

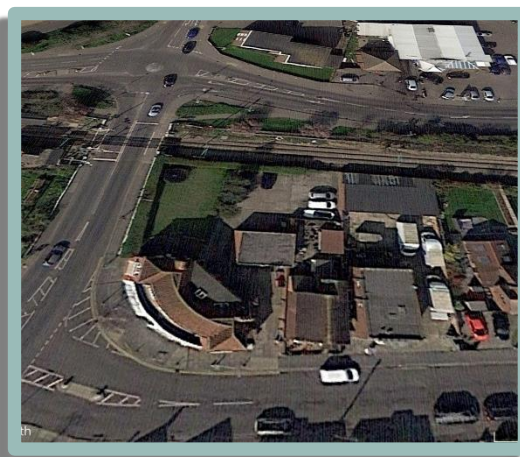
L/A 152 Connaught  
Avenue

Frinton on Sea  
Essex CO13 9NE

# Architectural Management

Architecture and Heritage Consultants

## HERITAGE STATEMENT FOR A NEW RESIDENTIAL BLOCK



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## Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction and Purpose	1
2.0	Preamble	2
3.0	Location	2
4.0	General Description of the Application Site and its Setting	3
5.0	Brief Description of the proposal site	7
6.0	Description of the Proposals	8
7.0	Impact Assessment	9
	- Significance	
	- Impact	
8.0	Conclusion	13



## 1.0 Introduction and Purpose

This Heritage Statement is produced to accompany a Planning Application for a new development of four small flats in a single block.

The site address is land adjacent 152 Connaught Avenue, Frinton on Sea, Essex CO13 9NE.

The subject of this Heritage Statement is to consider the significance of the site and the impact of the proposal upon the setting of the conservation area.

This report is produced by Ian Alderton of Architectural Management Ltd upon commission by M & M Realty Ltd. and is to be read in conjunction with the architectural proposals produced by Chris Morris, scheme designer.

The general format of this report will be;

- To briefly describe the overall application site
- To outline the character and setting of the surroundings
- To describe the impact of the proposal upon the character and setting of the environs
- Conclusion

During the assessment of the setting, no detailed historical research into the development of the site has been undertaken. The specific aim of this report is to assess the effect of the scheme upon the setting of the conservation area.

The format, techniques and content of this Assessment draw upon the guidance from the English Heritage Publication; Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance (dated 23rd April 2008), supported by Historic England and The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition) published December 2017.

The Guidance provides a comprehensive framework for the sustainable management of the historic environment, within which 'Conservation' is defined as the process of managing change to a significant place and its setting in ways that will best sustain its heritage values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce those values for present and future generations.

## 2.0 Preamble

The NPPF Paragraph 194 states that... *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.*

The proposals for this scheme include changes within the conservation area. The proposal may have an effect upon the setting.

With regard to Paragraph 194 of the NPPF, the level of detail supplied within this Assessment is considered to be proportionate to the potential impact of development.

## 3.0 Location



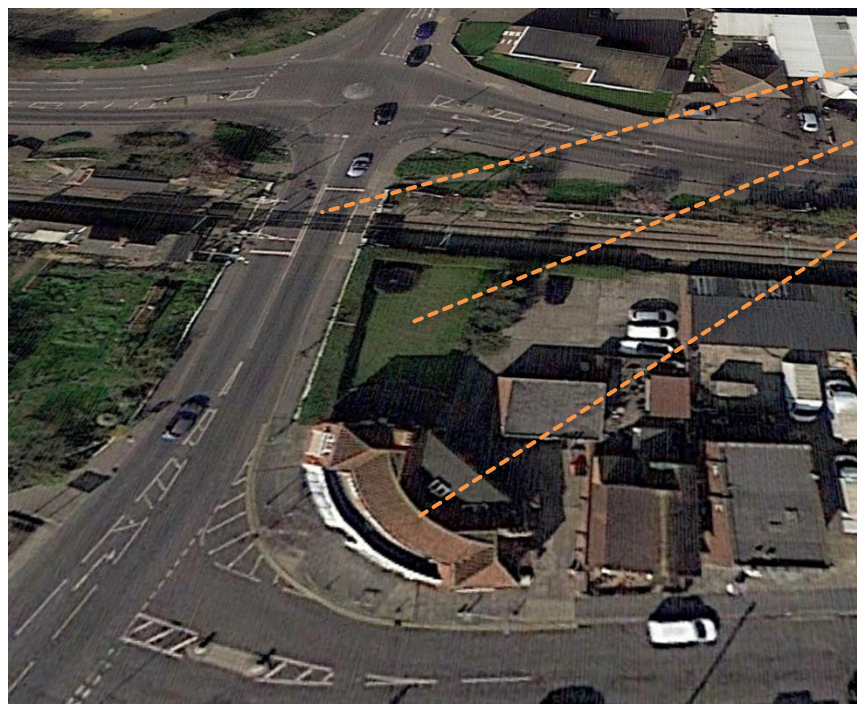
The national location of Frinton in Essex is shown left.

The site is located about 15 miles south east of Colchester. The site (red circle) is shown below.



## 4.0 General Description of the Application Site and its Setting

### The overall site



Level crossing

The Site

152 Connaught Avenue

The application site is located to the east of the landward end of Connaught Avenue. It is roughly rectangular in shape, bounded by the railway line to the north, Connaught Avenue to the west, the existing building to the south and open car parking space to the east. It presently forms part of the gardens to 152 Connaught Avenue, part of which is used as parking for the shop.

The site is bordered by hedging to the north and west sides.

The site is predominately flat.

There are no listed buildings in the vicinity, although 152 Connaught Avenue is likely to be considered a non designated heritage asset, as is the station house and the Crossing Cottage.

### Development of Frinton

Frinton on Sea is a relatively recent seaside resort, developed since around the turn of the C20<sup>th</sup>. There are two distinct areas of development: those inside the gates (early C20<sup>th</sup> origin) and those outside the gates, to the north (mid/late C20<sup>th</sup>). The area to the north is known as The Triangle.

The following information is gleaned from Frinton Residents Association website, which has contributions from David Foster.

There was little in the manner of expansion of the settlement until the late C19<sup>th</sup>, when the railway line from Thorpe-le-Soken to Walton-on-the-Naze was extended in 1864 (the idea of engineer Peter Bruff). It had a simple wayside halt in Frinton-on-Sea, which encouraged visitors, and the growing reputation of Frinton-on-Sea as a weekend resort prompted the Great Eastern Railway Company to build a station in 1888.

In 1885 the Marine and General Land Company effectively purchased the land of Frinton-on-Sea. In the following year plans were published. They wanted to create a town of 'broad terraces, squares, crescents, tree-lined avenues and roads'. This coincided with Bruff's idea of creating a new town called 'Frinton Haven'. Yet the town still did not grow, and by 1891 the population had only reached 87.

The reason for Frinton-on-Sea's lack of growth was a viable water supply. Peter Bruff discovered a water supply at Mistley and formed the Tendring Hundred Water Company. The supply of water arrived in 1888 and Frinton-on-Sea's development took off.

The town of Frinton-on-Sea as it is known today was created by Sir Richard Powell-Cooper. In 1893 he bought an interest in the bulk of the land within the 'Triangle' and the area outside and adjacent to The Gates, intending to follow on the development begun in 1886 by engineer Peter Schuyler Bruff. He began to develop the resort utilising some of Bruff's ideas to ensure that the settlement would be more than merely 'another' new town.

Between 1891 and 1911 Frinton-on-Sea developed from an area of scattered settlement with a population of 87 to a small town with a population of 1,510.

The progressive development of Frinton-on-Sea was initially centred on Station Road, which ran from 'Frinton Gates' to the seafront, and by 1904 many new commercial premises were being opened. Frinton-on-Sea's new status dictated that this main thoroughfare be upgraded and the Duchess of Connaught renamed it Connaught Avenue in September of that year.

Frinton-on-Sea's golden years occurred between the wars; they were dubbed the 'Royal Years' and, as a town, it was reasonably complete by 1935.

### Map Regression



The extract of the 1922 25 inch OS map, left, clearly shows that the site was not developed at that time. The Avenue is on its original route and Greenway is yet to be built.

The image right is an extract of the 1938 6 inch OS map. A building exists upon the corner site, but not in the shape of the current building.

This leads to the supposition that the building may be post war, although its style is definitely pre-war.



## Conservation Area

The conservation area covering Frinton and Walton-on-the-Naze was first designated on 19 June 1982. It was revised and extended on 20 November 1989 to include the area at the northern end of Connaught Avenue (and the application site). A review of the conservation area was undertaken in 2001 and this was used as the basis for the conservation area appraisal. The Conservation Area Character Appraisal was adopted by the Council in March 2006. It is derived from an earlier document produced for the Council in 2001.



The image left shows an extract of the CA review 2006 with the site roughly outlined in orange. The conservation area boundary is shown with a long dashed line (unfortunately the published documents are of a poor quality).

The area adjacent, circled, indicates an 'important space' and the wide arrow denotes an important view. Therefore the proposal site features as part of the wider setting of these two descriptors.

The CA Management Plan 2007, item 7.27 suggests the following improvements:.....*A better setting for the railway station and level crossing gates. This is where the first impression of Frinton is made.*

## 152 Connaught Avenue



The image left shows the road frontage of 152 Connaught Avenue, an early/mid C20<sup>th</sup> style two storey brick building with a rendered feature ground floor shopfront. The front of the building is curved, with an outshot hipped gable at each end, embracing the single storey frontage. It has a roman pantile roof and chimneys at either end. Other features such as white rainwater goods, white metal windows with square lead type glazing, a detailed doorcase, brick soldiers and scrolled metal balconies all add to the overall quality and detailing of the building.

It sits to the northern end of Connaught Avenue, just inside the gates. To the right of the image is Pole Barn Lane. The building is purpose designed as a corner feature and head of the Avenue.

It addresses the town side, offering the view above when looking landward along the Avenue.

The image right shows the south and east elevations. The first floor is a flat which is accessed via a set of rear stairs to a (now enclosed) balcony which forms a porch.



The image left shows a wider view of the crossing from outside the gates, looking south. The site is to the left of the entrance.

The image right shows the northern elevation of 152 Connaught Avenue, where it very overtly turns its back to the entering public, presenting a less than inviting prospect. The open space between the side of number 152 and the railway line presents an opportunity to positively improve the setting.





## 5.0 Brief Description of the proposal site

The site is currently part of the gardens of 152 Connaught Avenue.

The image left shows the site, between the building and the railway line.



The image right shows the view of the proposal site, looking northwards, from the driveway of number 152.



The image left shows the north (rear) elevation of number 152, as presented to the public entering through the gates.

The image right shows the flat roofed double garage which is proposed for removal.



## 6.0 Description of the Proposals

The scheme comprises the construction of one detached residential building containing four small flats.



The new building is placed upon the present garden space. The revised access route to the parking area requires the demolition of a flat roofed double garage.

Details of the proposals can be read from the Chris Morris Design Ltd drawings.

## 7.0 Impact Assessment

### Criteria for Assessment

The following section assesses the significance of the setting of the heritage asset, in accordance with Section 16 of the NPPF and Historic England: Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance and The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Second Edition) (referred to henceforth as GPA3).

The assessment of how the proposed development will potentially impact upon the setting of the identified heritage assets has been undertaken using the guidance detailed GPA3. This recommends that an assessment should take into account the following factors when assessing the impact of a development:

- Location and Siting;
- Form and Appearance;
- Additional Effects; and
- Permanence.

The level of change will be assessed upon the following criteria:

Level of Change	Description
Major Beneficial	The proposed changes will substantially alter key elements of the heritage asset in a positive way, better revealing and/or enhancing important characteristics. There would be a substantial improvement to the understanding of important elements of the asset's significance.
Moderate Beneficial	The proposed changes will have a considerable positive effect on key elements of the heritage asset, such that they improve the overall character or significance of the heritage asset. There may be an improvement in key uses and beneficial change (e.g. the creation of coherency) to the characteristics of the asset.
Minor Beneficial	The proposed changes may cause a minor improvement to the character of a heritage asset.
Negligible	The proposed changes will have a very minor effect upon on the heritage asset or very minor impact on the overall character of the surrounding context.
Neutral	The proposed changes will have no impact on the overall character of the surrounding context.
Minor Adverse	The proposed changes will have minor impact on key elements of the heritage asset, such that the overall character of a heritage asset is negatively affected. Change of this magnitude may be acceptable if suitable mitigation is carried out.
Moderate Adverse	The proposed changes will have a considerable negative effect on the overall character and significance of the heritage asset. It will likely disturb key features and be harmful to overall heritage significance. Change of this magnitude should be avoided where possible, but can be minimised or neutralised through positive mitigation.
Major Adverse	The proposed changes will cause a substantial disruption to, or, in some cases, the complete destruction of important features of the heritage asset, such that its significance is substantially harmed. Change of this magnitude should be avoided.

In order to more fully understand the effect of the impact of proposals the following assessment provides a comparable analysis of the heritage value against the level of change. This assessment is based on the criteria set out by International Council on Monuments and Sites\* and is a clear way of understanding not just the impact of change but how levels of impact vary according to the value of the heritage asset.

Overall level of impact				
Level of Change	Sensitivity/Significance			
	Neutral	Low	Medium	High
Major Beneficial	Slight	Slight/Moderate	Moderate/Large	Large/Very large
Moderate Beneficial	Neutral/Slight	Slight	Moderate	Moderate/Large
Minor Beneficial	Neutral/Slight	Neutral/Slight	Slight	Slight/Moderate
Negligible	Neutral	Neutral/Slight	Neutral/Slight	Slight
Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral
Negligible	Neutral	Neutral/Slight	Neutral/Slight	Slight
Minor Adverse	Neutral/Slight	Neutral/Slight	Slight	Slight/Moderate
Moderate Adverse	Neutral/Slight	Slight	Moderate	Moderate/Large
Major Adverse	Slight	Slight/Moderate	Moderate/Large	Large/Very large

The following levels of harm may potentially be identified:

- **Substantial harm or total loss.** Harm that would ‘have such a serious impact on the significance of the asset that its significance was either vitiated altogether or very much reduced’
- **Less than substantial harm.** Harm of a lesser level that that defined above
- **No harm (preservation).** A High Court Judgement of 2014 held that with regard to preserving the setting of Listed building or preserving the character and appearance of a Conservation Area, ‘preserving’ means ‘doing no harm’.

Preservation does not mean no change; it specifically means no harm. Historic England guidance states that .....*Change to heritage assets is inevitable but it is only harmful when significance is damaged.* Thus change is accepted in Historic England’s guidance as part of the evolution of the landscape and environment. What matters is whether such change is natural, harmful or beneficial to the significance of an asset.

With regards to changes in setting, GPA 3 states that .....*protection of the setting of heritage assets need not prevent change,* with the above statement regarding the type of impact on the significance being key.

The following assessment is limited to considering the effects occasioned upon the setting of the conservation area and the heritage assets, by the proposed scheme.

\* ICOMOS (January 2011) Guidance on Heritage Impact Assessments for Cultural World Heritage Properties.

## Significance of the Heritage Assets

Setting is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as ..... *The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of the asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.*

It is important to understand how the setting contributes to the significance of the asset.

### The immediate setting of the conservation area

The proposal plot is within the corner of the defined conservation area.

The CACA describes the road junction between Connaught Avenue and Pole Barn Lane as being an important space and the view northwards along the Avenue as being an important view.



The image left shows the street view looking northwards along Connaught Avenue. The site is arrowed.

Despite the view being considered as important, there is a proliferation of road signs and the less than appealing paraphernalia associated with the railway and level crossing. However there is a certain urban appeal to the street scene at the meeting of the four roads in front of the building.

The site itself is largely hidden from view by the privet hedge and is perceived as a space behind the building between it and the railway. It does not positively enhance the immediate setting, nor does it particularly detract. However it is a prominent site, being the first to be seen upon entering the gates.

Overall the setting of the proposal site is considered to have a **neutral** contribution to the significance of the conservation area.

### The immediate setting of 152 Connaught Avenue

The proposal plot is immediately behind the building, which is likely to be considered as a non designated heritage asset, being part of the designed piece and engineered space of the main thoroughfare of the town (albeit possibly a later addition). It may not be part of the original design phase, being possibly later than its style would infer, but it still has the matching design essence of many of the other buildings in the area. It is an appealing building, of some quality, which forms an imposing corner piece between Connaught Avenue and Pole Barn Lane. However, it is a building seemingly designed to be addressed and enjoyed only from the front, with the sides and especially the rear being much less visually appealing. A curious design decision, perhaps, as it clearly has always been the first building one encounters upon entering the gates, where it presents its blank side and an oblique view of its rear to the public.

Thus there appears never to have been any intention to celebrate these elevations or relate to the space which forms the proposal site. The space is merely garden for the flat, which at present is under utilised, and partly concreted to form the parking area and driveway for the shop.

Overall the setting of the proposal site is considered to have a **neutral** contribution to the significance of the adjacent building.

## Impact upon the Heritage Assets

### The setting of the conservation area

The proposal will occasion a change to the proposal site, in that it will contain a building where it presently does not, but it exists as a domestic garden and therefore the use is not changed.

The proposal would, in effect, continue the run of buildings around the curve of the junction and join up to the railway line and so the character and grain is already established. The proposal plot does not contribute positively to the openness of the conservation area as the important open space is across the junction of the roads, in front of the building.

As the proposal site does not offer any substantive contribution to the setting of the conservation area, the proposal will therefore not occasion an impact upon it.

The proposed building has the appearance of a substantial detached dwelling, of traditional proportions and appearance and so does not appear incongruous. It offers the opportunity to turn the corner with the buildings and return in a natural row, fronting the street. It also provides an improved façade to present to the entering public, travelling through the gates into the town.

The level of change to the setting is considered to be minor, as the site is already in residential use as garden space and the new building is a continuation of a natural row.

Setting	Level of Change to setting	Significance of setting to the asset	Overall Impact
Conservation Area	Minor	Neutral	Neutral/Slight

The resulting impact on the setting of the conservation area due to the proposal is considered, on balance, to be **neutral**.

### Mitigation

If there were to be a consideration of negative impact upon the setting, the mitigation would include the fact that the site is already classified as developed (domestic residential) land in this urban setting. Also the very design of the proposed building blends in with the local vernacular, without attempting to mimic the earlier design style.

### The setting of 152 Connaught Avenue

The proposal will consume some of the space which is part of the overall site of the shop and flat. However this space offers no positive contribution to the setting of that building.

The proposal would tend to shield from view the less inspiring elevations of number 152, and present just an active side elevation, which may be seen as a benefit in this prominent position.

The level of change to the setting is considered to be minor, as the site is already in residential use as garden space and the new building does not unduly intrude or compete with the existing building. The architecture, form and presence of number 152 are sufficiently powerful not to be adversely affected by the proposed building, which has a lower profile (eaves and ridge) than the existing. It is also an urban setting which does not demand space around the building in order for it to retain its importance and significance.

Setting	Level of Change to setting	Significance of setting to the asset	Overall Impact
152 Connaught Avenue	Minor	Neutral	Neutral/Slight

The resulting impact on the setting of the existing building due to the proposal is considered, on balance, to be **neutral**.

## 8.0 Conclusion

The proposed scheme for a new residential building will occasion some change to the setting.

The new building will not change the essence of the overall site. The imposition of a new building will clearly be evident. Despite the site being in a prominent location it is not part of the setting which contributes substantially to the significance of the conservation area nor that of the existing building.

The proposal will not be detrimental to the conservation area.

*In the NPPF paragraph 202 it states that.....Where a development proposal will 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 including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.*

This report has analysed the factors which will be occasioned by the proposal. It has determined that overall a neutral impact will be occasioned to the setting of the conservation area. This constitutes no harm and consequently the NPPF paragraph 202 test is not invoked.

The proposal does not interfere with those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the conservation area, and therefore it preserves the special interest of the conservation area, in accordance with Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

*In the NPPF paragraph 203 it states that.....The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.*

This report has analysed the factors which will be occasioned by the proposal. It has determined that overall a minor level of change will be occasioned to the setting of the non designated heritage asset, resulting in a neutral level of impact. This constitutes no harm and the weight of the balanced judgement (NPPF paragraph 203) equates to a neutral impact.

The scheme offers an opportunity to provide new residential accommodation, achieved without detriment or harm to the heritage assets and their setting.

