



Queens Farm, Queens Farm Road, Shorne, Gravesend

HERITAGE STATEMENT

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The past is not dead, it is living in us, and will be alive in the future which we are now helping to make.

William Morris – Founder of SPAB

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by J F Heritage on behalf Evesham Properties Ltd to comply with paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), applicants are required to provide a description of the significance of the heritage asset and/or its setting and sufficient information to understand the impact on any heritage assets affected.
- 1.2 This Heritage Statement provides an overview of the site, the character of the conservation area, details of the proposed development and its impact on the character of the conservation area. The information is based on historical research, publicly available sources, and correspondence between the current owner and the local authority.
- 1.3 The application site consists of three detached modern agricultural buildings located around a concrete courtyard (The site). The site is located within the boundary of the Queens Farm Conservation Area, in an Area of Archaeological Potential, Green Belt and Higham Arable Farmlands Landscape Character Area.
- 1.4 Building 1 is used for agricultural purposes and is situated to the north of the site. Building 2 is partly occupied by Craftworks joinery workshop and is sited to the west of the yard.
- 1.5 The planning history is limited, and the relevant planning decisions have been included below:

Reference	Proposal	Decision
20181303	Prior notification under Part 3 Class R of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)	Granted

Table 1: Planning history of the site

2. Legislation and Policy

Heritage Legislation

- 2.1 Conservation areas receive protection primarily under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 in England and Wales, as well as under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 in Scotland. This legislation gives local planning authorities a duty to *"pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that Conservation Area"*. Any harm to the heritage assets must be weighed against the public benefit as outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.2 The NPPF sets out government policy on the historic environment which includes designated and non-designated heritage assets such as listed buildings, conservation areas and locally listed buildings.
- 2.3 The definition of significance is set out in the glossary of the NPPF as *'the value of the heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historical. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also its setting'*. Significance is defined as consisting of four main constituents: architectural interest, historic interest, artistic interest and archaeological interest. Historic England's guidance on *Conservation Principles* expands on significance and identifies four values that can contribute to significance, these are:
- Historic Value
 - Aesthetic Value
 - Communal Value
 - Evidential Value
- 2.4 The requirement for a heritage statement is covered under Paragraph 200 of the NPPF which states *'local 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 heritage assets importance and no more than is necessary to understand the impact of the proposal on their significance'* The relevant historic environment record should be consulted as part of the assessment.
- 2.5 Paragraphs 212 states that *'great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset when considering applications that affect its significance (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be)*. This is regardless of the level of harm to its significance.
- 2.6 Paragraph 214 states that *'where proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse*

consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss’.

- 2.7 Paragraph 215 of the NPPF also advises that *‘where a proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use. A balanced judgement is therefore required having regard to the scale of any harm and the significance of the heritage asset’.*

Gravesham Local Plan 2014

- 2.8 The following local policies are relevant to this application and are included in full below:

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS19 – Development and Design Principles
- CS20 – Heritage and the Historic Environment

Policy CS01: Sustainable Development

4.1.6 Planning applications that accord with the policies in the development plan for Gravesham will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.1.7 When considering development proposals the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and in this Core Strategy. It will work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

4.1.8 Where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise, taking into account whether:

- *Any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or*
- *Specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted.*

Policy CS19: Development and Design Principles

5.15.14 New development will be visually attractive, fit for purpose and locally distinctive. It will conserve and enhance the character of the local built, historic and natural environment, integrate well with the surrounding local area and meet anti-crime standards. The design and construction of new development will incorporate sustainable construction standards and techniques, be adaptable to reflect changing lifestyles, and be resilient to the effects of climate change. This will be achieved through the criteria set out below:

- Using the collaborative approach advocated in Building for Life 12 and in line with the guidance set out in Kent Design, the design, layout and form of new development will be derived from a robust analysis of local context and character and will make a positive contribution to the street scene, the quality of the public realm and the character of the area. Account will be taken of the scale, height, building lines, layout, materials and other architectural features of adjoining buildings. Account will also be taken of the wider site context, including strategic views, site topography, the significance of heritage assets and features of townscape and landscape value which contribute to local character and sense of place;*
- New development will encourage sustainable living and choice through a mix of compatible uses which are well connected to places that people want to use, including the public transport network, local services and community facilities; encourage sustainable travel; enhance Green Grid links and encourage healthier lifestyles;*
- New development will be located, designed and constructed to:*
 - safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants and those of neighbouring properties and land;*
 - avoid adverse environmental impacts from pollution, including noise, air, odour and light pollution, and land contamination; and*
 - not pose an unacceptable risk or harm to the water environment, including the quality and/or quantity of ground waters, surface waters, wetlands and coastal water systems;*
- The design and layout of new residential development, including conversions, will accord with the adopted Residential Layout Guidelines;*
- New development will be designed in an inclusive way to be accessible to all*

members of the community;

- New development will provide appropriate levels of private and public amenity space;*
- New development will include details of appropriate hard and soft landscaping, public art, street furniture, lighting and signage and will ensure that public realm and open spaces are well planned, appropriately detailed and maintained so they endure;*
- Car parking will be well related to the development it serves;*
- New development will protect and, where opportunities arise, enhance biodiversity and the Borough's Green Infrastructure network. Support will be given to environmental enhancements where opportunities arise;*
- New development will be fit for purpose and adaptable to allow changes to be made to meet the needs of users;*
- The design and layout of new development will take advantage of opportunities to build in resilience to the effects of climate change. This will include protection against flood risk, where relevant, delivering carbon reduction, provision for low carbon and renewable energy, and minimising energy consumption and water use;*
- New development will incorporate appropriate facilities for the storage and recycling of waste; and*
- The layout of new development will create a safe and secure environment and provide surveillance to minimise opportunities for crime and vandalism.*

Policy CS20: Heritage and the Historic Environment

5.16.10 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.

5.16.11 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.*

5.16.12 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. Historic Development

Archaeological Remains

- 3.1 A search of the Kent Historic Environment Record reveals that the wider area is rich in archaeological finds (**Fig 1**). An investigation by the Canterbury Archaeological Society in 2003 uncovered a late Iron Age enclosure dating from between 600–350 BC. To the west of the site lie the remains of an Early Medieval settlement and cemetery, while to the south lie numerous prehistoric features, including a ring ditch and a possible round barrow¹.

Historic Map Regression

- 3.2 Historic mapping demonstrates the evolution of Queens Farm as part of a long-established agricultural landscape located to the north-west of the Shorne Conservation Area. The earliest map is the John Norden's map of 1605 and the site is labelled 'Shorne II'. In the following century the Andrews Dury map of 1769 shows the site is labelled 'Lower Shorne'.

19th Century

- 3.3 The Ordnance Survey map of 1862 - 1875 (**Fig 2**) shows Queens Farm as an established farmstead by the mid-19th century. The farm comprises a small cluster of buildings, likely including a farmhouse and associated agricultural structures, arranged in a loose linear or courtyard formation along a trackway. The surrounding landscape, including the application site, is characterised by large, regular fields, indicative of post-medieval enclosure. The farm is set within an open agricultural landscape with little surrounding development, reinforcing its rural and functional character. Field boundaries are well-defined and there is evidence of orchard planting to the south of the farmstead.

¹<https://www.swataarchaeology.co.uk/pdf/2017/55Cover%20Queens%20Farm%20Building%20Recording%20Report.pdf>

- 3.4 By the late 19th century (**Fig 3**), the overall layout of Queens Farm remains largely unchanged, indicating a stable agricultural holding. The core farmstead retains its earlier form, with only limited incremental additions to outbuildings. The surrounding fields remain in agricultural use, with orchards still evident to the south and east. There is no significant encroachment of built development, and the farm continues to be experienced as part of a coherent rural landscape.
- 3.5 Early 20th-century (**Fig 4**) mapping shows continued continuity in the form and layout of the farmstead. The building group remains focused around the original cluster, with only minor additions or alterations, likely reflecting functional agricultural needs.
- 3.6 The wider landscape remains agricultural in character, although some subtle changes to field boundaries are evident, possibly associated with evolving farming practices. The relationship between the farmstead and its surrounding land remains strong and legible.

Late 20th Century to Present

- 3.7 The present-day arrangement reflects this evolution (**Figs 5-8**), with the historic core of Queens Farm remaining legible, while modern agricultural structures have been introduced within the wider farm holding. The group of modern agricultural buildings to the north-west of the conservation area appear to represent later 20th-century or early 21st-century additions, associated with the continued use of the land for agriculture. Their siting reflects a degree of separation from the historic core, which helps to retain the legibility of the original farmstead.

Summary

- 3.8 Historic mapping confirms that Queens Farm has been an established agricultural site since at least the mid-19th century, with likely earlier origins. The farmstead has experienced gradual and incremental change, with its historic core remaining largely intact through the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The introduction of modern agricultural buildings in the later 20th century represents a distinct phase of development, reflecting changes in agricultural practice. While these buildings differ in scale and character from the historic farmstead, they illustrate the continued functional use of the site within its agricultural context.

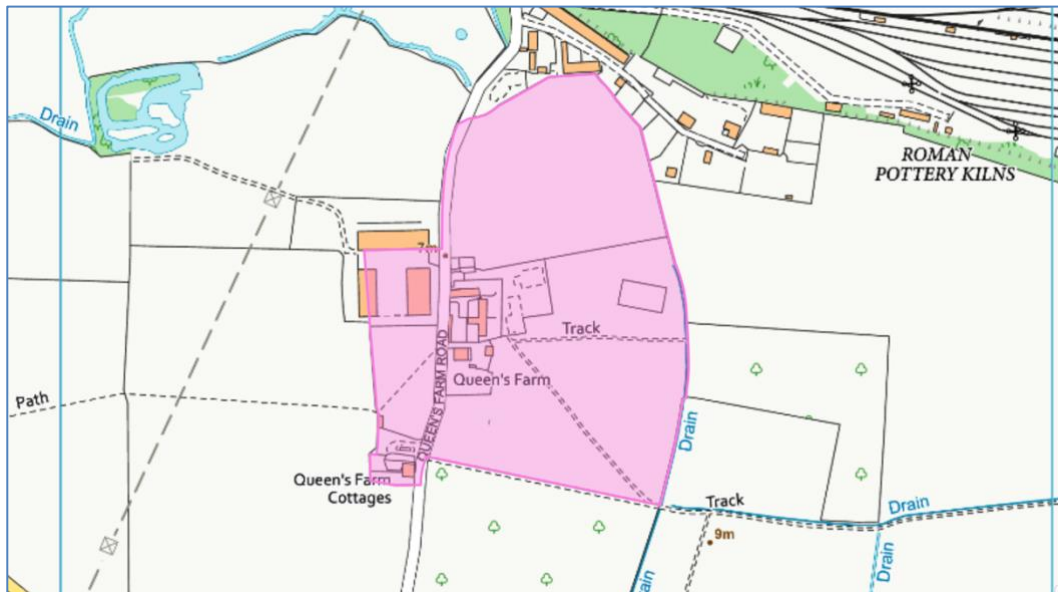


Fig 1: The designated heritage assets in the area

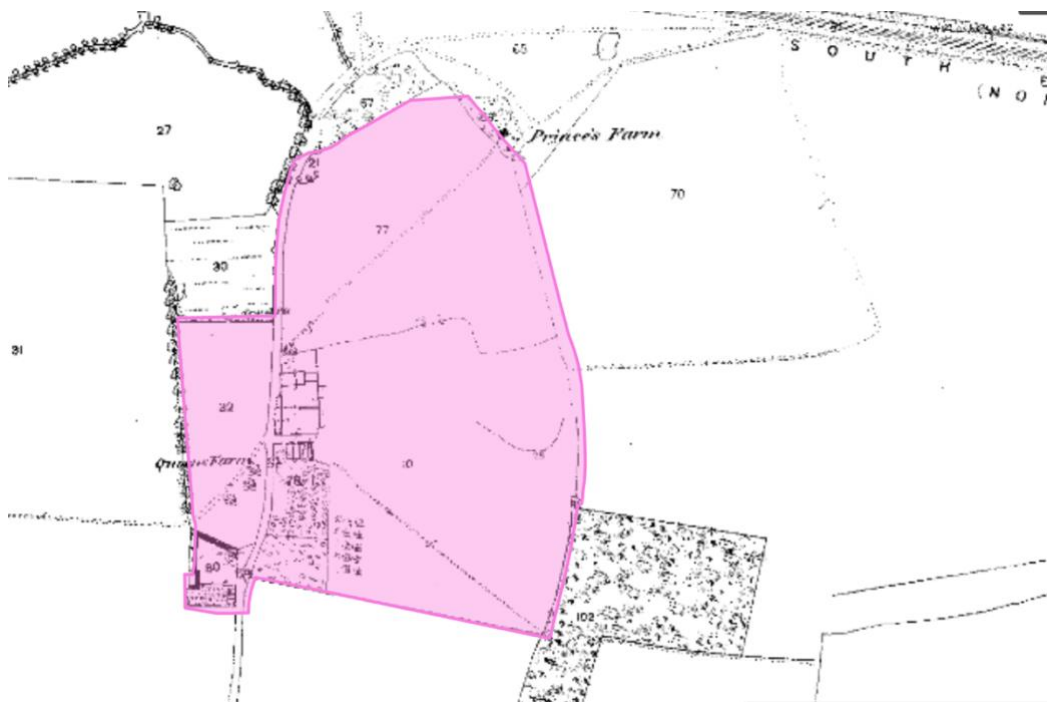


Fig 2: The 1862 – 1875 OS map

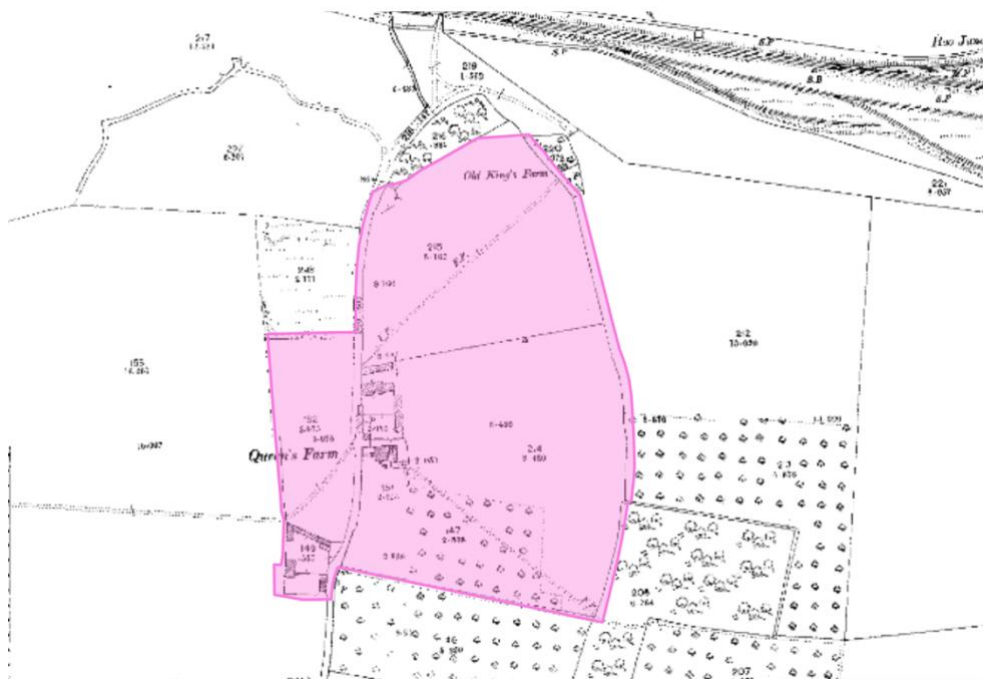


Fig 3: The 1897-1900 OS Map

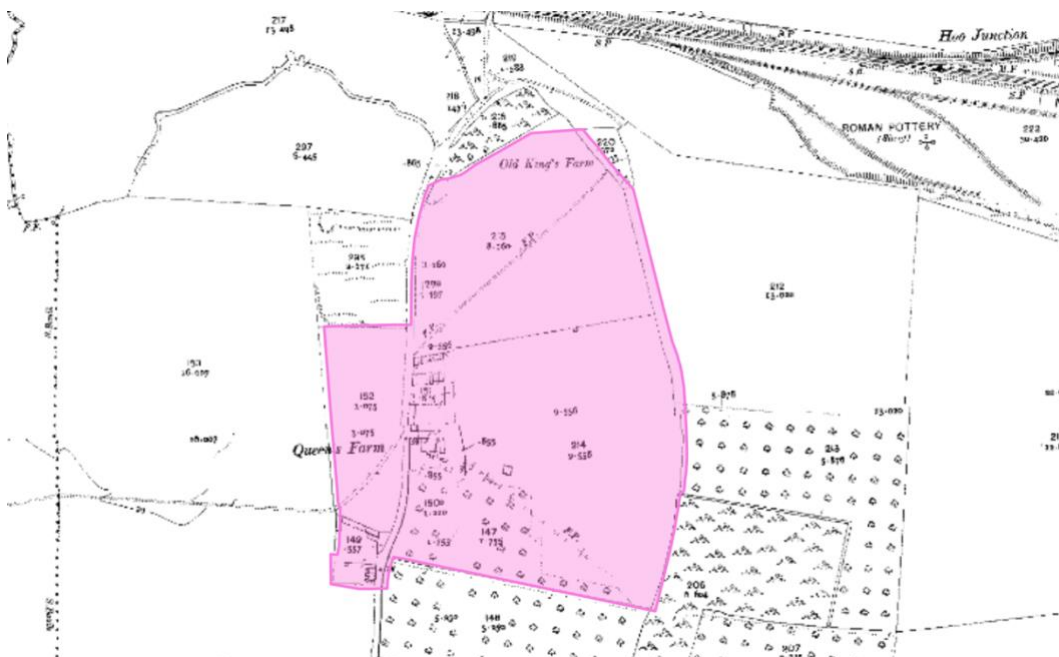




Fig 7: Aerial Photograph 1990



Fig 8: Aerial Photograph 2008

4. Significance

- 4.1 The NPPF defines significance as *“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.”* Historic England defines significance in *Conservation Principles* as *“The sum of the cultural and natural heritage values of a place, often set out in a statement of significance.”*
- 4.2 The NPPF defines setting as *“The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.”* Historic England defines setting in *Conservation Principles* as *“The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.”*
- 4.3 In accordance with Historic England’s guidance *Conservation Principles* there are several elements and values that can contribute to the significance of the building, this includes: architectural, historic, evidential, and artistic interest and aesthetic, historic, evidential, and communal values. The setting of a heritage asset may also contribute to its significance.
- 4.4 This statement analyses the significance of the building and is in accordance with Historic England’s guidance on Statements of Significance.

Conservation Areas

- 4.5 Conservation Areas are designated based on their special architectural or historic interest. Historic England has published guidance in respect of the designation and management of conservation areas, and this provides a framework for the appraisal and assessment of the special interest and significance of a conservation area.

Listed Buildings

- 4.6 Listed buildings are designated heritage assets that have special architectural or historic interest that are, for the time being, included in a list compiled or approved by the Secretary of State under Section 1 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990; for the purposes of that Act. The principles of selection for listed buildings are published by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and supported by Historic England’s Listing Selection Guides for each building type. There are no listed buildings within the Conservation Area.

Assessment

- 4.7 The following desk-based assessment of heritage significance is proportionate to the importance of the Queens Farm Conservation Area. It is intended to provide a sufficient level of description to understand the likely impacts of future change through the development, given its nature and extent. This assessment work is based on review of existing published information, desktop only archival research, and on-site visual survey.

Character of the Conservation Area

- 4.8 The Queens Farm Conservation Area is characterised by its well-preserved historic farmstead set within a predominantly rural marshland landscape (**Figs 9 & 10**). The area derives its special interest from the relatively complete survival of a traditional agricultural complex, comprising a farmhouse, associated farm buildings, yards and a small group of workers' cottages, largely dating from the nineteenth century but reflecting earlier origins ².
- 4.9 The spatial arrangement of buildings around functional farmyards illustrates the historic organisation of small-scale agricultural activity prior to modern intensification, with the ensemble forming a coherent and legible historic group. This completeness is a key aspect of the area's significance, providing a tangible representation of the evolution of rural farming practices.



Figs 9 & 10: View of the farmhouse and the historic farmstead

- 4.10 The conservation area retains a strong rural character, reinforced by its inclusion of surrounding agricultural land, orchards and field boundaries, which preserve its historic setting and limit the impact of later development. The wider landscape context, particularly its relationship with the Thames-side

² Conservation Area Appraisal <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3rpRo7SzRgdUThRdktEeWpaTFE/view?resourcekey=0-9dvVICEfg2o08maO96c4Hg>

marshes, contributes to its sense of openness, isolation and historic function. Overall, the character of the conservation area is defined by its agricultural origins, cohesive group value, and its survival as a rare example of a marshland farmstead within its historic landscape setting, with key views and the surrounding countryside contributing positively to its significance.



Figs 11 & 12: Views of the group of historic buildings to the south east of the site

Contribution of the Site to the Character of the Conservation Area

- 4.11 The existing buildings (**Figs 13 -16**) are modern and make a neutral contribution to the character of the Conservation Area, in that they continue the established agricultural use of the site and wider landscape. However, they are of limited architectural and aesthetic interest.



Fig 13: View of the site from the south east

Fig 14: View of Building 1



Fig 15: Building 3



Fig 16: Building 2

Contribution of Setting to Significance

- 4.12 The immediate setting of the site is defined by the courtyard, within which the form and functional relationship of the buildings are readily understood. As set out above, Buildings 1 and 2 are modern in origin and make a neutral contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The wider setting (**Figs 17 and 18**) of the Conservation Area comprises the surrounding rural landscape beyond its boundary, within which the agricultural buildings and historic farmstead are experienced as part of a broader agricultural context. This wider setting makes a modest but positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.



Fig 17 & 18: Views of the conservation area and wider setting

Summary of Significance

- 4.13 The Queens Farm Conservation Area derives its significance from the well-preserved survival of a historic agricultural complex set within a predominantly rural marshland landscape. The conservation area is characterised by a coherent group of buildings, including the farmhouse, associated farm buildings and workers' cottages, which together illustrate the historic organisation and operation of a traditional farmstead with origins in the nineteenth century and earlier.

5. Summary of Development

- 5.1 In line with the requirements of the NPPF 2024, the significance of the identified heritage assets, namely the Queens Farm Conservation Area, has been proportionately assessed in **Sections 3 and 4**. This assessment is based on a review of published sources, desktop and archival research, and a site visit.
- 5.2 Relevant heritage legislation, policy, and guidance have also been taken into account, including the statutory duties outlined in the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*, national policy set out in the NPPF 2024 and supported by the *National Planning Practice Guidance* (NPPG), as well as local policies and guidance for development within the historic environment. Collectively, these sections and appendices provide the necessary context for the local planning authority to consider the application and assess its potential impact on heritage assets.
- 5.3 This section outlines the proposed development and the planning history of the site. This information is based on data gathered from the planning portal website, supplemented by information provided to me, and further supported by a site visit to the property.
- 5.4 The planning history of the site is brief. The council granted prior notification under Part 3 Class R of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development).

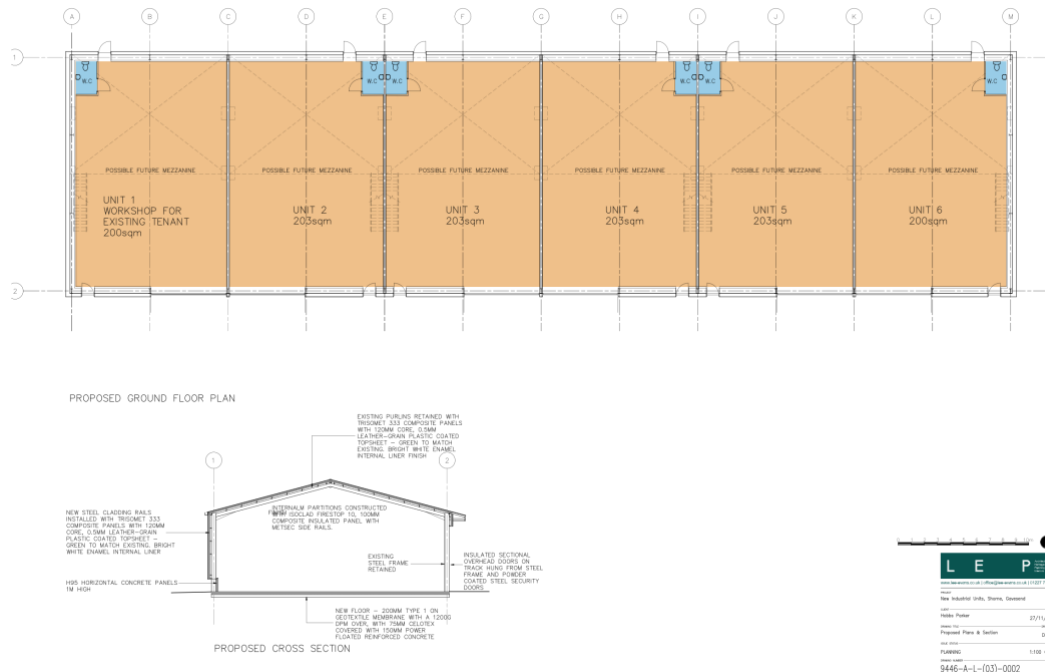


Fig 19: Proposed plans and section (Lee Evans Partnership, 2026)

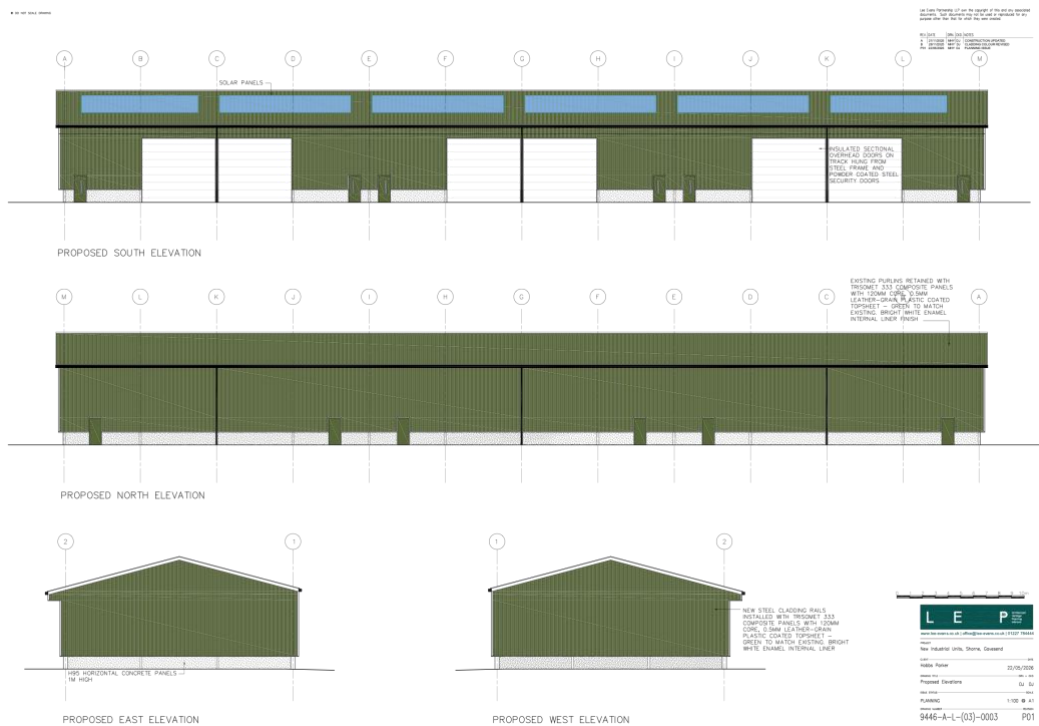


Fig 20: Proposed elevation (Lee Evans Partnership, 2026)

- 5.5 The applicant is seeking planning permission for a proposed change of use of the existing agricultural buildings to light industrial / storage units, installation of solar panels, an agricultural storage unit and workshop unit. Pre-application advice was sought from the Council, during which the council indicated support in principle for the proposed development.
- 5.6 Building 1 would be subdivided into six individual bays, comprising five light industrial/storage units and one farm workshop, each of approximately 200sqm. The currently open southern elevation would be enclosed, and roller shutter doors installed to serve each unit. Existing cladding, roofing materials and rainwater goods would be replaced. In addition, roof-mounted photovoltaic solar panels are proposed on the southern roof slope of Building 1 to support the sustainability objectives of the development and reduce operational energy demand. No extensions or increases in footprint are proposed.
- 5.7 Building 2 would be partially reconfigured, with the northern bay, currently in agricultural storage use, relocated to the farm workshop within Building 1. This bay would then be converted to provide additional Class E workshop floorspace to support the expansion of an existing occupier (Craftworks Joinery). Full details of the proposed development are provided in the Design and Access Statement and accompanying plans submitted with this application.
- 5.8 The proposed solar panels would be fixed flush with the roof plane and integrated within the replacement roof covering. Their siting on a modern agricultural building reflects the continued functional use of the site and supports the incorporation of renewable energy technologies in accordance with national and local planning policy objectives.

6 Impact of Works on Significance

Impact on the Character of Queens Farm Conservation Area

- 6.1 The proposed alterations to Building 1 comprise its subdivision into six bays, the installation of roller shutter doors, replacement cladding, roof covering and rainwater goods, together with the installation of roof-mounted photovoltaic solar panels on the southern roof slope. These works relate to a modern agricultural structure that makes a neutral contribution to the significance of the Queens Farm Conservation Area. The design approach maintains the building's functional and utilitarian character, which remains consistent with existing agricultural and commercial buildings on the site.
- 6.2 The proposed works to Building 2 comprise the conversion of the existing agricultural unit to a workshop. A joinery workshop is already operating within the building, and the proposed change of use is therefore consistent with the established use and reflects the existing utilitarian character of the building. Given that the significance of the Queens Farm Conservation Area derives primarily from the coherent grouping of the farmhouse, historic farm buildings, yards, and workers' housing, given the location and the proposals would not erode this special interest.

- 6.3 It is essential to consider the impact on the character of Queens Farm Conservation Area. The design choices have been informed by the Queens Farm Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, which identifies the key characteristics, building typologies, and materials that contribute to the special interest of the area. The proposed development responds positively to the appraisal's guidance by reintroducing appropriate architectural detailing and preserving the character of the area.
- 6.4 The proposed solar panels would be mounted on the roof of an existing modern agricultural building and would not require any increase in the height, scale or footprint of the structure. While the panels would introduce a contemporary element, they would be viewed in the context of a modern agricultural building that is already characterised by functional materials and utilitarian design. The panels would not affect the historic farmstead, key views of the historic buildings, or the legibility of the conservation area's historic agricultural core. Consequently, their impact on the significance of the conservation area would be negligible.
- 6.5 The inclusion of renewable energy generation through the installation of photovoltaic panels accords with Policy CS19, which supports development that delivers carbon reduction and incorporates low-carbon technologies, whilst preserving the significance of heritage assets. The Council's positive pre-application response further confirms that the works are appropriate in heritage terms and compliant with relevant policy. The proposals would therefore preserve its character and appearance, in accordance with statutory duties, local policies including Policy CS20 of the Core Strategy 2014.

Assessment of Compliance with Relevant Legislation and Policy

- 6.6 In accordance with paragraphs 207 of the NPPF, the significance of the identified heritage asset including any contribution made by their setting, has been proportionately assessed in **Section 3** of this report.
- 6.7 The proposals align with the key principles outlined in the NPPF, which emphasise the importance of sustaining the significance of heritage assets and supporting their viable use in a manner consistent with their conservation. Conservation, as defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF, involves managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains or enhances its significance. The works have sustained the appearance and character of the conservation area, demonstrating compliance with the requirements of the NPPF.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by J F Heritage on behalf of the applicant to provide a proportional understanding of the heritage significance of the site and the Queens Farm Conservation Area. This Heritage Statement has considered the character of the conservation area, provided details of the proposed development and the impact of the development on the character of the Queens Farm Conservation Area. The proposed development is sensitive to the character of the wider conservation area.

- 7.2 In light of the relevant statutory duty of the Planning Act (s.72(1)), special attention has been paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of the Queens Farm Conservation Area. The proposals satisfy the requirements of the statutory duties in that they preserve both the character and appearance of the Queens Farm Conservation Area.
- 7.3 In accordance with the NPPF, it is essential to carefully consider the impact of the proposed development on significance. The proposal, including the conversion works and installation of roof-mounted solar panels on Building 1, would not result in harm to the character or appearance of the Queens Farm Conservation Area. The solar panels would be located on a modern agricultural building that makes a neutral contribution to significance and would not affect the historic farmstead or its setting. The proposals therefore preserve the significance of the conservation area whilst supporting the continued viable use of the site and the adoption of sustainable energy measures.

Appendix 1: Photographs







No part of this report is to be copied without prior written consent from the author. Whilst every effort is made to provide detailed information, J F Heritage cannot be held responsible for errors within this report.

