



## GRAVESEND OLD TOWN HALL

Heritage Statement

for Skanska Technology

02/11/2021

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for Skanska Technology

November 2021

Ver 1.2

## PROJECT INFORMATION:

|                   |                           |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>HA JOB NO.</b> | P21-247                   |
| <b>NGR</b>        | 564778, 174272            |
| <b>PARISH</b>     | Gravesend                 |
| <b>COUNCIL</b>    | Gravesham Borough Council |

## PROJECT TEAM:

|                         |                                           |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
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| <b>GRAPHICS</b>         | Laurence Hayes                            |
| <b>VERSION COMMENTS</b> | Final                                     |



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## NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

*This document is a heritage statement, commissioned by Skanska Technology Ltd on behalf of Kent County Council, and has been prepared by Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd. The report provides supporting information for a planning application relating to a programme of internal and external maintenance to the fabric of Gravesend Old Town Hall, High Street, Gravesend DA11 0AZ (NGR 564778, 174272).*

*This report describes and assesses the significance and setting of the built heritage within and surrounding the Old Town Hall, and provides an assessment of the likely impact of the proposed development on the significance of heritage assets and the contribution made by their setting. Measures incorporated into the design of the proposals to minimise harm are identified.*

*The assessment concludes that the superficial nature and localised extent of the proposed works to the building are such that any potential harm to its heritage significance would be minimised. Potential harm is further limited by the use of sympathetic methods of repair and materials. There would be no harm to the settings of heritage assets in the surrounding town centre.*

*In all cases the works are specified on the basis that they are the minimum required to ensure the preservation of the building, and on that basis can be deemed to represent a public benefit, securing its long-term viable use as a public building without alteration of its existing historic and architectural interest.*

*Overall, the proposals do not conflict with legislative protection for listed buildings or conservation areas, and do not conflict with national or local planning policy.*

# HERITAGE STATEMENT

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1.1. This heritage statement was commissioned by Skanska Technology Ltd on behalf of Kent County Council and has been prepared by Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd. The report provides supporting information for a planning application relating to a programme of internal and external maintenance to the fabric of Gravesend Old Town Hall, High Street, Gravesend DA11 0AZ (NGR 564778, 174272, Figure 1).
- 1.1.2. Gravesend Old Town Hall is a Grade II\* listed building ('The Town Hall', list entry 1054761). It is located within the High Street portion of High Street & Queen Street Conservation Area, designated by Gravesham Council.
- 1.1.3. This report describes and assesses the significance and setting of the built heritage within and surrounding the Town Hall, and provides an assessment of the likely impact of the proposed development on the significance of heritage assets and the contribution made by their setting. Measures incorporated into the design of the proposals to minimise harm are identified.
- 1.1.4. This approach is consistent with the requirements of national and local planning policies on the historic environment in the planning process (see Part 3).

# Gravesend Old Town Hall



Key  
Site Boundary

**HEADLAND  
ARCHAEOLOGY**

Headland Archaeology North West  
RSK Fourways House  
57 Hilton St  
Manchester M1 2EJ  
t 0161 236 2757  
w [www.headlandarchaeology.com](http://www.headlandarchaeology.com)

Figure 1: Site Location

## 2. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1.1. The Old Town Hall is located within the historic core of Gravesend. It comprises an elongated parcel of land on the eastern side of High Street, extending 44m back from the road frontage and is 22m wide. The Old Town Hall Building covers the entire site, and comprises two parallel two-storey wings, with a partially covered passageway passing beneath the first storey of the neo-classical frontage. The passage extends to the covered market to the rear. The building is set slightly back from the road frontage, with a small paved forecourt adjacent to the High Street.
- 2.1.2. The building currently houses a single tenant at the ground floor of the northern wing (the restaurant 'Rico Sabor'). The remainder of the building is owned by the council and is disused, predominantly being used for storage.
- 2.1.3. The immediately surrounding area comprises commercial retail properties along the high street to the west, north and south. To the rear of the building is the covered market and to the north east an area of open ground which is currently under development (New Swan Yard).
- 2.1.4. Locally the topography of the High Street falls from around 15m AOD near the Town Hall to 5m AOD close to the wharves and town pier of Gravesend Reach in the north.



Figure 2: General view of Gravesend Old Town Hall facing north east from High Street



Figure 3: General view of the passageway between the rear wings of Gravesend Old Town Hall, facing east

### 3. LEGISLATION, POLICY AND GUIDANCE

#### 3.1. STATUTORY PROTECTION

3.1.1. The relevant heritage legislation in the context of the present site is described in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Relevant Historic Environment Statutory Legislation

| Legislation                                                   | Key Issues                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990) | <p>The 1990 Act is amended by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013 to introduce additional controls for works to listed buildings.</p> <p>Section 1 of the Act requires the Secretary of State to compile and maintain lists of buildings of special architectural or historic interest. The principal statutory duty under the Act is to preserve the special character of these heritage assets, including their setting. Buildings on the list are assessed and graded against the criteria of architectural and historic interest. Buildings listed at Grade I are defined as those considered to be of exceptional interest. Grade II* listed buildings are particularly important buildings of more than special interest, while Grade II listed buildings are of special interest.<sup>1</sup> This may include the extent to which the exterior of a building contributes to the interest of a group of buildings, i.e. 'group value'.</p> <p>Conservation Areas are normally designated by local planning authorities under Section 69 of the Act, which requires LPAs to determine which parts of their area are areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance</p> |

#### 3.2. NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

3.2.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021<sup>2</sup>) confirms that the historic environment, including archaeological remains, constitutes a material consideration in planning decisions, requiring applicants to describe the significance of heritage assets potentially affected by the development, including any contribution made by their setting.

3.2.2. Heritage and conservation forms one of the core planning principles of NPPF:

**(189)** "[Planning should conserve heritage assets] in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life for this and future generations."

3.2.3. This report contributes to meeting the following Policies on the historic environment contained in the document (paragraph numbers in bold text)<sup>3</sup>.

**(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."

**(200)** 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.

Substantial harm to or loss of:

a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;

<sup>1</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/listed-buildings/>

<sup>2</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/810197/NPPF\\_Feb\\_2019\\_revised.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/810197/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Government guidance on the application of the policies contained within the NPPF is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

*b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II\* listed buildings, grade I and II\* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.*

*(footnote 63) [Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.]*

*(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.*

*(203) 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.*

### 3.3. NATIONAL PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE (NPPG)

- 3.3.1. In March 2014, the Government published the NPPG. This guidance is intended to sit alongside and provide clarity to NPPF policy. The NPPG provides guidance on a range of topics including Heritage.
- 3.3.2. The NPPG provides additional guidance on conserving and, where appropriate, enhancing the historic environment further to the framework set out in the NPPF. It clarifies what is meant by 'significance' and 'harm', why it is important in decision making, and how proposals can avoid or minimise harm to the significance of heritage assets.
- 3.3.3. It also defines what is meant by the 'setting' of a heritage asset. The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to the visual relationship between the asset and the proposed development and associated visual/ physical considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part in the assessment of impacts on setting, the way in which an asset is experienced in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors (paragraph: 013 Reference ID: 18a-013-20190723).
- 3.3.4. Any harm to designated heritage assets is to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, as set out in the NPPF paragraph 195 (NB now [202]). The NPPG describes how public benefits could be anything that delivers economic, social, or environmental objectives as described paragraph 8 of the NPPF. Benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits, for example, works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit (paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 18a-020-20190723).
- 3.3.5. The NPPG defines non-designated heritage assets as buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets (paragraph: 039 Reference ID: 18a-039-20190723).
- 3.3.6. Plan-making bodies should make clear and up to date information on non-designated heritage assets accessible to the public to provide greater clarity and certainty for developers and decision-makers. This includes information on the criteria used to select non-designated heritage assets and information about the location of existing assets (paragraph: 040 Reference ID: 18a-040-20190723).

### 3.4. LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

- 3.4.1. The *Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy*, adopted in September 2014. Contains Policy CS20 relating to the historic environment:

- 3.4.2. **Policy CS20** Heritage and the Historic Environment states:

*The Council will accord a high priority towards the preservation, protection and enhancement of its heritage and historic environment as a non-renewable resource, central to the regeneration of the area and the reinforcement of sense of place. Particular attention in this regard will be focused on those heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. Securing viable, sustainable and appropriate futures for such assets at risk will need to be reconciled with the sensitivity to change that many present.*

*Proposals and initiatives will be supported which preserve and, where appropriate, enhance the significance of the Borough's heritage assets, their setting where it contributes to the significance of the asset and their interpretation and enjoyment, especially where these contribute to the distinct identity of the Borough. These include:*

- *Gravesend Town Centre, its development as a heritage riverside town, and its setting;*
- *The Borough's urban and rural conservation areas; and*
- *Surviving built features and archaeology relating to the Borough's maritime, military, industrial and transport history.*

*When considering the impact of a proposed development on a designated heritage asset, the weight that will be given to the asset's conservation value will be commensurate with the importance and significance of the asset. For non-designated assets, decisions will have regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.*

## 3.5. GUIDANCE

- 3.5.1. This heritage statement has been prepared with reference to the ClfA's *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment* (2014, revised 2017 and 2020<sup>4</sup>) and *Code of Conduct* (2014, revised 2019<sup>5</sup>), in addition to *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (Historic England's Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning GPA3, 2017<sup>6</sup>, see paragraph 3.5.4 below).
- 3.5.2. *Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets* (Historic England Advice Note 12, 2019<sup>7</sup>) contains guidance on the assessment of heritage significance through consideration of the component heritage values of an asset.
- 3.5.3. Further guidance on the assessment of significance as part of the planning application process is contained in *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment* (Historic England's Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning GPA2, 2015<sup>8</sup>).
- 3.5.4. Guidance on the assessment of the setting of heritage assets is contained in *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (Historic England's Good Practice Advice in Planning GPA3, Second Edition, 2017<sup>9</sup>). The methodology for assessment set out in GPA3 forms the basis for the structure of this report (see Methodology, Section 4). GPA3 notes that "Extensive heritage assets, such as landscapes and townscapes, can include many heritage assets and their nested and overlapping settings, as well as having a setting of their own. A conservation area will include the settings of listed buildings and have its own setting, as will the village or urban area in which it is situated".

## 3.6. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- 3.6.1. Headland Archaeology (UK) is a Registered Organisation with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA), an audited status which confirms that all work is carried out in accordance with the highest standards of the profession.
- 3.6.2. Headland Archaeology (UK), as part of the RSK Group, is recognised by the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) under their 'Historic Environment Service Provider Recognition' scheme. This quality assurance standard acknowledges that RSK works to the conservation standards of the IHBC, the UK's lead body for built and historic environment practitioners and specialists.
- 3.6.3. Headland Archaeology (UK) operates a quality management system to help ensure all projects are managed in a professional and transparent manner, which enables it to qualify for ISO 9001.
- 3.6.4. Ordnance Survey data is produced under © Crown copyright and database rights Licence 100014807.

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<sup>4</sup> [https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/ClfAS%26GDBA\\_4.pdf](https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/ClfAS%26GDBA_4.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Code%20of%20conduct%20revOct2019\\_0.pdf](https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Code%20of%20conduct%20revOct2019_0.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/heag180-gpa3-setting-heritage-assets/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/statements-heritage-significance-advice-note-12/heag279-statements-heritage-significance/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa2-managing-significance-in-decision-taking/gpa2/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/heag180-gpa3-setting-heritage-assets/>

## 4. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

4.1.1. The aim of the heritage statement is to provide supporting information to accompany a planning application for the proposed development.

4.1.2. To achieve this aim the following objectives are met in this report:

- To describe the heritage significance, including the contribution made by setting, of heritage assets that may be affected within and immediately surrounding the application site, including any designations, the age, style and history of development of the historic environment and its constituent parts;
- To describe any changes associated with the proposed development and assess the potential impact on the heritage significance of the historic environment within and immediately surrounding the application site, expressed in terms of the NPPF; and
- To indicate measures incorporated into the design of the scheme to remove, reduce or mitigate any identified harm to heritage assets and their settings.

## 5. METHODOLOGY

### 5.1. TERMINOLOGY – ‘SIGNIFICANCE’ AND ‘IMPORTANCE’

- 5.1.1. Heritage assets are assessed in this report in terms of their significance and importance, following the requirement in NPPF paragraph 194 and HEAN12, and taking account of Historic England’s guidance in *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment* (GPA2<sup>10</sup>).
- 5.1.2. Impact assessment is concerned with effects on *significance* – that is, the value or interest that applies to all heritage assets and relating to the ways in which the historic environment is valued both by specialists and the public.
- 5.1.3. The significance of a heritage asset will derive from factors including fabric, setting, rarity, completeness, historic and cultural associations, community, research and place-making potential. Significance is assessed in relation to the criteria in HEAN12<sup>11</sup> (i.e. in *archaeological*, *architectural*, *artistic*, or *historic* terms), which are intended primarily to inform decisions regarding heritage designations, but may also be applied more generally in identifying the ‘special characteristics’ of a heritage asset, which contribute to its significance and should be protected, conserved and enhanced according to the NPPF.
- 5.1.4. This use of the word ‘significance’, referring to the range of values or interest attached to an asset, should not be confused with the unrelated usage in EIA where the ‘significance of an effect’ reflects the weight that should be attached to it in a planning decision.
- 5.1.5. For further terminology and definitions, see appended Glossary.

### 5.2. STUDY AREA

- 5.2.1. Historic environment baseline information has been gathered from the sources described below for the Old Town Hall itself and a study area of up to 100 m surrounding the application site. The study area provides contextual baseline data for the site, the extent informed by the enclosed character of the local townscape which was reviewed on site during a walkover inspection, and the nature of the development proposals which are largely internal to the Old Town Hall building.

### 5.3. DATA SOURCES

- 5.3.1. To inform the assessment, baseline data on the historic environment has been collected or reviewed from the following sources:
- Historic England’s National Heritage List for England (NHLE) for details of designated heritage assets;
  - The Kent Historic Environment Record (HER) for records specifically relating to the Town Hall;
  - The Gravesham Borough Council website for records of conservation areas and conservation area appraisals;<sup>12</sup>
  - Historical Ordnance Survey mapping, pre-Ordnance Survey mapping and apportionments;
  - Trade directories, census records and historic newspaper reports; and
  - Relevant published and unpublished documentary sources.
- 5.3.2. A gazetteer of all known heritage assets within the study area has been compiled, using information from the data sources listed above. The gazetteer is included as Appendix 1 and the location of each gazetteer site is presented in Drawing 1 at the end of this report.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa2-managing-significance-in-decision-taking/gpa2/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/statements-heritage-significance-advice-note-12/heag279-statements-heritage-significance/>

<sup>12</sup> Gravesham Borough council does not maintain a list of locally-listed buildings.

## 5.4. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.4.1. The structure and assessment methodology for this heritage statement follows a five-stage process adapted from *The Setting of Heritage Assets 2nd Edition* (Historic England, 2017), Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning GPA3:

### *STAGE 1: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT BASELINE AND IDENTIFICATION OF HERITAGE ASSETS*

- 5.4.2. As described above, the baseline information in the heritage statement is presented with supporting figures describing the known heritage resource within and surrounding the PDA, and a chronological summary of the historical development of the site over time.

#### **Identification of Assets for Detailed Assessment**

- 5.4.3. In accordance with GPA3, and through an assessment of significance in accordance with NPPF and HEAN 12, a screening exercise has been undertaken in order to identify the heritage assets that are likely to be affected by the proposed development and therefore require detailed assessment (see Section 6.5).
- 5.4.4. This screening exercise has included a site inspection (carried out on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021). Consideration was given to the areas of the listed building which would potentially be directly impacted by the refurbishment proposals, as well as the potential effects of the proposed development on surrounding assets as a result of visual and/or other sensory changes within their setting.
- 5.4.5. The site visit enabled an appraisal of likely effects of the proposed development. A description of the baseline was made and representative photographs taken.

### *STAGE 2: ASSESSMENT OF HERITAGE ASSET SIGNIFICANCE*

- 5.4.6. For each asset potentially affected by the development proposals, the heritage values which contribute to its significance are identified in accordance with NPPF, and the way in which setting contributes to each asset's (or group of assets') significance is considered.
- 5.4.7. A broad measure of the importance of the asset or structure is given according to the following scale which takes into account existing designations, condition and group value:

| IMPORTANCE OF THE ASSET       | CRITERIA                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Very High (International)     | World Heritage Sites and other assets of equal international importance, that contribute to international research objectives                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| High (National)               | Grade I and II* Registered Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Monuments, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Battlefields, Grade I and II* Listed Buildings, and undesignated heritage assets of equivalent importance that contribute to national research objectives. Also Conservation Areas, Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens and Grade II Listed Buildings which have particular characteristics that merit a high level of importance. |
| Medium (National or Regional) | Conservation Areas, Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens, Grade II Listed Buildings except where their particular characteristics merit a higher level of importance, heritage assets on local lists and undesignated assets that contribute to Regional research objectives                                                                                                                                                             |
| Low (Local)                   | Locally listed heritage assets, except where their particular characteristics merit a higher level of importance, undesignated heritage assets of Local importance, including assets that may already be partially damaged                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Negligible                    | Identified historic remains of no importance in planning considerations, or heritage assets and findspots that have already been removed or destroyed (i.e. 'site of')                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |

| IMPORTANCE OF THE ASSET | CRITERIA                                                                                 |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Unknown / Uncertain     | Heritage assets for which a level of importance cannot be defined on current information |

5.4.8. Further assessment of significance is also undertaken in accordance with the NPPF (PPG paragraph: 006 reference ID: 18a-006-20190723) and Historic England guidance Statement of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets (2019, HEAN 12) as follows:

- **Archaeological** - There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point;
- **Architectural** - These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types;
- **Artistic** - Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skills, like sculpture;
- **Historic** - An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

### *STAGE 3: DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT*

5.4.9. The proposed development is described and illustrated in detail to inform the subsequent impact assessment, including the need case and alternatives considered, as well as the design and materials.

### *STAGE 4: ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT*

5.4.10. The impact assessment considers change that would result from the proposed development on the significance of the identified heritage assets, including both positive ('beneficial') and adverse ('harm'), including both direct impacts and effects within their setting.

5.4.11. The impact assessment for each asset is presented. The level of harm predicted is stated in accordance with the criteria contained in Paragraphs 200 and 202 of the NPPF (see Parts 3 & 4).

### *STAGE 5: MEASURES FOR MINIMISING HARM*

5.4.12. A summary is presented of the measures to remove, reduce or mitigate harm to heritage assets through careful design and consideration within the development proposals.

## 6. HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT BASELINE

### 6.1. DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

#### LISTED BUILDINGS

- 6.1.1. Gravesend Old Town Hall is a Grade II\* listed building, designated in 1952 (List Entry No. 1054761). The list entry states:

*This building was erected in 1836 on the site of the earlier Town Hall designed by C Sloane in 1764. It cost £3,000 and was built by the Brighton Architect, Amon Henry Wilds, in imitation of the Parthenon at Athens. Sandstone ashlar. The front has a massive tetrastyle portico of fluted Doric columns with triglyph frieze and small shields of the Arms of Gravesend Borough in the metopes. Pediment above, originally surmounted by the figures of Minerva, Justice and Truth but these were removed in 1949. 3 windows beneath the portico at 1st floor level. On the ground floor 1 window and a wide entrance to an open passage which leads to the Market behind the Town Hall. Recessed portion on each side of the portico containing 1 triple window on ground and 1st floors with pilasters between the lights. The south ground floor window is now blocked. Triglyph frieze and parapet above these flanking portions. Glazing bars intact. Over the portico is the inscription: - "Rebuilt 1836 in the Mayoralties of M Troughton and R Oakes Esquires. A H Wilds Architect", and over the entrance to the passage:- Re-constructed during the Mayoralty of George H Edmonds Esq 1882-3". The inside was further altered in 1898.*

- 6.1.2. The Kent Historic Environment Record contains a separate record relating to the Town Hall (reference no. TQ 67 SW 1155), which notes the principal phases of the 19<sup>th</sup> century construction, and further adds:

*Second World War air raid siren on the roof of the Old Town Hall, High Street, Gravesend. This was part of the arrangements to warn the community of an approaching air raid and to give the all-clear. It was probably installed in 1939 and would have been decommissioned in 1945. The siren was removed post-war, perhaps by 1946.*

*Second World War Civil Defence Control Centre at the former early 19th century Police Station in a suite of rooms at the Old Town Hall in the High Street, Gravesend. This was for the coordination of rescue and other emergency services within Gravesend, in the event of an air raid. It appears to have been established by around May 1939 and to have continued until 1941. The nature of any adaptation to the premises is unknown. There is nothing obvious to be seen today. The premises are now used as a local history museum.*

- 6.1.3. There are a further 12 listed buildings in the study area, summarised in Table 2 below. These buildings are predominantly located on the High Street, Nos 55-58 High Street facing the Town Hall and two K6 telephone kiosks being within the forecourt of the Town Hall. Three buildings are set back behind the High Street, comprising St George's Church in Church Street to the north west, a statue of Queen Victoria within Borough Market at the rear of the Town Hall, and 26-28 Queen Street beyond the market hall at the eastern edge of the study area.

Table 2. Listed Buildings within the Study Area

| List Entry No | Name                    | Grade |
|---------------|-------------------------|-------|
| 1367125       | 70, High Street         | II    |
| 1367124       | 56, High Street         | II    |
| 1367087       | 73, High Street         | II    |
| 1089057       | 71 and 72, High Street  | II    |
| 1089056       | The Albion Public House | II    |
| 1089055       | 57 and 58, High Street  | II    |
| 1089054       | 55 and 55a, High Street | II    |
| 1089053       | The Kent Public House   | II    |
| 1089036       | 26 and 28, Queen Street | II    |

|         |                                                   |     |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------|-----|
| 1089035 | Statue of Queen Victoria in Borough Market House  | II  |
| 1089034 | Church of St George                               | II* |
| 1393707 | Two K6 Telephone Kiosks outside the Old Town Hall | II  |

### *CONSERVATION AREA*

- 6.1.4. The High Street and Queen Street Conservation Area was designated by Gravesham Borough Council in 1970. The High Street Character Area of this conservation area encompasses the building plots on either side of the street, extending from Crooked Lane in the north to King Street in the south. The Borough Market Hall is included within the conservation area boundary, and properties to its east on Queen Street.
- 6.1.5. The Conservation Area Appraisal (dated 2007) identifies positive views and open spaces, which include views north and south along the High Street terminating at the Town Hall's frontage, while the forecourt of the Town Hall is identified as a positive open space which is an exception to the otherwise narrow street.
- 6.1.6. The locations of all designated heritage assets in the study area are illustrated in Drawing 1 at the end of this report.

### *OTHER DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS*

- 6.1.7. There are no scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields or World Heritage Sites within the study area.

## 6.2. NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

- 6.2.1. Gravesham Borough Council does not maintain a formal list of locally listed buildings, however the conservation area appraisal for High Street and Queen Street notes that all buildings identified in the 1974 listed building survey, but which were not awarded listed status, are considered to be 'Buildings of Local Interest'. These assets are indicated on Drawing 1.
- 6.2.2. Further information on non-designated assets with built heritage and archaeological interest within the study area has not been sought, in light of the development proposals which relate to the above-ground interior and exterior of the Town Hall building only.

## 6.3. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE

- 6.3.1. The Old Town Hall is a complex, multiphase structure. While the listing for the building focuses largely on the Greek Revival refronting of 1836 and later 19<sup>th</sup> century alterations, the overall plan form of the building and potentially parts of its fabric survive from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century or earlier. The history presented below is summarised from a detailed conservation plan prepared for the building by Alan Baxter Associates in 2004.
- 6.3.2. A town hall has existed at Gravesend since 1573, the original building going through phases of deterioration and repair in 1640 and 1659. While the building was not destroyed in the Great Fire of Gravesend in 1727, the building was replaced in 1764 in response to the general improvements being made to the surrounding town centre at that time.
- 6.3.3. The 1764 structure, designed by C Sloane, incorporated a police station and gaol cells, and an open space at the rear extending to Queen Street which included space for market stalls. The frontage included a portico with six Tuscan columns and three stone and brick arches extending through the ground floor (Figure 4).
- 6.3.4. Subsequently in 1818 plans for the improvement of the town hall and marketplace were advertised in the London Press, with the design of Charles Fowler incorporating two covered colonnades to either side of a central open space, extending eastwards from the rear of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century town hall. An engraving depicting this arrangement in 1820 shows the rear elevation of the town hall with a projecting two-storey wing on the northern side and a covered fish market to the south.

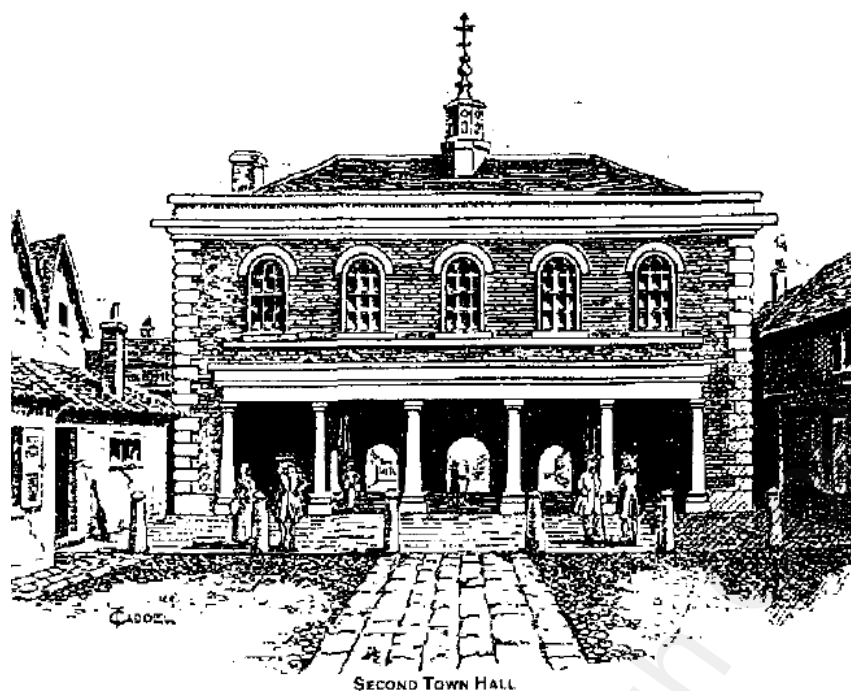


Figure 4: Engraving of eastern elevation of Sloane's Town Hall, late 18<sup>th</sup> century (after Alan Baxter 2004)

- 6.3.5. By the 1830s the condition of the building had again begun to deteriorate. In 1834 proposals were put forward by William Tierney Clark to redesign the façade of the town hall. These plans were not taken forwards, and in 1836 Amon Henry Wilds won the commission to make alterations and additions to the town hall. The commission included refronting C Sloane's 1764 structure, creating two wings projecting forwards of the western elevation of the earlier structure on either side of the new portico. This arrangement, with the western projecting wings, is visible on the Milton-Next-Gravesend tithe map of 1840 (Figure 5).



Figure 5: Milton-Next-Gravesend Tithe Map, 1840

6.3.6. A description of the town hall by Cruden in 1843 states:

*"Considerable alterations were made in this edifice by the Town Council. An additional space of ground having been obtained at the north end of the Hall, and the cages that projected to the street, having been removed, the front now extends seventy-four feet, east and west. The old front was removed, and the present elevation is of the Grecian Doric Order, taken from the Temple of Minerva at Athens, with a tetra style portico, between two projecting wings. The four fluted columns are twenty-five feet high, four feet nine inches diameter below, and three feet nine inches at the top. The pediment has at its centre, the arms of the Corporation in alto relievo. On the frieze, the arms in basso relievo, are sculptured in the metopes or spaces between the triglyphs.*

*Three colossal figures adorn the pediment; one in the centre, represents Minerva, on the right of that figure, is Justice, and on the left, Truth. On the architrave is the following inscription:- "Rebuilt A.D. 1836, in the Mayoralties of Medhurst Troughton, and Robert Oakes, Esqs. Amon Henry Wilds Architect." There are two large Venetian Windows in each wing, one to each floor. In front of each column is a massive tripods or standard of cast-iron, for lamps of large dimensions, that are lighted with gas. Above the roof is a square turret with open sided of lattice work and pilasters at the angles.*

*The building contains the following apartments:- On the ground floor, the Town Clerk's offices, the office of the Treasurer of the Pier, a Police station, and a store house for Fire Engines. On the principal floor are; the Great Hall, a room for the Magistrates as a Police Court, a room which (by compact with the Town Council) is used by the Commissioners of Pavements, and a retiring room. It is to be regretted that the front of the elevation cannot be viewed with full effect, for the space between the foot of two steps in the centre, that lead to the pavement upon which the columns stand, and the houses at the opposite side of the street, does not exceed thirty-three feet. The front is faced with Bath Stone. The cost of the alterations and additions amounted to about £3000."*

6.3.7. In 1849 plans, elevations and specifications were drawn up for new cells to be constructed in the north wing, and alterations to the Town Clerk's office.

6.3.8. In 1881 the architect Samuel Parr was appointed to carry out alterations to the internal layout of the Town Hall. The schedule of rooms adapted or created under this contract include the Council chamber, Magistrates court, Committee room, Magistrates consulting room and Mayor's parlour within the front of the building at first floor level. These works included infilling the space between the projecting wings at the front of the building (i.e. resulting in the loss of the original remaining C. Sloane frontage). The new front wall plane is inscribed "Town Hall reconstructed during the Mayoralty of George H Edmonds Esq. 1882-3". The former cast iron lamps outside the Town Hall were removed during this phase.

6.3.9. In 1895 the southern wing at the rear of the building was created on land previously occupied by the covered fish market, which was by that time in use as a police reserve room and soup kitchen. The new southern wing was to include a block of offices and a committee room, and was built by Albert Gordon Smith. This element remains largely as built, with a panelled committee room leading off the Council Chamber, lavatories, stair well, kitchen and scullery at first floor level, and offices for the Treasurer and Surveyor at ground floor level accessed via the lobby and entrance hall. The range included a strong room below the Surveyor's office with concrete ceiling composed of furnace slag, and an ornamental cast iron column in the panelled hallway. The resultant late-19<sup>th</sup> century form of the building is depicted on the 1897 OS map (Figure 6).

6.3.10. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century further changes occurred, with the removal of the statues of Minerva, Justice and Truth from the pediment between 1939 and 1949, and the removal of the square turret from the roof, apparently to lessen the loading on the portico columns. In 1940 the Gravesend Borough Police Station moved to new premises from the Town Hall.

6.3.11. Plans of the building in 1943 indicate changes to the ground floor of the south wing, the Treasurer's Office and Clerk's Office becoming police interview rooms, the partition wall between them being removed. The fireplaces and interconnecting door between the Surveyor's Office and Drawing Office were removed to create male and female lavatories.

6.3.12. During the Second World War emergency modifications were made to the building, including the installation of an air raid siren on the roof, likely to have been installed in 1939 and removed in the immediate post-war period. A Civil Defence Control Centre was established in the old Police Station Rooms during this period for the coordination of rescue and emergency services in the event of an air raid, however there are no obvious adaptations to the building associated with this.

6.3.13. During the later 20<sup>th</sup> century the building changed ownership from Gravesend Borough Council to Kent County Council. From the 1970s the building ceased to function as a Town Hall and was used solely as a Magistrates Court.

6.3.14. The building went out of use in the 1990s and since that time has housed a number of disparate functions, including a local museum and offices for management of the Market. Currently the ground floor in the

northern half of the building operates as a restaurant, incorporating the gaol cells of the northern wing, while the remaining areas are for the most part used as temporary storage. There are some modern adaptations associated with regeneration in the last 20 years, including the upgrade of some fire doors in the northern and southern wings, the installation of a lift and modernised toilets in the northern wing, and general redecoration internally. The suite of former court and council rooms and their interior decoration in the western part of the building remain intact.

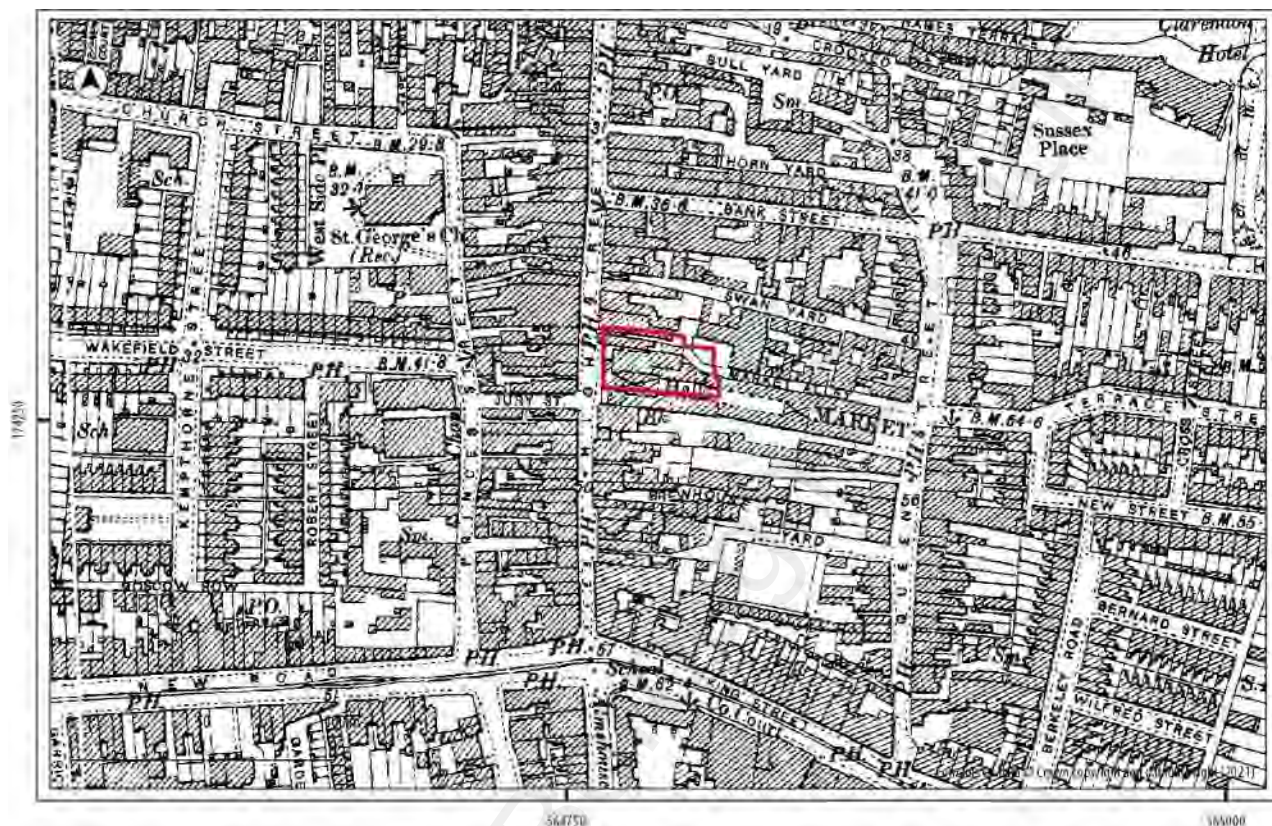


Figure 6: 1897 Ordnance Survey Map (1:2,500 scale)

## 6.4. IDENTIFICATION OF ASSETS FOR DETAILED ASSESSMENT

- 6.4.1. The Town Hall and surrounding area was visited on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021 in order to review the development proposals, confirm the suitability of the extent of the study area, and to confirm those heritage assets requiring detailed assessment of their setting.
- 6.4.2. The site inspection concluded that the nature of the development proposals, being confined to superficial maintenance of the existing fabric of the Town Hall (see Section 7 below), are such that detailed assessment of the setting of the Town Hall and other assets in the study area is not required. The assessment therefore focuses on the effect of the proposals on the significance of the Town Hall itself.

## 6.5. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF GRAVESEND OLD TOWN HALL

### Description

- 6.5.1. Gravesend Old Town Hall is a Grade II\* listed building of **High** importance (List Entry No. 1054761). The building is a multi-phase structure however, and accordingly the relative significance of its constituent parts varies.
- 6.5.2. The key phases of development can be summarised as follows:
- 1764: C Sloane – the fabric and layout of the main western block, and possibly parts of the original projecting western wings;
  - 1836: A H Wilds- the portico and projecting western wings to the front of the building;
  - 1849: Gould- cell block of the northern wing;

- 1882: alterations to the internal layout of the main block and infill between the wings of the western elevation;
- 1895: A G Smith- reconstruction of the south wing.
- 20<sup>th</sup> Century: alterations to interiors

6.5.3. As a whole, the Town Hall is of high historic interest, being a public building associated with the ceremonial functions of the local government throughout the post-medieval period. The multi-purpose function of the building remains legible, with the gaol cells, meeting spaces and back-room functions, as well as many of the original features and decorative elements, surviving. Pevsner notes that A H Wild's '*noble Greek Doric tetrastyle portico makes no concessions at all to the narrowness of the street. An archway under the portico leads past mean brick back parts ... to a covered market*',<sup>13</sup> reflecting the '*new concern for civic magnificence felt in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century*'.<sup>14</sup> That the building now forms a focal point and important open space in the narrow streets of the town centre, as well as functioning as a well-used access from the High Street to the market, reflects the fact that the function of the building is still readily understood in its historic context and the contribution that it makes to the town.

6.5.4. The architectural interest varies, and is influenced by the association of architects and builders noted above with differing parts of the building, stylistic influences, the period of the fabric within each element, the degree of survival of the layout and legibility of the structure. Drawing 2 at the end of this report illustrates the levels of significance summarised in Table 3 below, which incorporates the existing analysis contained in the conservation plan for the building<sup>15</sup>.

Table 3. Significance of Gravesend Old Town Hall

| Significance | Elements                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| High         | <p>A H Wild's principal frontage to the western elevation and portico, integrating mid-18<sup>th</sup> century fabric of C Sloane's Town Hall. The central section of the frontage behind the portico however dates to 1882.</p> <p>Court No. 1 (Old Council Chamber) is a major surviving space from the 1882 alterations.</p> <p>Parts of the building behind the portico which are by A H Wilds or incorporate fabric pre-dating Wild's building at ground and first floor level</p> <p>The overall layout, comprising two wings flanking a public pedestrian access.</p> |
| Medium       | <p>The cell block of 1849 in the north wing which survives largely as built</p> <p>Court No. 2 and the surrounding rooms dating from 1882, with their surviving decorative detailing.</p> <p>The south wing of 1882 which retains much of its original layout and frontage.</p> <p>The paved passage through the Town Hall leading to the covered Market</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Low          | The altered frontage of the northern wing at ground and first floor level                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| None         | Modern alterations including the inserted lift core of the northern wing and internal finishes and toilet blocks post-dating 2000.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

<sup>13</sup> Pevsner and Newman 1969, the Buildings of Kent : West Kent and the Weald. p 288

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, p 100

<sup>15</sup> Alan Baxter Associates, 2004.

## 7. DESCRIPTION OF THE DEVELOPMENT

- 7.1.1. The proposed development comprises a programme of internal and external maintenance, the scope of which is set out in Skanska document GTH-STL-XX-XX-RPT-S-0109 revision P04<sup>16</sup>.
- 7.1.2. An initial feasibility report relating to the fabric of the Town Hall was undertaken by Consult Construct<sup>17</sup> in July 2020, which involved a visual inspection of the building in order to identify and highlight 'urgent defects' including repair/replacement of roof and rainwater goods, internal remedial works, window replacement, boiler and heating. This report identified a series of recommended internal and external works.
- 7.1.3. The recommendations have subsequently been refined, and as set out in Skanska's Minor Works scope document, the elements which now form the programme of works are as follows:
- Roof:
    - Cleaning of roof surface and valley gutters;
    - Replacement of slates on roof where missing, displaced or loose;
    - Repointing of roof ridges;
    - Replacement/re-bedding of loose roof ridges;
  - Exterior:
    - Clearance of gutters and jetting of downpipes;
    - Visual survey to all elevations to determine condition of stonework/stucco;
  - Windows:
    - Repair of timbers and sills to windows where decayed;
    - Decorate timber windows/sashes;
  - Undertake render repair to undercroft soffit;
  - Doors:
    - Splice repairs to doors where decayed;
  - Masonry:
    - Undertake survey to determine condition of brickwork and apply resin repair. Repoint cracked and missing mortar;
  - External Drainage:
    - Replace fractured cast iron down pipe and hopper affecting Lobby room 1.018 and 1.010;
  - Internal repairs:
    - Plaster repair to exposed laths within room 1.014;
    - Trace and access required to identify and treat source of leak causing moisture in soffit of basement. Directly below room G.026;
    - Hack off damp plaster to entrance staircase (rooms G.027 – G.029) and within the main hall (room 1.024), first floor corridors (room 1.011). Allow for wall to dry and renew plaster with lime-based plaster and decorate to finish; and
    - Original panelled fire doors to be upgraded and not replaced by using intumescent veneers and paint.
- 7.1.4. The specifications for the remaining works are described in detail in Skanska Building Services document GTH-STL-SPC-S-0009.<sup>18</sup> A summary of the specifications is contained in Table 4 below.

<sup>16</sup> Skanska, 2021, *Kent Minor Works Scope Document, Gravesend Old Town Hall*.

<sup>17</sup> Consult Construct, 2020, *Feasibility Report for Building Fabric at Gravesend Old Town Hall*.

<sup>18</sup> Skanska Building Services, 2021, *Project Specification: Gravesend Old Town Hall, High Street, Gravesend, DA11 0AZ*

Table 4. Specification of proposed works

| Element           | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Roof              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial cleaning and clearance of valley gutters will be non-intrusive using a neutral soap and water. Surrounding surfaces will be protected to avoid damage or water ingress.</li> <li>Replacement of slates will be undertaken generally to make the roof sound and weathertight using natural slates to BS EN12326.</li> <li>Existing slates will be carefully removed with minimal disturbance of adjacent roofing materials.</li> <li>Where battens require replacement, this will be carried out with sawn softwood.</li> <li>Slating underlay will comprise reinforced bitumen sheet and breathable membrane.</li> <li>Slates will be bedded on sand cement mortar.</li> <li>Repointing of ridges and replacement ridge tiles will match existing.</li> </ul>                                                        |
| Exterior          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearance of gutters and downpipes will use neutral soap and water, with adjacent surfaces protected from damage.</li> <li>Visual condition survey of elevations will be non-intrusive.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Windows           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Splice repairs to timber windows and sills will involve cutting out of affected sections and replacement with structural softwood matched to the original species.</li> <li>Existing paintwork will be removed back to bare wood, prior to repainting with suitable product.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Undercroft Soffit | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Damaged plaster will be cut back to a square, sound edge.</li> <li>Replacement laths will match shape, size and species as existing.</li> <li>Render material will be batched on site using a lime/sand mix with hair reinforcement as necessary.</li> <li>Surface repainted to match existing soffit coating.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Doors             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Repairs to existing external doors will be based on survey to identify areas for repair.</li> <li>All original ironmongery will be removed and retained for re-use.</li> <li>Splice repairs to timber doors will involve cutting out of affected sections and scarfed replacement with structural hardwood matched to the original species.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Masonry           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any fittings/fixtures will be carefully removed minimising disturbance of surfaces.</li> <li>Any plant growths will be carefully removed from joints, voids and facework.</li> <li>Cleaning will be carried out using neutral soap and water, protecting adjacent surfaces from water ingress.</li> <li>All repairs will be specified to match existing fabric.</li> <li>Where possible, replacement brickwork will be taken from salvaged materials, with any alternative samples submitted for approval before use.</li> <li>Samples of repointing will be provided in an area of c.1m<sup>2</sup> for agreement, with mortar matched to the existing.</li> <li>Any cracked masonry will be cleaned prior to injecting suitable resin product and pointing to match the original colour as closely as possible.</li> </ul> |
| External Drainage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The existing cast iron hopper and downpipe will be carefully removed and replaced link-for-like.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Internal Repairs  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Damaged plaster will be cut back to a square, sound edge.</li> <li>Plaster affected by rising damp will be removed to a height of 300mm above the highest point reached, or 1m above DPC.</li> <li>Replacement laths will match shape, size and species as existing.</li> <li>Plaster will be batched on site using a lime/sand mix with hair reinforcement as necessary.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Fire doors will be fitted with intumescent materials around the doorframes of the existing doors, retaining the original doors in situ. These works are shown in Skanska drawing S20569-08-DR-001 and include the installation of surface mounted intumescent fire and smoke seal strips around the doorframes, the addition of a clear intumescent coating to the risk-side of the door preserving the original door colours, and the installation of intumescent sheet to hinges, locks and door closers to ensure protection of the existing ironmongery. Where doors have penetrations these will be treated with intumescent card/veneer and painted, or veneered in a close match solid wood finish, painted or varnished to match the existing</li></ul> |
|--|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## 8. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 8.1.1. As noted in Section 6.4, the development proposals are confined to superficial maintenance of the existing fabric of the Town Hall, with minor works to the exterior and interior of the building. As such, assessment of impacts on the setting of the Town Hall and surrounding heritage assets is not required, however it is noted that removal of vegetation and cleaning of the external elevations and roof will improve the appearance of the building within the high Street conservation area generally.
- 8.1.2. Within the scope of works, a number of items relate to surface treatments which do not require further assessment. These items are:
- Cleaning of the roof surface and valley gutters;
  - Clearance of gutters and jetting of downpipes;
  - Visual survey of elevations to determine condition of stonework/stucco;
  - Tracing of leak causing moisture in basement;
- 8.1.3. For the remaining elements of the scope, these have been inspected on site and assessed with reference to the heritage significance of the affected areas. For reference, where identified the proposed areas of work are indicated on Drawing 3 at the end of this report. Photographs are included in Appendix 2.

Table 5. Impact Assessment

| Element           | Assessment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Roof              | The replacement of slates and ridge tiles on the roof will be localised, confined specifically to those areas where there is damage to the existing roof covering. The current roof covering has been replaced in recent years, and therefore there is no intrinsic historic interest in these materials. The like-for like replacement of slates will preserve the overall appearance of the building, and therefore its architectural interest will remain unaffected. ( <b>Photo 8</b> and <b>9</b> ).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Exterior          | No impact                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Windows           | In respect of the windows, it is proposed to undertake splice repairs only to elements of the existing frames where damage has occurred due to natural deterioration over time. No window units will be replaced. The proposed methods of repair are sensitive to the importance of retaining the existing windows and the contribution that these make to the architectural interest of the building. Any impact to the fabric of the building would be negligible, and would be offset by the benefit of ensuring the preservation of the windows in their entirety.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Undercroft Soffit | <p>The area of the soffit affected by these works is located in the south western corner of the undercroft adjacent to the western elevation of the Town Hall and the portico (<b>Photo 10</b>). This portion of the building was constructed in 1882 when the former projecting wings of A H Wild's refronted Town Hall were infilled, and is assessed to be of Medium to High significance.</p> <p>In its current condition the damage comprises approximately 1m<sup>2</sup> of missing render, exposing the underlying laths. Ducting for electrical lighting is suspended below the laths.</p> <p>The proposals will result in removal of the edges of the damaged render and laths to a sound edge, replacement with size and species-matched laths, and re-rendering with lime-based render. The extent of this work will be limited, the majority of the void in the soffit already having been exposed through decay.</p> <p>It is therefore assessed that there would be a negligible impact on the significance of the building as a result of the works, and any harm would be offset through sensitive repair, reinstating the appearance of the soffit and preserving its architectural interest.</p> |
| Doors             | The precise details of the doors affected by the proposed works are to identified through further site survey as works are ongoing. In all cases there is no intention to replace doors, the works being limited to splice repairs of damaged timber using sensitive joinery methods which will promote their long-term retention. Existing ironmongery will be                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

|                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                   | retained and replaced following any repairs, preserving their architectural interest. Overall it is assessed that these works would have a negligible impact on the significance of the building.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Masonry           | <p>As with the doors, ad hoc repairs to the brick masonry of the building will be identified as works progress based on visual inspection. The brick masonry is assessed as being of medium significance (south wing) and low importance (northern wing).</p> <p>Removal of plant growths will be beneficial, improving the appearance of the building and preventing further damage caused by root action within masonry joints (e.g. <b>Photo 11</b> and <b>Photo 7</b>). Cleaning of the building will not result in any harm.</p> <p>The proposed methods for repair will be minimally invasive, replacing materials only where absolutely necessary, using salvaged materials wherever possible, and ensuring the suitability of any replacement brick. Repointing will be undertaken with mortars matched to the existing. Any crack repairs will be undertaken using suitable resin fillers and matched to the existing fabric colour.</p> <p>On completion, any original fittings and fixtures will be replaced.</p> <p>Overall it is assessed that these works will be beneficial, improving the condition and appearance of the building.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| External Drainage | <p>There is a single cast iron hopper and downpipe which is proposed for replacement. This drainage is located behind the façade of the southern wing, extending from the rear of the parapet wall of the northern elevation and continuing through modern ducting (plasterboard) in the north west corner of the central stair core (Rooms 1.018 at first floor level and G.013 at ground floor level). This section of the building is identified as being of medium significance.</p> <p>Water penetration to the surrounding fabric has resulted in cosmetic damage to paint and plaster finishes. It is noted that the existing plasterboard ducting has truncated the original plaster coving at ceiling level in Room 1.018 (<b>Photo 17</b>), and the ducting itself is not of historical significance.</p> <p>The works will require the removal of the damaged drainage and its like-for-like replacement. This will result in partial loss of one element from the 1882 south wing, however the repair will enable the protection of the surrounding building fabric in the long term and represent a benefit to the overall structure. As such these works are assessed as representing a benefit to the structure.</p>                                                                                                                                                               |
| Internal Repairs  | <p>The internal repairs to the building relate to two key aspects: repair of damaged plasterwork and subsequent redecoration, and fire-proofing fire doors within the building.</p> <p>In respect of repairs to plasterwork, the significance of the locations affected varies as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minor defect to decorative finish of coving and ceiling plaster in south east corner of room 1.006 ('Old Court Room') – High Significance (<b>Photo 12</b>)</li> <li>• Damage to decorative finish of wall plaster, Room 1.011 (first floor corridor, northern wing)- Low Significance (<b>Photo 13</b>)</li> <li>• Missing plaster exposing laths to ceiling of Room 1.014, south east corner (first floor storage room, northern wing)- Low Significance (<b>Photo 14</b>)</li> <li>• Damaged paintwork within lower stair core G.027, ground floor of northern wing- Low Significance (<b>Photo 15</b>)</li> <li>• Damaged and missing plasterwork exposing the underlying brick fabric to west of exterior doorframe, G.027 ground floor of northern wing- Low Significance (<b>Photo 16</b>)</li> <li>• Broken coving and water damage to surrounding plasterwork, north west corner of lobby/stair core Room 1.018 and G.013 in southern wing resulting from damaged internal drainage (as above)- Medium Significance (<b>Photo 17</b>)</li> </ul> |

|  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Water damage caused by plant ingress to plasterwork in south west corner of room G.012, ground floor of southern wing- Medium Significance (<b>Photo 18</b>)</li><li>• Missing ceiling plaster and water damage to high-level wall plaster in north east corner of lobby G.047, ground floor of southern wing – Medium Significance (<b>Photo 19</b>)</li></ul> <p>In all cases the proposals will comprise cutting back any damaged plasterwork to a sound edge, like-for-like replacement of laths where necessary, and replastering with a lime/sand render prior to redecoration. These works will result in minimal loss of fabric that is already damaged or missing, and will result in the sensitive restoration of the decorative finish to the affected spaces. Overall this is assessed as being beneficial to the architectural interest of the building.</p> <p>In respect of the fire doors, the proposed method of fire-proofing has been advanced to avoid the need for replacement or invasive work, retaining the original doors, their fittings and overall appearance. These works will preserve the architectural interest of the building while ensuring the building meets current safety requirements, ensuring the long term viability of use of the building. Representative images of the fire doors in the Old Court Room and surrounding chambers are illustrated in <b>Photos 20-24</b>.</p> |
|--|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

## 9. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1.1. The impact of the proposed development has been assessed in this report with regard to potential effects upon the significance of the Old Town Hall and surrounding heritage assets.
- 9.1.2. The assessment has concluded that the superficial nature and localised extent of the works are such that there would be no harm to the setting or significance of heritage assets within a 500m study area. Any potential harm to the heritage significance of the Town Hall itself would be minimised by the use of sympathetic methods of repair and materials, and an approach of minimal intervention.
- 9.1.3. In all cases the works are specified on the basis that they are the minimum required to ensure the preservation of the building, and on that basis represent a benefit, securing its long-term viable use as a public building without alteration of its existing historic and architectural interest. No mitigation of the impact of development is considered necessary.
- 9.1.4. Overall, the proposals do not conflict with legislative protection for listed buildings or conservation areas, and do not conflict with national or local planning policy.

# GLOSSARY

## DEFINITIONS

| Term                                   | Definition                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Designated Heritage Asset              | Assets registered on the National Heritage List for England. These may be protected by primary legislation (e.g. listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments) or have a non-statutory designation (e.g. World Heritage Sites, registered battlefields, registered parks and gardens, designated wrecks)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Heritage Asset<br>NPPF (Annex 2)       | <p>"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."</p> <p>Some heritage assets are designated as Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, World Heritage Sites, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields, or locally designated through policies in the Local Plan. Undesignated assets may be recorded in Historic Environment Records, while many other assets are currently unrecorded.</p> <p>Information contained in HERs and SMRs is not definitive, since they may include features which, for instance, have been entirely removed, or are of uncertain location, dubious identification, or negligible importance. The identification of undesignated heritage assets is therefore to some extent a matter of professional judgement.</p> <p>Both discrete features, and extensive landscapes defined by a specific historic event, process or theme, can be defined as heritage assets; and assets may overlap or be nested within one another.</p> |
| Listed Building                        | A building or structure which is considered to be of 'special architectural or historic interest'                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Non-Designated Heritage Asset          | Assets identified by the local planning authority or national registers for the historic environment which have no formal designation but are considered to have a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. These can include locally listed buildings, information on sites held by the relevant Historic Environment Record and National Record of the Historic Environment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Archaeological Site (also 'Monuments') | Heritage assets which may consist of surface and/or sub-surface remains, features, deposits and/or material relating to past human activity with a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Significance:<br>NPPF                  | "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"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Significance:<br>GAPN 2                | "The significance of a heritage asset is the sum of its archaeological, architectural, historic, and artistic interest. A variety of terms are used in designation criteria (for example, outstanding universal value for World Heritage Sites, national importance for scheduled monuments and special interest for listed buildings and conservation areas), but all of these refer to a heritage asset's significance."                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

| Term                                                                                                                                                                   | Definition                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Significance:<br/>NPPF (PPG para 6) and Historic England guidance Statement of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets (2019, HEAN 12)</p> | <p>Cultural values in the historic environment that people want to enjoy and sustain for the benefit of present and future generations.</p> <p>Archaeological - There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point;</p> <p>Architectural - These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types;</p> <p>Artistic - Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skills, like sculpture;</p> <p>Historic - An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.</p> |
| <p>Setting:<br/>NPPF</p>                                                                                                                                               | <p>"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 the significance or may be neutral" (an extended consideration of Setting is contained in GAPN 3)</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |

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- <https://www.gravesham.gov.uk/home/planning-and-building/heritage-and-conservation/conservation-areas>

## DRAWINGS

Gravesend Borough Council

**Headland Archaeology North West**

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www.headlandarchaeology.com

- Key**
- Site Boundary
  - 500m Study Area
  - Listed Buildings**
  - ◆ II\*
  - ◆ II
  - High Street Conservation Area
  - ▲ Buildings of Local Interest

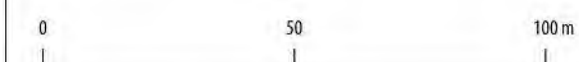


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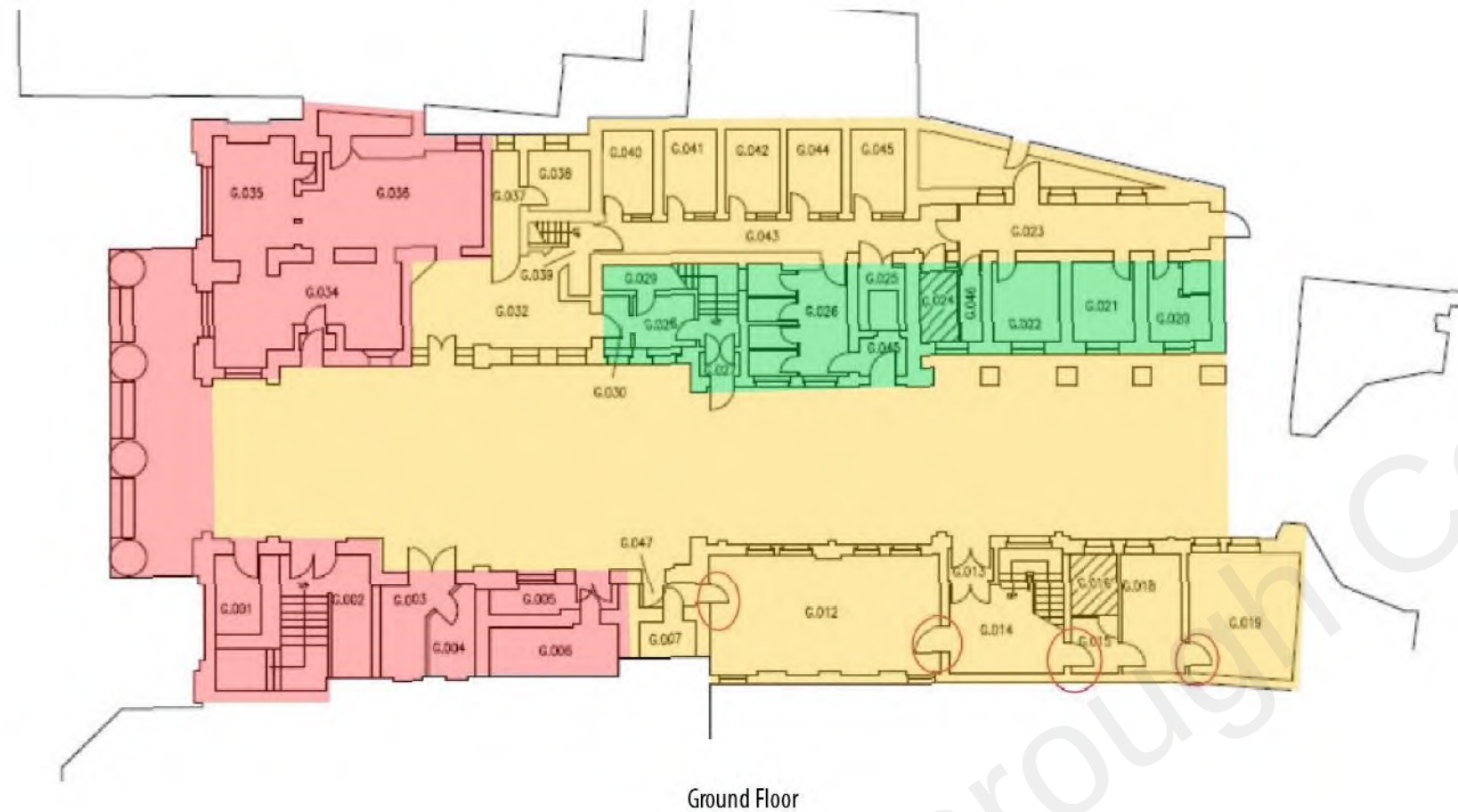
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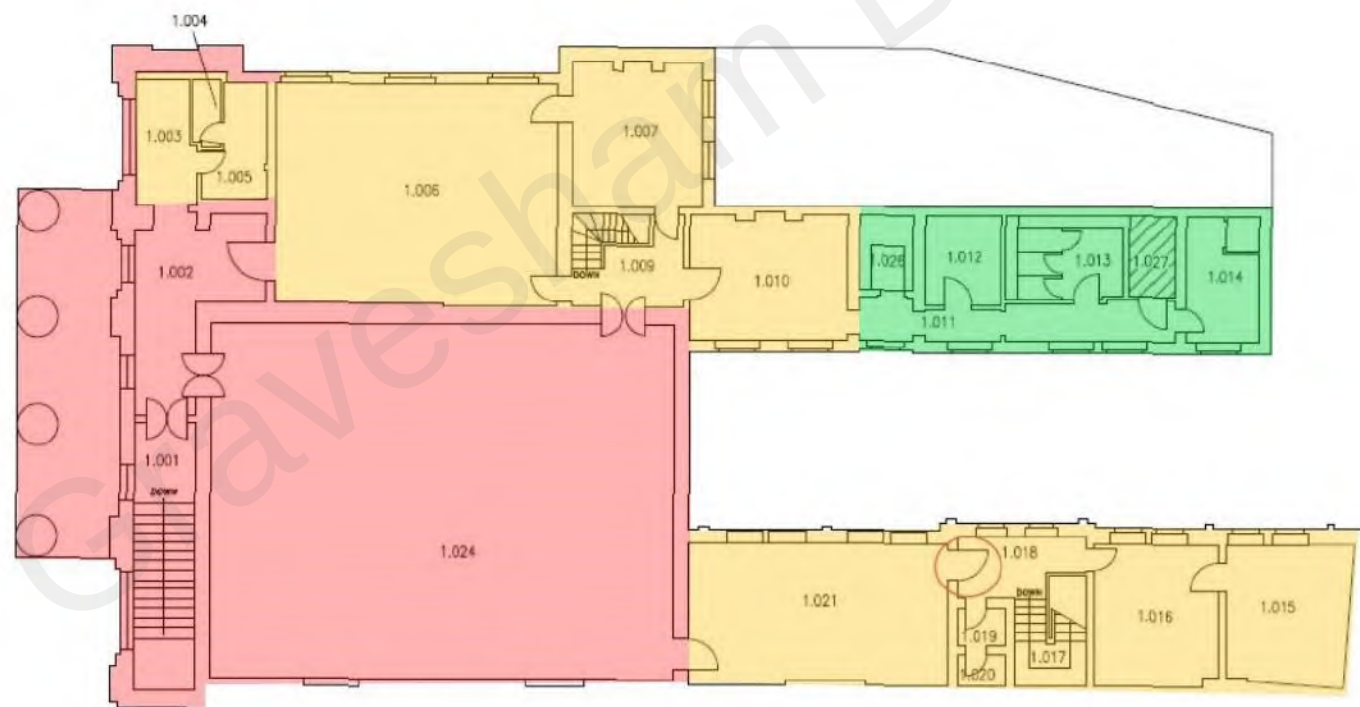
1:1500 @ A3



Drawing 1: Heritage Constraints



### Ground Floor



### First Floor

Key

Significance

- High
- Medium
- Low

1:250 @ A3



0                      5                      10 m

### Drawing 2: Significance of Gravesend Old Town Hall

**Headland Archaeology North West**

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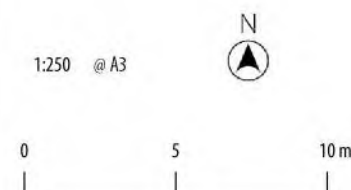
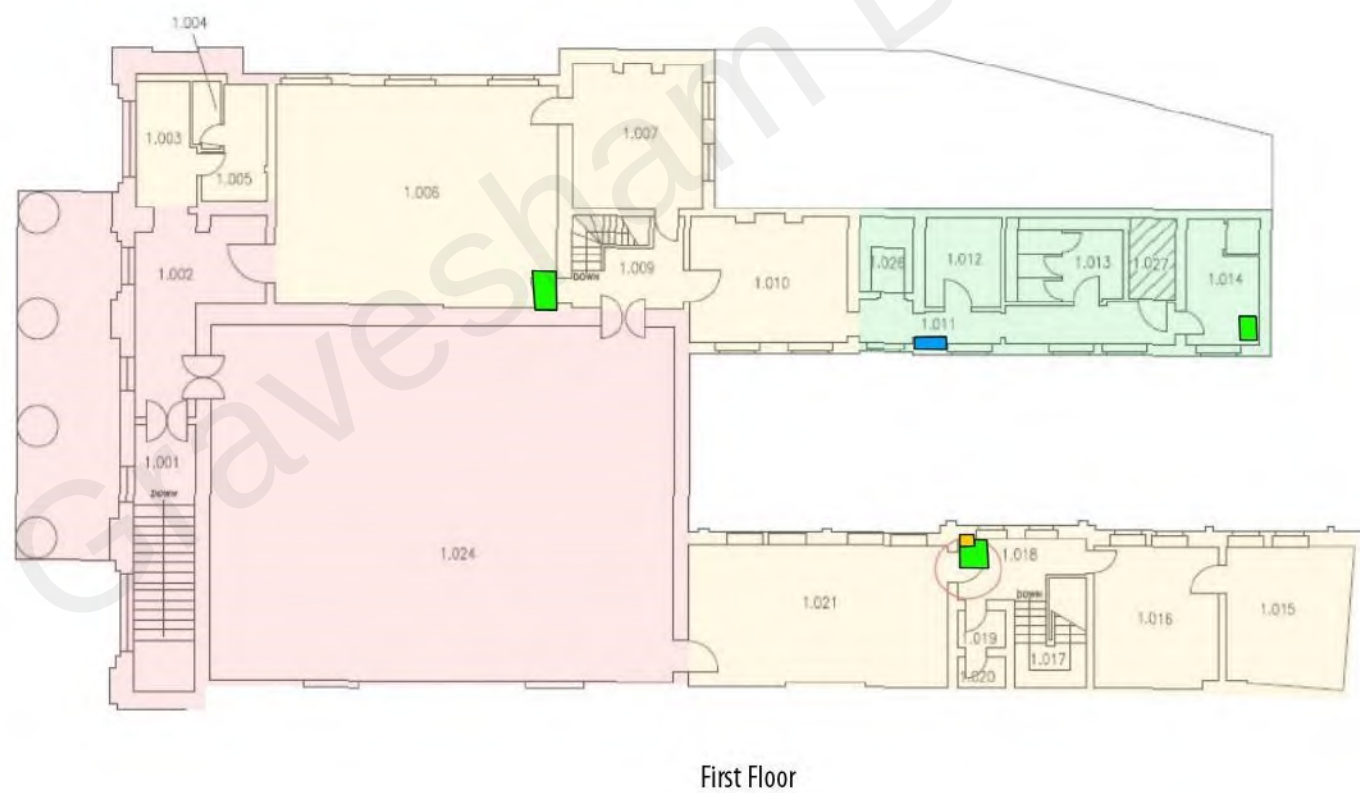
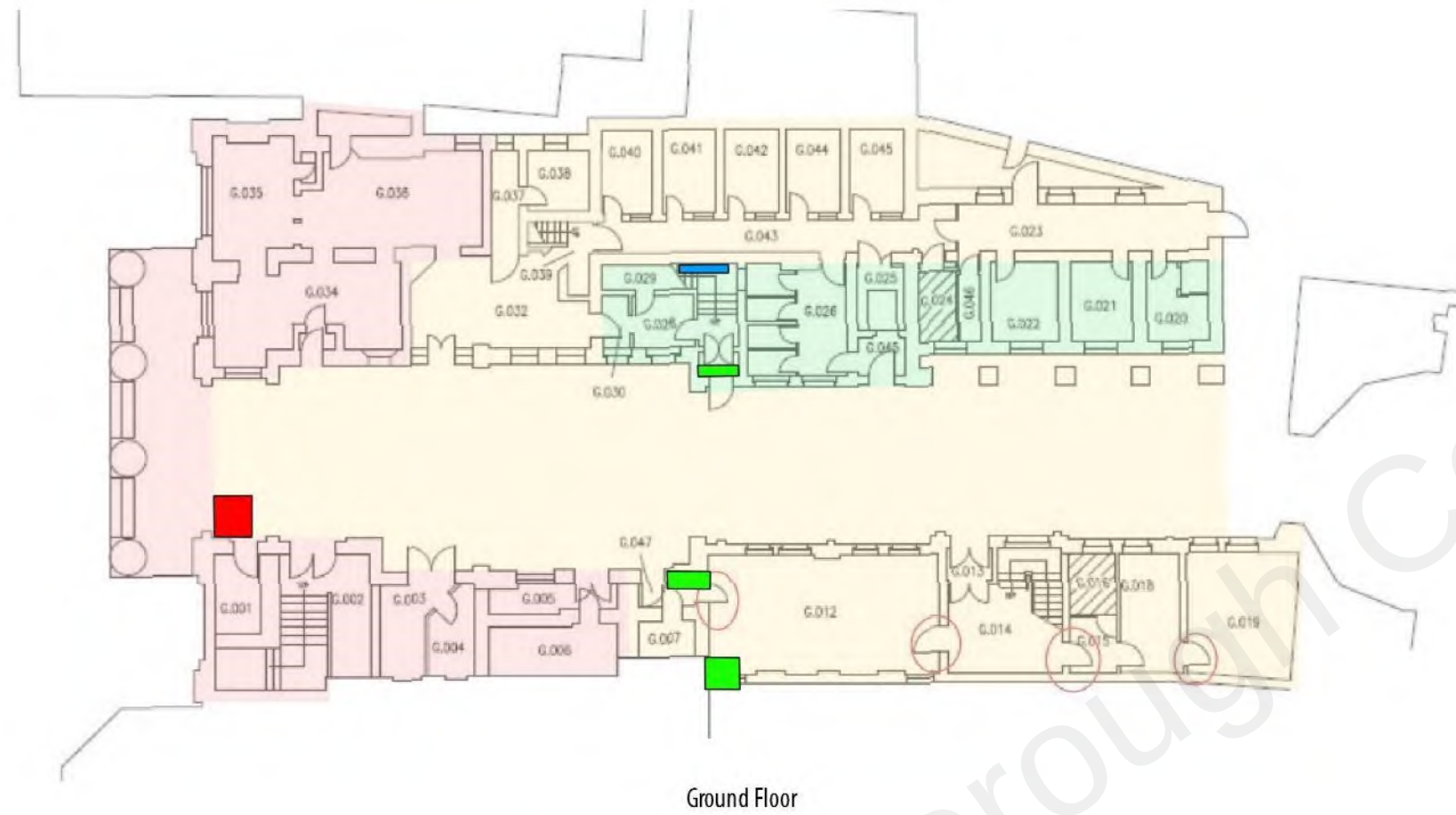
**Key**

**Works Locations**

- Soffit Repair
- Drainage Repair
- Plaster Repair
- Redecoration

**Significance**

- High
- Medium
- Low



Drawing 3: Proposed Internal Works Locations

## APPENDIX 1: GAZETTEER OF HERITAGE ASSETS WITHIN THE STUDY AREA

| NHLE Ref | Name                                              | Description       | Easting  | Northing | Period        | Status    | Importance  |
|----------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------|----------|---------------|-----------|-------------|
| NA       | High Street Conservation Area                     | Conservation Area | 564779   | 174271.4 | Post Medieval | NA        | Medium-High |
| 1089055  | 57 AND 58, HIGH STREET                            | Listed Building   | 564749.8 | 174283   | Post Medieval | Grade II  | Medium      |
| 1367087  | 73, HIGH STREET                                   | Listed Building   | 564754.5 | 174354.4 | Post Medieval | Grade II  | Medium      |
| 1089057  | 71 AND 72, HIGH STREET                            | Listed Building   | 564755   | 174348.4 | Post Medieval | Grade II  | Medium      |
| 1367125  | 70, HIGH STREET                                   | Listed Building   | 564755   | 174342.4 | Post Medieval | Grade II  | Medium      |
| 1367124  | 56, HIGH STREET                                   | Listed Building   | 564749.3 | 174276.3 | Post Medieval | Grade II  | Medium      |
| 1393707  | TWO K6 TELEPHONE KIOSKS OUTSIDE THE OLD TOWN HALL | Listed Building   | 564765.1 | 174264.5 | Post Medieval | Grade II  | Medium      |
| 1089034  | CHURCH OF ST GEORGE                               | Listed Building   | 564689   | 174341.4 | Post Medieval | Grade II* | High        |
| 1054761  | THE TOWN HALL                                     | Listed Building   | 564779   | 174271.4 | Post Medieval | Grade II* | High        |
| 1089036  | 26 AND 28, QUEEN STREET                           | Listed Building   | 564894   | 174233.4 | Post Medieval | Grade II  | Medium      |

| NHLE Ref | Name                                             | Description     | Easting  | Northing | Period        | Status   | Importance |
|----------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------|----------|---------------|----------|------------|
| 1089035  | STATUE OF QUEEN VICTORIA IN BOROUGH MARKET HOUSE | Listed Building | 564857   | 174258.4 | Post Medieval | Grade II | Medium     |
| 1089054  | 55 AND 55A, HIGH STREET                          | Listed Building | 564748.9 | 174269.7 | Post Medieval | Grade II | Medium     |
| 1089053  | THE KENT PUBLIC HOUSE                            | Listed Building | 564770   | 174310.2 | Post Medieval | Grade II | Medium     |
| 1089056  | THE ALBION PUBLIC HOUSE                          | Listed Building | 564750.2 | 174289.3 | Post Medieval | Grade II | Medium     |

## APPENDIX 2: PHOTOGRAPHS

Gravesend Borough Council



Photo 1: General view of Town Hall frontage taken from the High Street, facing north east



Photo 2: Oblique view across western frontage of Old Town Hall showing restricted visibility at short range



Photo 3: View from undercroft facing north east along front of northern wing towards covered market



Photo 4: Detail image of modern mosaic covering eastern elevation at rear of original west range of Old Town Hall



Photo 5: Northern wing facing north west



Photo 6: Southern wing facing south west



Photo 7: Central bay of southern wing facing south showing plant growth from brickwork.



Photo 8: Indicative view of existing roof condition, view to east



Photo 9: General view of roof condition, view to south west



Photo 10: Damage to soffit of undercroft, south west corner adjacent to portico



Photo 11: Detail of plant growth from masonry of western elevation



Photo 12: Damage to coving and plasterwork, south east corner Room 1.006 (Old Court Room)



Photo 13: Damage to decorative finish of wall plaster, Room 1.011 (first floor corridor, northern wing)



Photo 14: Missing plaster exposing laths to ceiling of Room 1.014, south east corner (first floor storage room, northern wing)



Photo 15: Damaged paintwork within lower stair core G.027, ground floor of northern wing



Photo 16: Damaged and missing plasterwork exposing the underlying brick fabric to west of exterior doorframe, G.027 ground floor of northern wing



Photo 17: Broken coving and water damage to surrounding plasterwork, north west corner of lobby/stair core Room 1.018 and G.013 in southern wing resulting from damaged internal drainage



Photo 18: Water damage caused by plant ingress to plasterwork in south west corner of room G.012, ground floor of southern wing



Photo 19: Missing ceiling plaster and water damage to high-level wall plaster in north east corner of lobby G.047, ground floor of southern wing



Photo 20: Existing door to Old Court Room



Photo 21: Existing second door to Old Court Room



Photo 22: Representative detail image of existing door fixtures, second door to Old Court Room



Photo 23: Door to Old Parlour Room



Photo 24: Existing door to Mayor's Lobby

Gravesend Borough Council