
Dancers End Water Pumping Station: Repairs to Roof Heritage Statement (incorporating Design & Access)

Dancers End Water Pumping Station/Treatment
Works, Dancers End, Buckland, Bucks HP24 6LB

May 2021

Listed Building Consent Application

Heritage Statement

The Savills logo, consisting of the word "savills" in a lowercase, sans-serif font, with the 's' in red and the rest in black, set against a yellow square background.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Heritage Statement has been prepared to support a Listed Building Consent Application by Thames Water Utilities Ltd (Thames Water) for repairs to the roof of Dancers End Water Pumping Station. The description of proposals is: 'Replacement of single-ply roofing system to Listed Pumping Station with the new liquid waterproofing system and associated works to repoint, re-flash and repair coping stones.' The details of the proposals are set out in the accompanying Centaur Specification Report dated 9th April 2021.
- 1.2. The Dancers End Water Pumping Station was Listed Grade II in 2014.
- 1.3. Dancers End is an operational water pumping station/water treatment works.
- 1.4. All of the land to which the application relates is owned and operated by Thames Water Utilities Limited and constitutes 'operational land'.
- 1.5. The repairs to the roof are not classed as development. If they were classed as development for any reason, they would constitute permitted development under Schedule 2, Part 13, Class A. of the GPDO, 2015. Class A of Part 13 sets out that the following works are permitted development: "Development for the purposes of their undertaking by statutory undertakers for the supply of water or hydraulic power consisting of - (g) any other development in, on, over or under operational land, other than the provision of a building but including the extension or alteration of a building."
- 1.6. Aylesbury Vale Council Heritage Team were notified of the proposals on 17th May 2021 and responded on 21st May 2021 setting out that a Listed Building application was required and that *"the proposals would raise no overriding heritage concerns in principle subject to relevant details as outlined in the specification."*
- 1.7. This Heritage Statement sets out the national, regional and local planning policy, considers the significance of the building as Heritage Assets and assesses the impact of the proposed works.

2. Site Description

- 2.1. Dancers End Water Pumping Station/Treatment Works constitutes operational land as defined in the Town and Country Planning Act, that being land that is either specifically used or held for the purposes of carrying out Thames Water's statutory undertakings.

- 2.2. The Pumping Station is a complex of structures built between 1866 and c.1970, which includes a gateway and watchman's lodge, an engine house, a cooling pond, an oil tank, lime tanks, a slacking house, settling reservoirs, a workshop, garages, a pair of workers cottages, and a superintendent's house.
- 2.3. The engine house, pump rooms, watchman's lodge, boundary wall, gate piers and cooling pond at Dancers End Pumping Station were Listed Grade II on 30th April 2014. The Historic England list description is provided below:

DATE AND ARCHITECT: principally of 1866 but extended in the late-C19. Attributed to George Devey.

MATERIALS: red brown brick with polychromatic moulded brick and soft red brick dressings, flat concrete roofs, and stone coping and finials.

PLAN: a rectangular plan, two-storey structure built 1866, with later C19 additions including a rectangular-plan single-storey boiler room, a booster pump room, a well pump room, and a chlorination room.

EXTERIORS:

1866 ENGINE HOUSE The original engine house, in Artisan Mannerist style is of two storeys and four- by-two bays, with a tall chimney attached to the north-east return. The main, north-west elevation is in four bays. It has a moulded brick plinth, below a ground floor which is treated architecturally as a basement. It is in plain brick with brick quoins and pierced by three narrow two-over-two pane horned sash windows set within openings with plain architraves beneath red brick flat arches with projecting keystones. A flight of stone steps to the left hand, northern bay, leads to a flat-roofed brick porch that has a round-arched front and side openings, in red brick, flanked by pilasters at the angles that rise to a moulded brick cornice. A tall brick parapet has a shaped centrepiece which contains a roundel bearing an 1866 date-stone. A pair of half-glazed doors have glass panels etched with a picture of Neptune with water spilling out of a cornucopia and are inscribed 'Chiltern Hills Water Works 1867'.

The principal, first floor, above a moulded storey band, has rusticated brick piers at the corners rising to a projecting moulded brick cornice. The main and rear elevations are articulated by rusticated pilaster strips, each bay with a tall, narrow, segmental-arched two-over-two pane horned sash window, again with red brick dressings. The two-bay return elevations have plain pilasters and on the south-west elevation blind openings. The panelled parapet, decorated with corner ball finials, screens the flat concrete roof. The centre of each end elevation is ramped up to form a small gablet enclosing a blind roundel. In the centre of the ground floor of the south-west elevation is the rusticated and truncated base of the original chimney stack, flanked to the right by a square-headed doorway.

The ground floor of the north-east elevation is obscured by the late-C19 extension; above which, it has a four-pane horned sash window with a segmental arch and an attached octagonal stair tower. This is surmounted by a lantern with in-filled round-arches and an octagonal domed roof with a weather vane. Doors at the top of the stair and base open onto the flat roofs of the engine house and late C19 extension.

To the rear, the original boiler room was housed in a single-storey, four-by-one bay arcaded range with a projecting brick cornice and flat roof. It has been converted into an electrical sub-station and the arcade has been in-filled and has doors inserted in the two end bays.

LATE C19 EXTENSION A late-C19, single-storey extension in a simplified Queen Anne revival style was built against the north-east elevation of the engine house; it contains a booster pump room, well pump room, an entrance lobby, chlorination room, and a new boiler house range. The two pump rooms are taller than the remainder of the structure. The well pump room, which echoes the engine house architecturally, has brick quoins, a moulded cornice and parapet, and is lit on the main elevation by three full-height four-over-four pane horned sash windows with segmental-arches, and by a square glazed louvred skylight in the flat concrete roof. Linking it to the engine house the plainer, booster pump room has a central round-arched doorway, flanked by, and below small keyed square windows, one blind, and by an oculus at first floor level.

The lower, single-storey range to the rear has an L-plan and wraps round the south-east and north-east walls of the taller rooms, with the boiler room occupying the south-eastern side. It has rusticated corners, rising to a moulded cornice with a low parapet obscuring a flat concrete roof. A glass block skylight over the boiler room has corner brick pillars and a pyramidal tile roof and rises above the height of the parapet. Given the relatively small size of this skylight, it seems likely that it was originally a louvered ventilator. The north-east elevation has two round-arch brick openings, a glazed door and a blind window with an inserted late-C20 double-doorway. One of the arches has a four-pane sash window with simple brick architraves and a projecting keystone, the other a late-C20 roller shutter door. The plain south-east elevation has a late-C20 doorway and two casement windows, inserted when the boiler room was converted to a workshop.

INTERIORS:

ENGINE HOUSE The engine house has a cantilevered stone stair with a timber handrail on plain cast-iron balusters and decorative newel posts. A doorway in the south-western wall of the lobby leads to the former steam condenser room which has a low, rounded, rectangular stone curb that encloses a steel plate cover over well No.2. Two cast-iron columns set into the kerb support the cast-iron beams and joists of the first-floor engine room above. A bricked-up doorway and openings in the south-east wall originally gave access to the former arcaded boiler room built against the rear elevation of the engine house. A brick plinth, which provided the base for the twin beam engine on the first floor, rises the full height of the room against the south-west wall. The former engine room is devoid of original fittings apart from four lifting rings in the concrete ceiling; the holdfast for the engine may still exist under the secondary floor covering. From the first floor a stone winder stair within the stair turret leads to the roofs. Modern steel storage racks within this building are not of special interest.

The late-C19 extension contains the chlorification room, the workshop (former boiler room), the well pump room and booster pump room. The chlorification room has a four-panel timber door with glazed upper panels and it is equipped with C21 chlorification equipment; the equipment is not of special interest. The workshop is devoid of any original fittings. The well pump room has a red quarry-brick tile floor with a concrete roof that has two lifting rings and a beam mounted block and tackle. Two late-C19 cast-iron valve pillar wheels, manufactured by Glenfield and Kennedy of Kilmarnock, and a chequered plate manhole are set in the floor. Late-C20 electrical cabinets and chlorification equipment within the room are not of special interest. A doorway in the south-west wall leads into the booster pump room; it is devoid of any original fittings apart from a girder beam for block and tackle lifting equipment. A door beneath the projecting base of the stair turret leads to the engine house.

SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: the engine house sits within a complex of structures within a walled courtyard. The courtyard is screened by a wall and is entered through a gateway flanked by a pair of brick gate posts that have rubbing stones at their base and are capped by ball finials. To the north-east of the engine house the brick wall is raised on a brick plinth and is capped with coping stones. The north-eastern section of this wall has an attached square-plan watchman's lodge in polychrome brickwork with a projecting brick cornice and a flat roof behind a low parapet. It is entered by a door in the south-west elevation and is illuminated by two small four-pane sash windows, one in the south-east elevation and one in the north-west that provides a view over the approaches to the pumping station.

Other structures within the courtyard and the adjacent workshops, cottages and superintendent's house contribute to this group. However, they have not been assessed for listing and so are not included in this List entry.

3. Proposed Works

- 3.1. The proposed minor works are to “replace the single-ply roofing system to Listed Pumping Station with the new liquid waterproofing system and associated works to repoint, re-flash and repair coping stones.’ as set out in the accompanying Centaur Specification Report dated 9th April 2021.
- 3.2. In summary, there are four flat roof areas over split levels all of the same build up. The roof has had a single ply overlay to the previous bituminous and asphalt coverings. The single ply has reached the end of its life, water has penetrated beneath the membrane and the roof is in need of refurbishment. It is proposed to strip the single ply membrane from the roof, going back to the bituminous system beneath which is then to receive a new Centech PU system to restore the waterproofing properties of the roof as detailed in the accompanying report.
- 3.3. Some of the roof copings are old and in a poor state of repair with mortar in the joints being loose or missing and in need of attention. The copings will be checked for stability and that they are firmly bedded. Where unstable the mortar joints will be raked clear and repointed with new lime mortar to weatherproof, and repair any defective areas of coping.
- 3.4. The repairs to the roof are not classed as development and hence to not require planning permission. If for any reason they were classed as development, they would constitute permitted development under Schedule 2, Part 13, Class A. of the GPDO, 2015. Class A of Part 13 sets out that the following works are permitted development: “Development for the purposes of their undertaking by statutory undertakers for the supply of water or hydraulic power consisting of - (g) any other development in, on, over or under operational land, other than the provision of a building but including the extension or alteration of a building.”

4. Planning Policy Framework

- 4.1.
- 4.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), February 2019, sets out the Government’s objectives for conserving and enhancing the historic environment in Chapter 16. The NPPF aims to conserve heritage assets and utilise the historic environment in creating sustainable places.
- 4.3. Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. Paragraph 193 states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the assets conservation.

- 4.4. The Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan Policy BE1: Heritage Assets advises that all development, including new buildings, alterations, extensions, changes of use and demolitions, should seek to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, including their setting, and seek enhancement wherever possible.

5. Heritage/ Planning Assessment

- 5.1. As set out above, the existing flat roof has come to the end of its life and requires replacing to ensure the building is water tight. The current roof leaks and this will detrimentally affect the fabric of the building if not remedied. The proposed replacement roof and repairs to coping stones, will ensure that the building is weather tight for the foreseeable future.
- 5.2. The proposed alterations are considered to be very minor in nature and it is not considered that these alterations will have a detrimental impact on the character of the Listed building. The proposed replacement roof is in keeping with the existing roof and existing coping stones will be retained and properly bedded.
- 5.3. The proposed works were informally discussed with the Heritage Team at the Council prior to the submission of the application and did not raise any concerns.
- 5.4. The proposed works will secure the ongoing use of the building which is a significant positive in favour of the application. The proposals are considered to be in accordance with national and local planning policy, as set out above and consent should therefore be granted.

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