

Nominate a Heritage Asset

The City Arms, Cowley Road



1. WHAT IS IT? Is it one of the following?	Tick
a building or group of buildings	y
a monument or site (an area of archaeological remains or a structure other than a building)	
a place (e.g. a street, park, garden or natural space)	
a landscape (an area defined by visual features or character, e.g. a city centre, village, suburb or field system)	

2. WHY IS IT INTERESTING? Is it interesting in any of the following ways?	Tick / Rank
Historic interest – a well documented association with a person, event, episode of history, or local industry	y
Archaeological interest – firm evidence of potential to reveal more about the human past through further study	
Architectural interest – an example of an architectural style, a building of particular use, a technique of building, or use of materials	y
Artistic interest – It includes artistic endeavour to communicate meaning or use of design (including landscape design) to enhance appearance	
<p>What is it about the asset that provides this interest?</p> <p>Historic interest: A public House called the University and City Arms was recorded at this location in Kelly's Directory of 1876 and is shown on the Ordnance Survey map of 1878. The present building was constructed in the late 1930s as an 'improved public house'.</p> <p>Architectural interest: The building was rebuilt in the early 20th century with an attractive double fronted Jacobean Revival design that falls within the pattern established for 'improved public houses' built during the Inter-War years. It is built in red brick with prominent parapeted gabled returns to the street and stone transoms, mullion and surrounds to windows. The front door is set at the street corner and also has an attractive stone surround and overlight. This is one of several pubs of Hall's Oxford Brewery Ltd (see also Donnington Arms and possibly the former Prince of Wales, Charles Street).</p>	

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3. WHY IS IT LOCALLY VALUED? Is the interest of the asset valued locally for any of the following reasons?	Tick / Rank
Association: It connects us to people and events that shaped the identity or character of the area	y
Illustration: It illustrates an aspect of the area's past that makes an important contribution to its identity or character	y
Evidence: It is an important resource for understanding and learning about the area's history	
Aesthetics: It makes an important contribution to the positive look of the area either by design or fortuitously	y
Communal: It is important to the identity, cohesion, spiritual life or memory of all or part of the community	
<p>How is the asset locally valued as heritage?</p> <p>Association: The City Arms is one of a number of public houses that provide a connection with the area's past as a working class suburb where pubs were an important venue for socialising and entertainment. A pub has stood on this site since the 1870s, providing a considerable continuity with the past, whilst this has served as a building where the community have come together, building cohesion and a sense of identity. This also helps to illustrate the long continuity of Cowley Road as a focus of entertainment and social activity for the suburb.</p> <p>Illustration: The architecture illustrates the development of the 'improved public house' as a type of building found within Oxford, paid for by the brewery companies. It represents a shift in attitudes towards frequenting public houses and drinking beer in the early 20th century as a recreational activity among the increasingly affluent working class communities and the response of brewery companies in seeking to raise the perceived status and respectability of their premises.</p> <p>Aesthetics: The building has attractive features that complement the detailing the nearby late Victorian and Edwardian Church Hall and Vicarage. Contributing to the creation of an area of particular visual interest. The design of the building is an important element of its heritage value, providing evidence of the intention of the pub company to make the use of their premises an aspirational activity, that is both respectable and part of an historic tradition in order to draw in the more affluent residents in the Inter-War period.</p>	
4. WHAT MAKES ITS LOCAL SIGNIFICANCE SPECIAL? Do any of the following features make the heritage significance of the asset stand out above the surrounding environment?	Tick
Age ... Is it particularly old, or of a date that is significant to the local area?	
Rarity ... Is it unusual in the area or a rare survival of something that was once common?	
Integrity ... Is it largely complete or in a near to original condition?	y
Group value ... Is it part of a group that have a close historic, aesthetic or communal association?	y
Oxford's identity ... Is it important to the identity or character of the city or a particular part of it?	y
Other ... Is there another way you think it has special local value?	
<p>How does this contribute to its value?</p> <p>Integrity: The building is well preserved externally retaining its early 20th century character and appearance, including many of its attractive architectural details</p> <p>Group value: The building forms a group with a number of focal buildings that cumulatively make this area an important gateway to the commercial area of Cowley Road, these include: The former Regal Cinema, Ss Mary and John's Church (with the churchyard) and former vicarage and church hall, and the Victorian parade of shops at Nos. 2011-2015 Cowley Road.</p> <p>Group value and Oxford's identity: This is one of a group of public houses spread across the East Oxford Suburb and particularly concentrated in the streets between Iffley Road and Cowley Road that preserve evidence of developments in the retailing of beer during the mid and late 19th and early 20th century, including the use of architecture to create messages about the status of pubs and their clientele. These buildings provided an important venue for socialising and</p>	

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entertainment for the residents' of these areas in the past and form an important element of its Victorian and Edwardian working class character, which is an important part of its identity. The later, Inter-War period 'improved public houses' are notable for the high quality of architecture they present, adding to the architectural interest of the suburb as a whole and providing important landmarks on many streets.