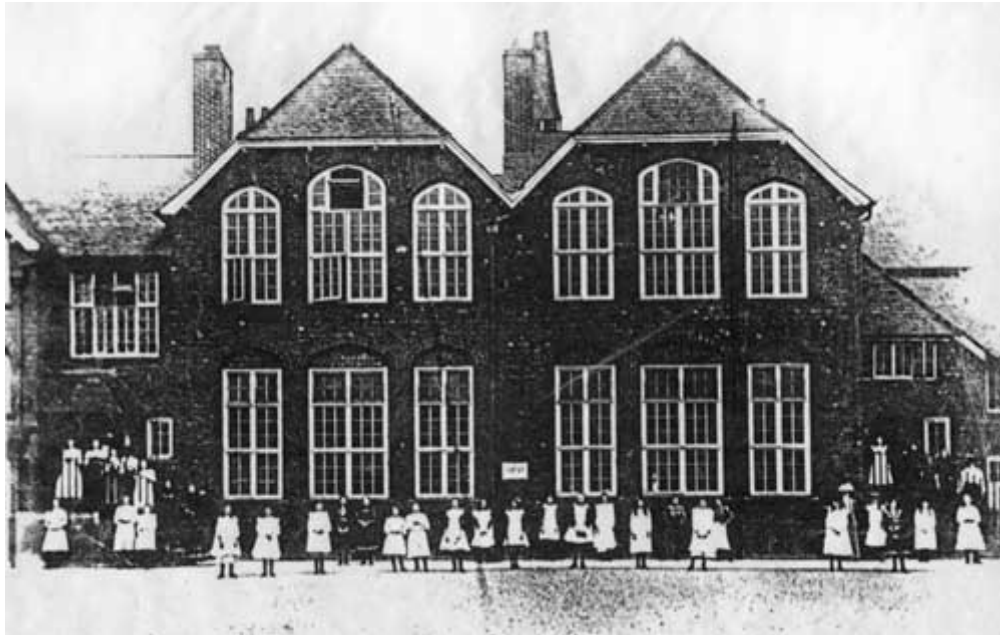
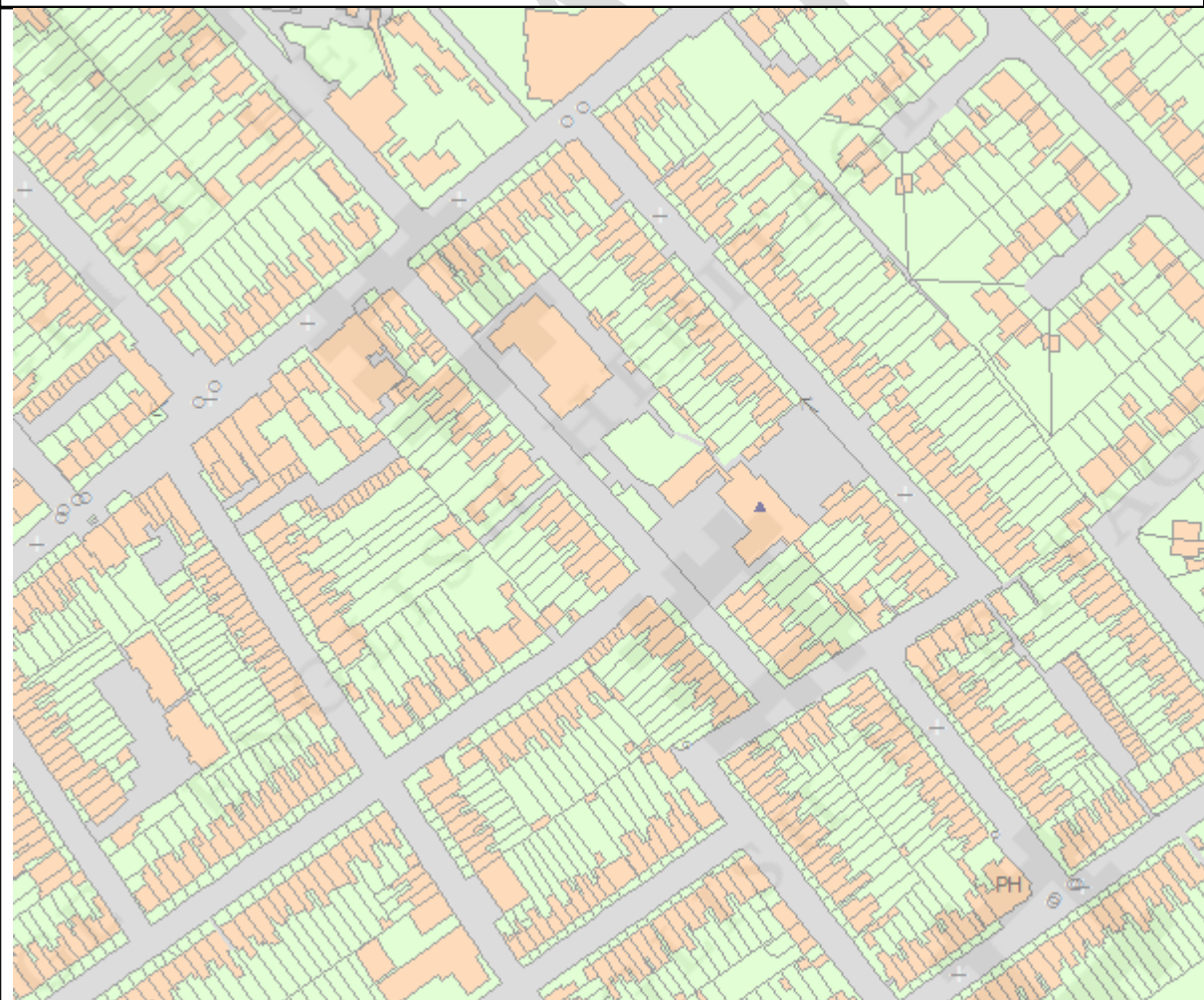


Name and location of your candidate heritage asset

SS Mary & John Primary School, Hertford Street, Oxford:



The Irving building (part of SS Mary & John School) from the Essex Street playground, c.1912



The building is as marked by the blue triangle

1. WHAT IS IT? Is it one of the following?	Tick
a building or group of buildings – A series of school buildings.	√
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
<p>Historic interest – a well documented association with a person, event, episode of history, or local industry:</p> <p>The School complex is made up of two principal buildings.</p> <p>The Comper building was designed and built W Bucknell and JN Comper in 1904. A proponent of the 'Oxford Movement', John Ninian Comper was a Victorian ecclesiastical architect and fellow tractarian of John Keeble. This is a listed building as indicated on the National Heritage List for England (http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england).</p> <p>Alongside it and within the same curtilage lies the Irving Building, built in 1896.</p> <p>SS Mary & John School, once known as the Robin Hood School or St Mary's Road School, was opened in October 1868 and was housed in a small building in St Mary's Road. This school, along with junior classes from St Mary's Road School, transferred to a new building in Hertford Street in 1896, which was extended in 1899. This building (now called the Irving Building) was restored after a serious fire in 1991. A new Infants' school, designed by Sir John Ninian Comper (1864-1960) and described by Bishop Paget as 'an infants' palace', was built on the site and opened in 1904. John Irving was headmaster from April 1895 until he retired in 1932.</p>	√
Archaeological interest – firm evidence of potential to reveal more about the human past through further study	
<p>Architectural interest – an example of an architectural style, a building of particular use, a technique of building, or use of materials</p> <p>The school is built in Victorian red brick. Comper building was described as an infant's Palace by Bishop Paget. The following description is taken from the National Heritage List for England:</p> <p><i>Red brick with dormers of roughcast and imitated half timbering. Tiled roofs.</i></p>	√

<p><i>Windows throughout have Tudor arches and single chamfer, heavy wooden casements with all glazing bars. Facade to Hertford Street: Gabled wings with round coping and three stepped windows. The centre is of six bays with crenellated parapet and buttresses with two setbacks. Two large triangular dormers centred over second and fifth bays. On central buttress a small cusped stone niche with figure of St. Mary and foundation stone with worn applied lettering. Asymmetrical end facades, each with Tudor lancets under central gable and plank door with ornamental hinges to right hand side. Rear facade of five gables, the three in centre over triple windows. Two dormers as at front.</i></p> <p><i>Interior. Central hall with wide pointed wooden tunnel vault, brought to seven corbels on each side by small cross vaults above large glazed partitions which light the classrooms on east, and windows on west. Vault defined by delicate roll-moulded ribs on arises and perpendicular to the ridge, painted brown, dark blue and gold (said to reproduce the original scheme). Classrooms under tunnel vaults running out from walls of hall.</i></p> <p>Victorians believed architecture could have meaning and influence beyond bricks and mortar, in the realm of education among others. In common with many other school buildings of that period, the key features of the Irving building - its high facades, large windows and polychromic brickwork, as well as the provision, internally, of a multi-purpose, open-plan hall and, externally, open space for planting and play - help to form a building with substantial street presence.</p> <p>This helps to mark its own importance as a community asset, but in addition its association with the adjacent Comper building marks it out as a heritage asset and merits its consideration in planning.</p>	
<p>Artistic interest – It includes artistic endeavour to communicate meaning or use of design (including landscape design) to enhance appearance</p>	
<p>What is it about the asset that provides this interest?</p>	
<p>WHY IS IT LOCALLY VALUED? Is the interest of the asset valued locally for any of the following reasons?</p>	<p>Tick / Rank</p>
<p>Association: It connects us to people and events that shaped the identity or character of the area</p> <p>The buildings together continue to house a school in the heart of East Oxford, and have provided the local community this vital function for c. 110 years</p>	<p>√</p>
<p>Illustration: It illustrates an aspect of the area's past that makes an important contribution to its identity or character</p>	<p>√</p>

<p>The school's buildings provide continuity for a diverse local community to a tradition of education for all, the value and importance of inclusivity, and a symbol of local connection and togetherness.</p>	
<p>Evidence: It is an important resource for understanding and learning about the area's history</p> <p>By virtue of its continued status as an educational establishment, the buildings act as a reminder of the importance of local schools acting as mediating and bonding features of local communities.</p>	√
<p>Aesthetics: It makes an important contribution to the positive look of the area either by design or fortuitously</p> <p>The buildings, and their surrounding open spaces, afford the local community a balance to the constraints of an otherwise densely populated area; their variety of scale and features also provide the area with an important architectural landmark.</p>	√
<p>Communal: It is important to the identity, cohesion, spiritual life or memory of all or part of the community</p> <p>Across the community there are families from diverse social and economic backgrounds and ethnicity who have one thing in common: their children or grandchildren having been educated in the Comper and Irving buildings. For these families, significant in their number, the school, and in particular its buildings, has been a point of connection, cohesion and belonging.</p>	√
<p>Heritage: How is the asset locally valued as heritage?</p> <p>By continuing to perform their original function as an educational establishment, and through the focus within the curriculum on the history of the school, the buildings act as a constant physical reminder of their heritage.</p>	

<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?</p>	Tick
<p>Age ... 108-116 years</p>	√
<p>Rarity ... Is it unusual in the area or a rare survival of something that was once common?</p>	√
<p>Integrity ... Is it largely complete or in a near to original condition?</p>	√
<p>Group value ... Is it part of a group that have a close historic, aesthetic or communal association?</p>	√
<p>Oxford's identity ... Is it important to the identity or character of the city or a particular part of it?</p>	√
<p>Other ... Is there another way you think it has special local value?</p>	√

How does this contribute to its value?

Alongside the school, Gibbons Bakery ('Di's Breadshop') has acted as the nexus for the local community - to gather together, to form ties and bonds, to share and receive information, and to buy bread (and sweets!); for generations of families living locally, the common threads in their lives have been school and the morning visit to the 'bread shop'.

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