

Heritage Statement
in connection with
Proposed development at

Land North of Copp Lane, Great Ecclestone

Prepared by

Ian Rowan MSc PGDip

April 2021

Contents

1	Introduction	3
2	General Description	4
3	Heritage Appraisal	15
4	Analysis of the Proposals	19
5	Summary & Conclusions	24

APPENDIX 1 – Local Planning Policy

INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Format

- 1.1 This heritage statement has been prepared to assess proposals to develop land to the north of Copp Lane, Great Eccleston for residential purposes. The proposal site is located within the vicinity of the Grade II Listed Dovecote to the east of the site, which is also designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Therefore, care is needed to avoid harming the significances of the setting listed building / SAM in line with the requirements of planning law and policy.
- 1.2 The statement assesses heritage significance and guides proposals for change in a manner that conserves significance and avoids harm. The approach adheres to the principle of managing change intelligently, which lies at the heart of national planning policy for conservation of the historic built environment.
- 1.3 The statement has been prepared in accordance with the general guidelines set out in the Historic England publications 'Informed Conservation'ⁱ and 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance'ⁱⁱ and in particular responds to heritage policies outlined in Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG, 2019). The legal context is set by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act of 1990.
- 1.4 The local planning policy context is set by Policy CDMP 5 and SA3/3 of the Wyre Local Plan.

The Author

- 1.5 Ian Rowan, the author is a qualified Planning & Conservation Officer. With a background of over 30 years in Planning, Regeneration & Conservation, Ian holds a Masters Degree in Environmental Planning and a Post Graduate Diploma in Conservation & Regeneration, and has specialised in Conservation Planning since 2004.

Methods of Research and Investigation

- 1.6 Inspections of the site were carried out in March 2021 to assess its physical nature. Background research has also been conducted to ascertain all relevant contextual matters appertaining to the proposals. In accordance with the NPPF, background research has been proportionate to the nature of the proposed works and their likely impact.

2 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Location

- 2.1 The site is located on the north side of Copp Lane to the south west of the settlement of Great Ecclestone. The topography of the site is relatively flat. The site forms part of the wider Masterplan forming part of SA3/3 of the Wyre Local Plan. To the immediate north of the site is a public footpath along with wider open land, whilst to the south of Copp Lane, a previous phase of the masterplan has been implemented for residential purposes. to the east of the site is open land containing the Dovecote, with open land to the west. A location plan is given in figure 1.

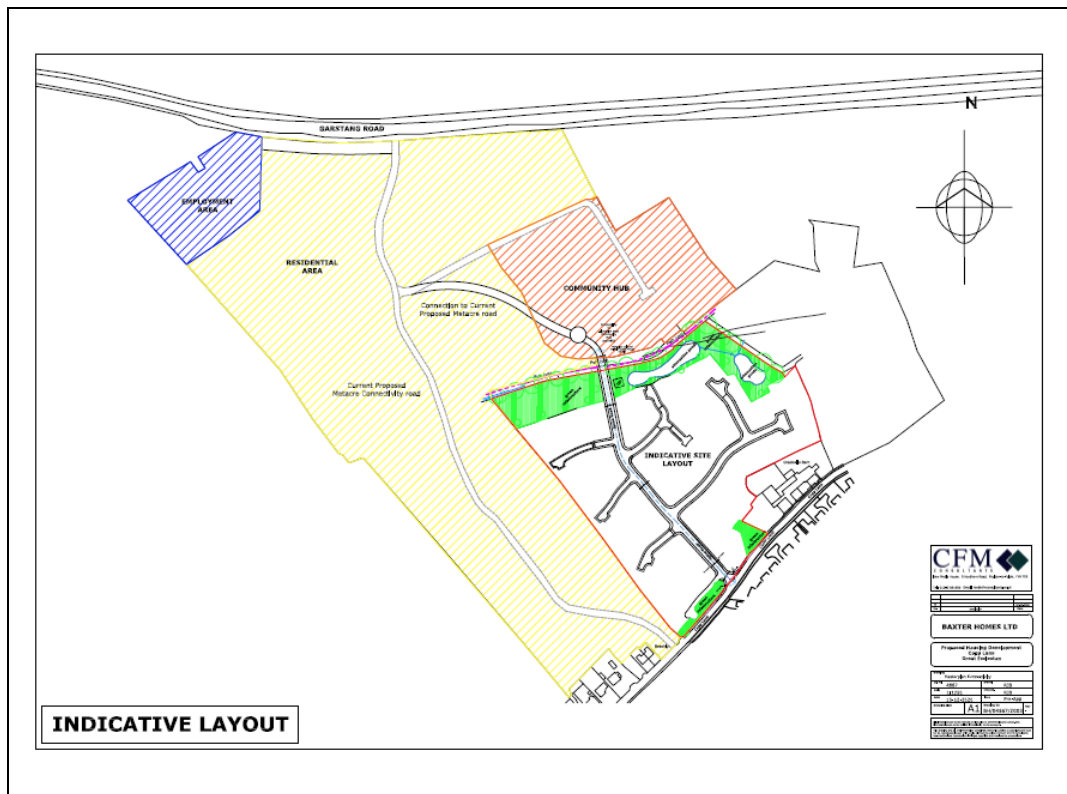


Figure 1 Location plan.

Outline Description & Historical Background

- 2.2 Map regression shows that the land forming the site and the wider masterplan area as being part of agricultural land holdings pre-dating the 1844 Ordnance Survey map, see Figure 2. The Dovecote first appears upon this plan, and it appears little changed since.
- 2.3 The Dovecote thought to date from the 17th Century and is of particular historic interest as a structure built to provide a source of food for the owner, often associated with buildings and owners of particular social standing and status. It is likely associated with Leckonby House, still extant to Leckonby Street, although some of the buildings throughout the small estate have been demolished. Features of interest are shown in the site photographs given later in Plates 1 – 12.

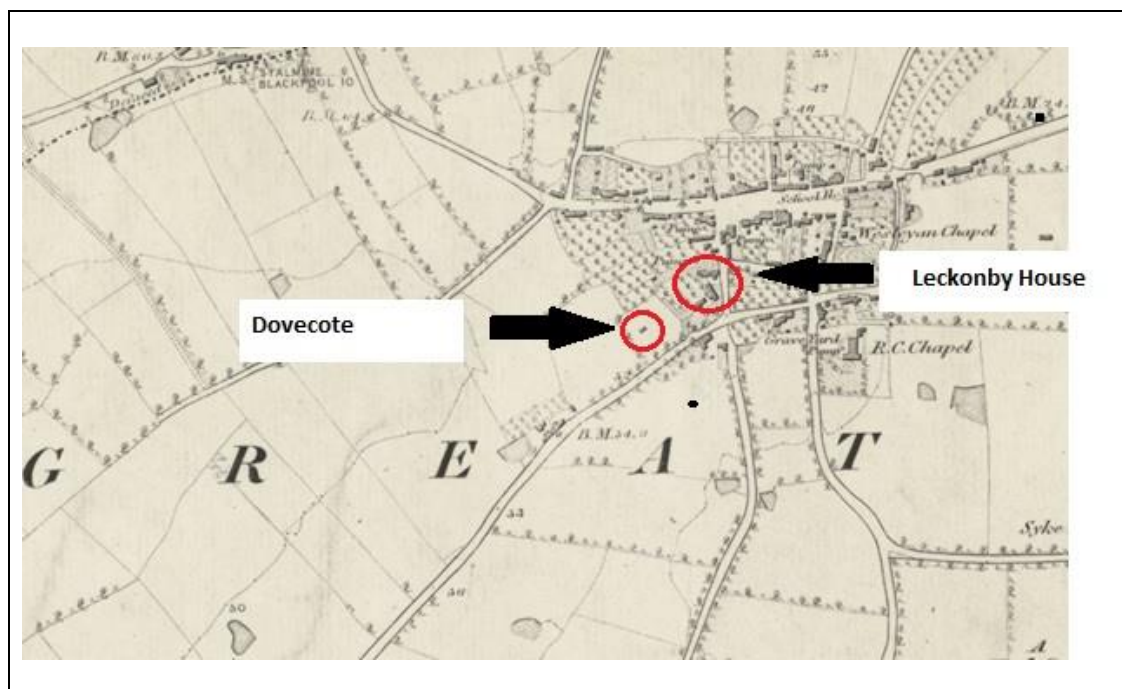


Figure 2 OS map of 1844

(Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)

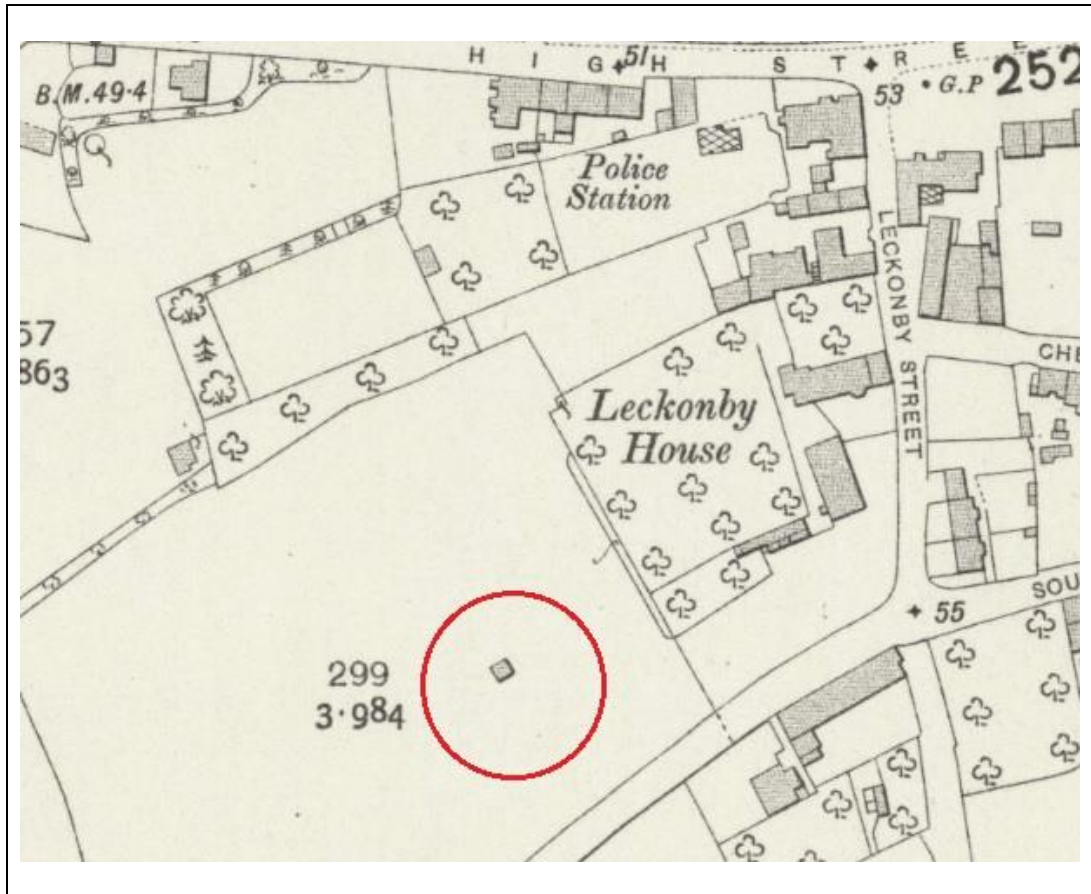


Figure 3 OS map of 1909

(Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland)

Heritage Asset Designations

- 2.4 The Dovecote is Grade II Listed and is also a Scheduled Ancient Monument, and the descriptions are provided below.

SD 44 SW GREAT ECCLESTONE

281/5/10001 Dovecote

II

Dovecote. Late C18, with late C20 replacement of roof structure. Red brick, with tile rat course at mid- wall level, and a Welsh-slatted pyramidal roof with a square ogee-roofed cupola. Square plan, with doorway to east side and a window above, both with shallow segmental brick arches. Studded plank door, hung from straps set on pins attached to ashlar sandstone blocks set into doorway jambs. Blocked overlight to door head. At door head level, and extending around all elevations, a double course of tiles form a rat course'. INTERIOR: Each wall contains 10 rows of nesting boxes, 9 boxes to each row, although internal alterations have damaged some areas. The lower part was latterly used to stall animals.

Reasons for Designation

Dovecotes are specialised structures designed for the breeding and keeping of doves as a source of food and as a symbol of high social status. Most surviving examples were built in the period between the 14th and the 17th centuries, although both earlier and later examples are documented. They were generally freestanding structures, square or circular in plan and normally of brick or stone, with nesting boxes built into the internal wall. They were frequently sited at manor houses or monasteries. Whilst a relatively common monument class (1500 examples are estimated to survive out of an original population of c.25,000), most will be considered to be of national interest, although the majority will be listed rather than scheduled. They are also generally regarded as an important component of local distinctiveness and character.

Despite some disturbance to the monument's nest boxes caused by later modifications, the dovecote at Great Eccleston 150m north east of Gradwells survives reasonably well and remains a good example of this class of monument. It is a rare survival in Lancashire of a brick-built 17th century dovecote.

Details

The monument includes a 17th century brick-built slate-roofed dovecote surmounted by a later wooden square cupola or lantern. It is located in a field to the south west of Great Eccleston village 150m north east of Gradwells. The dovecote measures 4.7m square with a door on the north east side and a window above. Both door and window have arched lintels of vertical bricks and the doorway has jambs of rounded brick edges with inset dressed stone blocks for the door hinges and catch. Traces of an

external string course survive, formed of a double course of brick tiles projecting from the walls about halfway up. This is said to be a 'rat course' designed to prevent rats and other predators climbing the vertical walls and entering via the flight holes which would have been located in the lantern on top of the roof. This string course would have also functioned as a sunning ledge and perch for the doves. Internally there are ten rows of brick nest boxes each originally having nine boxes to each row. However, later modifications to the dovecote have disturbed a small number of these nest boxes. The dovecote is a Grade II Listed Building.

Photographic Survey

2.5 There follows a selection of photographs showing the relevant features of the site and the Conservation Area.



Plate 1 – Dovecote from Copp Lane



Plate 2 – Site From Copp Lane



Plate 3 – Site From Copp Lane



Plate 4 – Site From Copp Lane



Plate 5 – Site From Copp Lane



Plate 6 – Site From Copp Lane



Plate 7 – Dovecote From Copp Lane



Plate 8 – Dovecote from Copp Lane (Looking towards site)



Plate 9 – Dovecote



Plate 10 – Site from Public Footpath



Plate 11 – Looking through site the site towards the Dovecote



Plate 12 – Looking through site towards Gradwells Farm

3 HERITAGE APPRAISAL

Introduction

- 3.1 The following appraisal adheres to guidance published by Historic England (2008)² and relates specifically to the requirement contained in paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019), given in extract below:
- 3.2 *“In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.”*
- 3.3 The appraisal begins by identifying and assessing any heritage values which might be affected by the proposals, before evaluating these values and expressing them concisely within a ‘Statement of Significance’. The essential purpose of this Statement is to set priorities for conservation of significance and enable an objective assessment on the likely impact of the proposals.

Heritage Values

- 3.4 The heritage values explored below are distilled under the following headings: *evidential value; historic value; communal value; aesthetic value*. The exploration focusses specifically on those values deemed of relevance to the proposals and is therefore not an exhaustive assessment of the relevant heritage assets.

Evidential Value

- 3.5 Historic England (2008) suggests that “Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.”
- 3.6 The Dovecote located on land to the north of Copp Lane presents authentic evidence of this particular type of building. Built of brick in an English

Garden Wall Bond, under a hipped slate roof, this brickwork suggests possible 18th Century development, (as identified through the listing description), although the scheduling description suggests the building is from the 17th Century. The provision of the brick tiles at mid height was designed to prevent rats climbing and entering the building.

- 3.7 As expected of a building of this nature, its rural setting within an enclosed field has long since been established, whilst possible evidential links with nearby gentry houses has long since been diminished, thus eroding some of this value.
- 3.8 The proposal site, an open field to the west of the Dovecote is divided by dense planting, which the masterplan suggests is to be retained. Much of these hedgerows date back to at least the mid - 19th Century and as such yield some evidential value in terms of enclosure, however these are around the edge of the site and not within the site, which have long since disappeared.

Historical Value

- 3.9 Historic England (2008) suggests that - "Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative".
- 3.10 The Dovecote conserves an element of Great Eccleston's historic past and demonstrates a style of building popular with the gentry at the time of construction and as such the building holds some illustrative historic value due to its ability to depict images of the past. The relatively intact nature of the building provides some notable historic value. The provision of such a building suggests that the owners were likely of a particular high social standing and yields historic value in terms of how the owners expressed their power and wealth to others and gives an insight into life on a landed estate, along with demonstrating the diet of the gentry class. The land around the building provides some contributory historic value in terms of its rural nature.
- 3.11 The proposals site holds little in the way historic value in terms of how it relates to the Listed structure. Whilst the wider rural nature of the fields

will contribute to the rural historic nature of Great Eccleston, the links of the Dovecote to Leckonby House as a source of food has been eroded through later building and the evolution of the village.

Communal Value

- 3.12 Historic England (2008) suggests that: "Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory".
- 3.13 As a highly visible listed building and Ancient Monument, communal value associated with the Dovecote will be high. Some of this value will be presented due to its Grade II Listed status and designation as a SAM, whilst its prominence as a focal historic building on the outskirts of the settlement will provide a source of shared community pride as a building of national importance. The setting of the Dovecote will provide some communal value in terms of its openness to Copp Lane.
- 3.14 The proposals site yields little communal value in heritage terms. It is a private site albeit a public footpath runs to the north, and this limited value does not readily relate to the heritage values attributed to the Dovecote

Aesthetic Value

- 3.15 Historic England (2008) suggests that: "Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place". good
- 3.16 The Dovecote is a good example of such a structure, but is devoid of any notable architectural value and detailing, being designed primarily for its particular function in a vernacular style. That said, some value is yielded through the use of traditional materials, and the cupola provides some aesthetic value as a focal point for an otherwise plain functional building.
- 3.17 The setting of the Dovecote is established by its location within the field, which contributes to its original rural setting in a positive way. The immediate setting to the north east of the building has been eroded by later development, divorcing it from its original setting in the wider estate of Leckonby House. The structure is best experienced from Copp Lane, as

it is traversed from the south west, the building can be glimpsed over the hedge, before the site opens up alongside the Dovecote to provide a notable view.

- 3.18 The proposals site does not contribute to the setting of the Dovecote. Heavily screened by planting between the site and the Dovecote's field, there are no glimpses of the structure from the site or vice versa

Statement of Significance

- 3.19 Having assessed the heritage values associated with the site, it is possible to take a more informed approach to the assessment of site significance, giving specific consideration to conservation priorities in light of the proposals for change. In this context a statement of significance is given below.
- 3.20 The Dovecote yields high evidential, historic, and communal values, with lower aesthetic value. The setting is moderate to high in terms of its evidential and aesthetic setting and higher in historic and communal value. The proposals site is relatively low in significance and as it is divorced from the Dovecote field, makes little or no contribution to the setting, this being limited mainly to the north end of Copp Lane and the field itself.

4 ANALYSIS OF THE PROPOSALS

General Principles

- 4.1 General guidance on assessing proposed changes to heritage assets is given in Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2019). The policy establishes the premise that conserving significance should be a guiding principle when developing proposals for any new scheme. In order to do this it is first necessary to conduct an appraisal of heritage values and identify the significance(s) of heritage assets before commencing with design. Part 3 of this appraisal fulfils this need, and the findings of part 3 have informed the development of the proposals. There follows, here in section 4, an objective review of the finalised scheme to verify to what extent conservation of significance has either been secured or compromised.

Summary of the Proposals

- 4.2 The proposals consist of proposed residential dwellings upon the proposals site, to the rear of Gradwells Farm and north of Copp Lane. Full plans will be submitted as part of the planning application but an indicative layout is provided overleaf in Figure 4.



Figure 4 Indicative Layout Plan

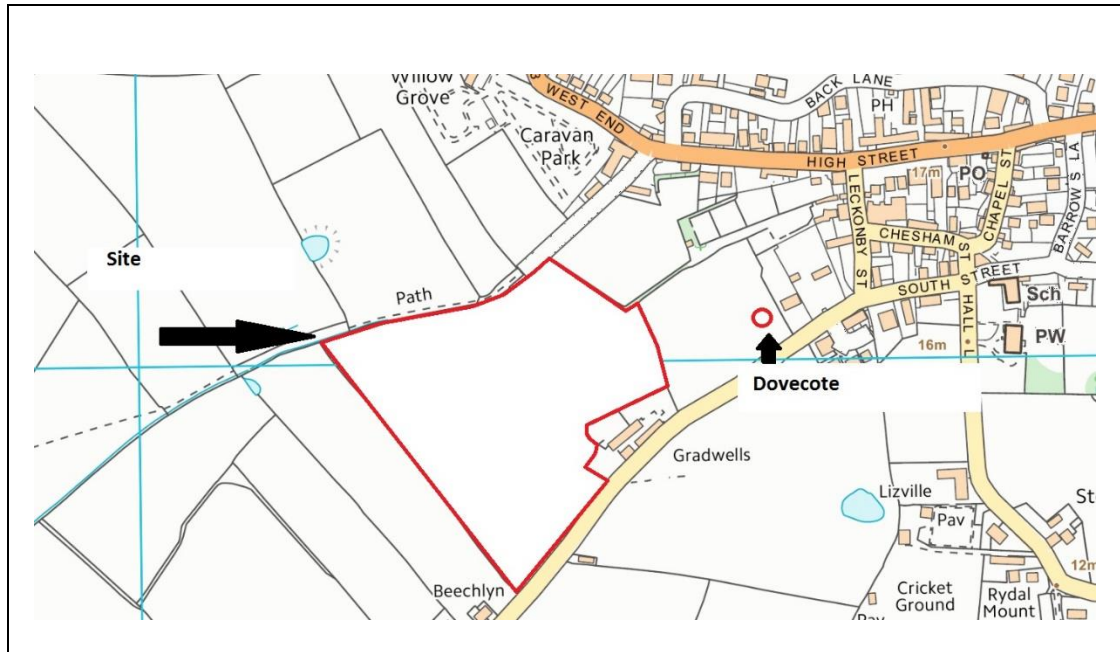


Figure 5 – Site Location & Dovecote

Analysis of the Proposals: National Planning Policy Framework

4.3 As discussed earlier, Chapter 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of the NPPF (2019) considers heritage planning and identifies the following key drivers in the decision making process:

- *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.*

4.4 In order to establish a clearer, objective assessment of the proposals in the context of the NPPF, the following commentary considers how the proposed scheme aligns itself to the NPPF heritage policy drivers listed above.

4.5 ***The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation*** – the significance of the heritage asset and its setting has been assessed within this statement which has established that the Dovecote has high evidential, communal and historic value with more

moderate levels of aesthetic value, whilst the proposals site is relatively low in heritage terms, and due to its location to the west the contribution made by the proposals site to the setting of the listed building is relatively low in all areas. As such the key drivers of significance of the asset's setting will be sustained.

- 4.6 ***The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality*** – the heritage asset i.e. the Dovecote will be preserved and will not be physically altered. Similarly the preservation of its setting will retain the rural feel to the edge of the village thus making it a place people wish to visit.
- 4.7 ***The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*** – the proposed development will offer the opportunity to provide modern homes without affecting the setting of the heritage asset.
- 4.8 Paragraph 193 of the NPPF states: ***"When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance."*** - the proposal under scrutiny is whether the development causes harm to the setting of the listed building. As demonstrated through this report, the proposal will not impart harm upon the significance of the building's setting. The key drivers of significance have been assessed and given the retention of landscaping, the setting of the Dovecote will be retained, in particular the intimate setting within the field and from Copp Lane will be preserved.

Analysis of the Proposals: Local Planning Policy

- 4.9 Current Planning Policy is provided through Policy CDMP5 of the Local Plan and SA3/3 of the Local Plan, relevant sections provided in extract in Appendix 1.

- 4.10 The report has demonstrated that the setting of the Dovecote will be preserved. The report has considered whether the proposed development will accrue any harm to the setting, and it has been established there is no harm either substantial or less than substantial caused to the key drivers of the setting's significance. As such the relevant parts (1, 2, 3, 4 and 5), have been considered and addressed.
- 4.11 Policy SA3/3 identifies that the setting of the Dovecote should be protected by an appropriate buffer and this is provided for through the retention of planting and the preservation of the field as its intimate setting. As such, policy SA3/3 is addressed.

5 SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This appraisal has reviewed the likely impact of a new residential development on land to the north of Copp Lane, Great Eccleston upon the significance of the Dovecote located on land to the east of the proposals site. The report has determined the significance of the Dovecote including its setting, and assessed the contribution of the proposals site to this setting. The report identifies that the site makes no contribution to the significance of the site or its setting and there will be no harm upon this setting by the proposed development.
- 5.2 The proposals satisfy national and local heritage planning policy and represent what in the context of the NPPF is described as sustainable development, and as such the proposal is wholly supportable.

i Clarke, K, *Informed Conservation*, Historic England 2003

ii Historic England, *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance: Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*, 2008

Appendix 1

CDMP5 Historic Environment

1. The Council's overall objective in relation to the historic environment is for designated and non-designated heritage assets to be protected, conserved and where appropriate enhanced for their aesthetic and cultural value and their contribution to local distinctiveness and sense of place.
2. New development will be required to protect, conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the historic environment, through high standards of design. Proposals for new development should identify and take advantage of opportunities to integrate with and promote the Borough's heritage assets.
3. Development with the potential to affect the significance of any designated or non-designated heritage asset, either directly or indirectly including its setting, will be required to sustain or enhance the significance of the asset where appropriate.
4. Proposals which will cause substantial harm to, or total loss of significance of, a designated heritage asset will not be permitted unless it is demonstrated that: a) The substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss; or b) The nature of the asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and c) No viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing in accordance with policy SP6 (Viability) that will enable its conservation; and d) Conservation by grant funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and e) The harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.
5. Proposals which will cause less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset or harm to an undesignated heritage asset that is considered by the Council to have local significance will not be granted unless: a) In the case of a designated heritage asset, the public benefits of the proposed development or works where appropriate, clearly outweigh the loss of significance; b) In the case of a non-designated heritage asset, the benefits of the proposed development or works where appropriate, clearly outweigh the loss of significance having regard to the scale of harm or loss.
6. In making its assessment in relation to parts 4 and 5 of this Policy, the Council will require as appropriate evidence to be provided setting out: a) The significance of the heritage asset, in isolation and as part of a group as appropriate, its contribution to the character or appearance of the area, and the degree of harm that would result; b) The public benefit arising from the proposals for the site; c) The condition of the asset and the cost of any repairs and enhancement works that need to be undertaken; d) The adequacy of efforts made to sustain existing uses or find viable new uses; and e) Appropriate marketing in accordance with Policy SP6 (Viability). Wyre Local Plan (2011 – 2031) 59
7. Where proposals include the loss of important heritage buildings or features, applicants will be required to demonstrate that retaining, reusing

- or converting these buildings, or maintaining features, has been considered and found to be unviable.
8. Where some impact on significance is considered acceptable, the Council will require a programme of recording the asset to be implemented prior to any work being carried out.
 9. Where an unlisted building makes little or no contribution to the character of a conservation area and has little or no significance in its own right, proposals for its demolition will be granted permission where alternative proposals for the site make a positive contribution to the preservation or enhancement of the character of the conservation area.
 10. Consent will not be granted for the demolition of a designated heritage asset until and where appropriate an acceptable redevelopment scheme has been approved and there is evidence demonstrating reasonable certainty that the scheme will be implemented. Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments
 11. Where development affecting sites of known archaeological interest is acceptable in principle, preservation in-situ is the preferred solution. Where preservation in-situ is not justified or possible, the developer will be required to make appropriate and satisfactory provision for the excavation and recording of the remains and to agree a timetable for the publication of findings before development commences.
 12. Development affecting nationally important archaeological remains and their settings, whether or not they are scheduled, will only be permitted where the archaeological value and interest of the remains and their settings is preserved.
 13. Development affecting locally important archaeological remains and their settings will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that the public benefit of the development outweighs the local value of the remains. The developer will be required to provide a programme of investigation and recording of the remains and a timetable for the publication of findings agreed.

Site SA3/3 Wyre Local Plan

9. A Dovecote situated within the site to the north of Copp Lane is Scheduled Monument and Grade II listed building. An appropriate buffer will be required to protect its setting.