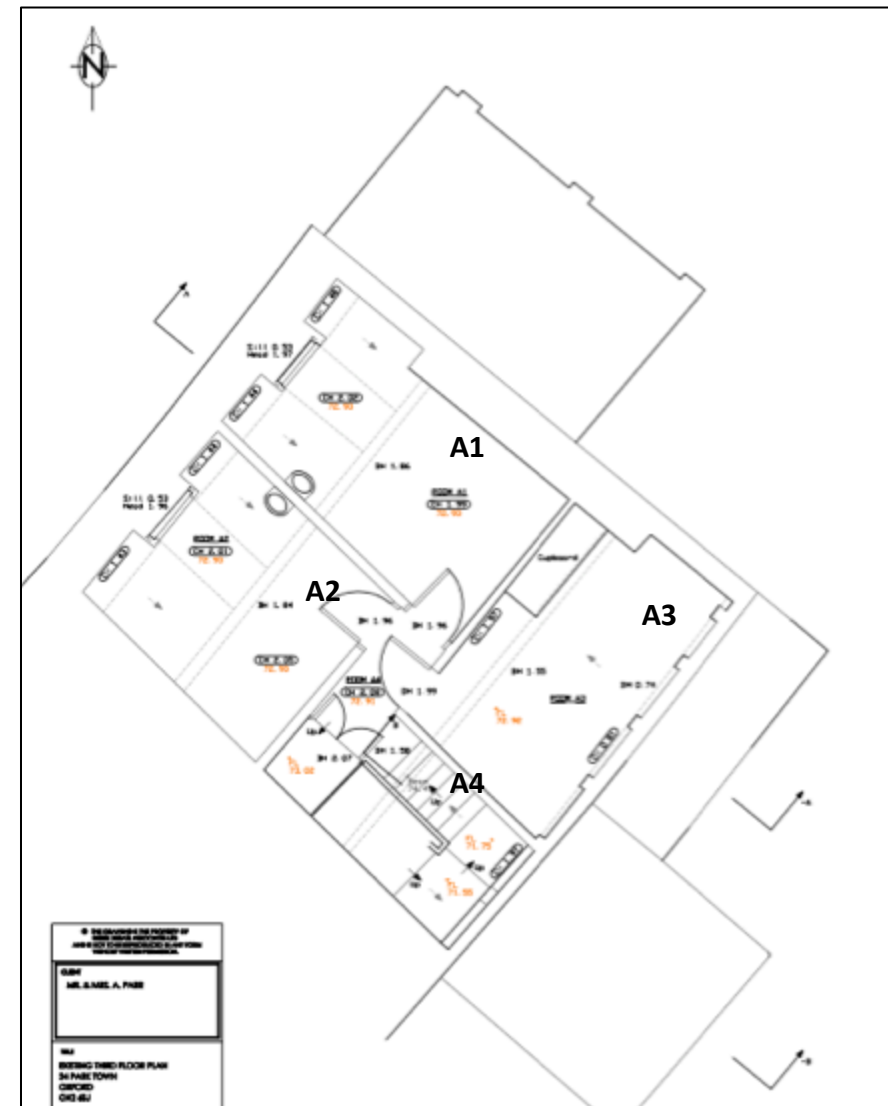


Figure 23: Existing third floor/attic

Statement of significance.

The historic value of this property pertains to being an integral part of Park Town. Park Town is a complete development with each component (property) being irreplaceable to the collective group and to the setting. Being one of the first developments to the north of the city, Park Town was an influential initiative to encourage the middle classes out of the city. The north of Oxford is a celebration of the 19th century architectural era, with the Arts and Crafts movement playing a major role. The orderly rows of Italianate Villas and terraces of Park Town provides this part of Oxford with a Spa town aesthetic, which enjoys orderly and defined plot divisions and communal gardens.

No. 34 is historically significant in its own right and as part of a collective group. The property has undergone some changes over time, but on the whole is largely original in form. Many key features remains such as:

- Skirting, cornice, architraves and many doors.
- Some fireplaces remain, but where absent the room remains readable as formally heated.
- Primary principal staircase
- Some of the pine floors are visible.
- Plan form mostly remains, although oddly re-configured on the second floor.
- The majority of the fenestrations remain, with a good proportion of primary glass.

The rear range was added at the end of the 1940s. Whilst, this is evolution, the range in terms of architectural merit and finish offers very little in the way of value.

As too the way in which the rear of **G2** has been extended south. Based on floor plans and photographs of another property in the crescent, it appears the shallow extension to both the basement and the ground floor are likely early 20th century additions. To the ground floor it is likely that the French-doors were positioned central to the room (as now) but set within the removed (and primary rear) wall. The range fits uncomfortable over the basement, (although this arrangement is echoed in the basement) resulting in a straddling at ground floor level from threshold to the garden, blocking natural light into the basement.

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Each floor has incurred small and simple 20th century changes which detract some-what from the significance. The main facilities need to be updated. The bathrooms are not only outdated but also placed in partitioned rooms, one of which has no natural ventilation which will incur damp and condensation. Likewise, the bathroom in the basement/lower ground floor (**LG4**) has no natural ventilation, and does nothing to enhance the room. There are a few WCs throughout the property, but not always where one would expect to find them (or need them for that matter). This area certainly needs to be modernized. Not only to comply with modern-day living, but to return the building to some order. Also, there is no proper kitchen facility. **F3** provides some kind of kitchen but is not practical for modern living, plus from a heritage point of view, does nothing to enhance the property.

To conclude: No. 34 has retained a good proportion of its primary fabric and features of historic significance. On the whole, the plan form has not changed dramatically, and can still be read. The 20th century alteration and facilities need updating and rearranging to bring this property back to life.

Introduction to the Proposal.

- Minor changes to the lower ground floor.
- Removal of a section of wall on the ground floor.
- Single roof light to the former garage.
- Two roof lights to the rear slope of the main range.

➤ **Lower Ground Floor – Fig. 24.**

Proposed works and mitigation –

- **LG3** – block doorway from **LG2**, (which is likely to have been constructed during the 20th century when the larder was subdivided), and remove the stud partition to create a shower room. The primary entrance at the foot of the stairs will be retained and preserved. There will be a low-level trap-door provided towards the north of the room to allow access for meter reading.

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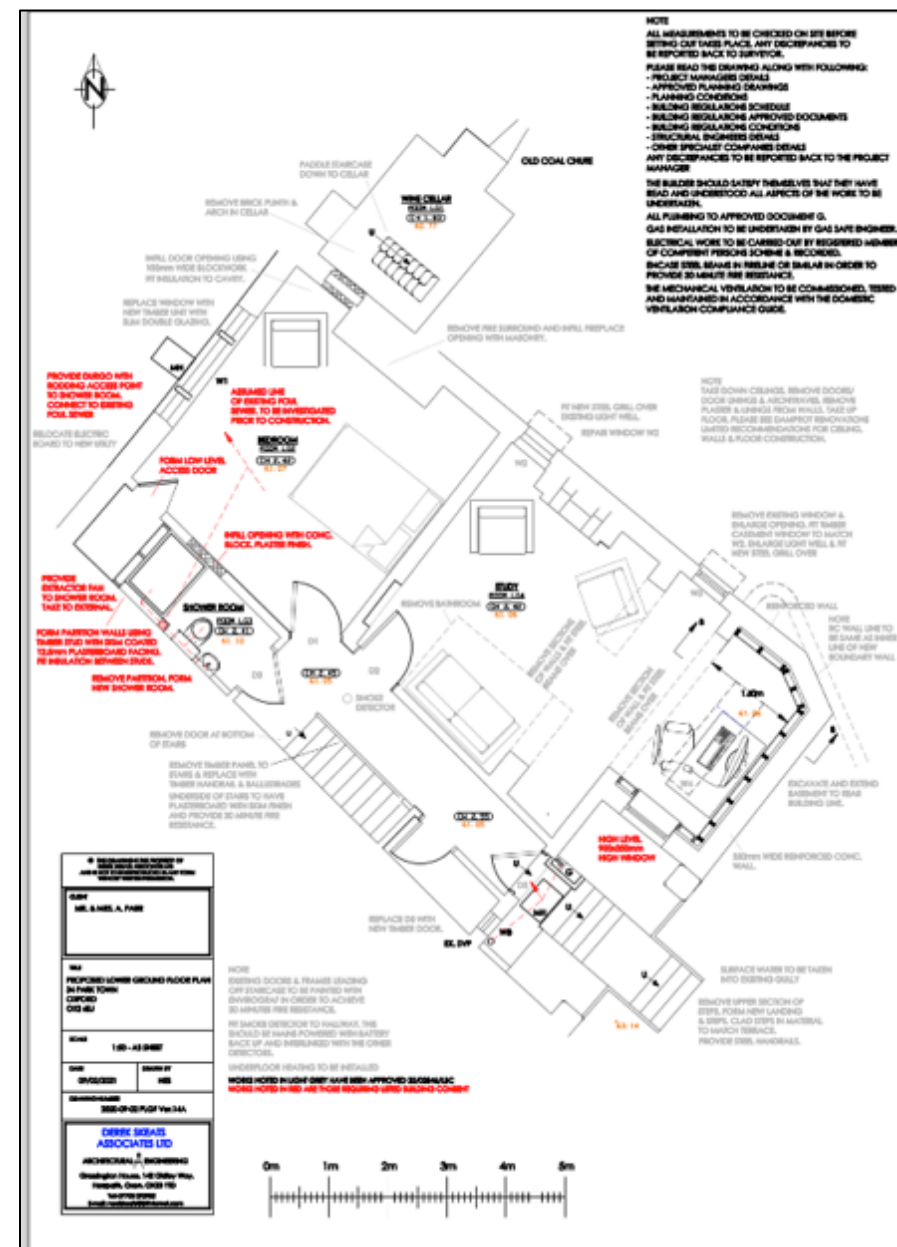


Figure 24: Drawing No: 2020-09-02 PLGF Ver.14A

- **LG3-** remove the WC and hand basin to the rear of the passage (adjacent to the rear door) to alter this small room into a Boot Room.
- **LG4** – create a high level window to the southwestern aspect of the room, to provide natural light.
- **Assessment of, and significance of impact –**
- ***LG3** – block doorway from **LG2**, (which is likely to have been constructed during the 20th century when the larder was subdivided), and remove the stud partition to create an ensuite. The primary entrance at the foot of the stairs will be retained and preserved. There will be a low-level trap-door provided towards the north of the room to allow access for meter reading.* The stud partition and doorway from room LGF2 has no historic significance. Using the former entrance at the foot of the stairs preserves the former layout. Presently the space is un-lit and damp; the changes will enhance the lower ground floor area and preserve the primary entrance.
- ***LG3-** remove the WC and hand basin to the rear of the passage (adjacent to the rear door) to alter this small room into a Boot Room.* The removal of the WC and hand basin will not have any detrimental effect; neither will the transformation of this small room into a Boot Room.
- ***LG4** – create a high level window to the southwestern aspect of the room, to provide natural light.* The provision of a high level window will provide essential natural light, therefore is deemed as beneficial.
- **Overall conclusion for the lower ground floor.**
- The overall floor plan will remain readable, sustaining the historic layout. The changes are minor and will enhance each area.
- The overall opinion is enhancement and preservation.

Description of the proposal and impact assessment.

➤ Ground Floor – figure 25 and 26.

- **Existing** – Two-room floor-plan with side hallway and continual staircase to all floors. Room G2 has been extended, possibly during the 20th century, towards the garden, echoing that of the lower ground floor. There is a single-storey garage to the eastern gable built during the 20th century, constructed from rendered solid brick walls under a felt flat roof. (Refer to pages 23 -26 for building analysis).
- **Proposed works and mitigation** –
 - Remove section of wall between proposed kitchen **G2** & dining room **G1**. Fit steel beam over. This alteration has been carried out on other properties in the crescent and improves the natural light to these rooms making them feel light and airy. In this case, a kitchen needs to be provided on the ground floor as the present kitchen is impractical and outdated.
 - **Garage** - Provide a single flush fitting roof light to the garage to provide additional natural light to the utility room.

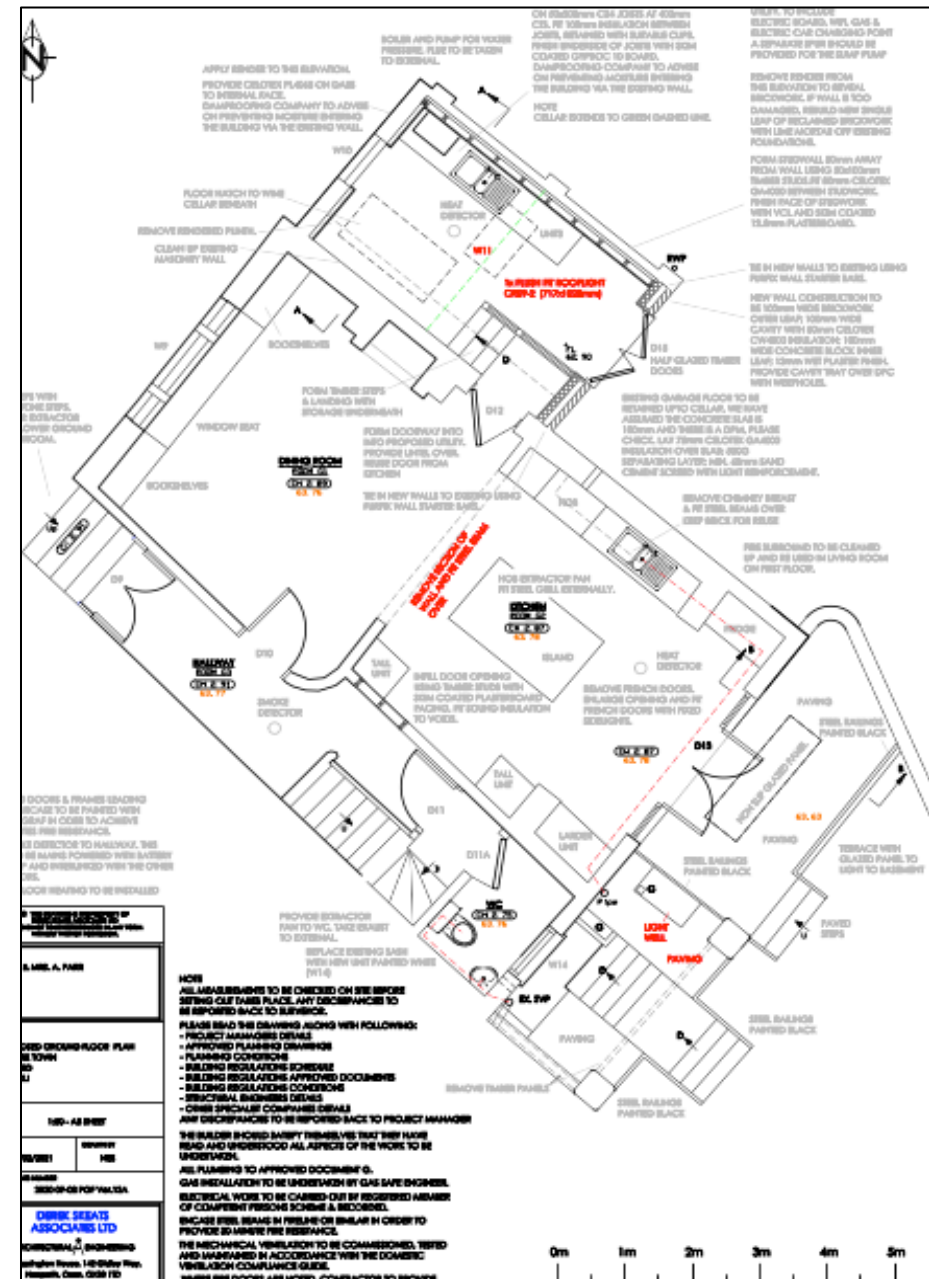


Figure 25: Drawing No: 2020-09-02 PGF Ver.13A

Job reference. 070-21. Date: February 2021.

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- **Assessment of, and significance of impact –**
- *Remove section of wall between proposed kitchen **G2** & dining room **G1**. Fit steel beam over. This alteration has been carried out on most of the properties in the crescent and improves the natural light to these rooms making them feel light and airy.*
This will result in the loss of primary fabric and change in room division; however, sections of the returns will remain rendering the historic floor plan readable. This change has already happened on the floor above (first floor), and yet the floor plan still reads as two rooms.
- **Garage** - *Provide a single flush roof light to the garage roof.*
- Permission has been granted for a mono pitch natural blue slate roof with a raised parapet wall with stone coping on the front elevation. A single flush fitting roof light will not be out of keeping for such a roof and will improve the natural light and passive solar gain. The roof light will not be apparent when viewed from the streetscape, therefore will have no impact.

Overall conclusion for the ground floor

With regards to **G1** and **G2**, this presents as the formal two-room plan of the Regency era. The proposal will result in the loss of walling fabric, and echoes that of the first floor. The changes made to the first floor

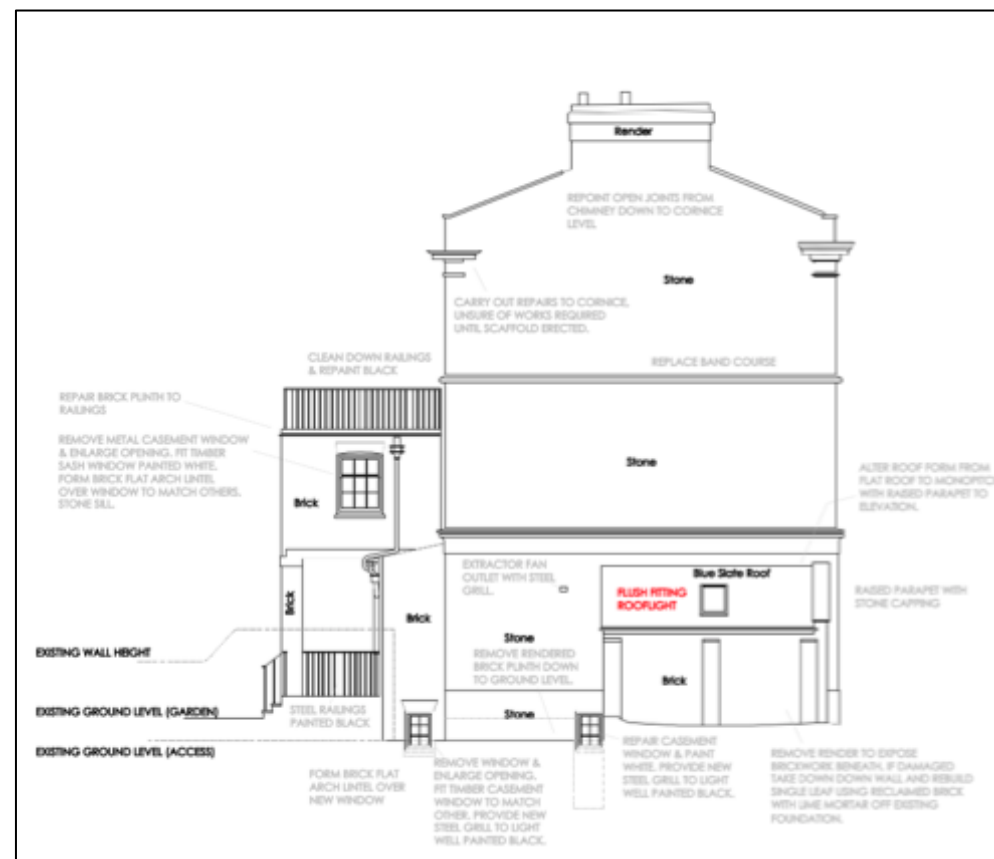


Figure 26: Drawing No: 2020-09-02 PEI Ver.7A

have not diminished the ability to understand the primary two-room arrangement. It is intended that the ground floor is easily recognizable as such.

The proposal seeks to keep both wall returns to make clear the former arrangement. The loss of fabric is mitigated against opening up the space to provide a kitchen on the ground floor with an integrated dining area, and some much needed modernity. Presently the kitchen is situated in the rear extension, which is poorly designed in terms of access and practicality. Neighbouring properties have altered the ground floor in the same manor with granted permission.

Description of the proposal and impact assessment.

➤ Third Floor – fig. 27, 28 and 29.

- **Existing** – Two rooms to the front with a void to the rear. Large 20th century cupboard occupying most of the landing area. (Refer to pages 27 for building analysis).
- **Proposed works and mitigation**
 - Insert two flush fitting roof lights to rear roof slope: one to **A3** and the other to **A4** above the stairs. This will allow extra natural light to the staircase, and much needed natural light to the rear of **A3**. This will also provide ventilation and improve passive solar gain.

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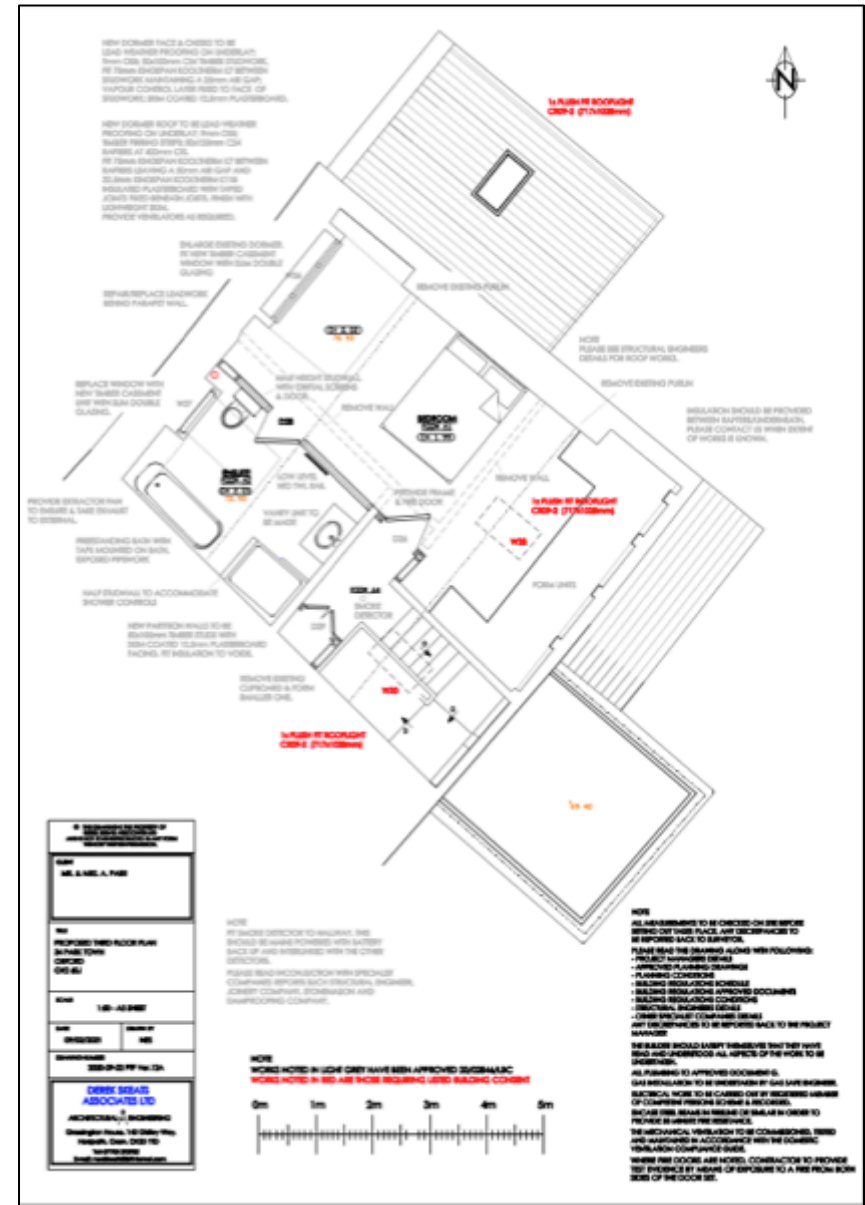


Figure 27: Drawing No: 2020-09-02 PTF Ver.12A

- **Assessment of, and significance of impact –**
- *Insert two flush fitting roof lights to rear roof slope, one to **A3** and the other to **A4** above the stairs.* Presently, there is some light gain to **A4**, but limited, and there is no natural light source above the rear slope of **A3**. Plan PE2. Ver. 7A – **fig. 28**, shows the presence of roof lights, however, in reality these are not visible from the rear garden or side path (**fig. 29**).
- **Overall conclusion for the third floor**
This floor traditionally would have been the servant's quarters, therefore the provision of such necessities such as natural light would not have been provided generously. Therefore, this floor lacks in natural light sources. This modest change will enhance the rooms, whilst preserving the overall aesthetic, and will not be visible from the rear of the property, at ground floor level. The changes are deemed as enhancement and preservation.

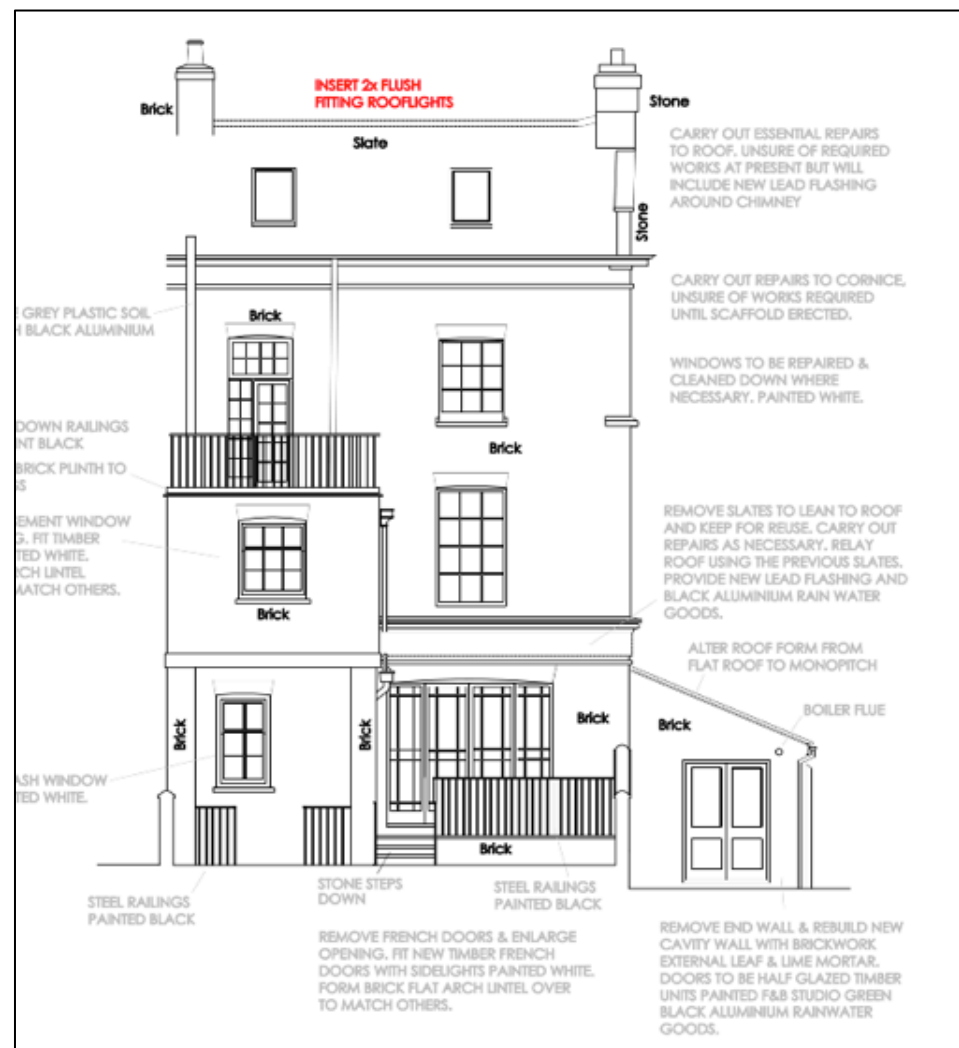


Figure 28: Drawing No: 2020-09-02 PE2 Ver.7A

Job reference. 070-21. Date: February 2021.

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Figure 29: Rear elevation and roof, demonstrating that the proposed roof light will not be visible.

Summary and overall conclusion.

The proposed changes are modest and work with those alterations which have already been granted permission under application no: 20/02846/LBC. The design team and clients have worked hard to ensure the alterations to this property are well-conceived and designed as such, so-that no major changes need to occur for years to come, therefore preserving the building and its fabric to the best of everyone's ability.

The desire for additional light is only requested in areas where there is a need, and the notion of creating an ensuite within the footprint of an existing cupboard/ larder ensures there are no changes to the floor plan.

The request to open-up the wall between **G1** and **G2** will result in a loss of walling fabric but every attempt has been made to ensure the room remains readable as two-rooms. As mentioned previously, the present kitchen facility is totally impractical, therefore a change has to be made, and the ground floor is the practical site this. Opening-up the room will result in a family space with good natural light provision.

The property has been neglected for many years and is in desperate need of care, attention and modernity, and it is felt this design team has proposed a sensitive design which enhances and preserves it's Regency elegance.

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4.0 Test against policy

To consider the impact thoroughly, the following policies and Historic England guidance will be considered:

- Nation Planning Policy Framework 16, *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment*, July 2018
- Historic England, *The Setting of Heritage Assets*, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition), December 2017.
- Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance, Historic England, April 2008.
- Adopted City of Oxford Local Plan (2016 – 2036): section 6, Enhancing Oxford's Heritage and Creating High Quality New Developments, Policy DH3 Designated heritage assets, page 93.

Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance, paragraph 102 suggests, *'Ideally, proposed changes will cause no harm to any of the values of the place, and the right decision will be obvious. In practice, however, there tend to be options for achieving the objective of proposed change, each of which will have different impacts on values. The predicted long-term or permanent consequences of proposals (in terms of degree, and whether positive, negative or neutral) on each of the identified heritage values of a place, and thus on the significance of the whole, should provide the reasoned basis for a decision, where necessary taking other interests into account.'*

This property has stood the test of time well, however, it's the 20th century changes that have been the most detrimental. This proposal has sought to make changes that will ensure that the long-term future of the property is preserved. The design has been well conceived and quality materials and tradesman proposed. Conducting major renovations at one time has its benefits, clearly not financially, but to the structure as works are programmed accordingly, therefore, hopefully, preventing future disruption to the fabric. The significance and value of the site will be preserved and enhanced by the proposal.

In accordance with **Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance, and the NPPF, paragraph 189**. *'In 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. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed*

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using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.’ As with the Adopted City of Oxford Local Plan (2016 – 2036)¹¹ this policy requires the applicant to describe the significance and value of the heritage asset. This report has thoroughly investigated this, thus issuing the report in two distinct parts. Part One: Statement of Significance. Part Two: Impact Assessment. With regards to documentary evidence, on-line sources were plentiful. Local Historic Environment Record Offices are closed to the public at time of writing.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), July 2018. Paragraph 193, of the NPPF¹², states.. *‘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’.* The proposal seeks to preserve and enhance the asset. The Impact Assessment and Design and Access Statement are very thorough and list and mitigate the proposed works clearly.

With regards to primary legislation, under the **Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, section 66,** *which sets out the special regard that must be had to the desirability of preserving the (listed) building or its setting or any feature of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Section 72 of the Act sets out the special attention that shall be paid to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character or appearance of that area.* The character of this property will be preserved. The statutory listing imposes a high level of significance to the external detail as part of a collective group of buildings. The proposal seeks to make repairs and remove and improve harmful elements built during the 20th century. The external character will be brought back to life.

¹¹ Adopted City of Oxford Local Plan (2016 – 2036): section 6, Enhancing Oxford’s Heritage and Creating High Quality New Developments, Policy DH3 Designated heritage assets, page 93.

¹² Nation Planning Policy Framework 16, *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment*, July 2018, pg. 15

As for the internal character, the proposed changes will result in a level of modernity and change. **The Conservation Principals, Policies and Guidance**¹³ states that in principal, ideally, there would be no harm caused by proposed changes, but acknowledges that in practice there will be a variety of options that provide different levels of impact on the significance or value. This paragraph then continues to discuss the long-term impact of said changes. Paragraph 104 continues to discuss that where there is unavoidable loss of fabric, mitigation must be considered to minimise the harm, and the reversibility of such changes (paragraph 100) should be available where possible. Considering all these relevant points; the loss of walling fabric is fairly minimal but mitigated against the retention of the returns, clearly indicating the position of the wall for reintroduction in the future if required. Also, a full suite of photographs has been taken as a record of the building prior to renovations.

Adopted City of Oxford Local Plan (2016 – 2036): section 6, Enhancing Oxford's Heritage and Creating High Quality New Developments, Policy DH3 Designated heritage assets, page 93.

This policy requires a heritage assessment for planning applications which 'would or may affect the significance of any designated heritage asset, either directly or by being with its setting,..'. The heritage assessment should include a description of the asset and its significance, along with an assessment of the impact of the proposal on the asset's significance. The heritage assessment should: see right

- a) an understanding of the significance of the heritage asset, including recognition of its contribution to the quality of life of current and future generations and the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits they may bring; and
- b) that the development of the proposal and its design process have been informed by an understanding of the significance of the heritage asset and that harm to its significance has been avoided or minimised; and
- c) that, in cases where development would result in harm to the significance of a heritage asset, including its setting, the extent of harm has been properly and accurately assessed and understood, that it is justified, and that measures are incorporated into the proposal, where appropriate, that mitigate, reduce or compensate for the harm.



¹³ Conservation Principals, Policies and Guidance, Historic England, April 2008., paragraph 102 and 104, pg. 47 and paragraph 100, pg. 46.

This Heritage Statement has demonstrated an understanding of the significance of not only the property but the setting of Park Town. This is fully detailed in the Statement of Significance: Part one of the report. The client and design team are fully aware of the significance of the site and have put forward a proposal sympathetic to its significance and value.

Historic England's guidance: The setting of Heritage assets - Good Practice advice Notes 1-3 (GPA 1-3) advocate a 5-step process to assessing the potential affects of a proposed development on the setting and significance of a heritage asset:

1. Identify which heritage assets and their setting are affected.

34 Park Town is part of a collective group of buildings known as Park Town.

2. Assess whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset.

No. 34 contributes as part of the crescent, and to the streetscene of Park Town. The setting is that of the 19th century Regency Spa town aesthetic, designed by Samuel Lipscomb Seckham.

3. Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on the significance.

The proposal will make beneficial repairs.

4. Explore the way to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm.

Not applicable.

5. Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

This Heritage Statement has documented and recorded the setting to inform the Impact Assessment.

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Job reference. 070-21. Date: February 2021.

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West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, adopted September 2018.

Appendices.

Appendix I– Listed description of Park Town: houses, and Park and Garden

Job reference. 070-21. Date: February 2021.

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Appendix I– Listed description of Park Town: houses, and Park and Garden

Heritage Category: Park and Garden

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1001292

Date first listed: 08-Mar-1994

Map



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Location

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County: Oxfordshire

District: Oxford (District Authority)

National Grid Reference: SP 51241 07801

Details

The pleasure grounds of a suburban development laid out in the mid C19 by Samuel Lipscombe Seckham, with landscaping by William Baxter snr, formerly Superintendent of the Oxford Botanic Garden (qv).

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

The land for the Park Town development was purchased c 1853 by the City Architect and Surveyor from the Guardians of the Oxford Poor, who had in turn bought it from New College (qv), the owners since the C15. Preceding the major development of the Victorian suburb of North Oxford by at least a decade, the proposed residential estate of Park Town offered all the advantages of a situation in the country, combined with the comfort and security of the town. The young local architect Samuel Lipscombe Seckham (1827-1900) designed the villas and terraces, built between 1853 and 1857, which, in an early example of mixed social planning, provided for several income groups in the 'middling classes'. His plans for the development, dated 1854, show the Centre Garden in its basic form. William Baxter snr (1788-1871), former Curator of Oxford Botanic Garden and author of *British Phaenogamous Plants* (1834-43), was appointed in 1854 to lay out the three ornamental pleasure grounds which were well stocked with trees and flowering shrubs. The area remains (1998) a facility for the use of the surrounding residents.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING Park Town lies 1.5km north of the centre of Oxford, east of the Banbury Road which forms the west boundary. The c 1ha site is bounded to the north, east and south by the contemporary mid C19 development (listed grade II) of detached, Palladian, symmetrical villas, in their own well-planted grounds, together with rows of terraced houses (The Terrace to the east, and The Crescent at the centre) which directly overlook the central and eastern gardens. The site is largely level, set within the later C19 development of North Oxford.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES Park Town is approached directly from Banbury Road to the west, via a crescent road forming the west end of Park Town road, backed to the east by several detached villas set in their own spacious, mature gardens. The Crescent and Banbury Road enclose the Half

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Circle, a raised semicircular lawn planted with mature specimen trees, particularly pines and hollies. The lawn is bounded by a low brick wall topped by stone coping, presumably formerly the seating for iron railings (now gone). The Half Circle overlooks Banbury Road to the west, and to the east the axial element of Park Town road that extends from the centre of The Crescent to the remainder of the development.

GARDENS Park Town is roughly symmetrical about the central Park Town road that extends east past the Half Circle to the oval Centre Garden, between which it is flanked by detached villas set back in their own gardens. Here the road divides to encircle this central area, flanked to north and south by the two terrace blocks of The Crescent, the fronts of which open directly onto the road. The Centre Garden (restored late C20) is bounded by 1990s iron railings set on a stone plinth surrounding a perimeter clipped hedge (largely holly) and shrubbery. Within this a perimeter path extends around the whole area, with spurs to north and south giving access to the road beyond, via iron pedestrian gates with lamps surmounting overthrows (1990s restoration). Within the oval perimeter path four cross paths, flanked by lawns planted with mature shrubs and specimen trees, lead to a small, circular central panel of lawn planted with a specimen Atlantic cedar. Other trees form the remains of a small, mid C19 pinetum, including Bhutan pine (*Pinus wallichiana*), Scots pine (*P sylvestris*) and Chile pine (*Araucaria araucana*), together with yew, copper beech, holm oak and other species. This pinetum is comparable with another small pinetum laid out by Baxter in the mid C19 at the Botanic Garden, alongside Rose Lane, the planting of which has largely been lost.

At the east end of the Centre Garden the road re-joins to continue east to a second crescent, the Terrace Garden which fronts the curved Terrace houses at the eastern end of the estate. To either side of the central road leading to the Terrace Garden stand further detached villas set back in their own gardens. The Terrace Garden was laid out as a balancing green space to the Half Circle, and to serve the Terrace dwellers as a 'Shrubbery and Pleasance', as laid down in their title Deeds. The area is bounded in parts by a low, clipped box hedge enclosing a dense shrubbery with mature trees, including several false acacias (*Robinia pseudoacacia*). A short, central path crosses the Terrace Garden from west to east, aligned on an archway inscribed 'Park Town 1855', which straddles a passage dividing The Terrace into two halves. This passage leads to the service lane running along the rear of The Terrace back gardens.

The Park Town layout is a late example of the planning tradition seen, for example, in parts of London, Bath, Bristol, Brighton and Cheltenham; that is, with the development designed by a single architect, with communal gardens, and with the title deeds ensuring uniformity of design. Sale particulars of the 1850s for the estate show the flanking crescents laid out as shrubberies, with a proposed layout for the Centre Garden. As proposed at this

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time, it was to be entered from the north and south, the entrances leading to a formal layout of circular paths at each end connected in the middle by four curved paths enclosing a central lawn and specimen plants. It was probably not laid out to this pattern, or, if so, had been modified by the mid 1870s (OS 1876) when the present layout of the Centre Garden was shown as it now (1998) stands.

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Maps OS 25" to 1 mile: 1st edition published 1876

Description written: September 1998 Register Inspector: SR Edited: March 2000

Parks and Gardens Legal

This garden or other land is registered under the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 within the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens by Historic England for its special historic interest.

End of official listing

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1-47 AND 49-64, PARK TOWN

Heritage Category: Listed Building

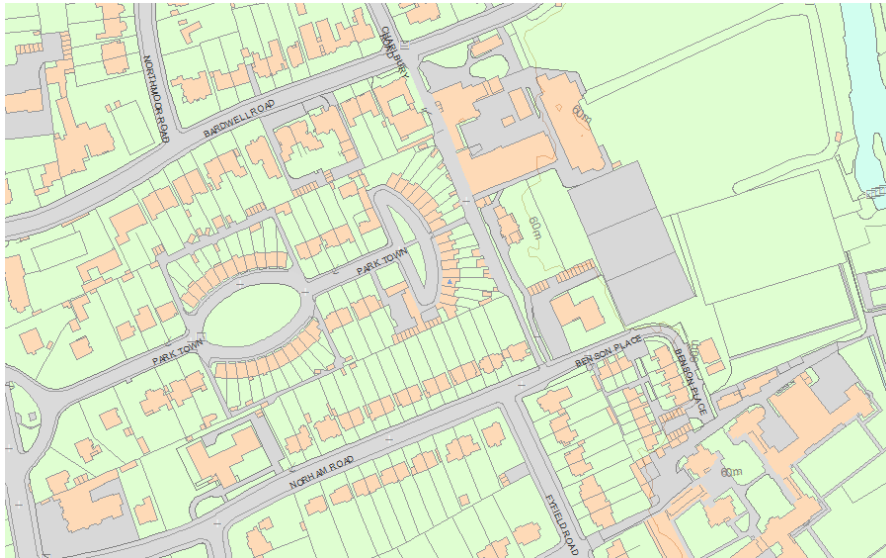
Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1047179

Date first listed: 29-Jan-1968

Statutory Address: 1-47 AND 49-64, PARK TOWN

Map



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Location

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Statutory Address: 1-47 AND 49-64, PARK TOWN

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County: Oxfordshire

District: Oxford (District Authority)

National Grid Reference: SP 51384 07825

Details SP 5107 NW 1/32 1485

PARK TOWN

(North Side), Nos 1 to 61 (odd)

(South Side) Nos 2 to 46 and 50 to 64 (even)

29.1.68.

II GV

Consists of four groups of houses laid out in 1853 by Samuel Lipscombe Seckham, architect.

(1) On the West of the Crescent Nos 4 to 14 alternate on the South and Nos 1 to 9 alternate on the North. These are detached, 3-storeyed houses of the villa type with Welsh slate roofs and sash windows.

(2) The Crescent. Nos 11-31 alternate on the North and Nos 16-34 alternate on the South. 3-storeyed stuccoed, in two curved rows of houses of the "terrace" type with an ornamental shrubbery in the centre. The ground floors are rusticated and there are basements and good iron railings. Above is a moulded cornice and a small balustraded parapet. In each floor are two sash windows with cills supported on consoles, those in the 2nd floor being of simpler design. In the ground floor each has a 3-light sash window and a recessed doorway up a flight of steps.

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(3) On the East of the Crescent. Nos 33-45 alternate on the North and Nos 36-44 alternate on the south. These are similar to (1).

(4) The Terrace. At the East end of the group. Nos 47-61 alternate to North of central archway and Nos 50-64 alternate to South of same. 3-storeyed yellow brick with basements and a stuccoed, rusticated ground floor, the whole terrace being raised some 4 ft above the roadway. Each house has two 1st-floor sash windows and on the ground floor is one sash window and a recessed doorway up a flight of steps. The central stuccoed Archway is dated 1855.

All the listed buildings in Park Town form a group, with Nos 68 and 70 Banbury Road.

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