

# *Mike Gilbert Planning*

**External cold room, BBQ hut, pergola and outdoor steps,  
The White Horse, Hambrook, Bristol, BS16 1RY**

## **Planning and Heritage Statement**



**November 2023**

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## Introduction

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1. This Planning and Heritage Statement accompanies planning and listed building applications for external buildings and works which have already been carried out at The White Horse pub in Hambrook. These applications have been submitted following discussions with the Council's Planning Enforcement Officer, Scott Britnell. Planning permission and, insofar as the cold room is concerned, listed building consent are sought for the following works:
  - A timber-clad external cold room attached to the east elevation of the stone barn located to the rear of the main pub building.
  - A detached timber BBQ hut located at the rear of the pub garden.
  - A timber pergola located at the rear of the pub garden.
  - Gravel surfaced timber steps leading down to the brook beside the pub.
  
2. The White Horse pub building and the recently restored stone barn immediately to the rear (formerly a brewery malt house) are both Grade II statutorily listed buildings. In addition, The Hambrook Inn (formerly The Black Horse pub), which lies to the east of the site, is a locally listed building. The site does not lie within a Conservation Area. Bradley Brook, a tributary of the River Frome, runs along the western boundary of the site, and the M4 motorway lies on the other side of the brook. Although the lower parts of the site alongside Bradley Brook lie within flood zones 2 and 3, all of the buildings lie within flood zone 1. The site lies within the Green Belt.
  
3. In addition to this Statement, the following documents have been submitted with these applications:

- Application form
- Drawing nos. 0508/EX/01 to 05 – Site plan and photographs
- Drawing no. 0508/SL/01 – Site location plan
- Drawing no. 0508-SL02 – Block plan
- Drawing no. 0508-GA01 – External cold room floor plan and elevations
- Drawing no. 0508-GA03 – BBQ hut floor plan and elevations
- Drawing no. 0508-GA04 – Outdoor steps plan and sections
- Drawing no. 0508-GA05 – Pergola floor plan and elevations
- CIL Form 1

## Policies and guidance

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### National Planning Policy Framework

4. Paragraph 81 says that planning decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
5. Paragraph 84 d) says that planning decisions should enable the retention and development of local services and community facilities, including public houses.
6. Paragraph 147 says that “*inappropriate development*”, by definition, is harmful to the Green Belt and should only be approved in very special circumstances. Paragraph 149

confirms the categories of new buildings which are not to be regarded as “*inappropriate*”, including “*the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.*”

7. Paragraphs 199 and 200 say that when considering the impact of new development on the significance of designated heritage assets (i.e. the Grade II listed White Horse pub and adjacent stone barn), “*great weight*” should be given to their conservation. Any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset (including from development within its setting) requires clear and convincing justification.
8. Paragraph 202 says that when development proposals would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
9. Paragraph 203 says that, in weighing proposals which affect a non-designated heritage asset (i.e. The Hambrook Inn), a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm and the significance of the heritage asset.

### **Historic England’s Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance**

10. Paragraph 138 says that new work or alterations to “*a significant place*” should normally be acceptable provided:
  - there is sufficient information comprehensively to understand the impact of the proposal on the significance of the place;
  - the proposal would not materially harm the values of the place which, where appropriate, would be reinforced or further revealed;

- the proposals aspire to a quality of design and execution which may be valued now and in the future;
- the long-term consequences of the proposals can, from experience, be demonstrated to be benign, or the proposals are designed not to prejudice alternative solutions in the future.

11. Paragraph 140 says that the sensitivity of a place or building to change will depend on the range and strength of its inter-related heritage values - i.e. evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal values.

### **Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment**

12. This Historic England advice note relates to the way in which decision-making in the historic environment should be undertaken, emphasising the importance of understanding the significance of any affected heritage asset, the contribution of its setting to that significance, and the impact of the proposal on that significance.

### **Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets - Second Edition (2017)**

13. This Historic England advice note relates on the management of change within the setting of heritage assets. Setting is not a heritage asset or a heritage designation and is separate from the concepts of curtilage, character and context. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset itself or to the ability to appreciate that significance. This will almost always include the consideration of views. However, whilst views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which

an asset is experienced in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places.

### **South Gloucestershire Core Strategy 2006 – 2027 (adopted 2013)**

14. Maintaining economic prosperity is a Key Issue of the Core Strategy. Paragraph 9.2 says that maintaining economic prosperity is a key priority of the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy and is reflected in the Council's Economic Development Strategy and in the Council's partnership with the West of England Local Enterprise Partnership.
15. Policy CS9 says that new development should ensure that heritage assets are conserved, respected and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance.
16. Policy CS23 seeks to protect existing community infrastructure, including local pubs.

### **Policies, Sites and Places Plan (adopted 2017)**

17. Policy PSP7 relates to new development in the Green Belt and says that additions to existing buildings will be acceptable in Green Belt terms provided they are not disproportionate to the size of the original building. As general guide, additions should not result in a volume increase of more than 30% of the original building.
18. Policy PSP8 says that new development should not have an unacceptable impact on the residential amenity of occupiers of nearby properties through loss of privacy or overlooking, an overbearing or dominant impact, loss of light (daylight / sunlight), noise or disturbance, or odours, fumes or vibration.

19. Policy PSP17 says that development proposals should protect and, where appropriate, enhance or better reveal the significance of heritage assets and their settings.

Development proposals affecting heritage assets should demonstrate the significance of the assets affected, the impact of the proposal on the significance of the assets and their setting, and how the development will protect, enhance or better reveal that significance. The level of detail should be proportionate to the significance of the heritage assets affected and the nature of the works. Where development would result in harm to the significance of a heritage asset or its setting, planning permission will only be granted when all of the following criteria are met:

- the proposal results in public benefits that outweigh the harm to the heritage asset;
- there is no other means of delivering similar public benefits through development of an alternative site;
- the harm to the heritage asset is minimised and mitigated through the form and design of the development and the provision of heritage enhancements; and
- if appropriate, the heritage asset will be properly recorded to professionally accepted standards.

20. Policy PSP34 supports the retention of public houses. The accompanying text says that public houses need to be safeguarded as they provide a valuable meeting place for the community. Pubs can also be important local landmarks, often with significant architectural qualities or heritage features. Consequently, development affecting pubs should not undermine the building's identity as a pub or harm its architectural character.



## Planning assessment

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21. Since the applicant took over the pub in 2016 it has become a well-used and much loved community facility. It is a very popular pub for local residents and has built up a reputation as an excellent destination pub / restaurant which attracts many customers from farther afield. Most of the reviews on Tripadvisor are 5 stars and the pub was Stonegate South-West Pub of the Year in 2022 and a finalist in the National Great British Pub Awards in 2023. In addition, the ancillary stone barn, which has been beautifully restored to showcase its original features (as permitted in 2018 under application nos. PT18/0340/F and PT18/0354/LB), is used to host weddings and other events and has proved very popular. The pub and events business employs 32 people and makes and a significant contribution to the local economy. As a valued business, therefore, it needs to be protected.
22. Considerable investment has been made in the pub and events business in recent years. In addition to the barn restoration works, the large rear garden has been overhauled to provide an inviting outdoor space with attractive and safe surfacing and plenty of seating on different levels. Improvements to the facilities provided on the site continue to be made, and the buildings and works the subject of these applications are essential elements of the ongoing investment in the business.
23. The external cold room attached to the east elevation of the stone barn provides essential refrigerator space for the restaurant and the barn. It should be noted that the cold room has been in situ for over five years without causing any problems. For obvious reasons, the cold room has to be located adjacent to both the kitchen and the

barn, and there is no other place it could go. Its location, therefore, is fixed and it has to remain in situ to meet the essential needs of the business. In these circumstances, and given its utilitarian appearance, the applicant has sought to minimise any potentially adverse impacts on the character of the listed barn and the local area.

24. Most obviously, the cold room is a temporary structure and so can be removed as and when it is no longer needed. In addition, it is low (2.7m high) and its attachment to the barn is minimal – i.e. only a simple lead flashing along the roof line to enable surface water to drain properly. In the meantime, whilst the cold room is needed to remain, it is largely obscured from public view by the 1.7m high stone boundary wall and timber gates and it has been clad with horizontal stained timber boarding, as shown on drawing no. 0508/EX/01 and in the photograph below.



*The external cold room as seen from the lane beside The White Horse*

25. The cold room, therefore, has a minimal impact on the character of the listed barn and the local area. In addition, no noise or odours are emitted from the cold room so it has no harmful impact on the amenities of any neighbouring residents.

26. The timber BBQ hut was installed in 2020 during the Covid pandemic. It is located on a raised area at the rear of the pub garden, as shown on drawing no. 0508/EX/02 and in the photograph below.



*BBQ hut*

27. The BBQ hut is a low timber structure located in an open area surrounded by woodland trees. It serves to diversify the type of cooked food offered by the pub and is used only on an occasional basis.

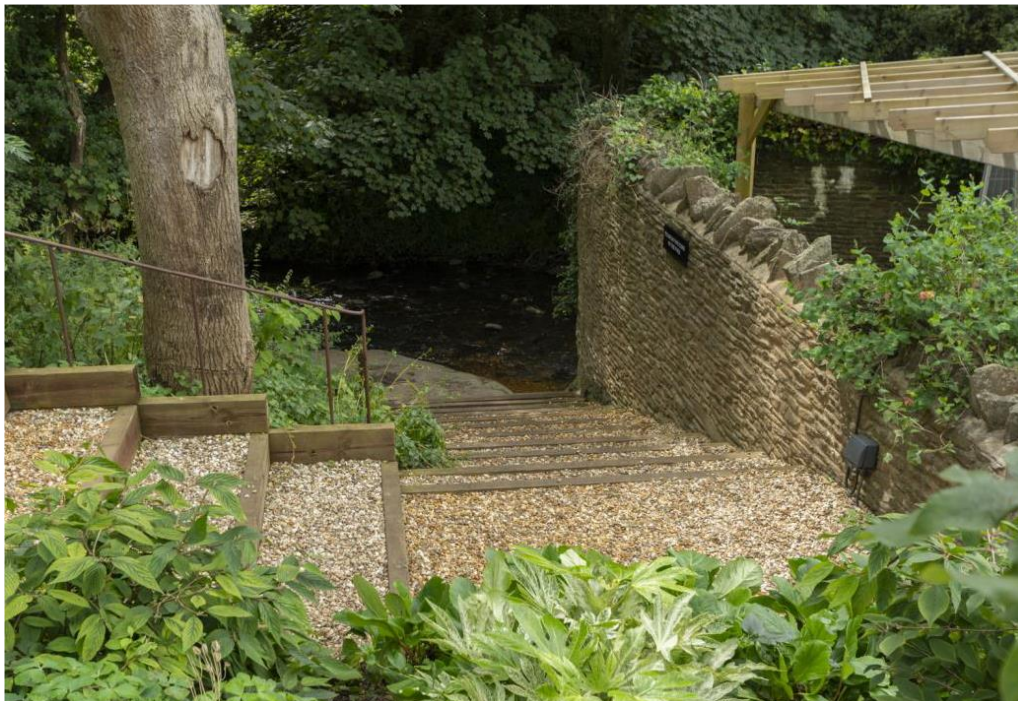
28. The BBQ hut sits on concrete paving slabs and has no footings. Consequently, as can be seen on site, it has had no harmful impact on any of the nearby trees. In addition, the applicant has planted several metres of native hedging on the eastern side of the hut. Given its discrete and rustic appearance and its location well away from the listed buildings and the site's boundaries, the BBQ hut has no harmful impact on the setting of the listed buildings or the character or appearance of the local area. As the BBQ hut emits no odours or noise (in addition to the general hubbub of customers using the pub garden), it also has no harmful impact on the amenities of any neighbouring residents.
29. The timber pergola is also located at the rear of the pub garden, at a lower level than the BBQ hut, as shown on drawing no. 0508/EX/05 and in the photograph below.



*Pergola*

30. The pergola is a wholly open structure and will be easily demountable at a future date when it is no longer needed. It is a simple structure and adds to the variety of the seating areas provided in the pub garden. Again, given its discrete appearance and location well away from the listed buildings and the site's boundaries, the pergola has no harmful impact on the setting of the listed buildings or the character or appearance of the local area, and it has no harmful impact on the amenities of any neighbouring residents.

31. The steps leading down to Bradley Brook are located towards the rear of the site and are shown on drawing nos. 0508/EX/03 and 04 and in the photograph below.



*Steps leading down to the brook*

32. The steps enable people to walk down to a small stone platform beside the brook which is an attractive area for people to enjoy the sights and sounds of the water and the surrounding woodland trees. It is also a popular location for newly-wed couples to take their wedding photographs. The steps are an attractive feature of the site and have no harmful impact on the setting of the listed buildings or the character or appearance of the local area. In addition, no ground levels beside Bradley Brook have been raised in the construction of the steps, so there has been no increased flooding impact within the small area of the site beside the brook which lies within flood zones 2 and 3. Interestingly, there has always been an access to the brook at this point. It was once a ford before the M4 was built, and the local fire engines were driven down to the brook to fill up their bowsers.

33. Taken together, the proposed buildings and works enable The White Horse pub and events business to be effectively run and, at the same time, enhance the quality of the facilities provided on the site, which can only be good for the business. This protection and enhancement of an important local business is a significant local economic benefit.

## Heritage impact

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34. The following sources of information have been consulted:

- The National Heritage List for England
- Historic England's Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance
- Historic England's Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes 2 and 3 (Second Edition)
- National Planning Policy Framework
- Planning Practice Guidance
- South Gloucestershire Core Strategy 2006 – 2027
- Policies, Sites and Places Plan (2017)
- Heritage Statements Technical Advice Note
- Planning application history of The White Horse

35. The White Horse pub and the adjacent stone barn are both Grade II statutorily listed buildings. In addition, The Hambrook Inn, which lies to the east of the site, is a locally listed building. Together, these are the designated and non-designated heritage assets for the purpose of this Statement.

36. The respective official list entries for The White Horse and the stone barn (formerly a house) say the following:

*“Public house. Mid / late C18. Roughcast, lower ½ storey lined-out, double roman tile roof. 2 storeys, 5 windows, first floor has all glazing bar sashes, the outer 2 are longer, the ground floor has a 16-pane glazing bar sash on either side of stone*

*doors flanked by 8-pane sashes behind a squat Ionic portico with 2 columns, 2 pilasters, frieze and cornice; lean-to extension to left (east).”*

*“House 10 metres south of White Horse Inn G.V. II Barn, now house. Early C19. Rubble, mainly painted, pantile roof, gable stacks. Bottom floor still storage, house above. 2 storeys, 5 windows all glazing bar sashes, first floor only, blank ground floor with central, projecting arched blind porch, rough cut parapet. Rear elevation: one large central elliptical headed opening with voussoirs and 2 similar, smaller flanking lights, otherwise blank.”*

37. The heritage significance of both of the listed buildings derives from their historical, aesthetic and communal value. They are both historic buildings with valued internal and external architectural features and they have a historic and ongoing connection to the local community as a place for people to meet and socialise. The heritage significance of The Hambrook Inn derives from its historical and aesthetic value.
38. The only element of the proposed works which requires listed building consent is the external cold room as it is physically attached to the listed barn. Nevertheless, all of the proposed buildings and works lie within the curtilage of the two listed buildings, so it is necessary to assess the impact of each element of the works on the setting of the statutorily listed buildings and, to a lesser extent, on the setting of The Hambrook Inn.
39. All of the proposed works are both minimal and easily reversible which ensures the significance of the heritage assets is protected. The cold room attached to the barn is a temporary structure and so can be removed as and when it is no longer needed. In addition, its attachment to the barn is minimal (i.e. only a simple lead flashing along the



roof line to enable surface water to drain properly) and it is largely obscured from public view by the 1.7m high stone boundary wall and timber gates. To soften its visual impact, it has also been clad with horizontal stained timber boarding. The cold room is essential to the running of the business (see Appendix 1) and its position is fixed as it has to be located beside both the kitchen and the barn and there is no other place to put it. Importantly, no historic or architectural features of the barn have been obscured or otherwise affected by the installation of the cold room. In particular, as shown on drawing no. 0508/EX/01, the two “*smaller flanking lights*” referred to in the list entry are not affected. The impact of the cold room on the character and setting of the listed barn and pub, therefore, is both the minimum necessary and reversible. This minimal impact needs to be weighed against its essential need.

40. The other elements of the proposed development (i.e. the BBQ hut, pergola and steps leading down to the brook) are all located well away from the heritage assets. The BBQ hut and pergola are simple low structures which complement the pub garden use of the site. They are constructed of timber and can easily be demounted at a later date when no longer needed. As such, their impact on the setting of the two listed buildings is negligible, and they have no impact at all on the setting of the separate and more distant Hambrook Inn.

41. The proposed buildings and works, both individually and together, do not result in any permanent or long-term harm to the character or setting (and hence the significance) of the designated heritage assets. Nevertheless, the works have introduced some change to that character and setting and so, under the terms of the NPPF, they have resulted in a low level of “*less than substantial harm*” to the significance of the designated heritage assets. Paragraph 202 of the NPPF says that when development proposals would lead

to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The public benefits in this case are the positive contribution the buildings and works make to The White Horse pub and events business (and hence to the local economy) and the improved outdoor facilities provided on site for people to enjoy. These are significant public benefits which weigh in the scheme's favour and more than offset the low level of "*less than substantial harm*" caused to the significance of the designated heritage assets.

## Conclusion

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42. Each element of this proposal is either essential to enable The White Horse pub and events business to be run effectively or an enhancement to the facilities provided on the site. In particular, the essential need for the external cold room cannot be over-emphasised. Taken as a whole, the proposal serves to protect and enhance this important local business and so provides a significant local economic benefit.
43. The proposal has resulted in a low level of "*less than substantial harm*" to the significance of the two designated heritage assets on the site. Nevertheless, the public benefits which weigh in the scheme's favour more than offset this low level of "*less than substantial harm*".
44. The proposal as a whole, therefore, is consistent with Government policy and relevant local plan policies relating to the need to support economic growth and productivity and the effect of new development on the significance of heritage assets. Accordingly, we believe that planning permission and listed building consent should be granted.

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8th November 2023

## APPENDIX 1

### The applicant's business case to retain the external cold room

The White Horse Inn has become a very busy operation – at capacity, during the summer months, the pub, barn and garden can host up to 350 customers a day.

Our food offering is based on locally sourced fresh ingredients and requires a considerable amount of refrigerated space. The external cold room is vital to the business for the following reasons:

- The enormous quantity of fresh produce that is delivered daily must be housed at a holding temperature of between 2 and 5 degrees to conform with EHO guidelines. The external cold room allows suppliers to leave produce in a safe and legally conforming place without having to access the pub. It means deliveries can be made early in the morning so that ingredients are on site when staff arrive for work.
- Prepared food is also stored in the cold room before being taken to the small walk-in fridge in the service kitchen. This fridge is used solely for items to be utilised during food service in the pub and is generally full to capacity.
- On days when there is a wedding or large event in the barn, the external cold room is the only facility available to store the raw ingredients as well as the prepared food for these events. The kitchen in the barn is not big enough for a service fridge and the location of the cold room adjacent to the barn creates a solution to this problem.

The removal of the external cold room would have a hugely negative impact on the business – food safety would be compromised, our menu would have to radically change to incorporate pre-prepared food which would have no provenance (the provenance of our ingredients is of particular importance to our customers – they know that our ethos of “locally sourced” is actually true), and there would be nowhere for the homegrown produce from our orchard and allotment to be kept.

In essence, it would be impossible to continue the current business model of The White Horse without the external cold room. It really is the hub of the pub.

Alison Weaver

Publican and the business owner