

**THE CLIFDEN ARMS, 75 CLIFDEN ROAD, WORMINGHALL,
AYLESBURY, HP18 9JR**



Planning application for the permanent retention of children's play equipment, two sheds and a fence around an air conditioning unit in the grounds of the building. Temporary retention of two shipping containers for a period of two years (retrospective).

PLANNING AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning and Heritage Statement has been prepared on behalf of Clifden Arms Trading Ltd and is submitted in support of a retrospective planning application for the permanent retention of children's play equipment, two sheds and a fence around an air conditioning unit in the grounds of the building, along with temporary retention of two shipping containers for a period of two years on land at The Clifden Arms, Worminghall.
- 1.2 This Statement aims to explain the design principles that have been applied in the proposed plans. The Statement demonstrates how the structures have been designed to comply with the relevant national and local planning policies and to reflect the local patterns of development and neighbouring buildings in terms of layout and siting, height, scale, materials and landscaping.
- 1.3 The children's play equipment, sheds and fencing around the air conditioning unit are all associated with the day to day operation of the public house business. The structures have been sited so as to ensure that the significance of The Clifden Arms as a designated heritage asset is preserved. The shipping containers are temporary until a permanent storage solution is approved, nonetheless they have also been designed and sited so as to ensure that the significance of The Clifden Arms is preserved.
- 1.4 The application comprises:
- Completed application form
 - Plans and drawings
 - This Planning Statement

2. Site context

- 2.1 The Clifden Arms is a detached public house building situated in a rural location in Worminghall. The building is timber framed with whitewashed brick infill and a thatched roof. The rear of the building is red brick with a tiled roof. It is a grade II listed property.



Existing view of the property

2.2 The listing description for the property is as follows;

Public house. Low medieval range to right, C17 cross wing to left. Timber frame with whitewashed brick infill, thatched roofs, half-hipped over right wing; rebuilt brick chimney to centre of left wing. T-plan with later extensions to rear gable of cross wing. Cross wing has 1½ storeys and an attic, and is of 2 bays. Gable to front has C19 2-storey canted bay window with wooden casements and hipped slate roof. Similar 2-light casement above to attic. Lobby entry with C20 door in left side, interior with stop-chamfered spine beams. Older wing has 2 concealed cruck trusses and is of one storey and an attic with irregular wooden casements and entry to rear.

2.3 The area surrounding the application site is rural in character and Worminghall itself is a village with the surrounding countryside being mainly farmland. The Clifden Arms is located to the south of the main residential area with open farmland to the south of the site and neighbouring residential properties located to the north west and north east boundaries.

2.4 The COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on how The Clifden Arms is able to operate as a business. In order to ensure that The Clifden Arms remains a viable business the Applicant is seeking ways to diversify and encourage customers to continue to frequent the public house in a safe and enjoyable way.

3. Relevant Planning History

3.1 An application for the construction of an events building on land at the Clifden Arms was withdrawn in April 2022 in order to obtain an ecology survey (reference 21/04907/APP). The application was resubmitted in July 2022 and has yet to be determined (reference

22/02415/APP). The items stored in the shipping containers relate to the operation of events and would be moved to the new events building once approved and constructed.

3.2 Other recent planning history for The Clifden Arms comprises;

- An application for the alterations to and retention of the outside bar (21/03404/APP) which was approved 20th December 2021.
- Temporary planning permission was granted in January 2021 for the retention of the outside bar and a marquee on the site up to the end of September 2021 under planning application reference 20/03886/APP.
- Retrospective application for the erection of a timber gazebo (20/03752/APP) was approved 11th January 2021.
- Application to re-locate the LPG tank (15/01740/APP) – approved 15/07/2015.
- Listed Building Consent for re-thatching of roof (08/00398/ALB) – granted 10/08/2008.
- Application and consent for a smoking shelter (07/02162/ALB, 07/02161/APP) – approved & granted 28/09/2007.
- Application and consent for extensions and alterations (94/00356/APP, 94/00357/ALB) – approved & granted 6/5/1994.
- Application for internal alteration (93/02242/APP) – approved 14/2/1994.

4. The proposed development

4.1 The planning application seeks retrospective planning permission for the permanent retention of children's play equipment, two sheds and a fence around the air conditioning unit in the grounds of the building, along with temporary retention of two shipping containers for a period of two years. The play equipment, sheds and the fence around the air conditioning unit are all used in the day to day operations of the business. The play equipment was installed in April 2019 and is a valuable feature with regards to attracting families and maintaining the viability of the business. The Applicant has also diversified the business to include events, which again is part of the ongoing viability of the business. The two shipping containers (installed in 2019) provide temporary events storage until a permanent solution can be arranged. On removal of the shipping containers the area will revert to hard landscaping. Each of the structures have been sited and designed to appear subordinate in scale to the main building and ensure the significance of the listed building is preserved.



Site plan extract (a b design Ltd)

4.2 The air conditioning unit was in situ prior to the Applicant taking ownership of the business in 2018, and siting of the vents are documented in planning application 94/0356/APP. The wooden fence provides screening around the unit, obscuring it from view and direct access. The play equipment is largely timber construction and sited away from the building to the rear of the pub garden. All of the other structures are sited along the north boundary of the site, away from the building. The shipping containers are screened by timber fencing to improve their appearance within the setting of the listed building.



Fencing around the air conditioning unit



Children's play equipment



Timber sheds



Temporary shipping containers

5. Relevant planning policies

National Planning Policy: The National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) confirms that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainable development is defined as encompassing economic, social and environmental factors. The economic involves building a strong, responsive and competitive economy. The social role entails supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations and by creating a high-quality built environment. The environmental role requires protecting and enhancing our natural, built and

historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change.

- 5.2 The NPPF confirms that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking. For decision-taking this means approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.
- 5.3 Paragraph 126 of the NPPF confirms that the creation of high-quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and helps make development acceptable to communities.
- 5.4 Paragraph 199 of the NPPF advises that 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. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Paragraph 202 advises where proposals would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

The Local Development Plan

- 5.5 In this instance the Local Development Plan comprises the adopted Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan (VALP) 2013-2033 (adopted 15th September 2021) and the Worminghall Neighbourhood Plan (NP) 2017-2033.
- 5.6 Policy S1 of the VALP sets out the need for sustainable development in line with the NPPF.
- 5.7 Policy BE1 of the VALP notes the importance of heritage assets and seeks to ensure that such assets are protected. All development should seek to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance and seek enhancement where possible. The Council will *"support proposals that do not cause harm to, or which better reveal the significance of heritage assets"*.
- 5.8 Policy BE2 of the VALP requires that the design of new development should respect and complement physical characteristics of the site, local distinctiveness and vernacular character

of the locality, natural qualities and features, and the effect on important public views and skylines.

- 5.9 Policy CH1 of the Worminghall Neighbourhood Plan aims to preserve, and where possible, enhance Worminghall's listed buildings and their settings, including protecting views of particular importance.
- 5.10 Policy SB1 of the Neighbourhood Plan notes that "*proposals for new buildings will be supported which are appropriate in scale, design and character to the village of Worminghall*".
- 5.11 Policy RC1 of the Neighbourhood Plan aims to ensure the rural character and its surrounds are respected with regards to new development.
- 5.12 Policy CFR1 of the Neighbourhood Plan supports proposals to improve the viability and retention of the Clifden Arms as a community facility.

6. Design

Use

- 6.1 All the structures are ancillary to the use of the main building as a public house. They are used in the day to day operation of the public house and for hosting events such as weddings and large social gatherings. The temporary shipping containers provide valuable storage until a permanent solution to the temporary events marquee is resolved. The use is therefore consistent with the existing use of the site.
- 6.2 The play equipment and events help to attract customers. Policy CFR1 of the Neighbourhood Plan is supportive of proposals that would improve the viability of the public house and the application proposals are consistent with that aim.

Amount

- 6.3 In terms of the amount of development, the submitted site plan and photos above demonstrate that the structures all have a smaller footprint and height than the main building of the Clifden Arms.
- 6.4 The structures are not overly excessive and have been carefully designed to respect the heritage of The Clifden Arms and how the site functions in general. The play equipment is of an

appropriate scale so as to ensure views of the listed building from the west are maintained. The fence around the air conditioning unit is of an appropriate height and design so that the brick chimney breast detail is still partially visible.

Layout

- 6.5 The siting of the play equipment, sheds and shipping containers have been carefully devised having regard to conserving the setting of the listed building. To that end the play equipment is sited 28m west of the main building and the other structures are sited along the north boundary of the site, with clear separation from The Clifden Arms building.
- 6.6 The location of the structures ensure the aesthetics of the main building can still be appreciated and the views of the building are protected as far as possible in accordance with VALP policy BE1 and NP policy CH1. On approaching the Clifden Arms the building itself obscures views of the play equipment, ensuring the listed building remains the focal point.



View approaching the site from the north (Clifden Road) and Policy CH1 extract, red arrow is the protected view.

Scale

- 6.7 The roof form of the sheds and the predefined form of the temporary shipping containers ensures the scale of each structure is limited. The use of timber as the main material complements the adjacent boundary fence and the rural character of the area in accordance with VALP policy BE2 and NP policies SB1 and RC1.
- 6.8 The play equipment and the fence around the air conditioning unit are modest in scale and appropriate to their intended use.

Appearance

- 6.9 The ancillary structures are designed to ensure that their appearance and detailing are appropriate to the setting of the listed building and rural location. To that end the principal material is timber, with a timber fence in place to obscure the shipping containers.
- 6.10 As has already been stated above, the subordinate scale of the structures, together with their design and separation distances from The Clifden Arms building are such that they will appear contextually appropriate to the setting of the public house in accordance with VALP policy BE1 and NP policies SB1 and RC1.

Landscaping

- 6.11 The structures have had a minimal impact to soft landscaping. The sheds and shipping containers are sited on the edge of the hard standing car park area, therefore there has been no impact to landscaping. The play equipment is sited on an existing area of turfed gardens within the curtilage of the public house, and the play structures are set off the ground which allows grass to continue to grow around the support posts. The fence surrounding the air conditioning unit is sited around an area of existing hard landscaping.
- 6.12 Ample garden space has been retained on the site, which helps to preserve the setting of the listed building and biodiversity on site.

7. Heritage

- 7.1 The Clifden Arms is a grade II listed building, operating as a public house and events business, set within generous grounds. In consideration of the impact on the significance of the listed building of the play equipment, sheds, fence around the air conditioning unit and the two temporary shipping containers, this is a retrospective application, and as such the structures are already in place.
- 7.2 The previous owners of the site had play equipment in the same section of the pub gardens that included a large red 'boot' with a slide. The latest play equipment was installed in April 2019 and is considered to be a much more conservative and complementary design for the rural setting. The scale, design and siting of the play equipment ensures that there is no harm caused to the aesthetic value of the listed building.
- 7.3 The sheds and the two temporary shipping containers are sited along the north boundary of the site, adjacent to the fence and in front of a backdrop of mature trees and large shrubs. Any views

of the listed building from adjacent sites to the north are restricted by the existing landscaping and fence. Long distance views of the sheds and shipping containers from the south are restricted by the listed building itself together with existing landscaping. As such the sheds and shipping containers are primarily only visible when entering the car park of the Clifden Arms or from within the listed building and its gardens on the western section of the site. In order to appear appropriate within the setting of the public house, the temporary shipping containers include a timber fence that provides a degree of screening. The proposal is for a temporary period of two years, at which point the area will revert back to hardstanding as part of the existing car park. The sheds are constructed of timber, which is considered appropriate for any ancillary structure within a rural setting. As such, the combined effect ensures that the sheds and temporary shipping containers do not cause any harm to the significance of the listed building and its setting.

- 7.4 The air conditioning unit is located on the southern elevation of the building, either side of the chimney breast. They provide extraction to the kitchen area and were in situ when the Applicant took ownership of the business in 2018. The siting of the vents is documented within the approved plans for extensions and internal alterations 94/0356/APP. The timber fencing around the unit was constructed in 2020 with the intention of enhancing the appearance of this section of the building and providing a degree of visual screening of the fans. The fence is attached to the building at one end and measures 2.4m high which aligns with the eaves of the building. As such the timber fence does not diminish the architectural value of the listed building or its distinctiveness.



Photo taken of the southern elevation before the fence around the air conditioning unit was constructed

7.5 The permanent siting of the play equipment, sheds and the fence around the air conditioning unit will support the day to day operation of the public house. The temporary siting of the shipping containers facilitates the events that currently take place and helps ensure the ongoing viability of the community facility. The structures seek to conserve the heritage asset and its significance in accordance with Policy BE1. The public benefit of approving the application is therefore considered to be greater than any harm the structures may cause to the listed building.

8. Access

8.1 The Clifden Arms is surrounded by its grounds on all sides and therefore all the structures can be accessed from any part of the grounds without having to enter the listed building itself.

8.2 The sheds and shipping containers do not impact on the parking capacity of the Clifden Arms, which is 30 vehicles on a daily basis, with additional capacity for a further 30 cars on site for events.

9. Conclusion

9.1 In accordance with the NPPF consideration needs to be given as to whether the structures constitute sustainable development. In this case the permanent siting of the play equipment, sheds and fence surrounding the air conditioning unit, along with the temporary siting of two shipping containers is sustainable for the following reasons:

- The structures are of an appropriate scale and design and respond well to the character of the area, and
- The structures do not cause harm to the significance of the listed building, and
- The provision of the play equipment and storage to support the hosting of events enhances the offer of the pub to the local community, and
- The structures are part of a package of measures that will improve the long term viability of the community facility.

9.2 It is therefore considered that the planning justifications and design rationale identified in this Planning Statement demonstrate that the development is acceptable.