



Heritage Statement

**7 High Street
Bildeston
Ipswich
Suffolk
IP7 7EX**

30th August 2023

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1.0 Introduction & Pre-Application Advice

1.1

This Heritage Statement has been written to support applications for planning permission and listed building consent for alterations and extension to 7 High Street, Bildeston. The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) requires an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by the proposal, 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 (paragraph 194).

1.2

This Statement provides an appraisal of the heritage assets affected and assesses significance in accordance with the policies contained in the NPPF and the guidance contained in Historic England's Advice Note 12 *Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets*. The impact of the proposed works on the significance of the heritage asset is then described and considered.

Pre-Application Advice

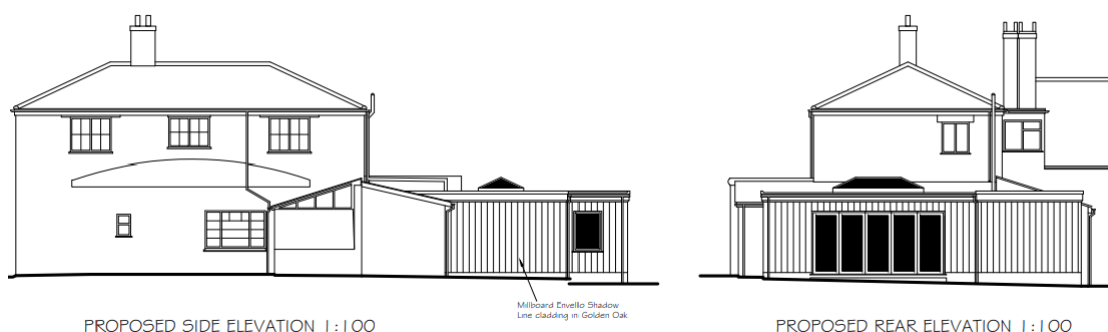
1.3

The proposal was submitted for pre-application advice, accompanied by a heritage assessment detailing the historical context of the site and summarising its significance. This is reproduced in the following section of this statement.

1.4

The response, dated 31st July 2023 (ref. DC/23/03141) concluded that

There is no objection in principle to a rear addition to this listed building, or to one of contemporary aesthetics with a flat roof. The main concern with the proposal is the relationship of the extension to the existing single storey elements, the resultant cumulative size of later additions to the main building, and the complexity of the plan form, with the projecting bedroom section. Any design is more likely to be supported if it is of robust and simple form and design.



The pre-application proposal

2.0 The Heritage Assets & Summary of Significance

2.1

No. 7 High Street is a grade II listed building (List no. 1286141). The list description reads as follows:

An early C19 timber-framed and plastered building. Two storeys. One window range on the front of double-hung sashes. Roof slate, hipped.



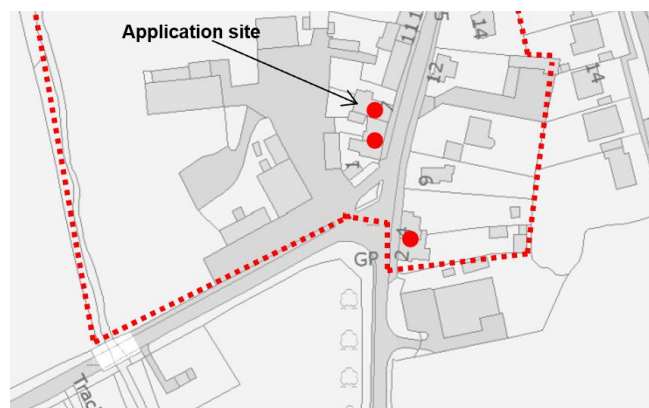
2.2

It adjoins nos. 3 and 5 High Street, located immediately to the south and all are prominent roadside buildings at the southern end of the Bildeston Conservation Area.

2.3

Nos. 3 & 5 High Street is a seventeenth century timber framed building with exposed framing on its front elevation. The list description is as follows (list no. 1037421)

A C17-C18 timber-framed and plastered building. Panelled on the front with panels of pebbledash. Red brick faced on the south end. Two storeys. Three window range of casements. Roof tiled, with a central chimney stack and an end stack at the north end.



Conservation Area Boundary & Listed Buildings

2.4
No.7 High Street has been included on the statutory list by virtue of its 'group value' with nos.3 & 5. The short row of houses forms a roadside group at the entrance to the conservation area.



2.5
No.7 also has 'group value' with the roadside buildings immediately to the north. Though not listed, these make a positive contribution to the character of the conservation area and are buildings of local interest. The end of the row nearest the application site was formerly a coconut matting factory.



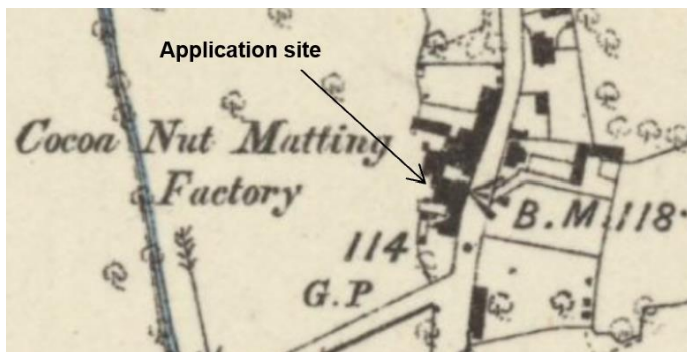
2.6
The Bildeston village website explains the process:

The fibre was taken from husks of coconuts in India and Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and arrived tightly packed in bales. It was left its natural colour for mats made on special frames in workers' homes, where the fibres were twisted and then secured to create a pile. Making lengths of matting was heavier work carried on in large workshops or factories. The coconut fibre arrived as yarn, which was then bleached or dyed orange, red, blue or green in large vats. When dry, it was either wound on to bobbins that were placed on creels at the back of looms to form the warp threads or into cops, which were placed into the long shuttles that created the weft. Using iron-framed looms, matting up the 52 yards long (47.5 metres) was woven, finished and then packed up for dispatch to retailers¹.

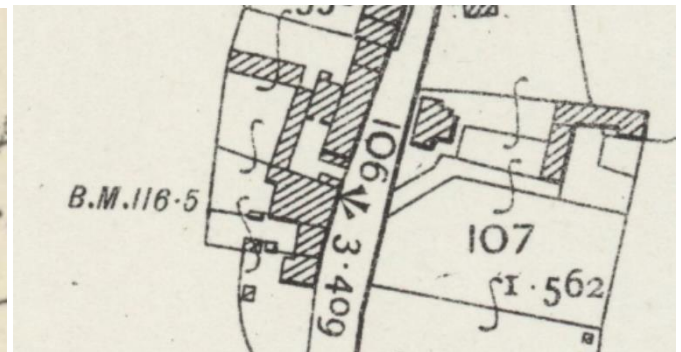
¹ Andrews Matting factory in High Street - Bildeston Village website

2.7
 The first matting factory in Bildeston would seem to date from 1867 when it was described as the 'brick built and slated building now used as a coco-fibre matting manufactory in Hadleigh Street' (now nos.9a and 9b High Street). It was set up by Frederick Moss, who having married Elizabeth Osborn took out a mortgage on property that Elizabeth's father had left her (7-9 High Street). It finally closed in 1885 though coconut fibre mats continued to be made in Bildeston well into the 1890s.²

2.8
 The application site was the house for the factory and is now entirely separate from the former matting factory site.



1883



1902

2.9
 The 1902 map shows the separation from no.9, now Lucy's Cottage to the north, which was converted to a dwelling in 1989.

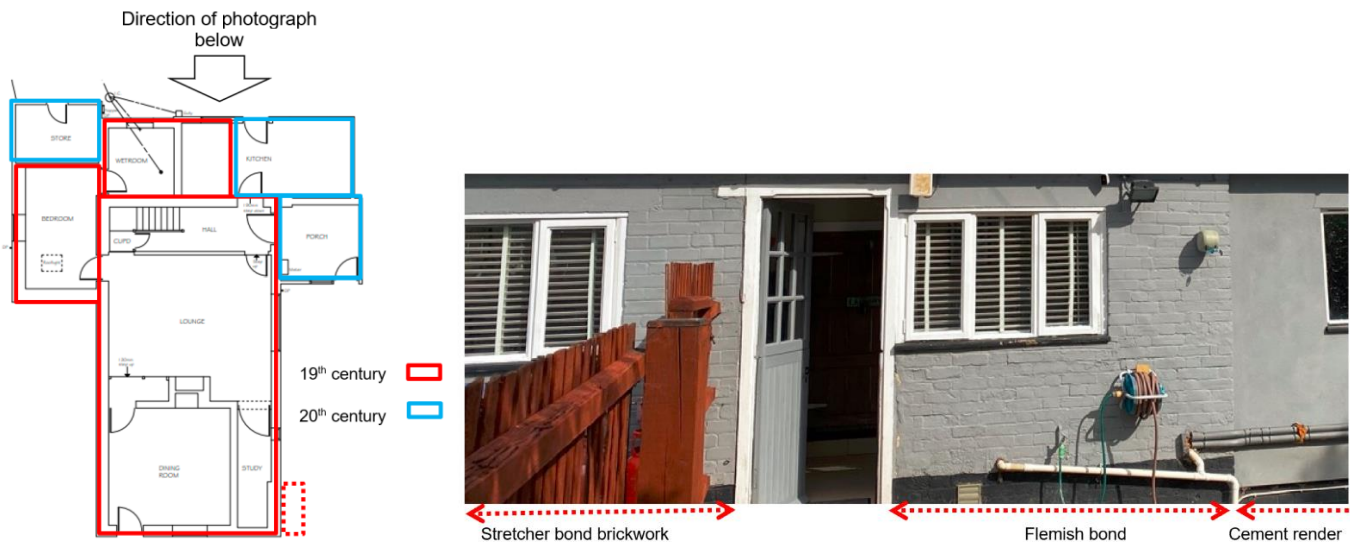
2.10
 The map shows a small extension on the north-east corner (close to the OS benchmark). This is no longer in place and was possibly removed to widen the access. It was replaced in the mid-twentieth century by the current part weatherboarded extension which continues around the back of the house as a lean-to.



² Ibid.

2.11

The rear lean-to adjoins a further taller monopitched extension, which may have extended further to the west (garden), which would account for the apparent bulk of the buildings as shown on the 1902 map. These rear extensions have been considerably modified with mid to late twentieth century additions and alterations as shown in the brickwork.



Significance

2.12

The National Planning Policy Framework defines 'significance' as, "The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting".

2.13

The building is grade II listed, primarily on account of its 'group value'. It makes a significant contribution to the street scene on account of its close proximity to the timber framed seventeenth century listed building to the south. It also has group value with the buildings of local interest to the north. These comprised the coconut matting factory to which n.7 High Street once formed a pair and the building has historic significance as a result of this association.

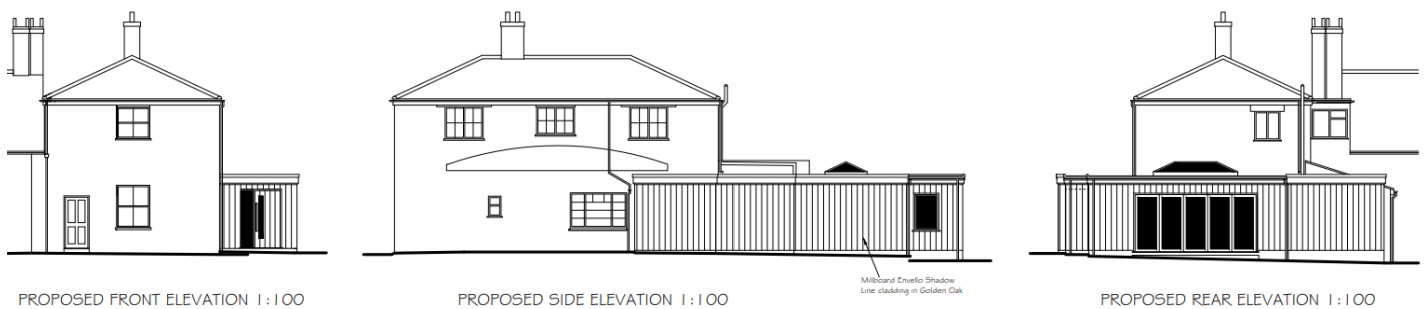
2.14

The twentieth century additions and alterations to the side and rear single storey extensions have little or no significance and detract from the appearance of the heritage asset.

3.0 Proposed Works & Heritage Impact Assessment

3.1

It is proposed to provide a single storey extension to the rear of the property, attached to the largely twentieth century rear lean-to. The principal reason for the extension is to provide an upgraded kitchen and family room.



3.2

The proposal, which has been modified following pre-application advice by removing the different elements of the existing single storey roof lines, is a high quality contemporary design, clad in vertical boarding with a flat roof with a lantern light. The extension is attached to the existing lean-to and requires the removal of a section of its outer wall, mostly of stretcher bond brickwork.

3.3

The proposal does not affect the fabric of the principal listed building, but solely affects the later rear and side extensions. The question is whether the proposal affects the setting of the listed building or the character and appearance of the conservation area.

3.4

The NPPF defines 'setting' 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 an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

3.5

The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) states that

The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors ... and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places.' It goes on to say that 'The contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights or an ability to access or experience that setting. This will vary over time and according to circumstance.

3.6
The proposed extension does not alter the manner in which the listed building is appreciated and understood. Its historic relationship with the matting factory is not harmed and the principal listed building is unchanged. The proposal causes no harm to the group value the property has with the adjacent listed building and causes no harm to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

3.7
It is considered that the proposal results in a visual improvement and if it is considered that it does not benefit the setting, it is not harmful either. At worst its impact is neutral and it forms a twenty-first century iteration of the setting.

4.0 Conclusion

4.1
The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that in considering applications for development which affects a heritage asset or its setting, local planning authorities shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting (section 66.1). Special attention shall also be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area in the exercise of any powers under the planning Acts (section 72).

4.2
The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) expands on the 1990 Act. It states that the significance of listed buildings and conservation areas can be harmed or lost by alteration to them or by development in their setting. Paragraph 206 states that proposals which preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to, or better reveal the significance of the heritage assets should be treated favourably.

4.3
Paragraph 194 of the NPPF requires an applicant to “describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting”. Paragraph 197 requires local planning authorities, in determining applications to take account of “the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation”.

4.4
Paragraph 200 states “Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification’ and paragraph 199 advises that when considering the impact on the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to their conservation. It goes on to advise that significance can be harmed or lost through the alteration or destruction of those assets.

4.5
In this case, no harm is caused to the heritage assets or the setting. No harm is caused to the character of the conservation area and the proposal accords with the guidance contained in the NPPF and local planning policies which seek to protect the historic environment.

Bibliography

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