

HERITAGE STATEMENT

**FIELDGATE NURSERY,
STATION ROAD,
MELDRETH,
ROYSTON
UNDERTAKEN ON BEHALF OF:

THE PLANNING CONSULTANCY LTD.**



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CONTENTS

- 1.0 INTRODUCTION
- 2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT
- 3.0 PLANNING POLICY
- 4.0 NATURE AND EXTENT OF HERITAGE SETTING
- 5.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE
- 6.0 THE PROPOSED WORKS
- 7.0 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT
- 8.0 CONCLUSIONS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the redevelopment of land to Fieldgate Nurseries, Meldreth, Royston. The statement should be read in conjunction with the Planning Statement and associated plans.

1.2 The statement shall assess the impact of the proposed development on nearby heritage assets:

- Fieldgate Farmhouse

1.3 The design objectives of the application are:

- To replace an existing commercial site with an upgraded and improved development.
- To create attractive family homes.
- To avoid any negative impacts upon the features and setting of any designated and non-designated heritage assets.
- To design in a style which respects the surrounding dwellings and vernacular.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT

2.1 The application site comprises a parcel of land located within the location of Meldreth.

2.2 The site encompasses existing residential properties to the front of the site affronting the highway along with numerous commercial structures to the rear of the site with associated hardstanding. To the very rear of the location is unmade scrubland. The site is enclosed with trees and fencing and well-established screening along its boundaries; to the South there is formal vehicular access to the site.



Fig. Existing Units to Rear of Fieldgate Farmhouse



Fig. Existing Units to Rear of Fieldgate Farmhouse

2.4 The site is not located within the Green Belt.

2.4 Fieldgate Farmhouse is the closest historic property relating to the application site. Fieldgate Farmhouse is described as:

Late C17 and C18. Timber framed, plaster rendered and steeply pitched tiled roofs with ridge and end stacks. Single range two bay plan to late C17 part with outshut at rear. C18 single bay added to north end. Two storeys and attic. C17 part has gabled dormer on east side, now removed, and on the principal front two c.1984 wood windows and two at ground floor. The C18 addition, possibly a parlour bay, is of two storeys and attic. One gable dormer and one window, c.1984 to each storey. c.1984 door in its original location. Adjoining at South end is a C19 red brick and slate barn.

2.5 To the North of the site opposite the vehicular access and Fieldgate Farmhouse is the main highway and public footpath which leads to the settlements of Meldreth and Melbourn.

2.6 The Grade II Listed Building is positioned to the North of the application boundary and approximately 20m from the closest proposed new build structure (a single storey garage). The property is currently separated from the rest of the site by close boarded fencing, and hard standing before the main structures of the existing commercial units.



Fig. Existing Site Layout

3.0 PLANNING POLICY

3.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a responsibility upon the local planning authority (LPA) when determining applications for development affecting listed buildings to pay special regard or attention to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting.

3.2 The Government's national planning policy is set out within The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which provides the information/requirements for the conservation of the historic environment and states:

“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. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.” (paragraph 194)

3.3 NPPF (Paragraph 195) states that 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). They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset to avoid/minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

3.4 The NPPF defines the significance of a heritage asset 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.”

3.5 The heritage policy relevant (Development affecting Listed Buildings) which states that *“Development affecting a listed building should be in keeping with its scale, character and surroundings. Demolition of a listed building, or development proposals that adversely affect the setting, and alterations that impair the special characteristics of a listed building will not be permitted. In cases where planning permission might not normally be granted for the conversion of listed buildings to alternative uses, favorable consideration may be accorded to schemes which incorporate works that represent the most practical way of preserving the building and its architectural and historic characteristics and its setting.”*

4.0 NATURE AND EXTENT OF HERITAGE SETTING

4.1 The following section sets out to identify which heritage assets and their settings could be affected by the proposal (Step 1 as detailed in Historic England’s ‘The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition)’).

4.2 Historic Ordnance Survey Mapping obtained from the National Library of Scotland indicates how the land associated with the site has developed.

- The below OS Mapping from 1880 to 1952 indicates the settlement development along the road frontage.



Fig. OS Circa 1880

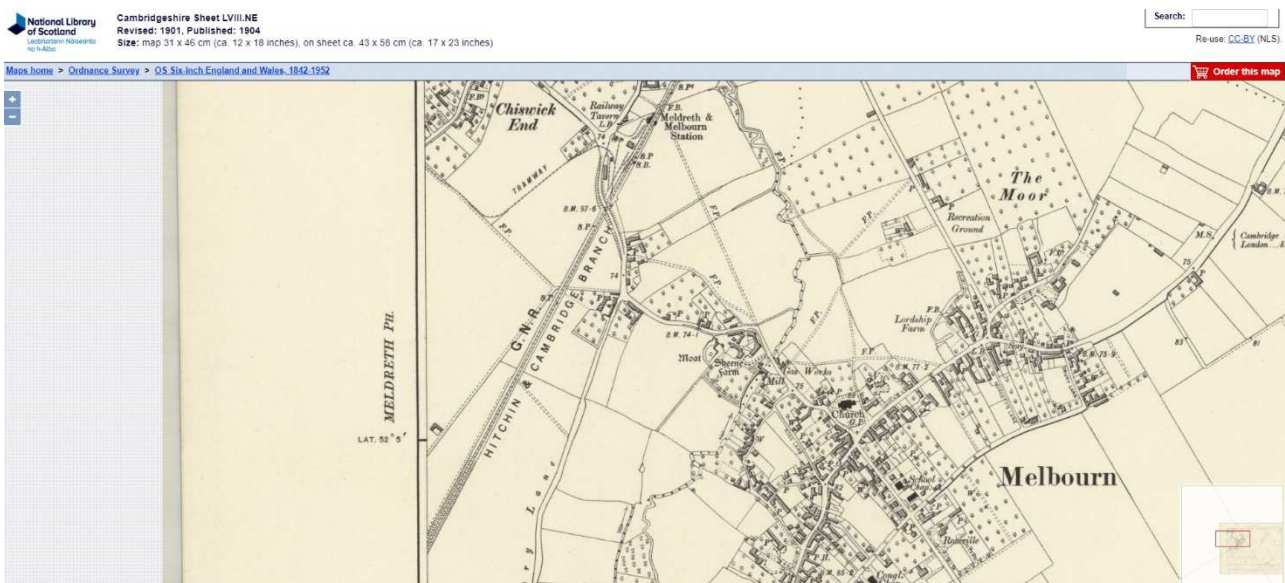


Fig. OS Circa 1901

4.3 The latest OS Mapping indicates the change to the settlement with the provision of numerous large commercial units to the North as well as units on the application site itself (See below).

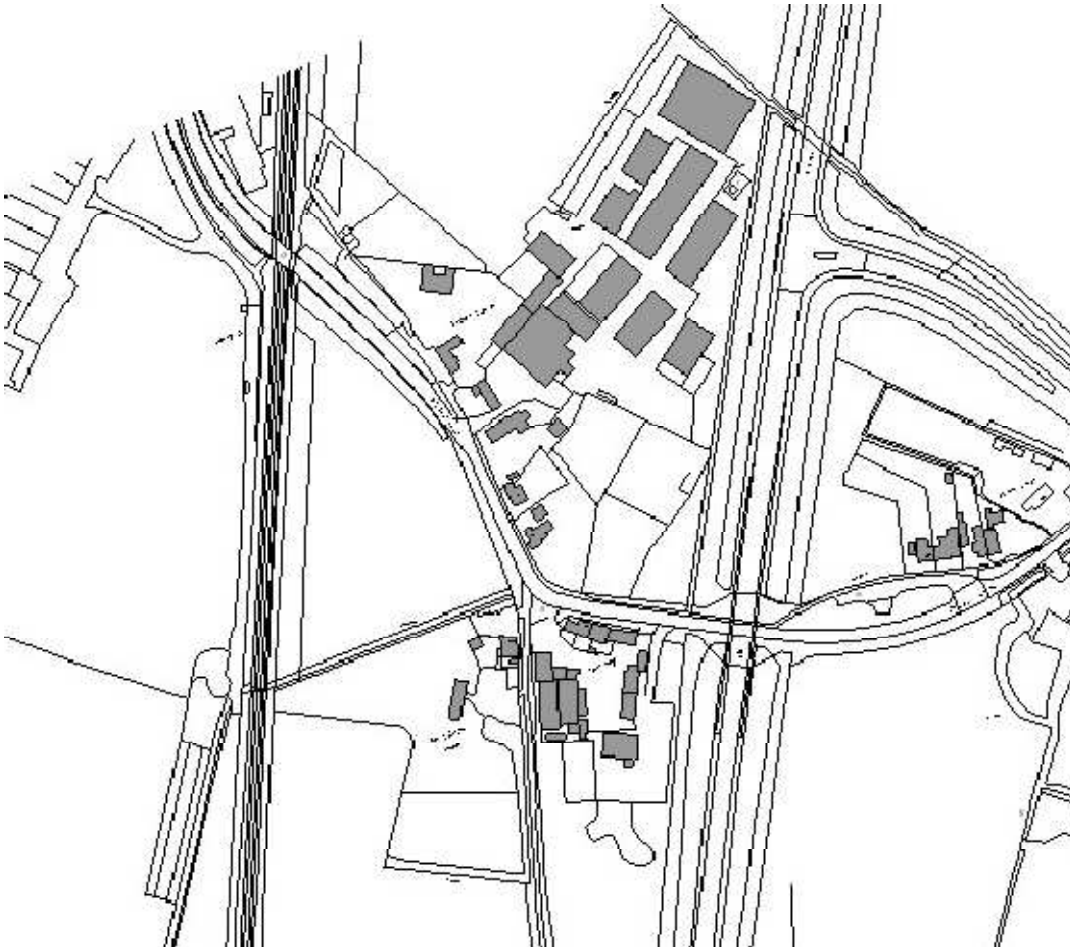


Fig. OS Data

4.4 These properties particularly demonstrate the large-scale evolution and development of the settlement North along the highways.

4.5 The latest OS Mapping also indicates that the historic landscaping/trees/screening/ planting along the Southern element of the site that has been removed over time and it is worth highlighting that this application will provide opportunity to implement planting where appropriate with the application.

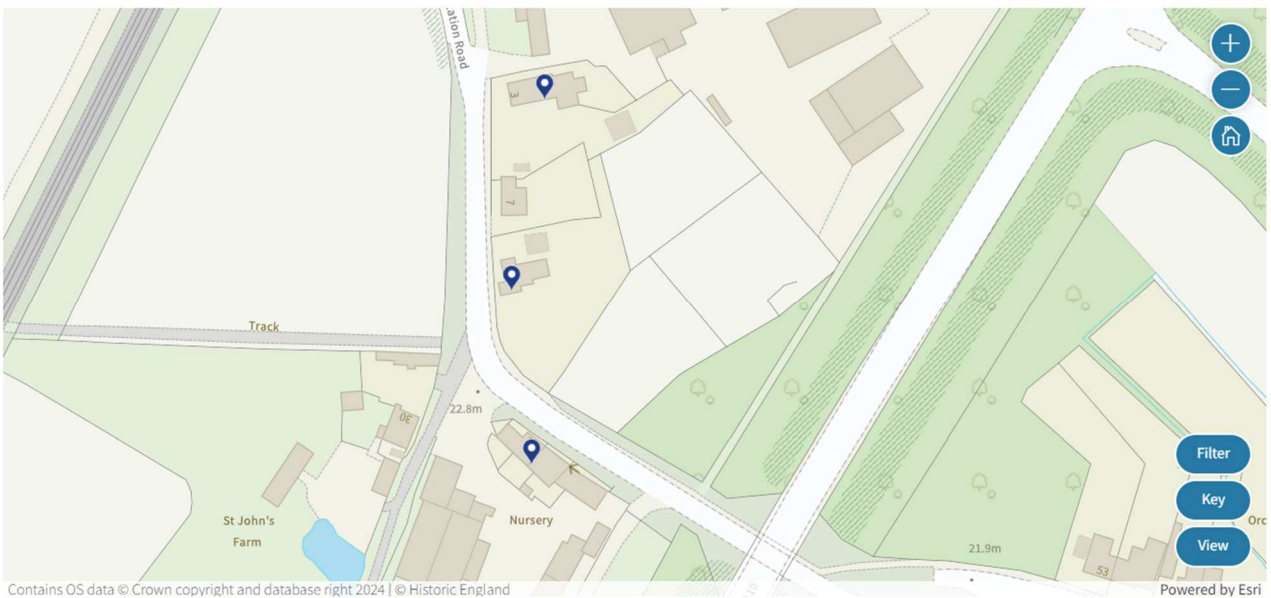
4.6 As discussed above Fieldgate Farmhouse is described as:

Late C17 and C18. Timber framed, plaster rendered and steeply pitched tiled roofs with ridge and end stacks. Single range two bay plan to late C17 part with outshut at rear. C18 single bay added to north end. Two storeys and attic. C17 part has gabled dormer on east side, now removed, and on the principal front two c.1984 wood windows and two at ground floor. The C18 addition, possibly a parlour bay, is of two storeys and attic. One gable dormer and one window, c.1984 to each storey. c.1984 door in its original location. Adjoining at South end is a C19 red brick and slate barn.



Fig. Archive Image

4.11 There are two other Listed Buildings in the vicinity detailed below: -



- Fieldgate Cottage (70m approx. from new build structures)
- Meldreth Thatch (90m approx. from new build structures)
- All new build structures proposed on the application site will be screened from the proposed development by Fieldgate Farmhouse and existing landscaping.

4.12 Due to the large distance from the application site combined with the existing established screening separating the site it is considered that these are outside the ‘Zone of Visual Influence’, and thus their setting would not be affected by the proposal.

4.12 The site is not located within a Conservation Area.

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

5.1 The following section is set out to assess the degree to which these settings and views of the above-mentioned heritage assets contribute to the significance of said heritage assets or allow significance to be appreciated (Step 2 as detailed in Historic England’s ‘The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition)).

5.2 Fieldgate Farmhouse



Fig. 09 Archive Image of Wood Farm Farmhouse

5.3 Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1128336

Date first listed: 17-Oct-1985

Date of most recent amendment: 10-Sep-1981

List Entry Name: FIELDGATE FARMHOUSE TL 37692 45052.

“MELDRETH STATION ROAD TL 3745 (South west side) 23/245 No. 32 (Fieldgate Farmhouse) GV II House. Late C17 and C18. Timber framed, plaster rendered and steeply pitched tiled roofs with ridge and end stacks. Single range two bay plan to late C17 part with outshut at rear. C18 single bay added to north end. Two storeys and attic. C17 part has gabled dormer on east side, now removed, and on the principal front two c.1984 wood windows and two at ground floor. The C18 addition, possibly a parlour bay, is of two storeys and attic. One gable dormer and one window, c.1984 to each storey. c.1984 door in its original location. Adjoining at South end is a C19 red brick and slate barn.”

Listing NGR: TL3769245052

5.4 As described in the listing details, Fieldgate Farmhouse derives its significance from its historic and architectural qualities notably its roof tiles, timber frame and plastered render.

5.5 Fieldgate Farmhouse is a prominent dwelling within the street scene as it is not set back from the public highway with established trees/hedgerow plantings along the road frontage boundary that does not obscure views of the building.



Fig. North Bound View

5.6 Only partial views of the side elevations are visible when approaching from the North both on foot and from within a vehicle before becoming obscured by the existing planting.

5.7 Fieldgate Farmhouse is best read within its own context from the highway, due to the extensive redevelopment to the rear of the site.



Fig. Aerial View of Application Site

5.9 The view of the rear of Fieldgate Farmhouse will be greatly improved with the implementation of the proposed application.

5.10 The setting of Fieldgate Farmhouse has changed dramatically over time with the provision of new commercial structures to the rear of the property in close proximity of the structure.

5.11 The proposed newbuild dwellings will have a positive impact on the setting of Fieldgate Farmhouse with the removal of unattractive structure in close proximity to the property along with improved separation and planting.

5.12 Overall, Fieldgate Farmhouse is assessed as having moderate heritage significance.

6.0 THE PROPOSED WORKS

6.1 Full planning permission is sought for the redevelopment of the application site as detailed in the supporting documentation.

6.2 The proposed properties have been carefully designed to complement both the modern buildings within the vicinity whilst also respecting the historic properties to the Nouth.



Fig. Proposed Site Plan

6.3 In this application, the dwellings have been set back from the road behind properties.

6.4 Plot 2 - 7 of the application includes two-storey dwellings to the East with Plot 7 being a single storey dwelling in the location closest to neighbouring property.



Fig. Proposed Residential Units

6.5 The proposed commercial units on the site have been carefully designed to be in keeping with the agricultural nature of the site.

6.6 Units will be kept low level and set a considerable distance from the listed building and these units have been purposely designed to be of an agricultural style and single storey in height as it is considered that this will complement the existing structures on the adjacent property and remove any impact. (Refer to below).



Fig. Proposed Commercial Units

6.8 Traditional Materials such as Timber windows and doors, weatherboarding, painted render, handmade brick plinths and plain tiles are proposed in keeping with the local vernacular.

6.9 The site plan also demonstrates that the ample front and rear gardens, to the new properties along with driveways/garages with space for vehicles will be screened by substantial landscaping.

6.10 The proposed access would be via existing points which themselves would lead to new driveways.

6.11 The accesses would include a carriageway and visibility splays of 43m to the East and 43m to the West in line with the requirements of the Manual for streets.

6.12 Due to the scale of the site it is proposed to provide enhanced landscaping features with native species hedges and trees.

7.0 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 The following section looks to assess the effects of the proposed development, on the significance or on the ability to appreciate the previously detailed heritage assets. (Step 3 and 4 as detailed in Historic England's 'The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition)').

7.2 Given Fieldgate Farmhouse has been assessed as having moderate significance, it is deemed to have a moderate capacity to realize alteration without significantly altering its present character.

7.3 Due to the distances and existing screening Fieldgate Cottage and Meldreth Thatch have been assessed as having low significance and is therefore deemed to have a more substantial capacity to realize change without significantly altering their present character.

7.4 The proposal would introduce new dwellings onto the application site, along with new commercial units set back from the public highway and a large distance from the existing listed buildings.

7.5 All the new build units have been sensitively designed to be complementary to both the recognized listed buildings on the adjacent site and the more modern properties within the area.

7.6 The designs look to incorporate clay and slate roofs with rendered/weatherboarded walls to reflect the materiality present within the building's surroundings.

7.7 The dwellings are of a traditional design vernacular with visual mass and bulk being carefully positioned in the most suitable areas of the site.

7.8 The proposal would not alter the view from the public domain of any special architectural features of Fieldgate Farmhouse.

7.9 The existing boundary treatments to the site will be retained and enhanced with additional landscaping to minimise intervisibility between the site and the listed buildings.

7.10 The proposed dwellings would be exceptionally well screened when approaching from the West, which is arguably the most important view. This would retain Fieldgate Farmhouse as the focal point to the area.

7.10 As is demonstrated by the historic OS mapping, the application site and its surroundings have evolved and altered greatly over time. The proposal would therefore be fully in keeping with this natural progression.

7.11 The proposal would fit with the natural evolution of the settlement.

7.12 There would be minimal impact on Fieldgate Farmhouse with regard to environmental factors. Furthermore, the removal of the existing dilapidated units and replacement with a more suitable/sustainable design proposal will greatly improve the environmental elements related to the existing listed buildings.

7.13 The proposed distance between the dwellings and acoustic screening provided by the existing and proposed landscaping would negate any potential noise impact.

7.14 Increased vehicle movements to and from the site would have a minor impact due to the distance from the existing properties.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

8.1 Fieldgate Farmhouse has been identified as a heritage asset which could be affected by the proposal.

8.2 Fieldgate is assessed as having moderate heritage significance.

8.3 The proposed development would not be present in the key view of the Fieldgate Farmhouse and would be separated by significant screening afforded by the existing structures and enhanced landscape planting.

8.4 The proposed dwellings/units would have no impact on the key view of the principal elevation to the listed buildings by way of distance/position and existing landscape planting.

8.5 The proposed development by reason of its design, siting and landscaping would not impact the special features of Fieldgate Farmhouse, or other designated heritage assets, and would thus preserve their settings.

8.6 Removal of dilapidated and existing commercial units to the rear of the site would greatly enhance the setting of the existing listed buildings.