

## **Community welcomes local listing of former Drews building**

The Bell Tower Community Association warmly welcomes the local listing of the former Drews building on Caversham Road by Reading Borough Council.

The listing should help Bell Tower in its campaign against plans to demolish the building and replace it with a seven-storey warehouse-style block of flats, which it considers too tall for the area. Local listing will mean any development of the site will at least have to reflect its historic character.

The building is the oldest in the Bell Tower area, having been built in the 1870s as a malthouse by Henry Pendlebury Dowson to supply Simonds brewery. The lease for the site was purchased from John Weldale Knollys, a local landowner, who is recalled in Reading street names. When Dowson died in 1902, malting ceased at the site and the main building was converted to retail use. The final tenant was Drews, which moved in in 1979 and finally moved out at the end of 2018.

“It is fantastic to see the historical interest of our area acknowledged, and I’d like to thank Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee and Reading Civic Society for their support of our application to have the building locally listed. Above all, I’d like to thank Bell Tower Committee member Julia Wink and local heritage consultant Mary Neale for all their hard work on this,” Bell Tower Community Association Chairman Jonathan Dart said.

For more on the history of the building go to <https://bell-tower.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/NN054.pdf> and <https://bell-tower.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/NN055.pdf> to see the relevant issues of *Neighbourhood News*.

### About the Bell Tower Community Association

- The Association was founded in October 2005.
- It represents 600 homes and businesses in the area bounded by Caversham Road, Northfield Road, Barry Place, the residential end of Cardiff Road, Addison Road, Denbeigh Place and Randolph Road.
- It represents the local community, organises events, publishes a quarterly newsletter and operates a members' discount scheme with local businesses.
- It won a Pride of Reading Award in 2007 in the Environmental Projects category for its graffiti clean-up campaign and won third place in the 2010 Reading area of the South East Community Empowerment Awards.
- The neighbourhood has no historic name so the association took on the name of a local landmark, the bell tower on E P Collier Primary School in Swansea Road. The tower can be seen from all over the area.

Further information on the Bell Tower Community Association can be found at [www.bell-tower.org.uk](http://www.bell-tower.org.uk)

For information on the listing and the Bell Tower Community Association please contact David Neale: [info@bell-tower.org.uk](mailto:info@bell-tower.org.uk) or 07890 118167.