

DESIGN & ACCESS and HERITAGE STATEMENT

The George Inn, Hever Court Road, Gravesend, DA12 5UQ



Figure 1: The George Inn, principal elevation.

June 2025

Regulated RICS



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared in relation to an application that seeks listed building consent to install an accessible toilet at The George Inn, Hever Court Road, Gravesend, DA12 5UQ. The George is a Grade II listed building and is thus a designated heritage asset.
- 1.2 Where a development affects a designated, or undesignated, heritage asset, due regard must be had for potential impacts on the historic environment. This statement, and the assessment set out herein, is proportionate to the importance of the asset and the potential impacts.
- 1.3 The George Inn is located on the south side of Hever Court Road to the south of Gravesend. Vehicular access to the rear car park is shared with the adjoining Premier Inn. The character of the area is primarily residential, with dwellings situated opposite and to the west.
- 1.4 When viewed from the road, the George is characterised by 2no. parallel ranges. The front range is two-storey with painted brick at ground floor and pebbledash above painted white. The roof is tiled and there is a chimney at each end. The western side elevation is plastered and painted white (see **Figure 2**), to the east the red brick is exposed from approximately 1.5m and above (see **Figure 1**). The rear range is weatherboarded with a slate roof.



Figure 2: The Geogre Inn, principal elevation.

Planning History

- 1.5 The recent planning history is set out in the table below.

Ref:	Description of Development	Valid	Decision
20240040	Application for Listed Building Consent for the alteration and refurbishment of existing advertisements and signage.	Wed 31 Jan 2024	Approved Wed 20 Mar 2024
20240035	Erection of new double-sided post mounted Corex sign and refurbishment of existing signage and signwriting.	Wed 24 Jan 2024	Approved Wed 20 Mar 2024

20130268	Application for approval of condition 3 attached to planning permission reference number 20130021 relating to the details and samples.	Tue 02 Apr 2013	Approved Wed 05 Jun 2013
20130021	Internal alterations including installation of timber and glazed screens, re-decoration, new vanity units in toilets, new meet and greet counter to replace coffee service bar and new internal double doors.	Mon 21 Jan 2013	Approved Tue 19 Mar 2013
20070481	Construction of covered pergola at the rear and installation of a jumbrella at rear.	Thu 24 May 2007	Approved Tue 17 Jul 2007
19980033	Display of illuminated signage.	Fri 27 Feb 1998	Approved Thu 07 May 1998
19980035	Attachment of a non-illuminated directional signboard to the east elevation of The George P.H. Carvery/Restaurant building.	Fri 30 Jan 1998	Approved Fri 27 Mar 1998

2.0 PLANNING POLICY

- 2.1 Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) relates to achieving well-designed places.
- 2.2 Paragraph 135 (f) states that Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments “*create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users...*”.
- 2.3 Chapter 16 of the NPPF sets out guidance in relation to conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
- 2.4 Paragraph 202 recognises that heritage, “*... assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations*”.
- 2.5 Paragraph 207 confirms that,
- “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.”*
- 2.6 Paragraphs 212 and 213 read:
- “When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.*
- 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.”*
- 2.7 Paragraph 215 states that:

“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”.

The Local Development Plan

- 2.8 The Development Plan for Gravesham includes the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy and Local Plan Policies Map (2014), the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994) – saved Policies, and the Kent County Council Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2024-30 (adopted March 2025). The following policies are considered of relevance to this proposal:

Core Strategy 2014

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

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- TC2 – Listed Buildings

3.0 IDENTIFICATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF HERITAGE ASSETS

- 3.1 The George Inn is a Grade II Listed public house located on the southern side of Hever Court Road. Vehicular access is via a shared car park with the adjoining Premier Inn.

- 3.2 The official list entry reads as follows:

“The front elevation is outwardly C18 but there is a timber-framed portion to the rear. 2 parallel ranges. The front range is of 2 storeys, the ground floor painted brick, the 1st floor pebbledashed on the front elevation and plastered on the side elevation. Tiled roof. 5 sashes with verticals only. 2 doorcases with pedimented hoods over. The rear range is weatherboarded with a slate roof and 1 sash window to the side elevation. To the rear is a 2 storey timber-framed portion at right angles.

Orchard House, Corner Cottage, Chapel Farmhouse and the George Inn form a group.”

- 3.3 **Figure 3** depicts an historic OS Plan published in 1908. The George Inn is visible on the plan but the footprint is smaller than that of the modern public house. There is a group of freestanding outbuildings to the rear.

- 3.4 **Figure 4** depicts a later OS plan published in 1933, which evidences significant works to extend the public house to the rear during the early part of the 20th Century.

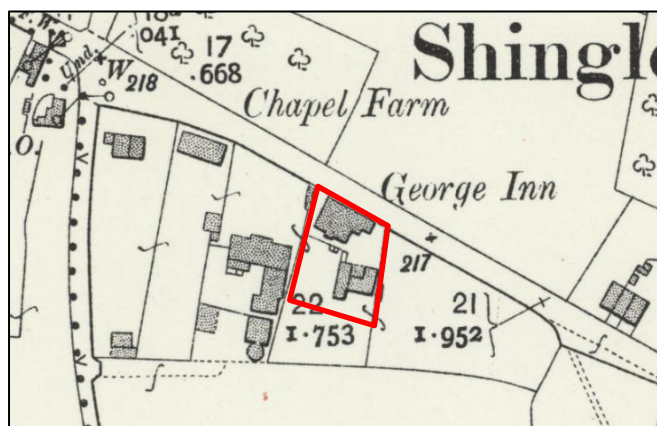


Figure 3: Historic OS Plan, Revised 1907, Published: 1908. The George highlighted red.

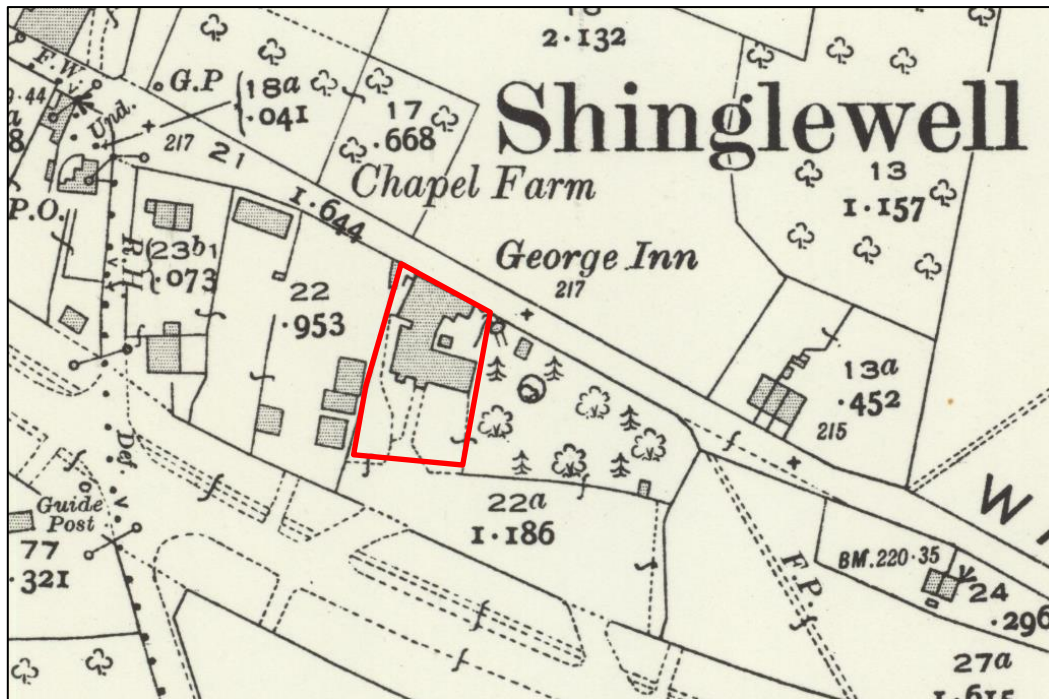


Figure 4: Historic OS Plan Revised: 1932, Published: 1933. The George highlighted red.

- 3.5 The historic core of the building, from which it derives the majority of its heritage significance, is edged red on **Figure 5**. It comprises:
1. A two-storey brick-built range, with tiled dual pitch roof and gable ends, fronting Hever Court Road.
 2. A later two storey addition with lower ridge height on right hand side.
 3. A two storey, timber framed, rear wing, with tiled Roof. This may be the oldest part of the building.
 4. A weatherboarded rear range, with slate roof.
- 3.6 The interior of the historic core has been much altered and opened up. Many of the internal walls have been removed and a public house interior, with bar that crosses three distinct elements, has been inserted.
- 3.7 There are former outbuildings to the rear (edged orange in **Figure 5**). Once free-standing, they have been linked to the historic core, and incorporated into the trade area, with single storey pitched, flat roof and mansard extension, that principally date from the first half of the C20th. The modern extensions are sympathetic to the building and have a neutral impact upon heritage significance.
- 3.8 The George Inn also derives some historic significance from its association with Orchard House, Corner Cottage, and Chapel Farmhouse. The four properties are all Grade II Listed, date back to the 18th Century, and share similar material and design characteristics. They have 'group' value.

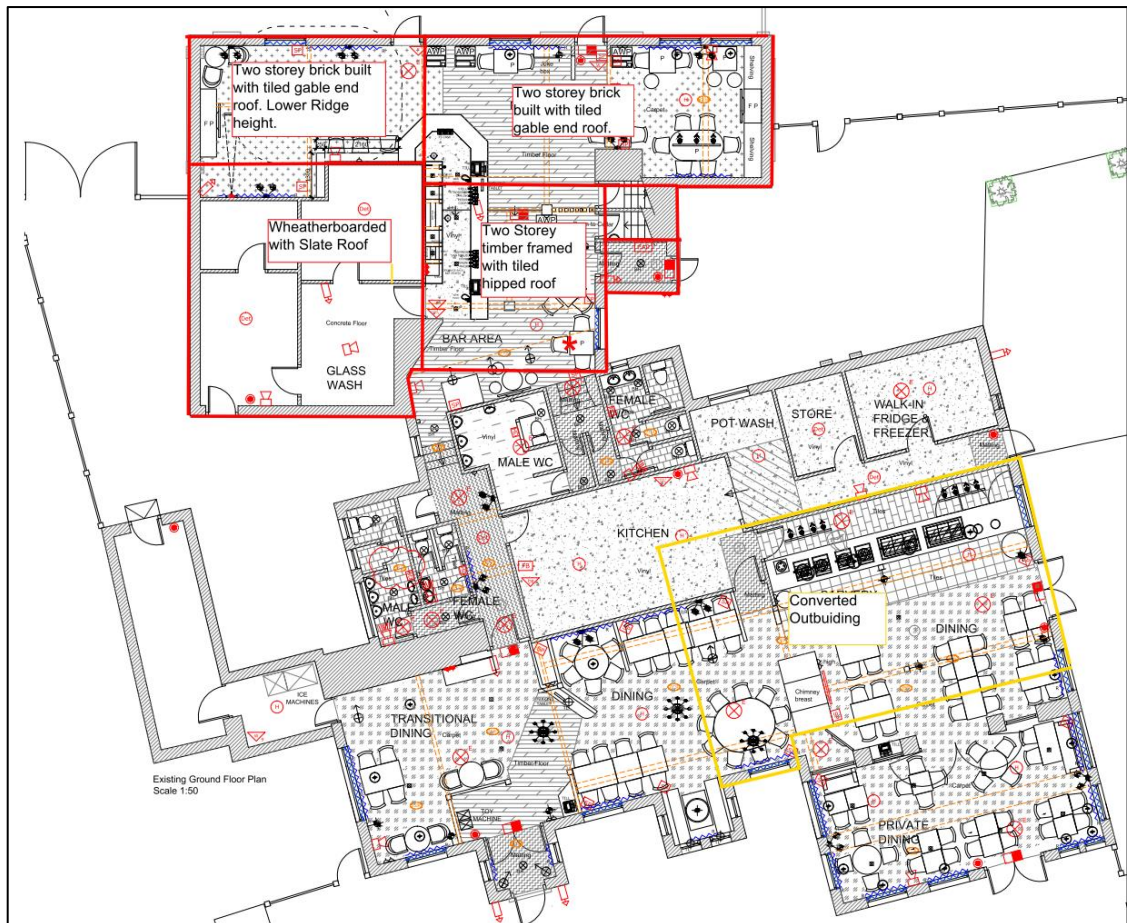


Figure 5: Heritage Significance

4.0 THE PROPOSALS

- 4.1 There is an existing accessible toilet in the front bar area, but it is not accessible to customers in the rear dining area due to a change in levels between the historic core and the rear extensions.
- 4.2 There is insufficient space to install a ramp, so the Company proposes to install a second accessible toilet in the rear (southwestern corner) single storey addition (See **Figure 6**), which is part of the early C20th extensions. Customers with disabilities, or ambulant issues, will thus have access to appropriate facilities wherever they chose to drink or eat in the building.
- 4.3 Existing and proposed floor plans are set out on drawing numbers 3193-102 and 3193-203B. The Applicant proposes to remove an existing timber screen and make good the disturbed surfaces, relocate a radiator, and block up one window and the section of another (internally only) to facilitate the construction of the accessible toilet. Metal stud walls, aligned with the central mullion in the window will create the toilet enclosure.



Figure 6: Location of proposed Accessible WC

5.0 IMPACT ON HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

- 5.1 The new toilet will be at the rear of the building in a relatively modern, early C20th extension, which makes no contribution to the heritage significance of the public house.
- 5.2 The proposed alterations are minor and, with the exception of the installation of the new ventilation fan, all works will be carried out internally. No original features will be removed. The existing flooring and wooden screen to be lost are modern additions, and existing windows will be blocked up internally, but the external elevation will remain unchanged.
- 5.3 The proposal will cause no harm to heritage significance.

6.0 PLANNING BALANCE

- 6.1 The Applicant seeks listed building consent for works to install a second accessible toilet at The George Inn.
- 6.2 As detailed above, it will be located within a rear extension and will not have a negative impact on any original features or cause any harm to heritage significance.
- 6.3 It will deliver public benefit in that it will provide additional facilities for disabled and non-ambulant customers, so allowing them to enjoy the facilities of the building on an equal basis with ambulant customers.
- 6.4 The proposals are consistent with the objectives of Chapters 12 and 16 of the NPPF (2024), Policies CS01, CS19, and CS20 of the Core Strategy 2014 and Policy TC2 of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review 1994.