

Heritage Statement

Advertisement Consent for 1 no. internally illuminated totem sign (Retrospective Application).

At

Boughton Service Station Heath Road Boughton Monchelsea
Maidstone Kent

Client: Mr S Robinson

Andrew Street BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

Consilium

Town Planning Services Limited

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 The report is prepared for Mr S Robinson. It has been prepared to inform an advertisement consent application for one. internally illuminated totem sign (Retrospective application).
- 1.2 The application reference is 21/505300/ADV. This is a retrospective proposal requested by the Local Planning Authority.
- 1.3 This Heritage Statement is prepared by Andrew Street BSc (Hons) DipTP MRTPI. My qualifications include a specialism in conservation and urban design. I am a Director of Consilium Town Planning Services Limited. I have been qualified for 22 years in both private and the public sectors.
- 1.4 The Local Planning Authority has again asked for a Heritage Statement to accompany the planning application. It should be read alongside the submitted planning application drawings.
- 1.5 There are a number of designated 'heritage assets' in the distinct vicinity relevant to this proposal ('heritage assets' are defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (2019)). They are:
 - Boughton Monchelsea Cock Street Conservation Area (See Appendix 2);
 - There are four Grade II listed buildings contained within the conservation area; namely; The Cock Inn, Swallowfields, Martins Farmhouse and 3 Park Lane
- 1.6 The application site is located outside the conservation area.



Google Earth *Proposed Location*

Plan 1 Site Location with Heritage Assets at Boughton Monchelsea

1.7 The purpose of this document is twofold. It firstly provides a proportionate assessment of the significance of the nearby conservation area and listed buildings to a proportionate degree of detail. Secondly, it provides an assessment of the effect of the proposals on the significance of these heritage, in accordance with paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF) 2021.

2.0 Relevant Heritage Policy & Guidance

National Planning Policy and Guidance

- 2.1 Legislation relating to listed buildings and conservation areas is contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and has special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting. Considerable importance and weight will be attached to the desirability of preserving the listed building.
- 2.2 The NPPF sets out government planning policy. Chapter 16 sets out policies for conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
- 2.3 Paragraph 189 requires applicants to describe the heritage significance of heritage assets potentially affected by proposed development. This should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. Paragraph 189 places an onus on local planning authorities to identify and assess the significance on any heritage asset that may be affected, and to take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal.
- 2.4 Paragraph 192 states that local planning authorities, in determining planning applications, should take account of: the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 2.5 Paragraph 193 advises that great weight should be given to an asset's conservation; the more important the asset, the greater this weight should be. It goes on to state that significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset, or development within its setting. Any such harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.
- 2.6 Paragraphs 195 and 196 set out two decision-making tests where proposals would lead to substantial and less than substantial harm respectively. Paragraph 195 guides that substantial harm to or total loss of significance should not be permitted unless that harm is necessary to deliver substantial public benefits that would outweigh that harm or loss, or other criteria are met.
- 2.7 Paragraph 196 guides that where a development proposal would lead to less than substantial harm, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.
- 2.8 Paragraph 197 of the NPPF guides that the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. A balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset in determining applications affecting non-designated heritage assets.
- 2.9 Paragraph 200 guides local planning authorities to look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas 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 or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

- 2.10 The significance of a heritage asset is defined in the NPPF as being made up of four main constituents, architectural interest, historical interest, archaeological interest and artistic interest. The setting of the heritage asset can also contribute to its significance. Setting is defined in the NPPF as follows:

'The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral'.

(Annex 2: NPPF 20)

National Planning Policy Guidance

- 2.11 National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) makes it clear that:

Proposed development affecting a heritage asset may have no impact on its significance or may enhance its significance and therefore cause no harm to the heritage asset. Where potential harm to designated heritage assets is identified, it needs to be categorised as either less than substantial harm or substantial harm (which includes total loss) in order to identify which policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 194-196) apply.

Within each category of harm (which category applies should be explicitly identified), the extent of the harm may vary and should be clearly articulated.

Whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision-maker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases.

(Para Ref. ID 18a-018-20190723)

Best Practice Guidance

- 2.12 Good Practice Advice in Planning (GPA) 'Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment' (2015) provides information on good practice to aid decisionmakers in the implementation of policy set out in the NPPF and PPG.
- 2.13 GPA 'Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets' (2017) sets out advice on managing change within the settings of heritage assets, including archaeological remains and historic buildings, sites, areas, and landscapes. It advocates a staged approach to assessing significance and the impact of development within the setting of heritage assets.
- 2.14 Historic England Advice Note 12 "Statements of Heritage Significance" (2019) covers the NPPF requirement for applicants for heritage and other consents

to describe heritage significance to help local planning authorities to make decisions on the impact of proposals for change to heritage assets. It explores the assessment of significance of heritage assets as part of a staged approach to decision-making in which assessing significance precedes designing the proposal(s).

Local Plan Context

- 2.15 The relevant development plan is the Maidstone Local Plan (adopted 2017). The local plan states that where development is proposed for a site which includes or has the potential to impact on heritage assets, developers must submit an appropriate heritage assessment which analyses the direct and indirect effects of development on those assets. Significance can be defined in this context as the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest which may be historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic. Significance derives not only from the heritage asset's physical presence but also from its setting.

- 2.16 Policy DM 4 states:

Development affecting designated and non-designated heritage assets

1. Applicants will be expected to ensure that new development affecting a heritage asset incorporates measures to conserve, and where possible enhance, the significance of the heritage asset and, where appropriate, its setting.

2. Where appropriate, development proposals will be expected to respond to the value of the historic environment by the means of a proportionate Heritage Assessment which assesses and takes full account of:

i. Any heritage assets, and their settings, which could reasonably be impacted by the proposals;

ii. The significance of the assets; and

iii. The scale of the impact of development on the identified significance.

3. Where development is proposed for a site which includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, applicants must submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation

3 Statement of Significance

- 3.1 This section seeks to establish the heritage significance of the heritage assets on the site, which is defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as:

'The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.'

- 3.2 The setting of a heritage asset is described in Annex 2 of the NPPF as:

'The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance may be neutral.'

Conservation Areas in Boughton Monchelsea

- 3.3 Boughton Monchelsea has three designated Conservation Areas: The Green, Quarries, and Cock Street. The Cock Street Conservation Area, relevant to this application, was designated by Maidstone Borough Council in January 1990.
- 3.4 The Cock Street area was deemed to have conservation area status because of its *'special character engendered largely by a collection of listed buildings, although other buildings do contribute to the visual qualities of the locality. This area is readily identifiable, being bounded to the north and west by 20th century housing and farmland, to the east by a **garage** (emphasis added) and farmland.'*
- 3.5 The Cock Street Conservation area is located east of the main village of Boughton Monchelsea at the crossroads of Green Lane, Brishing Lane, Park Lane, and Heath Road (B2163). The village is historically rural and agrarian.
- 3.6 Today fields remain to the north, south and southeast. The wider village of Boughton Monchelsea lies approximately 4.5 kilometres south of Maidstone and is the largest settlement of development in the Parish of Boughton Monchelsea. To the west are Linton Parish and Loose Parish and to the north lie Maidstone and Langley. On the east it is bordered by Chart Sutton and to the south by Staplehurst and Marden.

The Boughton Monchelsea Cock Street Conservation Area

- 3.7 Boughton Monchelsea's Cock Street Conservation Area contains four listed buildings they are Martins Farmhouse and Swallows. All are believed to date to the 15th century and the building which became the Cock Inn originated in the 16th century.
- 3.8 The density of old, so-called high-status buildings in one hamlet is one indication of the area's relative importance. All three buildings are notable for their age and design. All are located on or near the crossroads.
- 3.9 Although all three of the above buildings were likely to have been built as farmhouses, Martins Farmhouse is the longest-serving remnant of this history. A large, L-shaped building, its rear, right wing was added in the 16th century.

It was only converted to three dwellings in the second half of the 20th century, adding the addresses of 1 & 2 Park Lane.

- 3.10 Two of these were part of the Martins Farmhouse complex, now called “The Oast” and “The Barn” All three appear on the 1876 Ordnance Survey map so may date from the late Georgian to Victorian era.
- 3.11 The Cock Inn’s location is another indication of the importance of the crossroads. While it likely began as a smaller farmhouse, it was altered early on to serve as an inn for travellers from London to Canterbury. The first written mention of “The Cock” is 1623.
- 3.12 Copies of the listings are attached in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.13 The images below clearly illustrate the setting of the site.



Google Image

Proposed Site (1940)



Google Image

Proposed Site (1960)



Google Image

Proposed Site (1990)



Google Image

Proposed Site (2019)

- 3.14 There is no archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic connection between the site and the Boughton Monchelsea Cock Street Conservation Area.
- 3.15 Copies of the listings are attached in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.16 The designated heritage assets are located to the west and south west of the site, approximately 50 metres distant. Swallowfields is well screened from the proposal by mature boundary tree planting that obscures the proposal.
- 3.17 From the archives at Kent County Council confirm no archeological records or interest relating to the site. Moreover, there is no architectural, artistic or historic relationship to any of these designated heritage assets.

4 *The Planning Application Proposals*

- 4.1 The advertisement consent application is for 1 no. internally illuminated totem sign (Retrospective).

- 4.2 The sign measures approximately 6 metres in height and is 1.5 metres in width and 0.7 metres in depth. Details of the submission are attached on the accompanying drawings

5 Consideration of Heritage Effects

- 5.1 Provided below is a consideration of effects on the designated heritage assets taking into the above analysis and the contribution the site makes towards of the significance of these assets.

Effects on the Boughton Monchelsea Cock Street Conservation Area

- 5.2 As explained above, the setting of the Site makes little if any contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area as a designated heritage asset.
- 5.3 There is no architectural, artistic or archaeological relationship between the site and the Cock Street Conservation Area.
- 5.4 With regard to the contribution the inter-visibility between the site and the Conservation Area and the contribution that makes towards its setting, it is notable that views of the signage are obscured by an existing tree line that exists between the petrol filling station and the adjoining property at Swallowfields
- 5.5 The proposed signage is a replacement for an earlier totem pole sign that had been previously removed from this location. The foundations of this earlier signage can be clearly viewed on site.
- 5.6 It is therefore considered that the proposed development is consistent with and suitably retains the historic settlement pattern of the adjoining conservtaion area,
- 5.7 Lastly, it is not considered that the proposed development would give rise to any environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from the proposed land use that would affect the understanding of the historic relationship (to the extent there is any) between the site and the Conservation Area.
- 5.8 In summary, it is considered that the scale, design and layout of the built form proposed and the intervening distance between the Conservation Area and the residential development will limit the potential impact on its significance. The existing tree planting alongside the petrol station will further screen and soften the new development, assisting to assimilate it into its context. It is not considered that the scheme would impact our ability to appreciate the designated heritage asset.
- 5.9 It is therefore considered that the overall effect of the development on the significance of the Conservation Areas or its setting is arguably '**neutral**'. To the extent that any harm could be argued to be caused to the significance of the Conservation Area, then it is considered this would be at very low level of '*less than substantial harm*'.

6 Summary and Conclusion

- 6.1 This Heritage Statement comprises a proportionate consideration of the relevant designated heritage assets comprising the Boughton Monchelsea Conservation Area and the Listed Buildings within the conservtaion area. It is considered sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposed development on their significance.
- 6.2 Policy DM4 of the Local Plan set out the Council's requirements for applications in close proximity to heritage assets and the criteria against which they will be assessed.
- 6.3 For the reasons set out in the report above, this document together with the accompanying plans and supporting information have demonstrated compliance with the local policy requirements.
- 6.4 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) requires local planning authorities to have regard to the desirability of preserving the significance of listed buildings, including any contribution made by their setting to that significance. Then proposed design and location it is not considered to result in an unacceptable level of harm to the significance of the listed buildings or their settings and therefore meet the statutory test set out at Section 16 of the 1990 Act.
- 6.5 The NPPF sets out government planning policy. Chapter 16 sets out policies for conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
- 6.6 For the reasons set out in this report it is considered that due to the scale and nature of development proposed, combined with the proposed site layout and associated landscaping would not result in harm to the significance of the heritage assets or their setting. As such the proposals are considered to be in line with the objectives set out in paragraph 192 of the NPPF.
- 6.7 To the extent that any harm could be argued to be caused to the significance of these assets, then it is considered this would be at a very low level of *'less than substantial harm'*.
- 6.8 We request that the advertisement consent be allowed.

Appendix 1: Copies of Relevant Historic England listings

Appendix 2 Boughton Monchelsea Cock Street Conservation Area Plan