

THE ROYALTY, HARBORNE B17 9PU HERITAGE STATEMENT

UPDATED MARCH 2025



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TRANSFORM | RESTORE | REPAIR

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This heritage statement has been prepared on behalf of the Harborne Royalty Trust, to assess the history, development and significance of the Royalty, Harborne, B17 9PU. The assessment has been carried out to inform alterations for redevelopment.

The site sits within the village of Harborne, three miles south west of the city of Birmingham. The area is rich in ancient history dating back to the conquest - a rural village, which rapidly became part of Birmingham's residential expansion following incorporation with the borough of Birmingham in 1891. It is essential to have a full understanding of the history and development of the study area within the wider context of Harborne to inform sensitive proposals. As such, this report has been prepared in line with requirements set out by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for fully understanding the significance of a site's heritage assets in advance of development.

1.2 SCOPE OF STUDY

The report is to cover only the heritage values of the study area and the site and therefore does not cover matters of planning or archaeology, landscape and ecology.

1.3 EXISTING INFORMATION & GAPS IN KNOWLEDGE

The site was visited on 17th May 2019, and a visual assessment made of the exterior only. Access internally was not permitted by the building owner. Archival research has been carried out using Harborne Library, and supplemented with several desk-based resources. A full list of resources consulted is included in Appendix A.

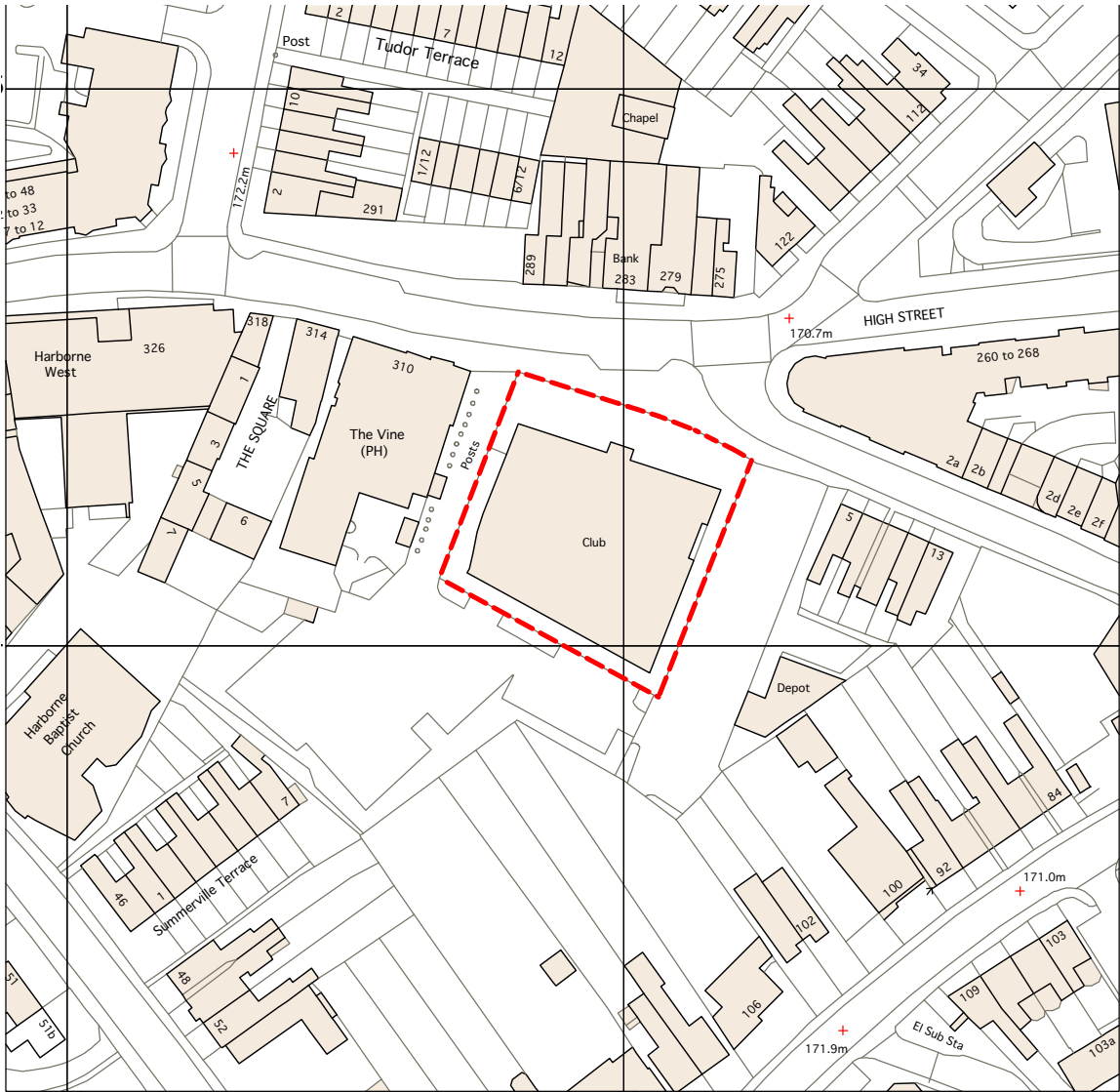
Owing to the lack of access, a degree of assumption has been made on significance. We have assumed that owing to the buildings robust brick and masonry construction, outside the auditorium most of the building fabric remains. This report draws heavily on the building record produced by Thames Valley Archaeology in combination with the extensive archive of photographs collected by the Harborne Royalty Trust, without which the production of this heritage statement would not have been possible.

It has not been possible to find any plans of the building produced before 2015, including plans or drawings deposited as part of the 1991 planning application for improved access into the old cinema. Any plans discovered may contribute to a further understanding of significance.



1.4 SITE LOCATION PLAN

— STUDY AREA



2.0 HERITAGE PLANNING POLICY

2.1 LISTED BUILDINGS

The study area includes the current curtilage of the Royalty.

Listed buildings are protected under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and are designated for their architectural or historic interest. Alterations to listed buildings require listed building consent. National and local planning policy also recognises that changes to other buildings or sites within the setting of a listed building can affect its special interest.

Listed Buildings within the study area

THE ROYALTY (Gala Bingo)

SUMMARY. A cinema of 1930, built to the designs of Horace G. Bradley, and converted to bingo use in the 1960s.

The full listing description is included in Appendix B.

2.2 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF; published 2024) is the overarching planning policy document for England and provides guidance on how to implement the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the legislation covering the historic environment. Within section 16 of the NPPF ('Conservation and enhancing the historic environment') are the government's policies for the protection of heritage.

The policies advise a holistic approach to planning and development, where all significant elements that make up the historic environment are termed 'heritage assets'. These consist of designated assets (such as listed buildings or conservation areas), non-designated assets (such as locally-listed buildings), or those features that are of heritage value.

The policies within the document emphasise the need for assessing the significance of heritage assets and their setting to fully understand the historic environment and inform suitable design proposals for change to significant buildings. The document also requires that the impact of development proposals which affect heritage assets is assessed.

210. 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.

212. 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.

213. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
- b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

214. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

215. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

216. 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.

217. Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.

218. Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.

219. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

220. Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 195 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 196, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

2.3 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

The Birmingham Development Plan (BDP) 2031 was adopted by Birmingham City Council on 10 January 2017. The BDP sets out a spatial vision and strategy for the sustainable growth of Birmingham for the period 2011 to 2031, and will be used to guide decisions on planning, development and regeneration. A copy of the plan is available at: www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/5433/adopted_birmingham_development_plan_2031

POLICY TP12 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

The historic environment consists of archaeological remains, historic buildings, townscapes and landscapes, and includes locally significant assets and their settings in addition to designated and statutorily protected features. It will be valued, protected, enhanced and managed for its contribution to character, local distinctiveness and sustainability and the Council will seek to manage new development in ways which will make a positive contribution to its character.

- Great weight will be given to the conservation of the City's heritage assets. Proposals for new development affecting a designated or non-designated heritage asset or its setting, including alterations and additions, will be determined in accordance with national policy.
- Applications for development affecting the significance of a designated or non-designated heritage asset, including proposals for removal, alterations, extensions or change of use, or on sites that potentially include heritage assets of archaeological interest, will be required to provide sufficient information to demonstrate how the proposals would contribute to the asset's conservation whilst protecting or where appropriate enhancing its significance and setting. This information will include desk-based assessments, archaeological field evaluation and historic building recording as appropriate.
- Where it grants consent for proposals involving the loss of all or part of the significance of a designated or non-designated heritage asset, the City Council will require archaeological excavation and/or historic building recording as appropriate, followed by analysis and publication of the results.
- Initiatives and opportunities to mitigate the effects of climate change by seeking the reuse of historic buildings, and where appropriate, their modification to reduce carbon emissions and secure sustainable development - without harming the significance of the heritage asset or its setting - will be supported.
- Opportunities for information gain through investigations as part of proposed development will be maximised and such information will be widely disseminated.
- Innovative design which retains the significance of the heritage asset(s) and is integrated with the historic environment will be encouraged.

Where a Conservation Area Character Appraisal or Management Plan has been prepared, it will be a material consideration in determining applications for development,

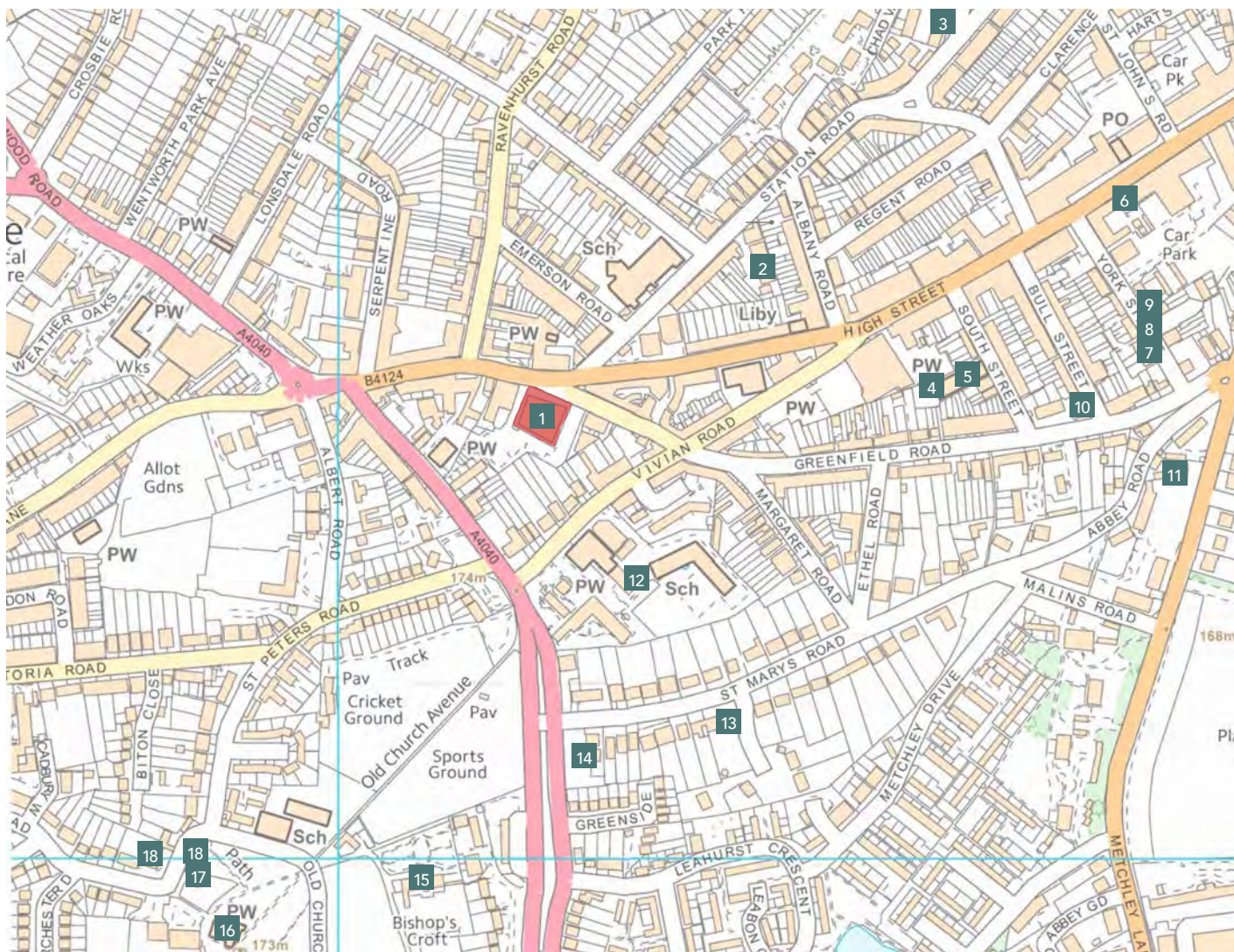
and will be used to support and guide enhancement and due regard should be given to the policies it contains.

The City Council will support development that conserves the significance of non-designated heritage assets including archaeological remains and locally listed buildings.

The historic importance of canals is acknowledged, and important groups of canal buildings and features will be protected, especially where they are listed or in a Conservation Area. Where appropriate the enhancement of canals and their settings will be secured through development proposals.

2.4 DESIGNATED AND NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

A desktop study of designated and non-designated heritage assets has been undertaken and a list of assets within 1km of the study area are marked on the heritage assets plan and listed below:



Designated Heritage Assets within 1km of the study area

Table 1. Designated Heritage Assets

Nº on plan	Building	List entry number	Period	Listing
1	The Royalty Theatre (Gala bingo)	1401284	1930	II
2	The Institute, Station Road	1380230	1878	II
3	The Fire Station	1034403	1907	II
4	Bell Cottage	1343451	Early 19C	II
5	Methodist Church	1076158	1868	II
6	The Clock Tower, Community Education Centre	1076111	1885	II
7	39 York Street	1076077	Early 19C	II
8	37 York Street	1343172	Mid 19C	II

9	35 York Street	1289972	Mid 19C	II
10	116 & 118, Greenfield	1075552	Late 18C	II
11	Metchley Abbey	1076261	Early 19C	II*
12	St Mary's Retreat	1076111	Early 19C	II
13	Low Wood	1343112	1910	II
14	Field House	1343083	18C	II
15	Bishop's Croft	1076251	Late 18C	II
16	Parish Church	1219775	1867	II
17	The Bell Public House	1343091	18C	II
18	7 & 9 Old Church Road	1076252	19C	II
19	Elmley Lodge	1219784	19C	II

NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

A list of non-designated heritage assets can be found in Appendix B.

2.5 CONSERVATION AREA



Greenfield Road, Conservation Area. Note the Royalty is locally listed as well as formally designated.

Whilst the Royalty Harborne is not within a conservation area the building is located to the north east of the old village conservation area and on the edge of the Greenfield Road Conservation Area. Whilst conservation area consent will not be required for alterations, any proposal for development may have an impact on the setting of the conservation area. Whilst an appraisal has not been prepared for the Greenfield Road conservation area reasons for its designation in 2009 are provided below.

GREENFIELD ROAD CONSERVATION AREA

The Greenfield Road area has an attractive suburban character which ranges in form, from the close grain of terrace houses found on South Street, Bull Street, York Street and part of Greenfield Road to the spacious plots of the larger houses on St Mary's Road. Originally rural in character the area was developed in an ad hoc manner, as strips of land were sold off for building. The properties seen today date from the between the early 19th century and the interwar period.

Mainly residential in character, the proposed conservation area boasts a wide variety of architectural styles, ranging from modest 19th century cottages, larger Edwardian and Victorian terraced and semi detached villas, to individually designed residences, which reflect the architectural influences of the Gothic and Arts and Crafts movements. Non- residential buildings include the listed South Street Church, together with occasional shops, some still complete with historic shop fronts.

3.0 UNDERSTANDING

3.1 HISTORIC CONTEXT

EARLY HISTORY

Harborne is listed in the Domesday book as a very small village of 5.5 households, and under the manor of Lichfield a holding of the Bishop of Chester. In the Middle Ages, Harborne Manor was one of scattered arable farms with a small village centre around the church and manor house.

After the dissolution, Queen Mary restored Harborne to the Lords of Dudley Castle. In the early 17th century the Dudley's fell into financial difficulties and began to sell their manors. Harborne and Smethwick first caught the attention of the Cornwallis family in 1604. The Cornwallis's increasingly gained control of Harborne and in 1618 bought the manor.

In 1661 the Cornwallis's sold the Manor to Thomas Foley, who is said to have brought home the Swedish process of slitting iron for nails. The production of nails remained one of the principal industries in Harborne for hundreds of years.

18TH CENTURY

Thomas' son Philip sold the Manor to George Birch, who's grandson (also George) sold it to Thomas Green in 1785. Thomas Green, a Birmingham manufacturer had been acquiring land in Harborne. In 1781 he leased land in the centre of Harborne and built Harborne House, later known as Bishops Croft. In 1790 Green commissioned a survey, the map was drawn by Jo Sherif a local maker of plans and surveys. This is the first known large scale map of Harborne, showing each house and field on Green's manor.



1790 survey by Jo Sherif. Copyright pending.
The population in the 18th Century was approximately 600-700, including many children whose lives would have been desperately short. Many of the cottages were in a very poor condition, the whole village being very primitive. The major industry at the time was nailing. By the end of the 18th century, housing had spread away from the old village centre around the St Peter's Church and along Harborne High Street.

19TH CENTURY



In 1803, wealthy squire Thomas Green died leaving his house Harborne House as his permanent legacy to Harborne. He left most of his land and money to his sons-in-law Theodore Price and George Simcox, much of the land on the west side of the manor went to George Simcox, whilst the east went to Theodore Price.

After the Napoleonic wars, life was harder for the rich and the poor. On his accession to the vicarage at Harborne the new Lichfield appointed vicar JT Law found it difficult to discover how much poor rate should be paid, and who owned what land. A new survey was commissioned of the whole parish including Smethwick and was carried out in 1827.



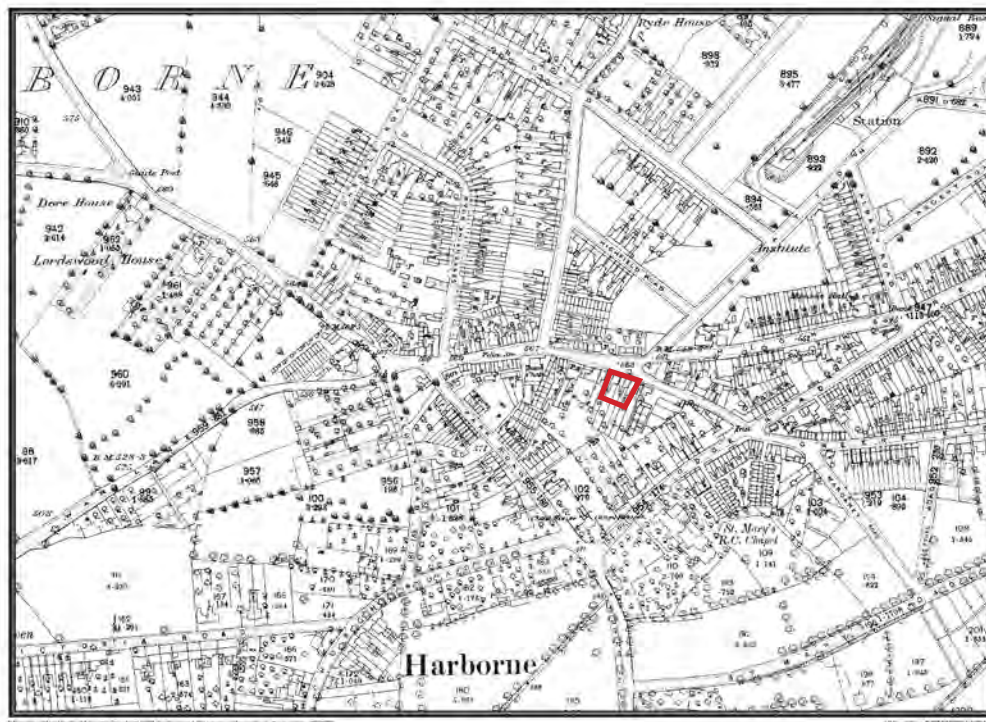
Tithe plan 1837. Harborne was still only a small string of houses at the western end of the High Street.



1856 Plan of Harborne. Lower-middle-class houses had been built in the triangle between Vivian Road, Greenfield Road and York Street, with many of the occupants working in central Birmingham.

By 1860 Birmingham had become a prosperous manufacturing town expanding north-west and to the south. Expansion south-west was harder, since the Calthorpe Estate covered most of Edgbaston. The solution was to leap over Edgbaston and built on plots in Harborne. Land was sold by the Simcoxes and the daughters of Theodore Price, and a new group of manufacturers entered Harborne. The Hall was occupied by William Roberts a Yorkshire metal merchant and Thomas Millington used the mill to make steel plate.

Harborne was in a difficult financial position, Smethwick had outgrown it and was developing its own institutions, whilst Harborne was still residential and had to look to its residents for financial support. The fire service was run on a voluntary basis, funds were raised from the gentry and business community for two new theatres and a library which were opened in 1878.



OS Plan 1890. With the opening of the Harborne Railway from Birmingham in 1874 the village expanded considerably especially north of the High Street. The 1881 census shows Harborne had become a suburb of Birmingham with many inhabitants born outside of the village. Note Ode St, later became Vivian Road.

William Chamberlain, owner of Harborne Hall, focussed his attention on the municipalisation and improvement of Harborne. Chamberlain and several of the chief residents established The Local Harborne Board to prevent Harborne being included in the borough of Birmingham. This was short-lived, by 1891, attracted by the promise of a new library and park the Local Harborne Board agreed to go into Birmingham, severing the link between Smethwick and Harborne. The move was critical as it meant that Harborne would become a primarily residential suburb.

In 1889 Birmingham was granted city status.

20TH CENTURY

- As a borough of Birmingham the early 20th century saw a phase of new civic and community buildings. The Library located in the old masonic hall on High St was opened in 1892 and public subscription provided for Queens and Lightwoods Park. New housing development continued, and old houses on High Street were being converted into shops.

The development of modern garden cities caused philanthropic manufacturers to consider housing conditions of their workers. In Harborne, the Moor Pool estate was the idea of John Sutton Nettlefold, a screw manufacturer whose factory was at Grove Lane, Smethwick. Fifty-four acres of

land was used to build 500 low-density high-quality homes with a bowling green, hall and a green.

Many Harborne workers travelled to factories in Birmingham including the jewellery quarter. From the south some men went to work at the brick works at California. For entertainment, the better off climbed into their cars to go to town to attend theatre or concerts in the town hall. In Harborne many of the old public houses were re-built and new ones constructed. During the 1930's cinema became a major form of public entertainment. First on the scene in Harborne was the Picture House in Serpentine Road, and this was followed by the Royalty.



OS Plan 1938. Harborne had benefited from a number of new civic and community buildings. The picture house and Royalty are both shown on the 1938 plan above.

Whilst industry still prospered, after the war, city planners had zoned all of Harborne as residential. New council estates were developed, with shopping facilities. The old mansions of rich businessmen fell prey to developers. Many post war changes threatened the character of Harborne as a pleasant residential suburb. In 1960, the Harborne Society was established to encourage a community spirit, promote interest in the character and history of Harborne and represent the interests of the area by encouraging the sustainable conservation.

With the rise of television, the two Harborne cinemas faced falling attendances and on 13 April 1957 the 'Old Harborne' closed. For some time, it remained empty until being sold to Harborne Village social club. The Royalty, a much grander cinema was eventually closed on 2 November 1963 to become Mecca Bingo Hall. In this role it has remained a popular attraction for Harborne and beyond.

The importance of Birmingham's ancient villages was recognised in 1969 when Old Harborne was designated in the City's second batch of conservation areas.

Harborne became part of the West Midlands in 1974 by the Local Government Act 1972

3.2 DETAILED DEVELOPMENT

20TH CENTURY



OS 1918 Prior to the construction of the Royalty the study area contained a row of terrace housing dating from at least 1890.



OS 1938. The 25inch map of a later period shows that the range of 7 dwellings running north south from the Greenfield Road and a further two house on Vivian Road have been demolished to make way for the new access and car park to the east of the Royalty.



OS 1938. 6inch map illustrates that the construction of the Royalty Cinema initially involved the demolition of 7 houses on High St/Greenfield Road.

Located in the Harborne, at the corner of High Street and Greenfield Road. The Royalty Cinema was opened on 20th October 1930 in the early years of cinema with sound. The cinematograph act of 1927 provided support to the British film industry against aggressive competition from Hollywood. Musicals and epic films became increasingly popular and evermore opulent and grand theatres were required for their exhibition. The Royalty was built for and operated by the local Selly Oak Pictures Ltd and accommodated 1,500 people. The Royalty - a magnificent art deco picture house, designed by architect Horace Bradley.

"Among the list of architects who have contributed materially to the progress of British cinematography by building beautiful and attractive cinemas must be included Mr. Horace G. Bradley, of 10A Temple Row, Birmingham."

During his career he was responsible for:

- The Highgate Picture House, Darwin Street, Highgate, which opened 3 October 1913.
- The Waldorf, Sparkbrook which opened 29 November 1913. Heavily rebuilt after the war.
- The Albion, 46 Holyhead Road, New Inns, Handsworth, which opened 1915/16.
- The Coronet, Coventry Road, Small Heath, which opened 4 April 1922.
- Lozells Picture House, 54 Lozells Road, which re-opened at Christmas 1922 (it had originally opened in 1911) (Refurbishment).
- Palace, Erdington High Street (conversion from public hall).
- Pringle's Picture Palace, Gooch Street, Highgate, in 1923 (it had opened in 1910/11) (Refurbishment).
- Bristol Street Picture House in 1923 (it had opened in 1911), (Refurbishment).
- The Kingsway, High Street, Kings Heath, which opened 2 March 1925.
- The Carlton, Taunton Road, Sparkbrook, which opened in May 1928.

In March 1935, The Royalty Cinema was taken over by the Associated British Cinemas (ABC) chain, as part of their expansion in the West Midlands.



1941 photograph of the Royalty Harborne. Source unknown. Note the Cupola above the dome was removed prior to the 2015 survey.



Number 1 Greenfield Road and terraced development behind, demolished between 1918 - 1938. See OS maps on previous page. Harborne Library photographic collection.

With the increasing popularity of television, on 2nd November 1963. ABC closed the cinema with Cliff Robertson in "P.T.109". The ABC converted into an Alpha Bingo Club.



The Royalty, 1964. Copyright Geoff Dowling.



The Royalty, 1965. Harborne Library photographic collection.

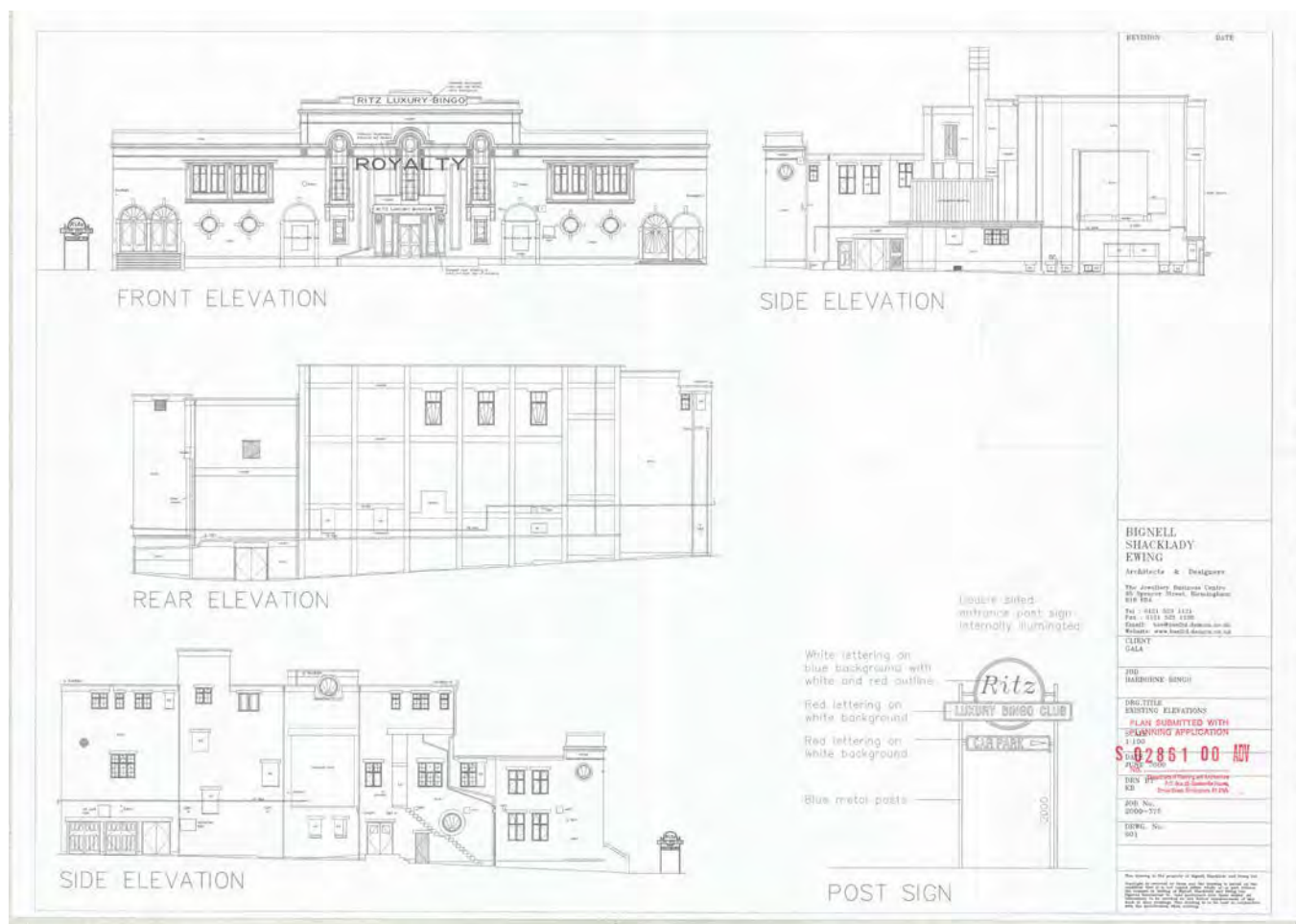
A press cutting from 1st March 1966 confirms that for a short period of time, the Royalty was used as The Top Hat Club casino.

The royalty became a Mecca Bingo Club a popular 1500-seat bingo hall.

In 1991 plans were approved for external alteration including a new metal external staircase and a new disabled ramp in front of the building.

21ST CENTURY

In 2000, drawings produced by architects Bignal, Shacklady and Ewing for planning for new lighting and signage show the High St elevation.



In 2000, drawings produced by architects Bignal, Shacklady and Ewing for planning for new lighting and signage show the High St elevation.

In the summer of 2011, the Royalty was designated a Grade II Listed building.

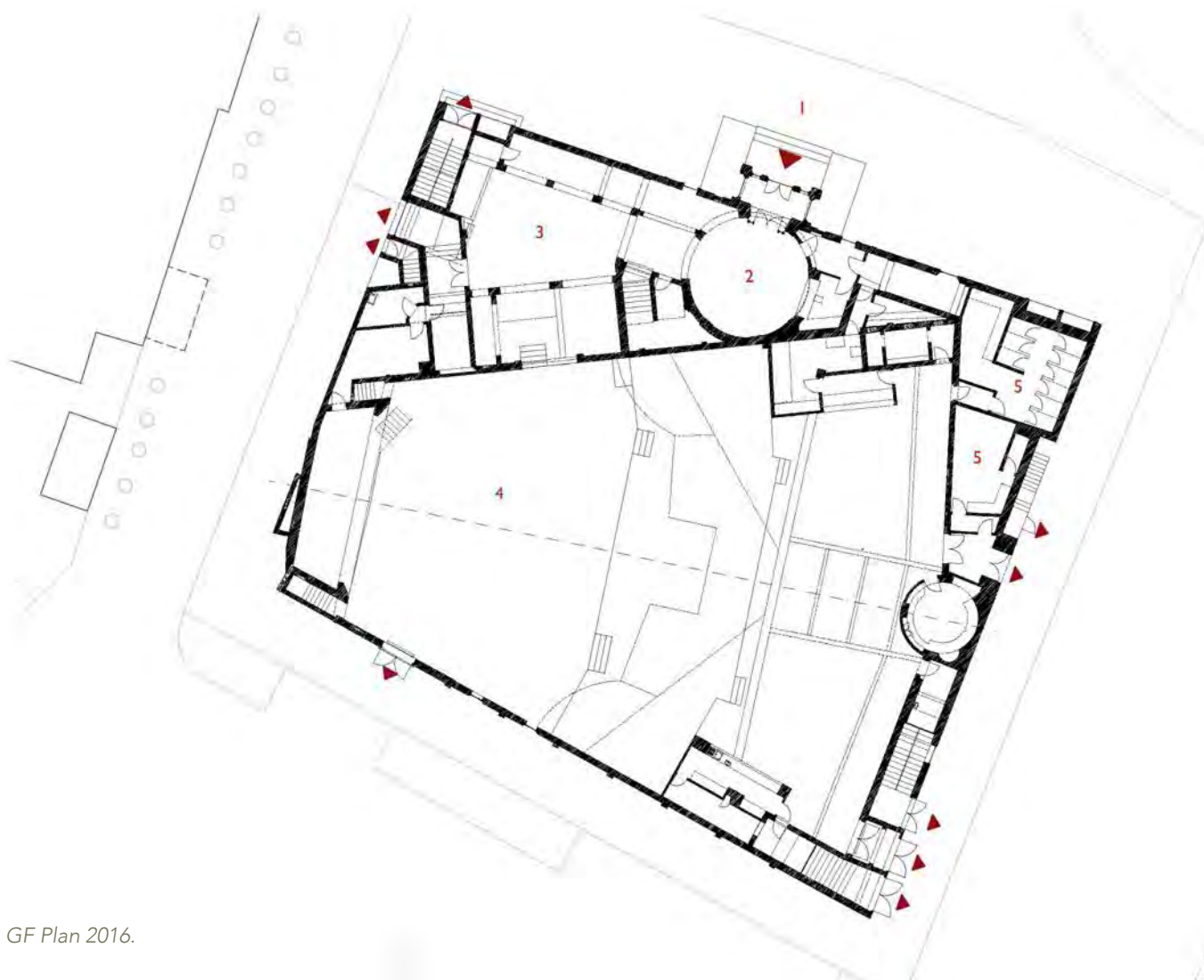
In 2012, Gala Bingo Club closed and the building began its gradual demise. In 2012, a cannabis farm was found inside the roof.



Photograph of Auditorium, 2015.

In 2015, a consortium of buyers acquired the Royalty as a commercial venture to identify new uses. Several suggestions emerged including a hotel and a retirement village.

A building record by Thames Valley Archaeological Services confirms that the building retains much of its original character, in particular the highly ornamented Neo-Classical façade and many surviving features of the same style in the interior of the building. The original layout of the building had not been significantly altered, with minor exceptions on the ground and first floors; the second floor appeared to be unaltered.

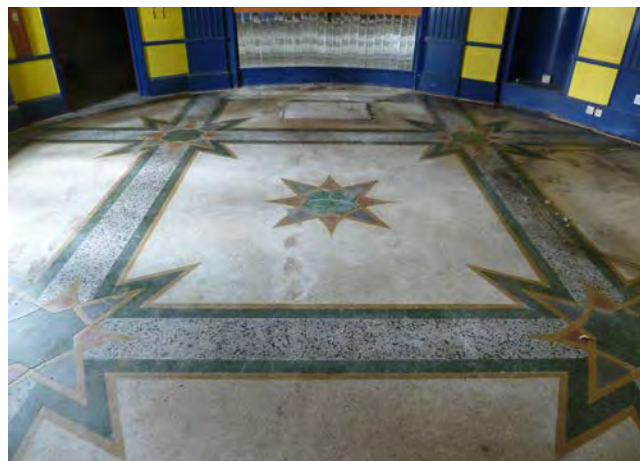


GF Plan 2016.

A selection of photographs from 2015-2017 provided by Harbourne Royalty Trust showing interior details.



Dome room, second floor, 2015



Foyer ground floor, 2016



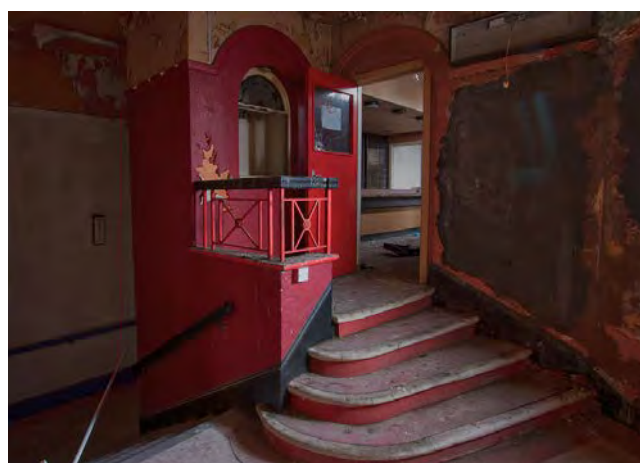
First floor, above foyer, 2016



Internal corridor, front building, 2016



Second floor leading to cafeteria, ballustrade, 2016



Second floor leading to cafeteria, 2017

A selection of photographs from 2016 provided by Harbourn Royalty Trust showing exterior details.



Foyer entrance, 2016



External door, 2016



External detail, 2016



Second floor leading to cafeteria, 2016

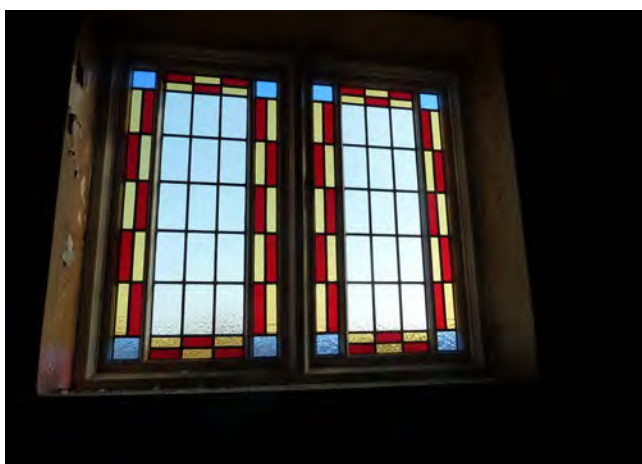
A selection of photographs from 2016 provided by Harboure Royalty Trust showing stained glass details.



Cinema auditorium door, 2016



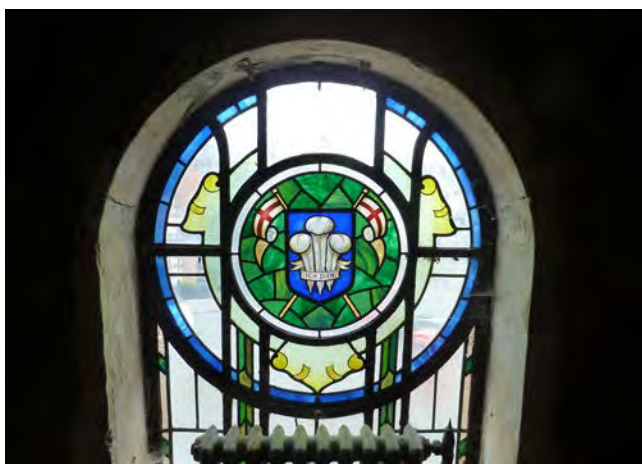
Second floor leading to cafeteria detail, 2016



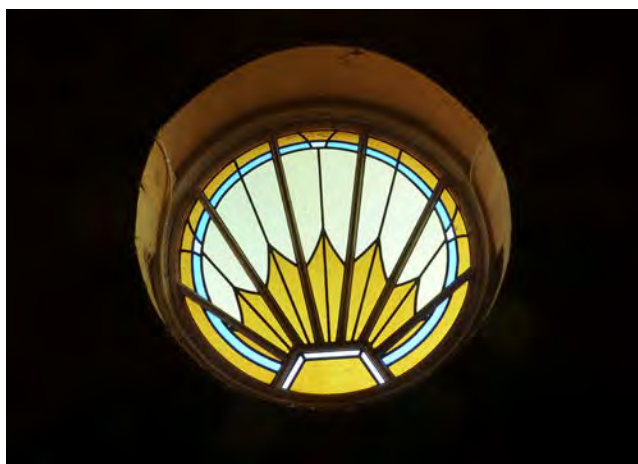
Stained glass window example, 2016



Stained glass window example, 2016



Stained glass window example, 2016



Stained glass window example, 2016

A selection of photographs from 2016-2017 provided by Harbourn Royalty Trust showing stained glass details.



Stained glass window example, 2016



Stained glass window example, 2016



Dome fireplace, 2016



Dome door glass, 2016

In 2017, temporary planning permission was granted for a car wash to increase security.

In November 2017, the empty building suffered a minor fire.



Photographs taken April 2018, Harborne Royalty Trust.

On 19 September 2018 a major fire occurred at 4am and devastated the building.

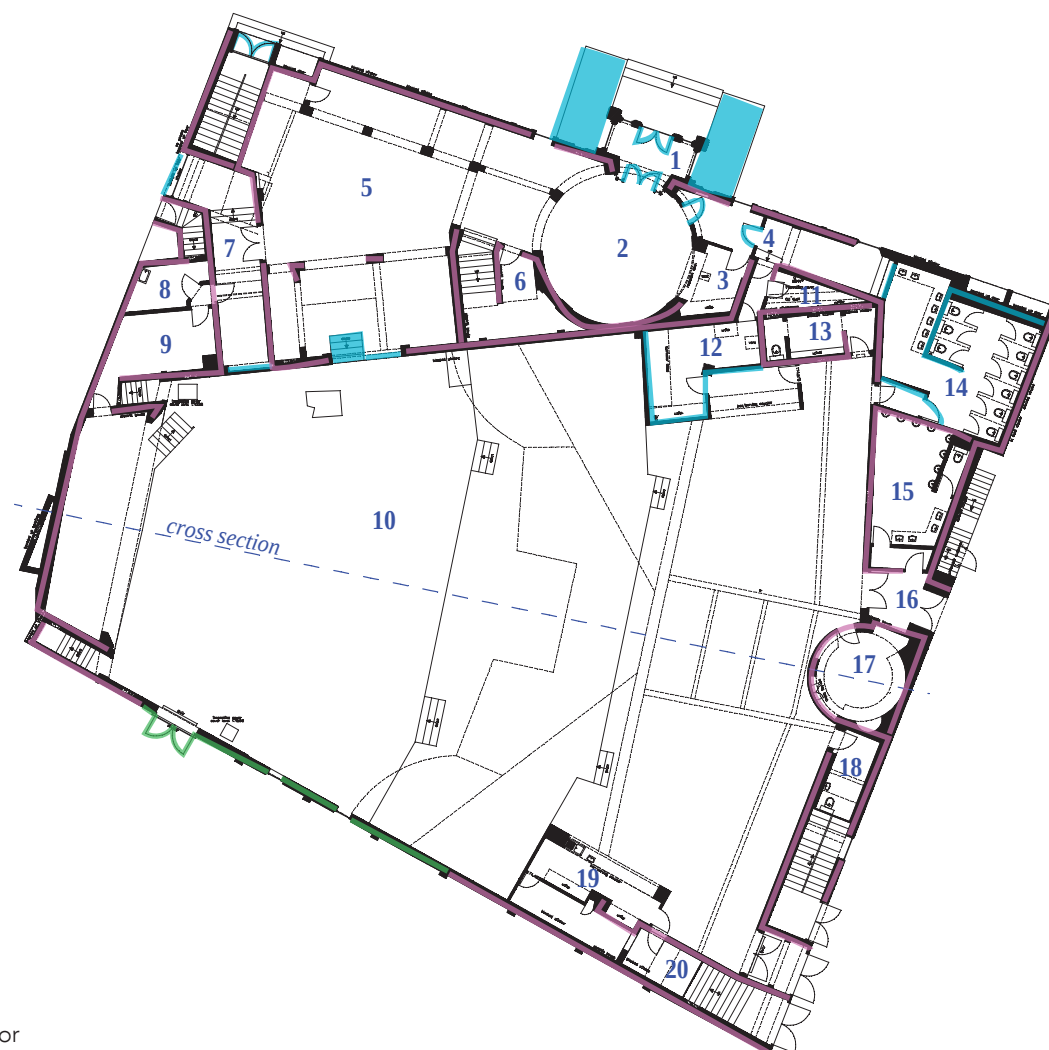


Photograph of the fire September 2018. Source unknown.

On 30 April 2019 a further minor fire occurred in the evening.

3.3 SITE PHASING PLANS

■ 1930 ■ Mid to late 20th C ■ Damage caused by fire Sept 19 2018



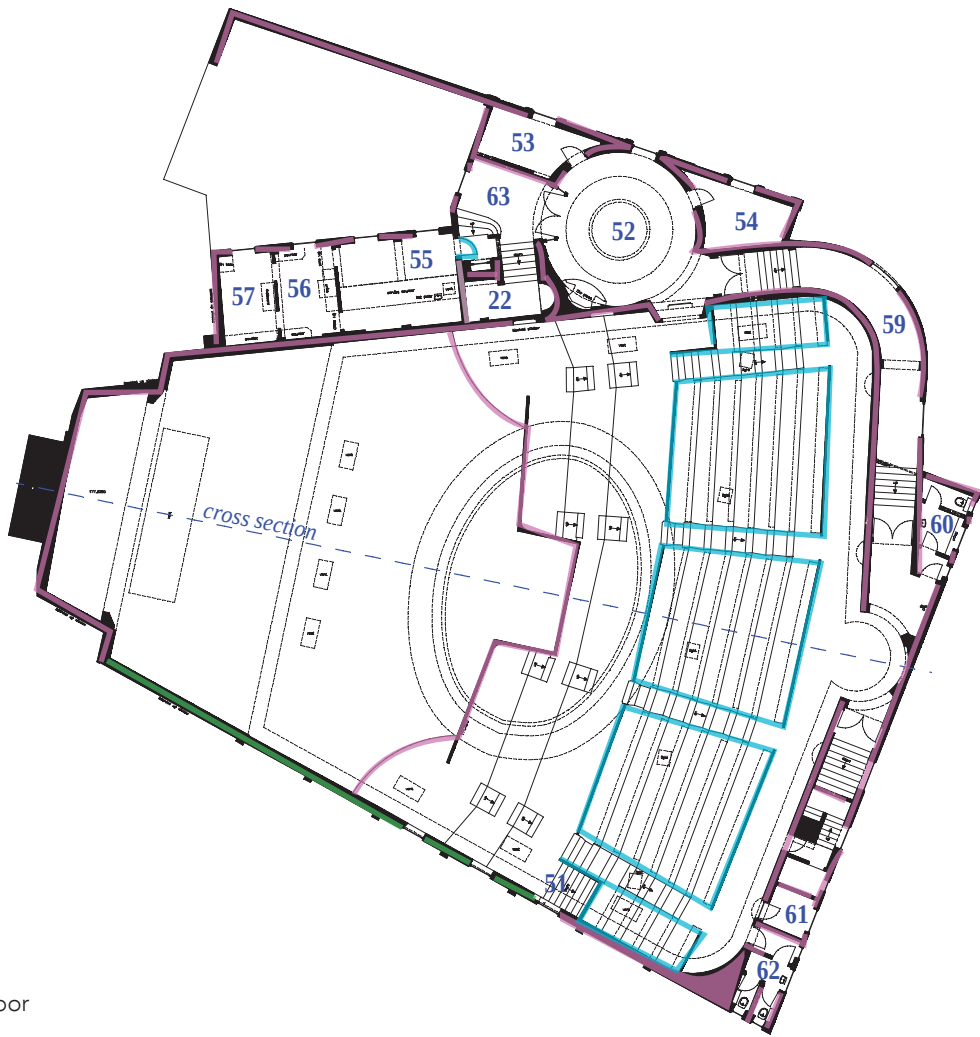
Ground floor

■ 1930
 ■ Mid to late 20th C
 ■ Damage caused by fire Sept 19 2018



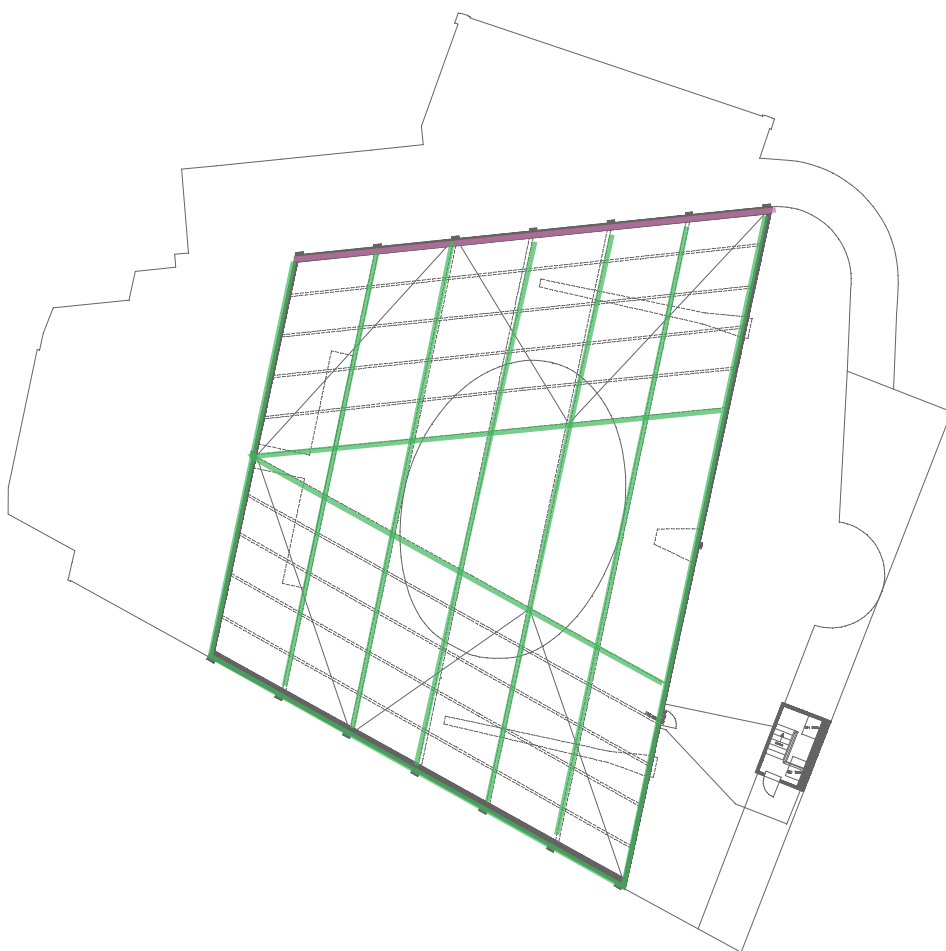
First floor

1930 Mid to late 20th C Damage caused by fire Sept 19 2018



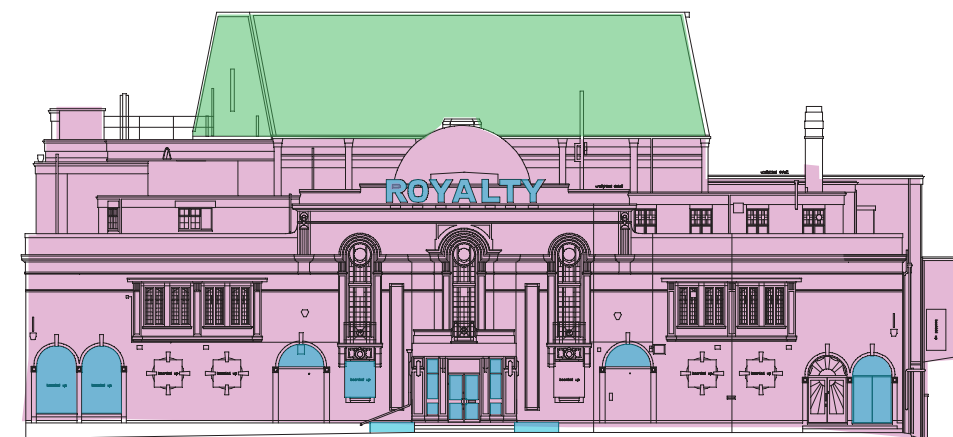
Second floor

■ 1930 ■ Mid to late 20th C ■ Damage caused by fire Sept 19 2018



Roof plan

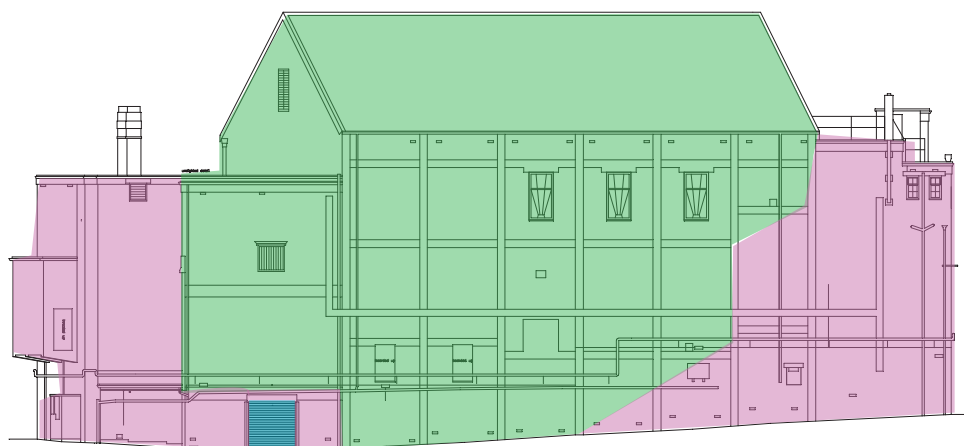
■ 1930
 ■ Mid to late 20th C
 ■ Destroyed by fire Sept 19 2018



Front elevation



Side east facing elevation



Rear elevation

1930
 Mid to late 20th C
 Destroyed by fire Sept 19 2018



Side west facing elevation

4.0 SIGNIFICANCE

4.1 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

Various hierarchies to 'quantify' or 'measure' the comparative significance of each value set have been utilised in recent years. They all have strengths and weaknesses, given the inevitability that such comparisons will always be subjective in their nature – especially when attempting to predict what future generations will find of value. However, at present, the only such hierarchy sponsored from within central Government is that set out within the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB; HA208/07, Volume 11 Section 3 Part 2) jointly published by the Highways

Agency, Transport Scotland, the Welsh Assembly Government, and the Department for Regional Development Northern Ireland in 2007. It has the added benefit of having been subjected to scrutiny within the planning system, including Public Inquiries. With minor adaptation under 'negligible' to bring the 2007 hierarchy into line with the NPPF, across two Annexes, DMRB provides the following terminology and definitions for a cultural heritage hierarchy of significance:

Table 1: DMRB Hierarchy of Value

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE	CRITERIA
VERY HIGH	World Heritage Sites; Assets of acknowledged international importance; Assets that can contribute significantly to acknowledged international research objectives; Historic landscapes of international value (designated or not) and extremely well preserved historic landscapes with exceptional coherence, time depth, or other critical factor(s).
HIGH	Scheduled Monuments and undesignated assets of Schedulable quality and importance; Grade I and II* Listed buildings (Scotland category A); Other Listed buildings that can be shown to have exceptional qualities in their fabric or associations not adequately reflected in their Listing grade; Conservation Areas containing very important buildings; Undesignated structures of clear national importance; Designated and undesignated historic landscapes of outstanding historic interest (including Grade I and Grade II* Registered Parks and Gardens); undesignated landscapes of high quality and importance of demonstrable national value; and well preserved historic landscapes exhibiting considerable coherence, time depth or other critical factor(s); Assets that can contribute significantly to acknowledged national research objectives.
MEDIUM	Designated or undesignated assets that contribute to regional research objectives; Grade II (Scotland category B) Listed buildings; Historic (unlisted) buildings that can be shown to have exceptional qualities in their fabric or historical association; Conservation Areas containing important buildings that contribute significantly to their historic character; Historic townscapes or built up areas with important historic integrity in their buildings, or built settings (for example including street furniture or other structures); Designated landscapes of special historic interest (including Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens); undesignated landscapes that would justify such a designation; averagely well preserved historic landscapes with reasonable coherence, time depth or other critical factor(s); landscapes of regional value.
LOW	Designated and undesignated assets of local importance including those compromised by poor preservation and/or poor survival of contextual associations; Assets of limited value, but with potential to contribute to local research objectives; Locally Listed buildings (Scotland category C(S) Listed Buildings) and historic (unlisted) buildings of modest quality in their fabric or historical association; Historic townscape or built up areas of limited historic integrity in their buildings or built settings (for example including street furniture or other structures); Robust undesignated historic landscapes; historic landscapes with importance to local interest groups; and historic landscapes whose value is limited by poor preservation and/or poor survival of contextual associations.
NEUTRAL	Assets with very little surviving archaeological interest; Buildings of little architectural or historical note; Landscapes with little significant historical interest.

Based on the table above we consider overall the significance of the building to be **Medium**.

4.2 SIGNIFICANCE VALUES

Significance can be defined as the sum of the cultural values which make a building or site important to society. When making an assessment of significance the following aspects are considered: architectural interest, historic interest, group value, social value, former uses, local distinctiveness, and much more.

Each element of a complex heritage asset may have high, medium or low value according to the guidance below. The result is that certain elements of a heritage asset such as the Royalty may have higher or lower significance than that provided by the group value assessed in 4.1.

HIGH: A theme, feature, building or space which is important at a national or international level, with high cultural value and important contribution towards the character and appearance of the area.

MEDIUM: Themes, features, buildings or spaces which are important at regional level or sometimes higher, with some cultural importance and some contribution towards the character and appearance of the area.

LOW: Themes features, buildings or spaces which are usually of local value only but possibly of regional significance for group or their value. Minor cultural importance and contribution to the character or appearance of the area.

NEUTRAL: These themes, spaces, buildings or features have little or no cultural value but do not detract from the character or appearance of the area.

INTRUSIVE: Themes, features, buildings or spaces which detract from the values of character and appearance of the area. Efforts should be made to remove or enhance these features.

The following significance values have been identified for the Royalty:

MEDIUM VALUES

The Royalty has medium social value – a community asset that local residents visited regularly with other members of the local community. This is strongly reinforced by its continued use for nearly 80 years by the local community, as a cinema for 30 years and 50 years as a bingo hall. Despite its run down appearance, and three recent fires, the Royalty remains a much loved building. The tireless energy and enthusiasm of the Royalty Harborne Trust in promoting the regeneration of the building. Recent consultation confirms there is high public support for the buildings redevelopment as a community asset. Until 2012 the building was in continued use by Gala Bingo, but is now at risk as a result of the recent neglect and the recent arson attacks.

“Among the list of architects who have contributed materially to the progress of British cinematography by building beautiful and attractive cinemas must be included Mr. Horace G. Bradley, of 10A Temple Row, Birmingham.” The Cinema 24th April 1924. The Royalty is a well-realised building with quality interior spaces. Architect Horace G Bradley, made his name as a cinema architect during the boom in British cinema and his works include many cinemas in the Birmingham area.

The Royalty has medium evidential value, the building is a rare example of a surviving cinema of this period. Despite the fire which has destroyed the roof and interior of the auditorium, the external fabric and secondary key decorative interiors such as the circulation spaces and the main foyers on each floor are likely to survive intact and with only minor alteration especially considering its long use as a bingo hall.

The Royalty is a landmark building and serves as a reminder of a period of boom in Harborne's development following incorporation with the borough of Birmingham. The Royalty - followed two new public parks and several new public houses - a symbol of the social and economic development of Harborne in the early twentieth century. The Royalty was one of two cinemas, distinguished from The Picture House owing to its regal, resplendent design - an architectural spectacle. A visit to the Royalty was as much part of the experience as seeing the film itself.

The contemporary art deco style became a metaphor for the vitality and success of the British film industry across the country. The construction of new cinemas a result of the investment made in new buildings as a result of the Cinematograph Act of 1927 in support of British filmmaking. The Royalty is a reminder of this high point in British cinema and serves as a reminder of the importance in film and entertainment at the start of the 20th century.

LOW VALUES

The buildings lack of a current use is a poignant reminder of the need to find a suitable and appropriate new use that will ensure that the building becomes a sustainable and useful building in the centre of Harborne for many years to come.

WAYS OF IMPROVING SIGNIFICANCE

Significance will be enhanced by returning all or part of the building to community use, so that the building is occupied by a use sympathetic to the Royalty's original purpose, whilst meet the costs of running and maintaining the building into the future.

The architectural and aesthetic value will be improved by restoration of the key interiors and a scheme of repair and restoration of the external envelope. Evidential value will be maintained through the development of a design that works within the footprint of the existing building and avoid disturbance of the surrounding ground and archaeology.

The building record, survey information and photographic record of the Royalty Harborne Trust provides adequate information to reinstate the building. However, the question for discussion is whether a large 1,500 seat auditorium is sustainable in a day and age where multi-screen cinemas are having to cut ticket prices to encourage audiences? An imaginative scheme will be required for the Royalty where reuse of existing spaces will need to be considered.

Public benefits of development

The development of the Royalty will provide a number of public benefits:

- Returning the building to community use – so that the Royalty is once again loved and cared for.
- Provide a greater appreciation of the art deco design and interiors of Horace G Bradley.
- A scheme of conservation and repair of the exterior of the building will improve the appearance of the building and the setting.
- The restoration will remove the need for the temporary adjacent car wash and inappropriate signage.
- The building work will require the introduction new insulation and upgrading of the existing fabric so that running costs are reduced and the building is more sustainable for the future.

4.3 SIGNIFICANCE PLANS

■ HIGH ■ MEDIUM ■ LOW ■ INVASIVE



Front elevation

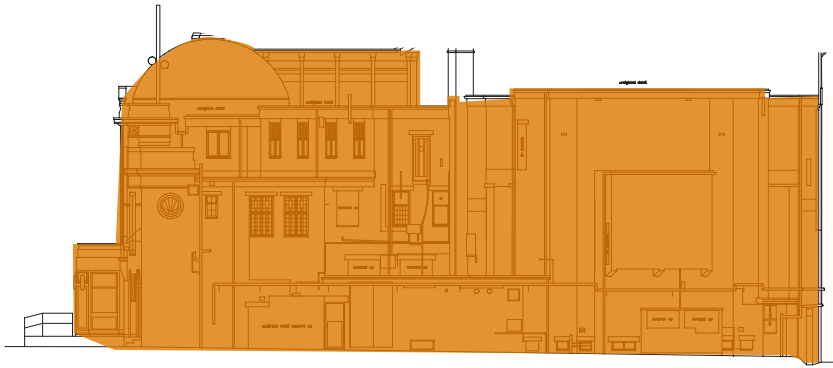


Side east facing elevation



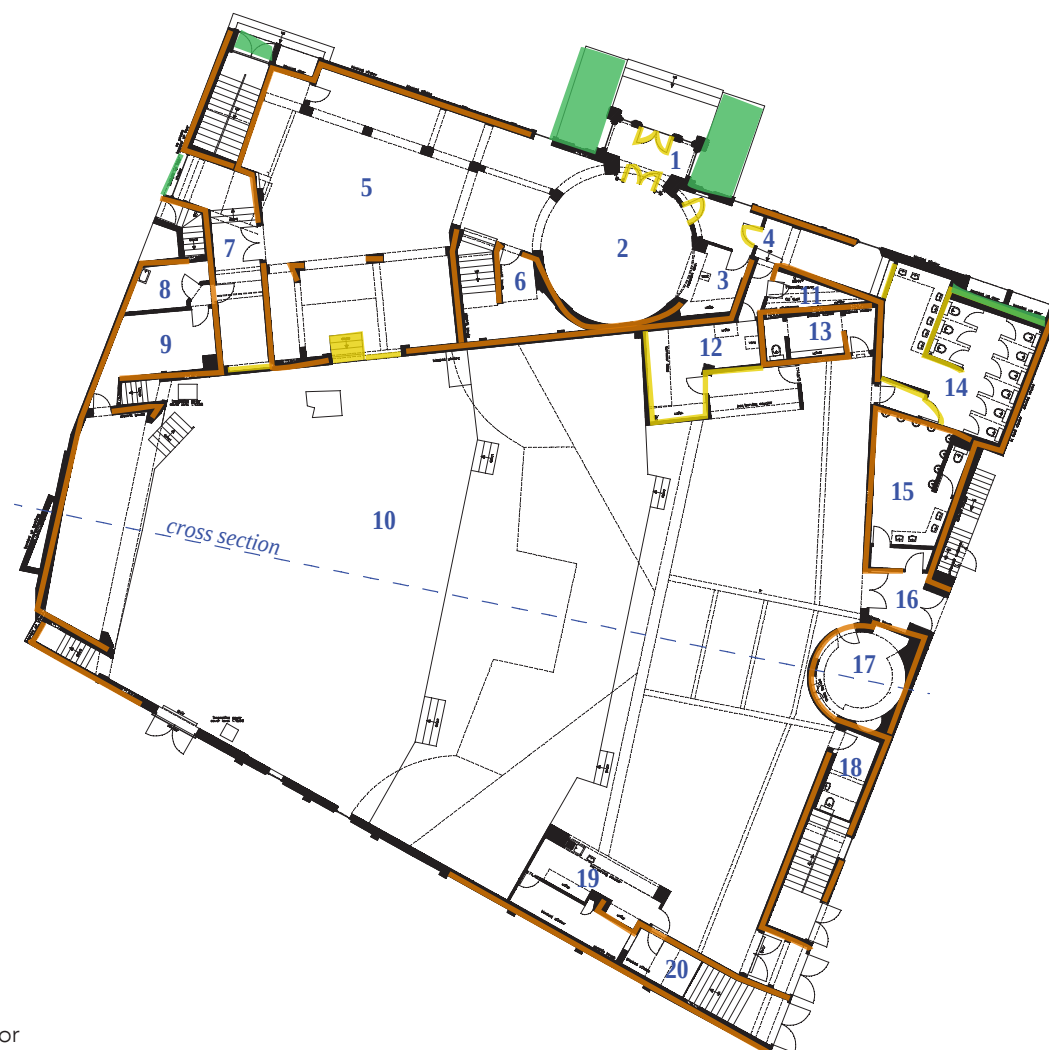
Rear elevation

■ HIGH ■ MEDIUM ■ LOW ■ INVASIVE



Side west facing elevation

■ HIGH ■ MEDIUM ■ LOW ■ INVASIVE



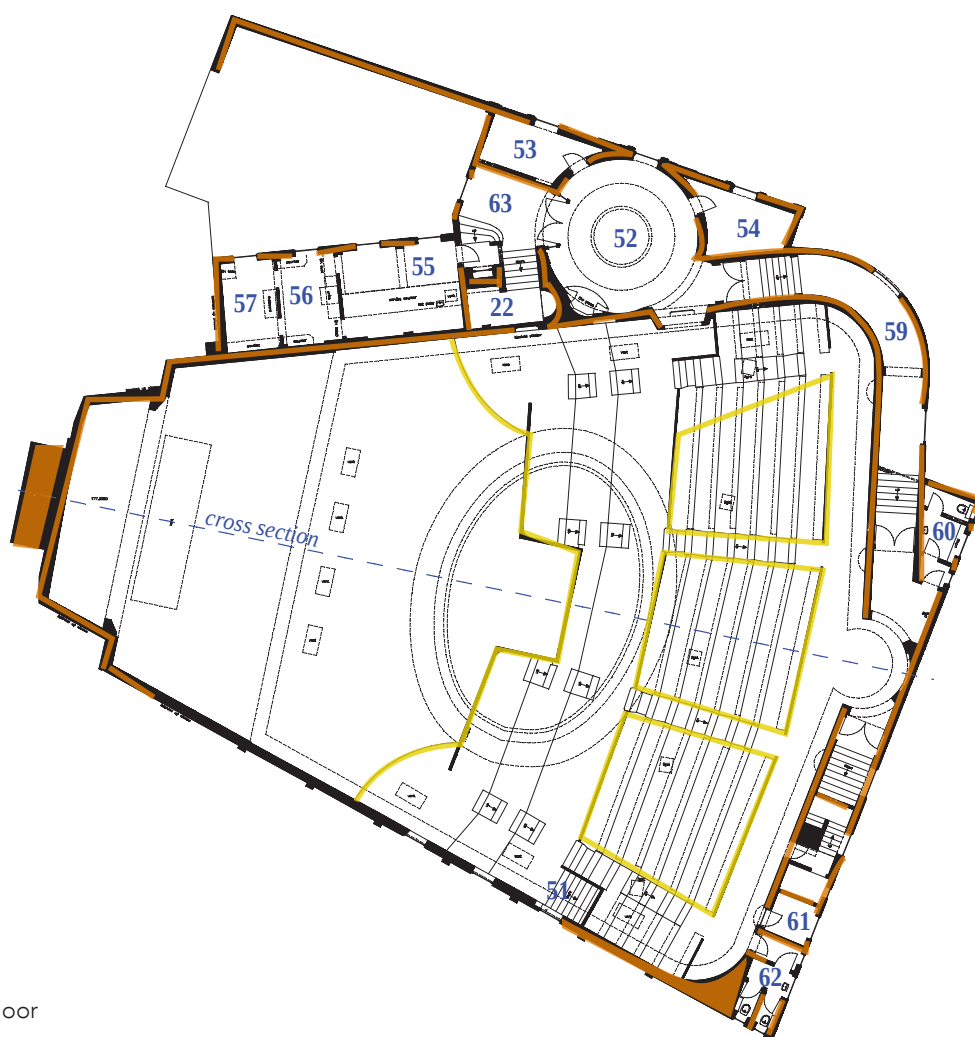
Ground floor

■ HIGH ■ MEDIUM ■ LOW ■ INVASIVE



First Floor

■ HIGH ■ MEDIUM ■ LOW ■ INVASIVE



Second Floor

4.4 THE SETTING AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ROYALTY

The setting of the Royalty Harborne is consistent with the setting of the Greenfield Road conservation area. The surrounding buildings are residential in character, including the shops on the High Street which have been converted. The setting around the Royalty reflects a wide variety of architectural styles, including Edwardian and Victorian terraced properties interspersed with contemporary buildings with no particular architectural style. The dominant construction material is the red facing brick and welsh slate roofs. The 19th Century domestic properties have a high degree of classical detailing and ornamentation around their fenestration.

The historic setting of the Royalty is one of busy residential village on the suburbs of Birmingham. The 1941 photograph shows the Royalty on the High Street - a busy road with separate pedestrian footpaths illustrating the recent highway improvements necessary for frequent passing traffic. As the century has progressed, increased traffic arrives with increased signage, street lighting and pedestrian crossings. Contemporary development has begun to change the residential nature of the setting: The Vine public house, west of the Royalty, has been rebuilt much wider than the original plan and in a neo Georgian style. The contemporary residential development on the corner between High Street and Greenfield Road is of four storeys and is particularly out of scale. The immediate setting of the Royalty is adversely affected by the temporary car wash, inappropriate signage, storage containers and electrical comms cabinet.



4.5 OPPORTUNITY FOR DEVELOPMENT

The redevelopment of the Royalty, is a complex conservation challenge. The building could be restored to its former glory but philosophically is that the correct approach? The priority must be to find a sustainable use that will pay for its future running and maintenance costs. Prior to the fire, pre-application proposals dated 2016, suggest that the building could accommodate two additional screens, and that this would be attractive to a cinema operator. This pre-application proposal was supported by the local authority and Historic England. The cost of the physical work in repairing the building after the fire, and addressing the extent of condition (i.e. the conservation deficit) will be substantial. The Trust may gain funding from the HLF or alternatively an enabling development which will attract sufficient profit to pay for reinstatement.

The following development options appear possible:

- Restore the Royalty as a cinema or alternative public use (via partnering) supplemented by community uses. (Funding from the HLF).
- Given the loss of fabric convert the auditorium to residential accommodation and use the front of the building for community uses.
- Convert the front of the building into residential accommodation and use the old auditorium for community uses.

Given the likely conservation deficit, it seems likely that further development will be required. The site of the car park to the east of the Royalty would appear to provide the opportunity for an appropriately scaled development that:

- a. provided funds through enabling development for the restoration of the cinema.
- b. provided ancillary community or commercial uses that will provide additional income to support the ongoing running and maintenance costs of the Royalty.



View from Greenfield Road.

The development of the car park site will be very sensitive as it will affect the setting of the listed building and also the setting of the conservation area.

Since the major fire in 2018, the Trust in 2019 put forward further proposals as a second pre application. These proposals included retention of the existing frontage and spaces behind along with a new linked building on the car park to provide cinema and community space.

BCC responded in 2022 with their own massing proposals in the main building for community and residential use but excluding development on the adjacent car park. Subsequently the Trust have proposed an additional enabling development on the car park comprising a row of terraced properties sympathetic to the properties which originally occupied the space and the neighbouring Greenfield Road conservation area. Space remains at the rear of the main building for additional residential development.

4.6 NEXT STEPS

In accordance with section 196 of the NPPF we recommend that a viability assessment is undertaken to understand the conservation deficit and the amount of development required for the Royalty's optimum viable use.



View from Vivian Road.

5.0 APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: BIBLIOGRAPHY

HARBORNE LIBRARY

DATE	REFERENCE NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
1790	NA	Jo Sheriff - Survey of Harborne
1843	NA	Tithe Map of Harborne
1856	NA	Map of Harborne
1965	Harborne Library Photographic collection	The Royalty 1965

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APPENDIX B: LISTING DESCRIPTIONS



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Name: THE ROYALTY (Gala Bingo)

List entry Number: 1401284

Grade: II

Date first listed: 02-Aug-2011

SUMMARY

A cinema of 1930, built to the designs of Horace G. Bradley, and converted to bingo use in the 1960s.

REASON FOR DESIGNATION

The Royalty, High Street, Harborne, built in 1930 to the designs of Horace G. Bradley is designated at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

Architectural: the Royalty is an assured and well-realised design with quality features including some Art Deco detailing, by a cinema architect of note; **Interiors:** the Art Deco fittings are of a high quality, representative of an era of resplendent cinema design, the detailing is of special note; **Intactness:** the building is well-preserved, especially considering its long use as a bingo hall; **Rarity:** relatively few cinemas of this period survive in such a complete form.

HISTORY

Gala Bingo first opened as The Royalty Cinema on Harborne High Street on 20 October 1930, in the early years of cinema

exhibition with sound. The Cinematograph Act of 1927 had attempted to support British filmmaking in the face of the aggressive influence of Hollywood. Musicals and epics became increasingly popular in the 1920s, and evermore opulent and grand theatres were constructed for their exhibition. The Royalty was designed by Horace G. Bradley for Selly Oak Pictures Limited, and could accommodate almost 1,500 patrons. It was taken over by ABC Cinemas in March 1935, as part of the organisation's expansion in the West Midlands. The site had been the location of a terraced row of dwellings from at least 1890, as shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of that year. The row was demolished to make way for the cinema by 1930, and the new building, set back from the road edge, is shown on the Fourth Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1938. The cinema closed in 1963 and became a bingo hall. Some internal modifications have been made to the building in the later C20, including the insertion of a false ceiling in the foyer, the introduction of a staircase to the balcony in the auditorium, and the replacement of the equipment in the projection box. In 2011 it continues to operate as a bingo hall

DETAILS

MATERIALS: The building is a reinforced concrete and red brick structure. The façade is dressed in a deep red brick, in Flemish bond, with stone and tile detailing.

PLAN: The building has an informal plan: the auditorium is largely rectangular, with a stage at the front, a stalls area, and a substantial dress circle seating area. The upper rear wall is bowed. Connecting corridors, circulation areas, service rooms and internal, flighted exits stand to the rear and side of the auditorium, at upper level. A projection box and further service rooms stand on a mezzanine level, with corridors serving them. The auditorium range stands offset to the road, with an attached foyer range, which is positioned in-line with the road. The attached range has a central, circular foyer with a lightwell above, offices, and a substantial inner foyer.

EXTERIOR: The road front is a seven-bay façade in a loosely classical style. The central three bays are two-storeys tall, under a dome. There are lower-height bays to either side. A projecting porch is attached to the central entrance. The fenestration in the central bays comprises three tall windows with stone pilasters and round heads rising into the upper floor, punctuating a fluted stone band that extends along the length of the façade. Above the band is a stone cornice and the central window has a hood and stone detailing. Above this is a frieze that terminates at both ends with a roundel above decorative pilasters. ROYALTY lettering is fixed to a stone parapet. The upper lights of the leaded windows have stained glass, and the lower sections of the left and right windows have iron balconies with "R" emblems, date stones, console brackets, and narrower stained glass windows below. The porch has pilasters decorated with pyramidal bosses, floral pendants and console brackets. The symmetrical bays to either side have central windows with mullions, stone pilasters and hoods, and are set at a raised level. There are paired keyed oculus windows below. Between these windows and the central porch are blank doorways with brick architraves, heads and raised tile keystones, and blue brick diapering in the tympanum. There are signs of former window openings in these blank doorways. At each corner of the façade are paired brick doorways with fanlights and raised tile keystones. One of the doors to the right has a sunray emblem. The bays to each side have brick parapets, ramped to meet the central bays. Above the façade stand the curved brick elevations of the auditorium range, and a pitched roof above.

The side and rear elevations are irregularly set with some visible concrete structural beams running through the red brickwork. The west flank is successively set back, accommodating the length of the auditorium and the service rooms that are attached to it. There is a mixture of timber fenestration to the left, and a brick chimney stack rises above a first-floor kitchen. A number of fire exits serve the ground floor and the concrete rear of the stage extends to the south-west. The wall to the south-east has three, evenly-spaced, lights at upper level, with sunray glazing bars. The flank elevation facing east has a number of casements under concrete lintels to each level, and a large inset brick section, and an oculus window above, with sunray glazing. There is a further oculus above a flight of fire escape steps.

INTERIOR: Original double doors with bronze handles lead into the circular foyer. This area retains its original proportions, although it has been re-worked. It retains its original tiled floor, mainly below modern carpet and there is a kiosk to the left, and service rooms/offices beyond. Above an inserted ceiling stands a lightwell with balustrade. To the right are steps up to doorways

to stairs to the dress circle and a switch room. Further right is a corridor to an inner foyer with concrete relieving arches, leading to the principal entrance into the main auditorium.

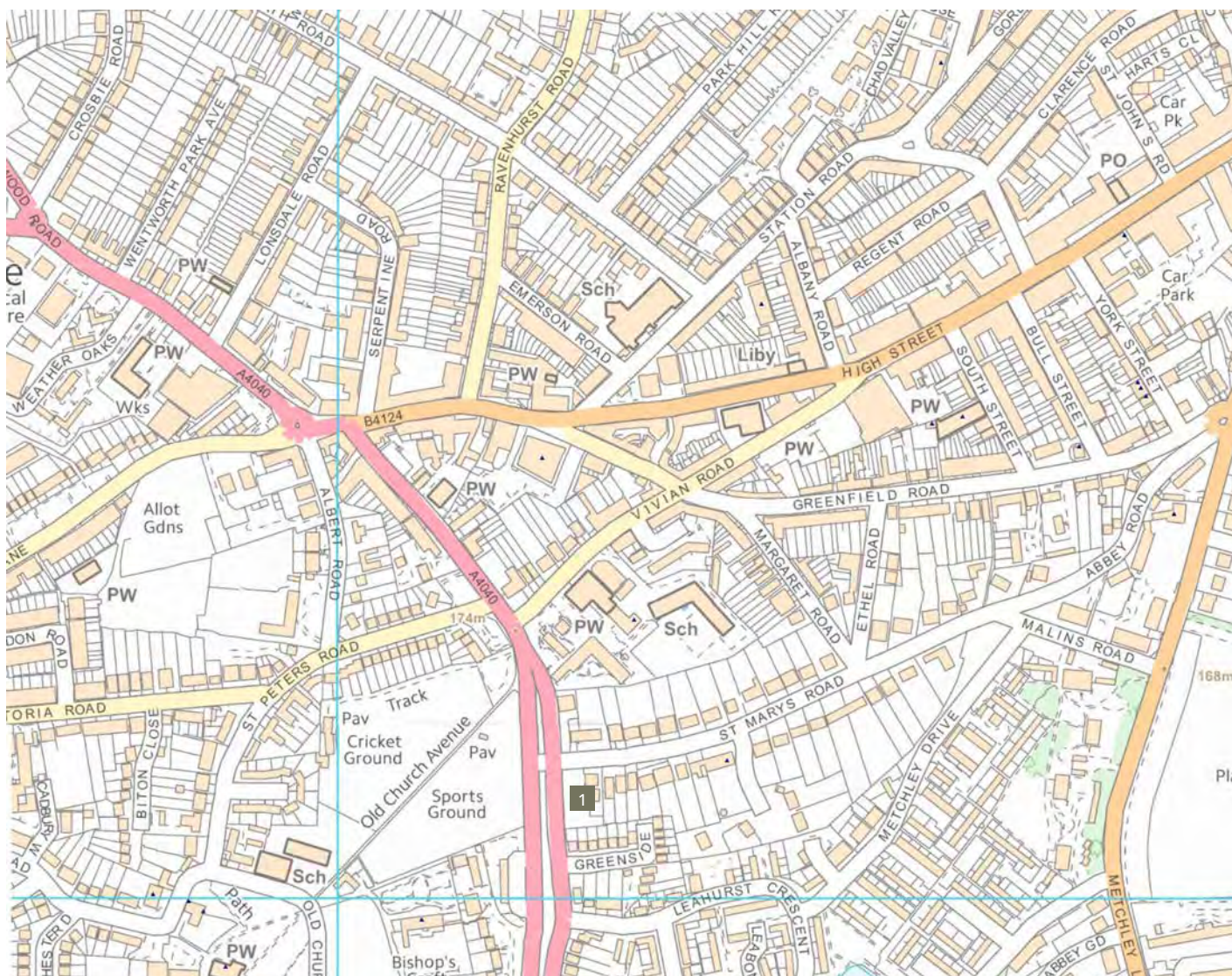
The auditorium is split-level to the stalls area, progressively raised to the rear, with modern seating and bingo tables. To the front is a raised stage with a proscenium arch. Either side are steps down to Gentlemen's and Ladies' facilities. The auditorium walls are richly decorated in plaster, most notably with boldly-coloured, arched, full-height, designs to either side of the stage. These decorations have a central crown insignia, in relief, at the top, and scimitar-like motifs dropping down to either side. The arches form the focus for a circular and arched design that continues around the upper level of the auditorium. The bases of the arches lead to regularly spaced, slender, pilasters with chevron motifs, terminating in an overlapping semi-circular pattern. A curved section of ceiling directly above the stage incorporates a decorative ventilation panel with an intricate design. Much of the interior decoration is sprayed in gold. There are a number of exits projecting into the auditorium space, all with original double doors. The doors have glazed upper lights, some with sunray motifs. To the rear, below the balcony, are further exits, toilets and modern inserted serveries. Across the auditorium, and the building in general, cast-iron radiators are inserted within shallow-framed alcoves, in the manner of a fireplace. On the dress circle, these are placed in line with the rake of the seating.

A modern stair leads from the right side of the stalls to the dress circle, which has modern seating. The balcony fronts have an elaborate applied design, and there is a former projection aperture, now an air-conditioning vent, in the central, recessed, section. The walls are richly decorated and a large, circular, ceiling dome with a rich floral cornice. The upper part of the dome has been sealed, and further decoration may be concealed above. The wall decoration incorporates the three windows in the south elevation, and there are three blank windows, with sunray patterns, on the opposite wall. To the rear are a timber-panelled balustrade, toilets, roof access, and a central semi-circular recessed lobby. There is an oculus window above the lobby with lotus flower glazing, and the rear auditorium walls to either side have inset lunettes. The stair to the foyer is accessed to the right of the lobby, and doors to the left lead to circulation spaces including, a café, further stairs and the lightwell above the foyer. The rear areas at upper level are generally plainly-detailed, although there are original doors and glazing, and three thematic leaded windows face the High Street (a crown, a white rose and a plume of feathers). Some of the rear stairs include display alcoves inset in the walls. On a mezzanine level, below the balcony, the former projection room has some remaining electrical plant, colour-coded light levers, and projection shutters. Many of the internal doors and fire exit balustrades are original.

APPENDIX C: NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

Below are a list of the non-designated heritage assets that fall within a 250m radius of the study area.

Nº	SMR Nº	TITLE	DESCRIPTION	TYPE
1	1248	Field House, 110 Harborne Park Road	One of the wells was considered Roman in the 19th century.	Excavation



APPENDIX D: PLANNING PERMISSIONS

REF	APPLICATION REF	APPLICANT	AGENT	DESCRIPTION	STATUS
1	A0591000			Illuminated Fascia Signs	Refuse 21/10/1965
2	A0591001			Illuminated Fascia Sign	Approve subject to Conditions 20/01/1966
3	A0591003			Erection of Hoarding	Refuse 19/05/1966
4	A0591004			Double Illuminated Sign	Approve subject to Conditions 18/12/1969
5	A0591005			High Level Box Sign Fascia Level Signs	Approve subject to Conditions 03/08/1978
6	A0782600			Advertisement Signs	Approve subject to Conditions 20/05/1971
7	49265001			Car park extension with new exit	Refuse 10/09/1981
8	49265002			Proposed extension to existing car park	Refuse 07/10/1982
9	1991/00230/PA	c/o Agent		External alterations, metal external staircase and new disabled ramp to the front of the building.	Approved 27/02/1991
10	2000/02861/PA		Bignell Shacklady, Ewing	Display of 7 illuminated signs, 2 non-illuminated signs and floodlights.	Approve Temporary 24-07-2000
11	2000/05821/PA			Certificate of Lawfulness for existing use as a bingo hall with ancillary offices	Approve 29-03-2001
12	2002/06919/PA	c/o Agent		Installation of flagpole, dishes and antennae	Seen & Noted by Authority 11-10-2002
13	2002/06905/PA	c/o Agent		Installation of 3xantenna, 1x 0.3 microwave dish. 1xantenna on east fac	Seen & Noted by Authority 30-09-2002
14	2002/06904/PA	c/o Agent		Installation of telecommunications equipment	Seen & Noted by Authority 30-09-2002
15	2002/06903/PA			Installation of 3xantenna, 1x 0.3 microwave dish. 1xantenna on east fac	Seen & Noted by Authority 27-09-2002
16	2008/00516/PA			Erection of an external awning & wall mounted rest to east elevation to form smoking shelter	Erection of an external awning & wall mounted rest to east elevation to form smoking shelter
17	2012/05402/PA	Everything Everywhere	Daly International	Listed Building Consent for replacement of existing 3G equipment & flagpole antennas and erection of 1 no. equipment cabinet	Approve subject to Conditions
18	2012/05401/PA	Everything Everywhere	Daly International	Replacement of existing 3G equipment & flagpole antennas and erection of 1 no. equipment cabinet	Approve subject to Conditions 25-09-2012
19	2013	BT	WHP Wilkinson	Application for a prior approval notification for the installation of a telecommunications equipment cabinet	Seen & Noted by Authority 07-02-2013

20	2016/07013/PA	RHT		Conversion of the building retaining the existing fabric but providing two extra screens.	Supported by both LA and Historic England.
21	2017/08565/		Lisa Cosgrove LMC Planning	Listed Building Consent for replacement of existing flagpole antenna supporting 3 new antennas and installation of new equipment cabinet and ancillary works	09/10/2017 - Withdrawn
22	2017/08520/	Hutchinson 3G UK Ltd.	Lisa Cosgrove LMC Planning	Replacement of existing flagpole antenna supporting 3 new antennas and installation of new equipment cabinet and ancillary works	09/10/2017 - Withdrawn
23	2017/03785/PA	S&M Car wash	Lucett Lample – Keen Partnership	Proposed temporary (hand) car wash and associated site office, bays and tank room	Approve Temporary 16-06-2017
24	2017/06779/PA	Hagley Rod Motors	Ian Ray. A.I.Architecture	Variation of Condition No. 2 attached to planning application 2017/03785/PA to allow opening on Sunday from 0900 to 1700 hours	Refuse 23-11-2017
25	2017/04932/PA	S&M Car wash	Lucett Lample – Keen Partnership	Listed building consent for the installation of external CCTV cameras & lighting system.	Withdrawn 02-06-2017
26	2018/00526/PA	Hagley Rod Motors	Ian Ray. A.I.Architecture	Temporary permission for the retention of caravan providing accommodation for 24 hour security staff until 15th June 2020	Approve Temporary 24-07-2018
27	2018/00527/PA	Hagley Rod Motors	Ian Ray. A.I.Architecture	Non-material amendment to planning approval 2017/03785/PA for the erection of a canopy and weather shelter and relocation of water tank	Approve 07-03-2018
28	2019/00894/PA			Temporary aerial (presumably due to fire damage to the existing aerial)	Seen & Noted by Authority 05/02/2019

CHIPPING NORTON
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