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# Fuller Long

Heritage Statement

The Cottage  
Plumford Road, Sheldwich  
Kent ME12 0LT

Date: 11.12.2023

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Ref: FL12104



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## CONTENTS

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- 1.0 INTRODUCTION
- 2.0 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS
- 3.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY
- 4.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE AND AREA
- 5.0 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE LISTED BUILDING
- 6.0 PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE
- 7.0 ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPSALS
- 8.0 CONCLUSION

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## 1.0

## INTRODUCTION

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- 1.1 The following Heritage Statement has been prepared to support an application for planning permission at The Cottage, Plumford Road, Sheldwich, Kent ME13 0LT. The proposals are for the erection of a part single/part two storey extension to the rear and a single storey side extension to the existing house. A new single storey garage is proposed within the southern section of the site. The existing detached ancillary building to the west of the house will be demolished.
- 1.2 The Cottage is a detached, single family dwelling house located in a rural setting on the outskirts of the village of Sheldwich. It forms part of the Sheldwich Conservation Area.
- 1.3 In line with paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF), the purpose of this Statement is to define the architectural and historic significance of the building and its contribution to the character and appearance of the Sheldwich Conservation Area. This assessment utilises the heritage values set out in Historic England's Conservation Principles (2008) in its analysis of the building, its setting and surroundings.
- 1.4 This statement has been produced using desk based and online research, combined with a visual inspection of the site and wider area.
- 1.5 The impact of the proposed works upon the host building and the character and appearance of the Sheldwich Conservation Area will be considered. The proposals will also be assessed against national and local heritage policies contained within the National Planning Policy Framework 2021 and the relevant Swale Borough Council Local Plan policies.

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## 2.0

## SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

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- 2.1 The following section provides an overview of the location and context of The Cottage and a brief description of the building and the wider site. A fuller assessment of the architectural and historic significance of the building is contained at section 5 of this Statement.
- 2.2 The application site is located in a rural position, to the north of the small settlement of Sheldwich and directly to the west of the busy A251 Ashford Road. It is broadly rectangular at its northern end, tapering to the south. There is a long frontage to Ashford Road, with a pedestrian access leading to the main front door of the house and a secondary frontage to Plumford Road, which runs to the south of the site, where there is a vehicular access and small parking area.
- 2.3 The Cottage is a detached two storey house with a deep 'L' shaped plan. It is constructed in brickwork which has been painted white, with painted timber subdivided sash windows. The roof has a shallow hipped profile and is clad in natural slate, with tall chimneys to its northern and southern flanks as well as to the western elevation of the rear addition. The front façade is a symmetrical composition with a centrally placed main entrance door into the property.
- 2.4 The house sits on a spacious plot which is currently rather overgrown. The frontage to Ashford Road has a substantial screen of trees and soft landscaping which conceal the site in close and longer views from the road. Beyond this there are open fields which spread to the east. The site is bounded on all other sides by a dense band of vegetation which creates a secluded character, with only limited glimpse views into the site from Plumford Road. Beyond the vegetation on the site boundary, open fields stretch to the north and west.
- 2.5 There are few buildings in close proximity to the site. To the south of Plumford Road is the Scout's Shepherd Park Activity Centre, which has a large single storey building of utilitarian character and dating from the mid 20th century. This is set back from Plumford Road behind a parking area. Further to the south are two detached single family houses, The Shepherd and Dewerstone House, which also front onto Ashford Road. However, these properties are not visible from the application site and do not form part of its setting due to the curved alignment of the road and the dense intervening tree cover.

## 2.0

## SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

**Heritage Designations**

2.6

The Cottage is situated in the Sheldwich Conservation Area which was first designated in March 1992. The conservation area is large and includes the settlements at Sheldwich, Sheldwich Lees and Hogben's Hill, as well as dispersed development along Ashford Road to the south of Sheldwich village. The conservation area also includes the Grade I listed Lees Court and its surrounding Grade II listed parkland.

2.7

The Council do not have an adopted Conservation Area Statement for the Sheldwich Conservation Area.

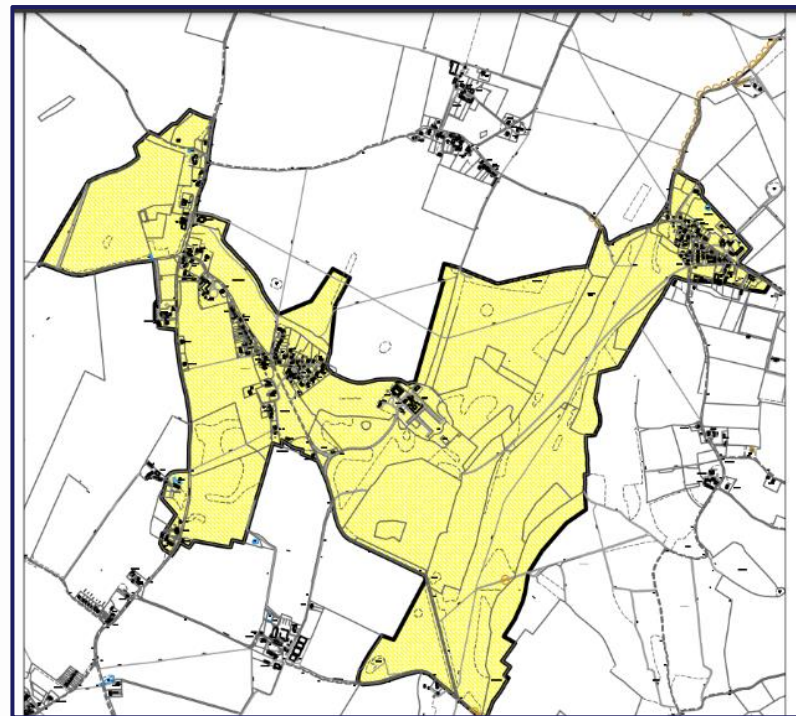


Figure 1 The boundary of the Sheldwich Conservation Area.

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## 2.0

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## SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

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### 2.8

The conservation area is largely residential in terms of its use and character however there are a smattering of other religious, educational and commercial uses including St James's Church at Sheldwich, Sheldwich Primary School, the Sheldon Spa and Parkside Joinery.

### 2.9

The conservation area contains a wide variety of buildings of various differing ages and typologies however most are of two storeys, some with accommodation within the roofscape and lit by dormers, providing a consistent sense of scale and massing. There are a range of architectural styles and motifs in evidence and the palette of materials is broad, including red and yellow brick, render, horizontal weatherboarding and both slate and clay tiled roofs, creating a heterogenous character to the conservation area.

### 2.10

There are no statutorily listed or other locally listed buildings in close proximity to the site. The nearest statutorily listed buildings are itemised below however they are located some distance to the south and given their position and the lack of inter-visibility between sites, The Cottage is not considered to form part of their setting.

- Throwley House – Grade II\* and attached stable block – Grade II
- St James's Church – Grade II\*

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**3.0**

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**RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

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There is no relevant planning history relating to the property.

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## 4.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE AND AREA

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- 4.1 The name Sheldwich is thought to derive from the Anglian word ‘sceld’ meaning ‘a shield, protection or shelter’, combined with the Old English ‘wic’ as in a dwelling – perhaps meaning a protected farm.
- 4.2 This area of Kent was traditionally agricultural and rather sparsely populated, its landscape dotted with cottages, the occasional larger house and farmsteads which were engaged in a mixture of pastoral and arable farming, augmented by the cultivation of fruit and hops.
- 4.3 Writing in 1798 W Bristow described the areas in his The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent: Volume 6, noting that *“The high road from Faversham to Ashford leads through this parish, from the former of which it is distant between five and six miles, it lies mostly on high and even ground, to which the land rises from the London road, in rather a pleasant and healthy country, the greatest part of it on a chalky soil, having much poor land in it, and that covered with slints, though in the northern part of it, where the chalk prevails less, there is some tolerable fertile land; in the eastern part, where the hill rises, there is much rough ground, and adjoining woodland. The church stands close to the Ashford road, along which the houses are dispersed, as they are in that leading to Sheldwich lees, and round it mostly neat chearful dwellings.”*
- 4.4 The 1872 Ordnance Survey map depicts the rural and isolated character of the area, with large fields interspersed with scattered tracts of woodland and orchards, including directly to the south of Plumford Road. Notable on this map are the landscaped gardens of large properties such as Throwley House, which along with St James’s church and its vicarage, formed the nucleus of the very small settlement at Sheldwich. To the south of the village was another large house, Lords also set amidst landscaped gardens and to the east, Lees Court, a large 17th century mansion destroyed by fire in 1910 and then reconstructed in facsimile in 1912.
- 4.5 The Cottage is thought to date from the mid 19th century. By the time of the 1872 map the house is shown with a distinctive ‘T’ footprint which differs from the current ‘L’ shape, suggesting that the northern arm of the T has been removed. The building forms part of a farmstead, with buildings laid out to create a courtyard enclosed to the north, south and west.



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## 4.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE AND AREA

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- 4.6 The wider context to the site had changed little by the time of the 1896 Ordnance Survey map. However, The Cottage is now depicted with an 'L' shaped plan, reflecting its current arrangement. The large farm building to the west had also disappeared.
- 4.7 The site changed little over the next 10 years and by the time of the 1906 Ordnance Survey map only one small farm building had been removed on the southern boundary of the site and the house retained its 'L' shaped footprint.
- 4.8 By the mid 20th century, the 1961 Ordnance Survey map shows the loss of more farm buildings around the courtyard and the construction of a 'T' shaped building on the former orchard to the south of Plumford Road. The wider context remained wholly rural, with swathes of orchards still in evidence and only a smattering of new development on the outskirts of Sheldwich Lees alongside the new school

## 4.0

## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE AND AREA



Figure 2 The 1872 Ordnance Survey map and a detail of the site.

## 4.0

## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE AND AREA



Figure 3 The 1896 Ordnance Survey map and a detail of the site.

## 4.0 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE AND AREA



Figure 4 The 1906 Ordnance Survey map and a detail of the site.

## 4.0

## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE AND AREA



Figure 5 The 1961 Ordnance Survey map and a detail of the site.

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## 5.0

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BUILDING

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- 5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework Annex 2 defines significance as *“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.”*
- 5.2 A heritage asset is defined as *“A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).”* In this case the Sheldwich Conservation Area is a designated heritage asset.
- 5.3 Historic England’s document ‘Conservation Principles – Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment’ (2008) identifies a series of values that can be attributed to a heritage asset and which help to appraise and define its significance. Paragraph 3.3 of the document outlines that:
- “In order to identify the significance of a place, it is necessary first to understand its fabric, and how and why it has changed over time; and then to consider:*
- *who values the place, and why they do so*
  - *how those values relate to its fabric*
  - *their relative importance*
  - *whether associated objects contribute to them*
  - *the contribution made by the setting and context of the place*
  - *how the place compares with others sharing similar values.”*

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## 5.0

### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BUILDING

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- 5.4 In assessing the significance of The Cottage it is necessary to examine its origins, history, form, architectural design, layout, materials and relationship with surrounding buildings. In making this assessment, consideration has been given to its intrinsic architectural merit, its completeness, the extent of any alterations and their impact, the contribution of the building to the character of the area and the degree to which the building illustrates aspects of local or national history. In line with the National Planning Policy Framework this assessment is “...*proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance*” (para 194) and to enable the local planning authority to “...*identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal*” (para 195).
- 5.5 The Cottage is a detached single family dwelling house dating from the mid 19th century. There is some evidence internally that it was not built in a single phase, with the remnants of a staircase in the northern section of the house and constructional details within the roof space which suggest that the rear addition was added later than the NE corner of the house. Nonetheless, the house now presents with a coherent architectural form and style and a lobby entry type plan which is reflected in its symmetrical front elevation.
- 5.6 The building is detached and has a deep ‘L’ shaped footprint. Both the frontage section and rear addition are of two storeys with generous floor to ceiling heights. The entire composition is topped with a shallow, slate clad hipped roof with deep overhanging eaves and tall chimneystacks to the northern and southern flanks, as well as the western façade of the rear addition. This arrangement is reflective of Italianate inspired suburban villas of the mid 19th century and provides a ‘polite’ architectural character to the house in this otherwise rural location and context. Its facades are of painted brickwork with painted timber sash windows in either a 6 over 6 or 8 over 8 configuration. The ground floor sash in the rear addition is set beneath a curved brick arch, with high quality gauged arches to the ground floor front façade. Here too there is elegant reed and roundel detailing to the timber sash boxes, a typical Regency feature which may have persisted in slightly later ‘out of town’ buildings. The architectural composition of the front façade is undermined to a degree however by the poor quality modern porch with faux classical detailing.

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## 5.0

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### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BUILDING

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- 5.7 To the rear the building has received a mid to later 20th century extension at 1st floor level which provides an upstairs bathroom. This is constructed of painted brickwork with a flat, felt roof and a modern window with a toplight. This sits above a void at ground floor level which maintains access into the house through the back door. To the south is a small single storey lean-to element with a pitched roof which is a storage space, accessed externally. This is also constructed of painted brickwork with a clay tile roof and a small casement window. These modern additions to the building detract from the character of the building due to their low quality construction and lack of appropriate architectural detailing, in particular the flat roof to the 1st floor element, its incongruous overhanging arrangement and the poor fenestration throughout. This part of the building also has a proliferation of servicing which clutters the building and detracts from its appearance.
- 5.8 The house is attractive and characterful, with high quality detailing and elegant features. In aesthetic and architectural terms it contributes to the character and appearance of the Sheldwich Conservation Area and shares some similarities with other historic buildings within the designation, for example its shallow slated clad hipped roof, symmetrical front façade and prominent chimneystacks. The house is situated rurally and not within one of the conservation area's small settlements, reflective of its historically dispersed and scattered settlement pattern.
- 5.9 Situated to the west of the main house is a single storey 19th century former farm building. This is timber framed with hipped, clay tile clad roof and is open in its southern section. The northern bays of the building are enclosed, with horizontal weatherboarded facades. This is in generally poor condition.
- 5.10 The house has a large private garden, situated mostly to the south, which is currently in a rather wild and overgrown state. The tall trees which bound the site create a very secluded character and block views out to the surrounding open countryside. There are glimpse views into the site from the vehicular access off Plumford Road, from where the house appears nestled into its green and verdant setting.



## 5.0

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BUILDING



Figure 6 The front façade of the house.



Figure 7 The rear of the house showing the modern infill structures and proliferation of modern pipework.



Figure 8 A longer view of the rear and southern flank wall of the house with the private garden in the foreground,



Figure 9 A view into the site from the vehicle access on Plumford Road.

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## 5.0

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## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BUILDING

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### 5.11

The A251 Ashford Road bounds the site to the east and is a busy rural route with a 50mph speed limit. There is no pavement on the western side of the road and only an overgrown track on its eastern edge, essentially forming part of the large field opposite the site and which is not well used. The site is screened in close range and longer views along Ashford Road due to the dense tree cover and soft landscaping on its boundaries. Consequently, the site makes little demonstrable visual contribution to the streetscape or to the character and appearance of this part of the Sheldwich Conservation Area, particularly given its position at the far northern tip of the designation.

#### **Assessment of significance**

### 5.12

Historic England's document 'Conservation Principles – Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment' (2008) identifies a series of values that can be attributed to a heritage asset and which help to appraise and define its significance. Paragraph 3.3 of the document outlines that:

*"In order to identify the significance of a place, it is necessary first to understand its fabric, and how and why it has changed over time; and then to consider:*

- *who values the place, and why they do so*
- *how those values relate to its fabric*
- *their relative importance*
- *whether associated objects contribute to them*
- *the contribution made by the setting and context of the place*
- *how the place compares with others sharing similar values."*

### 5.13

Historic England's 'Conservation Principles' identifies four values that can be attributed to a heritage asset. These have been examined in turn below.

#### **Evidential Value**

This value is derived from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity (para 35) and is generally closely associated with archaeological sites and remains, with age being a strong indicator of evidential value.

## 5.13 cont'd

In this case the building contributes to a broad understanding of rural life from the mid 19th century onwards but does not provide any specific evidence about human activity at the time.

**Historical value**

Paragraph 39 of the Conservation Principles document outlines that *“Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative.”*

The building has formed part of the historic local scene in Sheldwich for at least 150 years and consequently has age value. The building provides evidence of the slow evolution of the settlement and wider area over time. The building’s relatively secluded setting is still reminiscent of earlier centuries, set amidst open fields.

Whilst the building appears to have originally related to adjacent farm buildings which have now largely been demolished, this historic and functional use has now been severed and the site is in wholly domestic residential use.

**Aesthetic value**

Aesthetic value is defined as *“....the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.”*

The Cottage is an attractive building with a ‘polite’ architectural character more reminiscent of an urban or suburban setting, with generous floor to ceiling heights, elegant sash windows with their reed and roundel sash boxes and Italianate details such as the deep overhanging eaves. The use of a shallow slate roof rather than a steep pitch with local Kent peg tiles reflects the fashion of the period and the increasing availability during the 19<sup>th</sup> century for materials from beyond one’s local area.

The building retains a high degree of its original character, however this has been significantly undermined at the rear by the poor quality 1st floor infill which lacks any architectural integrity. A modern porch to the front façade detracts from its simple appearance and proportions and the painting of the brickwork throughout also disguises its original colour, texture and character.

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## 5.0

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### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE BUILDING

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#### 5.13 cont'd

##### **Communal value**

This value is derived from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience of memory. In this case, any communal value would be 'social', defined at paragraph 56 as *".....places that people perceive as a source of identity, distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence."*

The building has communal value in so far as it has been a familiar landmark in the area for many centuries and has featured in the day to day lives of those who live, work or pass through the area. This value is somewhat lessened due to its relatively secluded and rural location.

#### 5.14

##### **Summary**

The significance of the building derives from its siting, form, materials and detailing which all contribute to its historic and architectural interest and to the character and appearance of the Sheldwich Conservation Area. It has aesthetic and architectural value, with the retention of attractive historic features and a pleasing sense of scale and proportion. The building plays a small part in our understanding of the development and evolution of this rural area over time, forming part of the established local scene.

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## 6.0

## PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

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6.1 The following section sets out the legislative framework as well as the national and local heritage policy context against which the proposed scheme will be assessed.

### 6.2 **National Planning Policy & Legislation**

Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 with regard to conservation areas requires that:

*“...special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.”*

6.3 The revised National Planning Policy Framework 2021 (NPPF) sets out the Government’s planning policies and how these are expected to be applied. There is a general presumption in favour of sustainable development within national planning policy guidance.

#### Paragraph 194

*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.*

#### Paragraph 195

*Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.*



## 6.0

## PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

## 6.3 cont'd

Paragraph 197

*In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*

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

Paragraph 199

*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 (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.*

Paragraph 202

*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.*

**Local Planning Policy**

## 6.4

The Swale Borough Council Local Plan was adopted in July 2017 and contains a number of heritage and design policies. The relevant sections are cited below.

**Policy CP 4 - Requiring good design**

*All development proposals will be of a high quality design that is appropriate to its surroundings. Development proposals will, as appropriate:*

1. *Create safe, accessible, comfortable, varied and attractive places;*
2. *Enrich the qualities of the existing environment by promoting and reinforcing local distinctiveness and strengthening sense of place;*
5. *Retain and enhance features which contribute to local character and distinctiveness;*
8. *Be appropriate to the context in respect of materials, scale, height and massing;*

6.4 cont'd

- 9. *Make best use of texture, colour, pattern, and durability of materials;*
- 14. *Adhere to relevant supporting design guidance.*

**Core Policy CP8 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment**

*To support the Borough's heritage assets, the Council will prepare a Heritage Strategy. Development will sustain and enhance the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets to sustain the historic environment whilst creating for all areas a sense of place and special identity. Development proposals will, as appropriate:*

- 1. *Accord with national planning policy in respect of heritage matters, together with any heritage strategy adopted by the Council;*
- 2. *Sustain and enhance the significance of Swale's designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings in a manner appropriate to their significance and, where appropriate, in accordance with Policies DM 32-DM 36;*
- 3. *Respond to the integrity, form and character of settlements and historic landscapes;*
- 6. *Respect the integrity of heritage assets, whilst meeting the challenges of a low carbon future; and*

**Development Management Policy DM 14 General development criteria**

*All development proposals will, as appropriate:*

- 1. *Accord with the policies and proposals of the adopted Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise;*
- 2. *Include information sufficient to enable the Council to determine the application in conjunction with the Council's published Local List of requirements;*
- 3. *Accord with adopted Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance;*
- 5. *Reflect the positive characteristics and features of the site and locality;*
- 6. *Conserve and enhance the natural and/or built environments taking in to account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets;*
- 7. *Be both well sited and of a scale, design, appearance and detail that is sympathetic and appropriate to the location;*

## 6.0

## PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

## 6.4 cont'd

**Policy DM 16 Alterations and extensions**

*Planning permission will be granted for alterations and extensions to existing buildings provided they:*

- 1. Are of an appropriate design and quality which responds positively to the style and character of the building being extended;*
- 2. Are appropriately scaled in relation to the building and its surroundings;*
- 3. Maintain or enhance (where applicable) the character of the street scene;*
- 4. Reinforce or enhance as appropriate local distinctiveness;*
- 5. Preserve architectural, historic, landscape, or nature conservation features of interest.*

**Policy DM 33 Development affecting a conservation area**

*Development (including changes of use and the demolition of unlisted buildings or other structures) within, affecting the setting of, or views into and out of a conservation area, will preserve or enhance all features that contribute positively to the area's special character or appearance. The Borough Council expects development proposals to:*

- 2. Retain the layout, form of streets, spaces, means of enclosure and buildings, and pay special attention to the use of detail and materials, surfaces, landform, vegetation and land use;*
- 3. Remove features that detract from the character of the area and reinstate those that would enhance it.*

## 6.5

**Swale Borough Council 'Designing an Extension' SPD 2011***Scale*

*3.1 Traditionally, extensions to buildings are similar and less significant than the main building. Over-large extensions can destroy the appearance of the house and have a serious effect upon the area as a whole.*

*3.2 It is often advisable to set the extension back from the front wall of the existing house...and the roof should be set back by the same amount to create the right impression.*

*3.3 In the countryside scale is of particular importance. In rural areas policies are designed to maintain their attractive character and the extension of a small cottage to create a large house will normally be resisted. The Council will not normally approve an extension to a dwelling in a rural area if it results in an increase of more than 60% of the property's original floorspace.*

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**6.0****PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT**

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## 6.5 cont'd

*Design*

**3.4**            *On houses with pitched roof it is always best to have a matching pitched roof on the extension with the same type of tiles. All such two storey extensions should have a pitched roof....*

*Rear extensions*

**5.9**            *On well spaced detached properties or where an extension is to be built away from the boundary a larger extension may be acceptable.*

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## 7.0

## ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS

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- 7.1 This section will set out the proposed works to the building and will consider their impact. It will assess this impact in terms of the host building and the character and appearance of the surrounding Sheldwich Conservation Area. The proposed works will also be considered against the relevant statutory, national and local heritage policy framework.
- 7.2 The proposals are for a single storey extension to the rear and side of the house. This will provide an open plan kitchen/diner and a new living room. A two storey element will also be introduced into the SW corner of the house, forming part of the new ground floor kitchen accommodation and also providing a master bedroom and ensuite bathroom as part of the reconfigured 1st floor layout. The existing poor condition, part open ancillary building directly to the west of the house will be removed.
- 7.3 The private garden to the house will be extensively landscaped as part of the proposals, with new native trees to the eastern edge of the site and a new native hedge in line with the front façade, alongside new areas of lawn and soft landscaping.

### 7.4 **Impact of the proposals on the host building**

#### **Single storey extension**

The proposed single storey element will infill the 'L' shaped plan at ground floor level, replacing the current low grade modern lean to structure. It will project from the rear building line of the existing rear addition and will not project beyond either of the side elevations to the north and the south. The proposals will be of an appropriate scale and massing, with the setbacks from the southern facade of the house creating an appropriate degree of visual subordination and ensuring that the visual primacy of the original facades is maintained, particularly the front elevation. The low-level position of the proposed single storey extension will allow the upper sections of the building to remain visible, with the characterful roofscape, overhanging eaves and prominent chimney stacks still clearly appreciable.

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## 7.0

# ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS

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### 7.5

The proposed extension will be clad with horizontal timber cladding and simple vertically proportioned glazed doors and 6 over 6 sash window which reflect the vertical proportions of the original sash windows. The new doors and glazing will allow for improved visual and physical connectivity with the property's private garden.

### 7.6

#### **Two storey extension**

A two storey element is proposed which will merge with the proposed living accommodation at ground floor level and create a square plan to the 1st floor of the house. This will be clad in horizontal timber weatherboarding with a low hipped slate clad roof. The extension will be set back from both the eastern and southern facades of the house and the roof will be set in from the existing building lines and set down from the main ridge line in order to create a visual distinction between the original house and the proposed infill section.

### 7.7

The infill extension will be clad in white painted horizontal weatherboarding which differentiates it in material terms from the painted brickwork of the building's main facades and will allow the original profile and form of the house to remain legible. The use of white horizontal weatherboarding is a locally distinctive material which references many other properties within the Sheldwich Conservation Area, including those with a low hipped slate clad roof which is similar to the application building (see Figures 10 & 11). A new 6 over 6 sash in the southern and western elevations of the infill extension will stylistically link it to the architectural detailing of the main house.

### 7.8

The principle of the infill extension is considered acceptable, particularly given the proposed use of setbacks and appropriate subtly contrasting materials to provide articulation and subordination. There are other examples of detached houses in the surrounding area which clearly had original 'L' shaped footprints but have been extended to create a square plan at ground and 1st floor level, for example further north along Ashford Road (see Figures 12 & 13).

## ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS



Figures 10 & 11 White weatherboarding within the Sheldwich Conservation Area at the Grade II listed 'The Stocks' on the corner of Ashford Road and Lees Court Road (top left) and a house with weatherboarding and a low slate roof on Lees Court Road (bottom right).

## 7.0

## ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS



Figures 12 &13 Houses with infill sections and resulting square plans to the north of the application site on Ashford Road.



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## 7.0

# ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS

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### 7.9

The proposals have been carefully conceived so that the original form and profile of the house remains legible. The resulting scale and massing is considered appropriate and commensurate with other detached, single family houses along Ashford Road and within the wider Sheldwich Conservation Area (see Figures 14 & 15). From within the site the extensions will appear well articulated and responsive to the relevant parts of the main house, with setbacks from key building lines and from the main profile of the roof assisting with providing appropriate visual and physical subordination. The two storey infill will also secure the removal of the existing low grade bathroom extension at 1st floor level and the incongruous void which it creates beneath it, both of which detract from the appearance of this corner of the building.

### 7.10

The proposed additions to the house will be of high quality and have been sympathetically formulated to complement the character of The Cottage whilst providing their own subtle architectural contribution. They are considered to preserve the architectural and historic interest of the house whilst providing much needed additional living space to accommodate the needs of a growing family.

### 7.11

#### **Proposed garage**

A single storey garage is proposed within the southern tip of the site. This will have a slate clad pitched roof and horizontal weatherboarding to its facades. The garage is a very modestly scaled structure, sufficient for parking a single car and will be situated some distance from the house, adjacent to the existing parking area and vehicular access into the site from Plumford Road. The ancillary character of the proposed garage and its size and scale will ensure that it has no harmful impact upon either the streetscene along Ashford Road, the setting of the main house or the overall character of the application site.

## 7.0

## ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS



Figures 14 & 15 Large detached houses to the south of the application site and within the Sheldwich Conservation Area.

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## 7.0

## ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS

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### 7.12

#### **Views analysis**

##### **Impact of the proposals from within the site**

From the private garden to the south of the house the proposals will relate positively to the scale and character of the house, which is of a generous size and located on a spacious plot. The single storey element is set at low level and will allow key features of the upper storeys and roofscape to remain fully appreciable. Mature trees around the edge of the site will continue to provide a prominent verdant backdrop to the house and to contribute to its secluded character (see Figures 8 & 9).

### 7.13

There is limited space to the north, east and west of the house given its position in relation to the site boundaries. The setbacks from the front and northern building lines will ensure that the proposed single storey element will be fully subordinate to the main house. The two storey extension will be visible from with the house's private garden however it given its siting, materiality and architectural detailing it will read as a sympathetic and legible addition to the building. From the north the proposed two storey element will not be visible.

### 7.14

Overall the extension represents a high quality addition to the house which will remove the current unsightly 1st floor infill and provide for a remodeled and appropriately enlarged family house set within newly landscaped gardens.

### 7.15

##### **Impact of the proposals on the setting of the building and its wider context**

In views of the site from the north on Ashford Road, retained and new trees and soft landscaping will obscure views of the proposed single storey extension to the house. The proposed two storey element will not be visible given its position in the SW corner of the house (see Figure 16).

### 7.16

In views from the south, the green and verdant boundary to the site will filter any views of the proposed single and two storey extensions to the building. There is of course no planning requirement for good quality design to be screened and in this case the proposed extensions, where visible from any public realm vantage points, will read as appropriate additions to the host building (see Figure 17).

## 7.0

## ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS



Figure 16 A view from the north looking south towards the site which is concealed by greenery.



Figure 17 A view from the south looking towards Plumford Road and the site.



Figure 18 The site looking north along Ashford Road from the pedestrian path on its eastern edge.

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**7.0****ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS**

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7.17 From any vantage points directly to the east of the house the proposed single storey extension will appear wholly subordinate to the main house, well setback from its front façade (see Figure 18). Indeed, retained and new trees to the front of the house, and the proposed native hedging to the south of it will largely obscure views of the proposed extension. The proposed two storey element will not be visible.

7.18 It must also be noted that Ashford Road is a fast rural route with a 50mph speed limit and the house and its proposed extensions will be viewed from moving vehicles in the vast majority of cases. Whilst there is a pedestrian path on the east side of Ashford Road this peters out opposite the site and is barely used, providing limited opportunities for more static views into the site.

**Assessment of the proposed development against the statutory, national and local policy framework****The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990**

7.19 The main issues for consideration in relation to this application are the effect of the proposals on the host building and the character and appearance of the Sheldwich Conservation Area.

7.20 The proposals will retain the key characteristics of the building and extend it in a sympathetic manner which preserves its character whilst providing for additional well designed and attractive living space. The scheme will enhance the setting of The Cottage through beneficial new landscaping. Overall the proposals are considered to comply with the s.72 duty within the 1990 Act.

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## 7.0

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### ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS

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#### 7.22

##### **The National Planning Policy Framework 2021**

The scheme is considered to comply with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021).

##### Paragraph 194

This statement has fully assessed the significance of the host building, its setting and its contribution to the surrounding context.

##### Paragraph 195

The significance of the building and its setting has been identified and assessed. This has been taken into account when considering the impact of the proposals so as to minimise conflict with this identified significance.

##### Paragraph 197

The proposals will sustain and enhance the significance of the building through the careful siting, scale, design and materials of the proposals. They will maintain and enhance the building's positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness, retaining the legibility of its plan, form and profile whilst introducing thoughtful and sympathetically designed new additions.

##### Paragraph 199

The preservation of the character and appearance of the Sheldwich Conservation Area, a designated heritage asset, has been taken into account when formulating the proposals to ensure that they respond positively to the existing character of the building and the site.

##### Paragraph 202

Paragraph 202 outlines that any 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of a heritage asset should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use. The National Planning Policy Guidance 2019 (NPPG) states at paragraph 020 that public benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits and can include both sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset as well as securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation. The NPPG also indicates at paragraph 015 that *"The vast majority of heritage assets are in private hands. Thus, sustaining heritage assets in the long term often requires an incentive for their active conservation. Putting heritage assets to a viable use is likely to lead to the investment in their maintenance necessary for their long-term conservation."*

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## 7.0

## ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS

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### 7.22 cont'd

The aspirations of the applicant are to fully refurbish and upgrade the property which has been neglected for some time and is now in a poor condition, as well as undertake extensive landscaping works to rectify the overgrown and neglected state of the private garden. The enlargement of the house to accommodate the needs of a growing family and provide the required number of bedrooms are key to the applicant's long term future within the property and securing this additional space will reinforce the applicant's commitment to the property and to investment in its ongoing repair and maintenance. It is not considered that the proposals will cause harm to the significance of The Cottage, or to the surrounding Sheldwich Conservation Area, however the proposals will deliver demonstrable public benefits for the building, taking account of the wording of NPPG para 020, and these must be weighed into the planning balance. This will include enhancing its appearance, upgrading and refurbishing its internal and external fabric and finishes and enhancing its setting through extensive landscaping works to the garden and site boundaries.

#### **Local Plan**

### 7.23

The proposed works are considered to comply with the requirements of the Swale Borough Council Local Plan 2017.

### 7.24

Core policies CP4 (Requiring good design) and CP8 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) seek high quality design that is appropriate to its surroundings and which sustains and enhances the significance of heritage assets. Development Management policy DM14 (General development criteria) requires development to reflect the positive characteristics and features of the site and to sustain and enhance the significance of affected heritage assets through sympathetic and appropriate scale, design, appearance and detail. Policy DM16 (Alterations and Extensions) outlines that planning permission will be granted for development which is of an appropriate design and quality and which responds positively to the style and character of the building, is appropriately scaled in relation to the building and its surroundings and reinforces local distinctiveness. Within conservation areas, policy DM33 (Development affecting a conservation area) states that development will need to preserve or enhance all features that contribute positively to the area's special character or appearance, paying special attention to the use of detail and materials.



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## 7.0

### ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS

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7.25

The proposals will respect and respond to the integrity of the host building and the wider Sheldwich Conservation Area through the careful handling of the siting, scale and massing of the proposed extensions. The use of setbacks and a set down from the main ridge height will introduce a sense of visual subordination and articulation, allowing the form and profile of the main house to remain appreciable and legible. The use of vertical weatherboarding to the single storey element and a more contemporary glazing pattern provides a subtle distinction between old and new, whilst the choice of a horizontal weatherboarding to the two storey element references the traditional local palette of materials which can be found on other historic buildings within the surrounding area.

7.26

The proposals will sustain the significance of the host building and this part of the Sheldwich Conservation Area through the refurbishment and upgrading of a building which is very tired in terms of its fabric and finishes and in need of restoration. Its setting will be enhanced through the careful landscaping of its large private garden and the removal of poor quality, self-seeded trees and their replacement with new native trees. A native hedge will provide both visual screening to the proposals in views from Ashford Road and a level of acoustic protection to the garden.

7.27

This Heritage Statement has assessed the significance of the host building and its setting and provided a robust justification for the proposals. The proposed extensions make intelligent use of the building and its current layout whilst maintaining its historic and architectural character and integrity. The detailed design, form and use of materials for the extensions is sympathetic to the local vernacular and complements the profile and proportions of the host building. The proposed scheme will provide valuable additional living space in a sympathetic and contextual manner, causing no harm to the character of The Cottage. Given the position of the extensions, the location of the site and the degree of retained and new screening, the proposals will have no harmful visual impact and will sit comfortably within their context.

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## 7.0

## ASSESSMENT OF THE PROPOSALS

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### 7.28

#### **Swale Borough Council's 'Designing an Extension' SPD 2011**

The proposed scheme is considered to comply with the advice contained within the Council's SPD. It will be subordinate to the host building, incorporating setbacks from key facades and a set down from the main ridge line for the two storey element. The use of a matching roof profile to complement the house and a more contemporary, low slung approach at ground floor level will ensure that the character, form and profile of the building will be preserved. The SPD indicates that a 3m projection is appropriate for single storey extensions and 1.8m for two storey additions where these are *"close to your neighbour's common boundary."* Paragraph 5.9 is clear that *"On well spaced detached properties or where an extension is to be built away from the boundary a larger extension may be acceptable."* In this case the application site is secluded and spacious with no other dwellings in close proximity. A larger extension, albeit proportionate in scale and massing to the original house is considered appropriate given the site and its context.

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## 8.0

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## CONCLUSION

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- 8.1 The proposals are for a part single and part two storey extension to The Cottage, a detached family house set on a large spot to the north of Sheldwich.
- 8.2 The proposed works are considered to strike an appropriate balance between the aspirations of the applicant to provide valuable additional living space and the need to protect the character and appearance of the Sheldwich Conservation Area. The building is in a secluded location, at the very northern tip of the conservation area and its visual contribution is limited at present due to the heavy tree cover around the site. The proposed extensions will be located to the rear of the building, with only a subordinate single storey element wrapping around onto the side elevation. By virtue of the discreet siting and appropriate scale of the proposed extensions and their sympathetic design and materials, there will be no harm to the form, profile or character of The Cottage. Given the degree of screening which will be retained on site, the nature of the public realm views from Ashford Road and the absence of any neighbouring domestic buildings, the proposals are not considered to cause any harm to the site, its setting or surrounding context.
- 8.3 The proposals are considered to comply with the s.72 duty within the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the requirements of the Swale Borough Council Local Plan 2017 and the National Planning Policy Framework 2021.

Thank you for Viewing our Heritage Statement

If you have any queries or would like to discuss anything further with us, please don't hesitate to get in contact [hello@fullerlong.com](mailto:hello@fullerlong.com)

