



Planning & Heritage Statement  
**1 The Old Corn Mill**  
**Gweek, TR12 6UD**  
Landscape works and new gate installation



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<b>Assessment Type</b>	Planning & Heritage
<b>Client</b>	Yvette Elcock
<b>Report Number</b>	PHS1343
<b>Date</b>	07/12/2021
<b>Status</b>	FINAL
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## Summary

Enhance Land & Planning is instructed to apply for planning permission and listed building consent for works affecting the external areas and boundaries of 1 The Old Cornmill, Gweek. The property is one of the apartments contained within the substantial former Mill building to the south of Gweek. It is considered that the proposed works would provide a visual enhancement to the setting of the listed building, while complimenting its industrial heritage.

## Site Location & Description

The works relate to the curtilage of Number 1 The Old Cornmill, part of a substantial three storey, former mill of stone construction, which is grade II listed. The site lies to the hillside to the south of the village of Gweek, forming part of a cluster of buildings that is detached from the main village.

The property occupies the ground floor of the northern end of the L shaped building, with a private courtyard on its east side adjacent to the road, which is enclosed by the lower store section of the building along its south side. This building projects up to the road to the east, where there is currently a low wooden gate that provides direct access to the property from the pavement; the gate has a simple and functional appearance. A low stone wall of the same height continues along the roadside boundary to the north, where overgrown shrubs and bushes behind it have recently been removed. This area lies directly opposite a junction and is therefore visible on approach from the east. However, the curve and slope of the road, and the projection of the store, limit views from the north and south. The Lodge is a thatched building on the road junction opposite and is also grade II listed; The Lodge lies within the Mill's setting.

To the rear/west, the building is set into the hillside with a sloping strip of land immediately to the rear of No.1. A dilapidated close boarded timber fence and shrubs that marked the boundary of the property have recently been removed to establish the extent of stabilising work required, with a steep drop to land to the west and north.



*Images 1 & 2: Rear and front boundaries, listed Lodge opposite*



## Proposals

The Applicant is keen to enhance the existing external areas of the property, to this effect she has employed the services of a Landscape Designer and an Artist Blacksmith. To the rear, the informal strip of land is accessed via stone steps with a small area of paving, but then slopes away. The dilapidated fence and overgrown shrubs have been cleared and it is proposed to formalise this amenity area with a new stone boundary wall, new curved stone steps, small patio, and with the remainder of the area creating a wildlife garden.

The more visible element of the proposals relate to the proposed new gate and railings to the roadside boundary. The height of the gate would be increased above that of the wall, and would sit comfortably against the adjacent store building. The bespoke “water wheel” and adjacent railing is inspired by the industrial heritage of the site, referencing water flowing towards and over the water wheel.

Method statements for both the gate and landscaping works are included with the application, works would be carried out using traditional practices befitting of the industrial heritage of the site.

## Heritage Statement

A review of the Heritage record has identified that as well as having the potential to directly affect the character and appearance of the grade II listed Cornmill, consideration can be given to whether works to the front of the property would affect the grade II lodge across the road. In assessing the proposed works the following legislative and policy considerations are considered relevant.

### **Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990**

Works affecting Listed Buildings or structures are subject to additional planning controls administered by LPAs under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. In considering development which affects a Listed Building or its setting, the LPA must pay special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses (Section 66).

The statutory criteria for listing are the special architectural or historic interest of a building.

Buildings on the list are graded to reflect their relative architectural and historic interest:

Grade I: Buildings of exceptional interest;

Grade II\*: Particularly important buildings of more than special interest;

Grade II: Buildings of special interest, which warrants every effort being made to preserve them.

The assets affected in this case are all grade II listed.

### **National Planning Policy Framework.**

The Framework (NPPF) work was updated earlier this year and sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Section 16 covers the Historic environments and within this, paragraph 194 sets out the requirements for applications affecting heritage assets, stating, “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. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation”.

Paragraph 197 is also relevant, stating, “In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

When considering potential impacts, paragraph 199 advises that “great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be).”

### **Cornwall Local Plan**

Policy 24, which relates to the Historic Environment, states: “Development proposals will be permitted where they would sustain the cultural distinctiveness and significance of Cornwall’s historic rural, urban and coastal environment by protecting, conserving and where appropriate enhancing the significance of designated and non-designated assets and their settings”.

In addition, the Policy states: “Development proposals will be expected to:

- ☞ sustain designated heritage assets;
- ☞ take opportunities to better reveal their significance;
- ☞ maintain the special character and appearance of Conservation Areas, especially those positive elements in any Conservation Area Appraisal;
- ☞ conserve and, where appropriate, enhance the design, character, appearance and historic significance of historic parks and gardens;
- ☞ conserve and, where appropriate, enhance other historic landscapes and townscapes, including registered battlefields, including the industrial mining heritage;
- ☞ protect the historic maritime environment, including the significant ports, harbours and quays.”

### **The Old Cornmill**

The list description reads:

*Former corn mill now converted to accommodation. Circa early C19, remodelled circa 1970's. Shale rubble walls with granite quoins, jambstones and lintels. Asbestos slate roof, hipped at either end of south range, gable end at north and to single storey wing at east. Irregular L-shaped plan with original rectangular range (south), extended soon after with wide oblique-ended wing and at rear left and with single storey oblique ended wing, right. Restored wheel incorporated at the left hand end. Three-storeys. South front retains some original openings, some blocked or partly blocked and some new ones cut when converted. Loading doorway to 2nd floor towards left with hoist dormer has been altered to create more windows. The other elevations display similar mixture of original and new openings, the right hand (east) wall of rear wing mostly rebuilt. Interior not inspected. Though altered in the C20, much of the former mill structure remains, a particularly large mill for Cornwall.*



The building was first listed in 1975 and despite some remodelling before and after making the use of the appear obviously residential, the scale and surviving features noted in the listing clearly still demonstrate the building's original function.

The proposed works to the rear would have no bearing on the character or appearance of the building or its setting, lying out of public view and improving the informal rear amenity space, with works that would be entirely in keeping and sensitive. The bespoke gate and associated railings would reference and enhance the historic use of the building on what is an overtly residential part of the building, with front porch and low wall enclosing the front garden. This section of the building is not seen in combination with the surviving wheel or dormer to the south and the replacement of the low timber gate is seen as an enhancement with something of a more industrial character adding interest to the setting and utilising high quality design and traditional ironmongery skills.

The eastern wing is believed to have been largely rebuilt and any minimal attachment to this is no of concern, the wing is also located on the curve of the road and screens the yard area on approach from the south. The alignment of existing roadside boundaries to the north also limits views on approach up hill from the village, so the main view of the works would be from the road junction to the east. These viewpoints are demonstrated in the below photos.



*Images 3 and 4: street from south and north*



*Images 5 & 6: Roadside views*

It is noted that in commenting on a recent application for works to the porch (which was amended), the Conservation Officer originally raised concerns that “its residential style and function appears to clash with the mill's previous industrial focus”. It is considered that the low timber gate and to a lesser extent the low front wall also exhibit a purely functional and obvious residential style that isn't itself of any merit (other than in the use of stone). It is therefore considered that the bespoke metalwork, that is taller and directly/artistically references the function of the mill, will emphasise the previous industrial focus of the site more than the existing boundary arrangement, and reduce the residential character.

**The Lodge (Grade II)** (formerly listed as Lodge 10.7.57 East of Corn Mill South of river at Gweek) GV II Lodge, cottage ornee. Circa early C19. Dressed freestone, dressed granite quoins and dressed granite voussoirs. Octagonal wheat reed thatched roof with roof dormer to middle of front and central rectangular ashlar chimney with splayed corners. Octagonal plan but with flat front set back within open verandah supported on wooden columns. Small living rooms at left and right of central lobby, possibly small chamber originally behind each at rear. Loft converted probably C20 and small service room lean-to, probably C19 at left hand side. Single storey. Originally symmetrical 2-window north front with central pointed arched doorway and pointed arched window at either side rising to higher level. Original panelled door and original wooden Y-traceried and cusped windows with horizontal glazing bars (similar window at right hand side wall). The



*four posts supporting the verandah, one under each roof hip, are C20 replacements of probably rustic originals. Rear right hand window is original 12-pane 2-light casement. Interior not inspected. A virtually complete example of the Cottage ornee style.*

The Cornmill is separated from the lodge by a two-lane road, with the Lodge lying largely in its own setting on a corner as a statement of residential design, appearing as an entirely individual example of architecture in the setting. Given the separation distance, road alignment and scale of works proposed in relation to the much larger former mill building, it is considered that the proposals do not affect the setting of the Lodge, and only affect the immediate setting of a single aspect of the Old Cornmill.

## Conclusions

The proposed works amount to minor alterations to the external areas relating to one part of the large former mill's grounds, areas that relate to a single residential property. Number 1 The Old Cornmill enjoys specific areas of external amenity immediately to its front and rear, which currently demonstrate a more residential character than the wider communal grounds. Works to the rear would formalise and enhance the site boundary and space, while the proposed gate and railing to the frontage would be more visible and would add interest to the setting. The works would enhance a part of the site that has a more domestic character, providing a direct reference to the industrial origins of the site.

The use of a bespoke design, utilising traditional crafts and materials, would result in a feature that would not only relay the industrial heritage of the site but also provide an attractive visual enhancement to the roadside boundary.

The proposed works, as detailed in the supporting methodologies provided by the contractors, would result in no harm to the listed building or its setting and would accord with the aims and intentions of Policy 24 of the Local Plan and Section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework.