

Nominate a Heritage Asset

The Old Music Hall at No. 108 Cowley Road (including the offices above Nos. 104 – 110 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	y1
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	y2
Artistic interest – It includes artistic endeavour to communicate meaning or use of design (including landscape design) to enhance appearance	
What is it about the asset that provides this interest?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Former Conservative Club with hall, designed by Henry Wilkinson Moore and built in 1896, using a number of Queen Anne Revival motifs, later reused as a music hall and early cinema and subsequently as offices of Basil Blackwell's. • The building is a good example of late Victorian Architecture and has a strong presence in the street scene. • Despite conversion of the former hall for offices it is reported that elements of the stage and 'flies' have been preserved. 	

3. WHY IS IT LOCALLY VALUED? Is the interest of the asset valued locally	Tick / Rank
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for any of the following reasons?	
Association: It connects us to people and events that shaped the identity or character of the area	y2
Illustration: It illustrates an aspect of the area's past that makes an important contribution to its identity or character	y1
Evidence: It is an important resource for understanding and learning about the area's history	y4
Aesthetics: It makes an important contribution to the positive look of the area either by design or fortuitously	y3
Communal: It is important to the identity, cohesion, spiritual life or memory of all or part of the community	
How is the asset locally valued as heritage?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The building makes an important contribution to the Victorian and Edwardian character of Cowley Road's architecture (aesthetics) illustrating the development of Cowley Road as a district centre in the late 19th and early 20th century, serving the growing suburb (illustration). Its former use as conservative club offices and hall forms an element of the history of East Oxford as a focus of the city's political activity (association). The secondary use as a music hall and later cinema is part of the history of Cowley Road as a place of diverse entertainment venues serving the social life of the community. This is an important feature of the early 20th century history of the provision of leisure activities and entertainment of working class people in Oxford, responding to a period of increased leisure time. As such it contributes to the East Oxford's historic character as a suburb of the more affluent artisans of the city. The building has an association with an historic company and industry (Blackwell's and publishing) that is an important part of Oxford's identity. The history of the adoption of emerging forms of entertainment is particularly interesting. 	

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?	y
Rarity ... Is it unusual in the area or a rare survival of something that was once common?	y
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?	
How does this contribute to its value? Contributes towards place identity.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The building helps to illustrate the period in the late 19th and early 20th century when Cowley Road was emerging as the commercial and social centre for the East Oxford suburb (Age). As a surviving music hall it is a rare building in the suburb, whilst it maintains integrity in the architecture of the frontage range (Integrity). There is some suggestion that the preservation of elements of the stage and theatre machinery also contribute to the building's integrity. The building has group value with the collection of historic buildings surrounding the junction with Jeune Street, including the Ultimate Picture Palace (which had a similar history of use as an early cinema), and former Elm Tree Public House as a group of buildings that provide a strong sense of place and have associations with the history of Cowley Road as a place of leisure and entertainment in the late 19th and early 20th century (Group Value). The building contributes to the identity of East Oxford as cultural hub for the city, well 	

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known for its history as the focus of entertainment venues.