SUPPORTING STATEMENT

INCLUDING DESIGN, ACCESS AND HERITAGE

HOUSEHOLDER AND LISTED BUILDING APPLICATIONS

PRIMROSE COTTAGE

CHURCH LANE

LEIGHTON BROMSWOLD

CAMBRIDGESHIRE

PE28 5AX

Background

This statement has been prepared in support of a Householder planning and Listed Building application to Huntingdonshire District Council with the aim of establishing support for the proposed additional residential development and alterations at Primrose Cottage, Church Lane, Leighton Bromswold.

Planning History

8301723FUL – Extension and garage – permission granted 10.04.1984

8700479FUL - Alteration and extension to garage - permission granted 18.05.1987

89/00155/FUL - Erect a double garage - permission granted 14.031989

99/11561/LBC – Extension to dwelling – consent granted 22.12.1999

9901560FUL – Extension to dwelling - permission granted 16.12.1999

0600635FUL - Extension to dwelling and erection of entrance gate – permission granted

12.04.2006

0600636LBC – Extension to dwelling – consent granted 12.04.2006

0701693PDE - Conversion of garage to dining room and cloak room – planning permission

not required 11.06.2007

25/70002/PREAP – Demolition of existing single storey extension and erection of 1.5 storey and single storey extension. Internal alterations and changes to fenestration – Pre-app response received 10.02.2025

The Site

Constraint – Conservation Area (Leighton Bromswold)

Constraint – Listed Building (LB Ref: 22/71; Grade II)

The site is located off Church Lane in the hamlet of Leighton Bromswold. Church Lane extends to the east off The Avenue, which is the main street that runs through the spine of Leighton Bromswold. Church Lane contains a mix of residential properties, located predominantly on the south side of the lane, with St Mary's Church being the dominant feature on the northern side of the road.

The application site occupies the most easterly position of the southern development along Church Street, along with Castle House opposite on the northern side. The Avenue and Church Lane represent a mostly continuous linear line of residential development through the hamlet, with the application site bookending the built-up area of Leighton Bromswold along with Castle House.

The Local Plan to 2036 sets out the following built-up area definition: "A built-up area is considered to be a distinct group of buildings that includes 30 or more homes. Land which relates more to the group of buildings rather than to the surrounding countryside is also considered to form part of the built-up area".

Policy LP9 draws a distinction between how proposals considered to fall within the 'built up' area and those which are outside will be assessed.

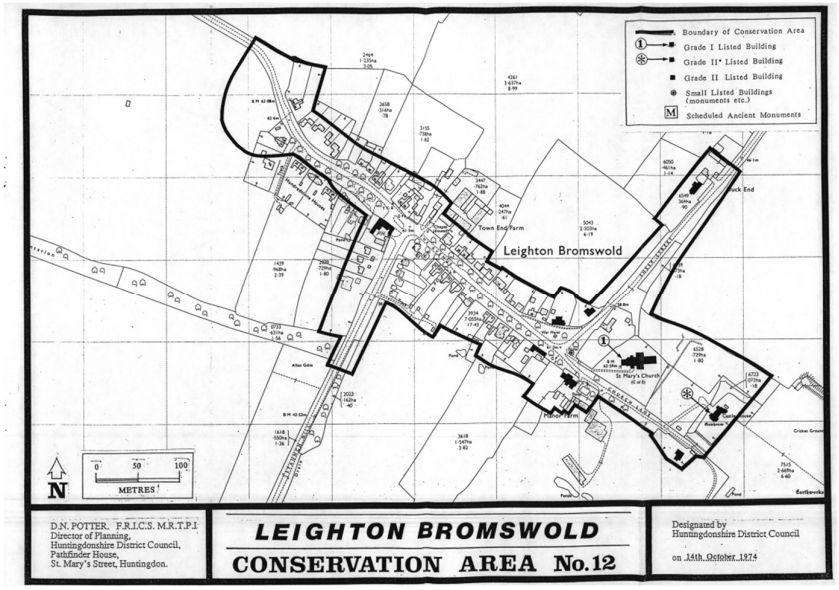
6.4. The plan advises that for the purposes of Policy LP9 the built-up area is considered to be "*a distinct group of buildings that includes 30 or more homes.*" This therefore excludes very small and often isolated groups of dwellings where there is little or no facilities with no obvious core or identity as a village settlement.

6.5. If the location meets the first test i.e., there is a distinct group of buildings including at least 30 homes, it is then necessary to consider whether the site in question "*relates more to the identified group of buildings or to the surrounding countryside*".

6.6. In terms of this first element, it is clear that Leighton Bromswold, whilst defined as a small settlement, is reasonably substantial comprising well in excess of 30 houses, it has a village core with church and public house.

As the site is previously developed as residential and forms a continuous ribbon of development between The Avenue and Church Lane, it is considered that the application site forms part of the 'built-up form' of the village (albeit an edge of village location) and should not be considered to be within the Countryside.

The site lies within the Leighton Bromswold Conservation area (see inset map) and is in Flood Zone 1.



Leighton Bromswold Conservation Area Map – Extracted from the Leighton Bromswold Character Statement (adopted March 1994)

The site is located in proximity to the following Heritage Assets, which could be impacted upon by the proposed development. These are identified on the inset map below.

1) Castle House – Grade II* - Former vicarage with a gatehouse and grounds
2) Church of St Mary – Grade 1 – Parish Church and grounds
3) Manor Farmhouse – Grade II – Later C17 farmhouse
4) Hundred stone – Grade II



Location of heritage assets in proximity to the application site

There are no significant trees on or adjacent to the area of development which are legally protected by a Tree Preservation Order but are legally protected due to their location within the Conservation Area.

The Property

Primrose Cottage is located upon the application site, with vehicular access off Church Lane into an expansive driveway with a double garage.

The property itself is a Grade II listed (C18) cottage that has been heavily modified and extended over time (C20), including the construction of the double garage, along with single storey extensions to both the southern gable and the northern end of the property.

The core (original) property is of timber framed construction with plaster/render over a brick plinth. The roof is covered in what appears to be a modern concrete tile, and the joinery is of modern C20 construction and detailing.

The listing text confirms that the property is listed for "group value" and not for its individual special interest or features.

Internally, the property presents a higher level of character and historic interest than the exterior, with exposed beams and visible timber framing. Many of the internal finishes are modern however, with a high degree of gypsum-based plastering being present.

The C20 extensions, along with the double garage, are all built in brickwork under concrete tiles matching the core of the property. The previous extensions include a range of single

storey structures along the northern boundary of the site, which connect into the 'core' of the property on the northern gable and the (rear) western elevation. The arrangement is considered to be very contrived and 'messy' and creates spaces with little connection to the core dwelling or the established garden to the west.

In addition, there is a single storey extension to the south gable of the property, which extends the Sitting Room. Again, this is constructed in brickwork, poor quality timber joinery and concrete tiles.

The Proposal

The application is supported by a detailed plans package which illustrates the proposed works.

In the main, the works seek the removal of the single storey extension to the western (rear) elevation and its replacement with a 1.5-storey dual pitched extension with single storey 'infill' extension to form a Utility and Boot room.

The proposed extension results in an increase to the total building footprint of 23sqm, which represents an overall footprint increase of 12.5%. Following development, the total footprint would represent approximately 21% of the total site area (955sqm) and thus is considered an appropriate level of development in this edge of village location.

The proposal is mostly concentrated on providing a higher level of Kitchen facilities consistent with the scale of this family property. The proposal also seeks to provide better 'service' facilities, and to improve the relationship between the interior of the property and the exterior landscaped gardens.

The proposed 1.5 storey extension provides a light and bright Kitchen-Breakfast room, with a part vaulted ceiling and expansive glazing looking into the rear amenity land. On the first floor, it is proposed to form a modest dressing/storage area to serve one of the existing bedrooms.

Public views of the 1.5 storey element of the extension will be mostly limited by the existing 'core' building and the previous extensions, and thus the visual impact on the Conservation Area is low.

The proposed extension is detailed within the supporting drawing package, which seek to show that a 'modern' extension can sit harmoniously with the existing property without any significant harm being caused through the loss of significant historic fabric or character. The extension has been designed to be subservient in scale, with the overall length being less than 50% of the host dwelling, the overall width being less than that of the host dwelling, and the overall eaves and ridge heights being significantly less than the existing property.

The single storey 'infill' element of the proposal creates a more functional Utility and Boot Room and utilises an otherwise underutilized space at the rear of the property. This element of the proposal is single storey in nature and would not be visible from outside of the site. The scale and appearance of the extension seeks to mirror the scale and appearance of the previous C20 extensions, to provide continuity to the overall scheme.

In addition to the extensions themselves, it is proposed to alter the existing porch canopy over the principal entrance door on the east elevation and to carry out some internal alterations. With the exception of two areas, all of the internal alteration works are proposed within the previous C20 extensions and thus there would be no loss of historic fabric or impact on the special interest of the property.

The application includes internal alterations within both the 'core' of the cottage and within the later C20/C21extensions. These are illustrated within the detailed drawing package, and include:

1) Removal of modern studwork partition walls within Entrance Hallway to rationalize shape and improve the overall usability. Insertion of rooflights for additional natural light.
2) Alterations to the existing ground floor WC to increase the overall size and improve the functionality of this space.
3) Removal of built-in cupboards within the ground floor Bedroom (all modern fabric)
4) Alterations to ground floor Bedroom En-suite
5) Vaulting of ground floor Bedroom and ground floor Office roofs, and insertion of rooflights
6) Insertion of a studwork partition within the Sitting Room
7) Removal of built in cupboards within first floor Bedrooms (all modern fabric)
8) Formation of a structural opening between first floor Bedroom and proposed Dressing/Storage Area (below existing eaves beam)

With the exception of points 7 and 8 above, all internal alterations proposed are within the later C20/C21 extensions.

On the first floor it is proposed to remove built in cupboards from two of the existing bedrooms within the historic 'core' of the dwelling. Each cupboard is constructed of modern partition materials and result in no loss of historic fabric or layout of the property.

On the first floor it is also proposed to form an opening into the extension from the existing bedroom. There is a timber wall plate at approximately 1.28m above floor level, which will be left in place with the opening formed below this. The location of the opening has been chosen to avoid the diagonal bracing within the timber framed wall, and will result in the need to remove one vertical stud. This stud will be re-installed alongside the new structural opening and thus there will be no loss of historic fabric as a result of this work

Finally, the works also proposed to replace the C20 joinery with more traditional joinery incorporating slimline 14-16mm double glazed units with horizontal glazing bars and clear glazing (obscured to Pilkinton level 4 within bathrooms). Joinery details have been submitted in support of this application

Design And Access

Use

The application site and property is currently in residential use. The site boundaries and application site are illustrated within the supporting drawing package

The proposals do not alter the existing use.

Amount

The application site serves a single residential dwelling house

The proposal does not increase the number of dwellings, but alters and extends the existing floor area of the dwelling.

The amount of development is illustrated and annotated within the supporting drawing package.

Layout

The layout of the existing site is illustrated within the supporting drawing package.

The application seeks alterations to the existing layout, including internal alterations, demolition of existing/previous extensions and new extensions.

Scale

The scale of the proposed works are illustrated within the supporting drawings and described within this supporting statement.

- Existing Site Area: 955sqm
- Existing dwelling footprint: 182sqm
- Proposed dwelling footprint: 205sqm
- Increased footprint: 23sqm (12.5% increase)
- Total site development: 21% of total site area
- Existing Gross Internal Floor Area (GIA): 173sqm
- Gross Internal Floor Area (GIA) to be demolished: 16sqm
- Proposed Gross Internal Floor Area (GIA): 200sqm
- Increased Gross Internal Floor Area (GIA): 27sqm (16% increase)

Materials

The proposed materials pallet is illustrated and annotated within the supporting drawing package, but includes:

- Roof – Clay plain tiles (existing roof tiles are concrete plain tiles)
- Exposed rafter feet (in oak)
- Oak gable frames supporting roof overhang and gable end glazing
- Slim frame aluminium doors and windows
- Pre-patinated standing seam zinc/lead cladding
- Reclaimed facing brickwork in stretcher bond and lime mortar to match existing
- Recessed conservation rooflight
- Through-colour Monocouche XF render in Sand or Cream
- Decorated timber joinery to replace existing joinery

The proposed material pallet is considered to be sympathetic to the existing property The use of reclaimed materials, timber joinery and oak framing acknowledge the historic significance of the core building in a contemporary way, whilst being a welcome visual relief from the heavy appearance of the previous brick-built extension.

Landscaping

The proposed extension will be constructed upon existing hard-standing (patio), which will be removed to facilitate development. The remaining patio area will be adjusted around the extension. There are no other proposed hard landscaping works.

The proposed extension will be constructed upon existing hard-standing (patio), and thus there are no alterations proposed to soft landscaping within the site.

Flooding

The application site lies within flood zone 1 and thus will not impact upon flooding in the locality

Ecology

Given the location and nature of the building, a Preliminary Ecological Assessment and Preliminary Roost Assessment has been commissioned, and this report is submitted in support of the application. The report concludes that there will be no detrimental impact upon protected species and that further surveys are not required. A Bat mitigation statement has also been prepared and submitted to cover the unlikely eventuality of bats being found during the construction process.

Arboricultural

There are some trees and hedges within the application site but these are not within the construction zone and are a significant distance from the property. As such, it is not considered that an Arboricultural assessment is required, albeit consideration under LP31 of Huntingdonshire District Councils Local Plan to 2036 is given below.

LP31

The application site lies within the residential hamlet of Leighton Bromswold, and within the Leighton Bromswold Conservation Area. As such, trees and hedges are protected from pruning or removal without prior consent.

As illustrated by the supporting Site Layout Plan, there are no trees or significant hedges within the construction area of the proposed works. Equally, there are no trees within or in proximity of the site that are subject to a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).

The site consists of residential development with associated garden land to the rear of the property. Within the garden are some ornamental trees and hedges that have been planted and maintained by the previous/current owners. None are considered to be of any special significance or quality, and most are non-native species.

Damage to retained trees will be avoided through careful planning of the construction, including consideration of the placement of construction materials and through a limited construction zone. Areas of the garden not forming the construction zone will be fenced off, and in turn, any trees and hedges within those areas will be protected from accidental damage through impact or compaction of the soils.

It is concluded that the proposed works can be completed without significant loss of impact upon existing trees and hedges on site, and that due consideration has been given in line with LP31 of Huntingdonshire District Councils Local Plan (2036).

Access

Access to the property will be unaffected by the proposals.

Access through the site and building will be unaffected, and proposed floor levels will match the existing floor levels where practical.

Heritage Assets and their Setting (LP34)

Great weight and importance is given to the conservation of heritage assets and their settings. The statutory presumption of the avoidance of harm can only be outweighed if there are public benefits that are powerful enough to do so.

A proposal will be required to demonstrate the potential for adverse impacts on the historic environment. Where investigations show that impacts on heritage assets or their settings, whether designated or not, are possible, a heritage statement will be required, in a manner proportionate to the asset's significance, that:

a. assesses all heritage assets and their settings that would be affected by the proposal, describing and assessing the significance of each asset and its setting to determine its architectural, historical or archaeological interest;

b. sets out how the details of the proposal have been decided upon such that all adverse impacts are avoided as far as possible, or if unavoidable how they will be minimised as far as possible;

c. details how, following avoidance and minimisation, the proposal would impact on the significance and special character of each asset;

d. provides clear justification for the proposal, especially if it would harm the significance of an asset or its setting, so that the harm can be weighed against public benefits; and

e. identifies ways in which the proposal could make a positive contribution to, or better reveal the significance of, affected heritage assets and their settings.

A proposal within, affecting the setting of, or affecting views into or out of, a conservation area should preserve, and wherever possible enhance, features that contribute positively to the area's character, appearance and setting as set out in character statements or other applicable documents. A proposal should:

k. minimise negative impact on the townscape, roofscape, skyline and landscape through retention of buildings/ groups of buildings, existing street patterns, historic building lines and land form;

l. retain and reinforce local distinctiveness with reference to height, scale, massing, form, materials and plot widths of the existing built environment; as well as retaining architectural details that contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area; and

m. where relevant and practical, remove features that are incompatible with or detract significantly from the conservation area.

Historic England's 'Historic Environment Good Practice in Planning: 3 The Setting of Heritage Assets' (2nd ed. 2017) makes it clear that setting is not a heritage asset and can only contribute towards the significance of a heritage asset. This document sets out a series of attributes that it may be appropriate to consider when assessing significance listed under two main headings: the physical surroundings of the asset, including its relationship with other heritage assets; and the way that the asset is experienced.

Heritage Assessment

The heritage interest of the buildings on the site are now assessed following the definitions set out above.

Archaeological interest – Moderate
The core of the building dates from the early C18 with later C20 alterations and additions, including modern extensions directly affixed to the building, and a modern garage structure located in close proximity. Given its location near to the Grade II* listed Castle House and the Grade I listed St Marys Church, there is potential for finds in the area.

Architectural and artistic interest – Limited
The exterior of the building is of limited interest – although the core of the building is of timber framed construction, the brick plinth has been rebuilt and the exterior elevations have been rendered with sand-cement render and masonry paint.

The C20 extensions are extensive and do not replicate any historic form or appearance. The appearance of the extensions are quite stark, and detract from the 'cottage' appearance of the core building.

The interior is of modest interest, with some visible timber framing. However, there are no significant historic features or details which elevate the architectural significance of the property.

Historic interest – Moderate
The building is not known to be of any particular historical significance, or being linked to any significant local figure. Given the edge of village location, it is likely that the cottage was previously linked with a local farmstead and/or perhaps Castle House to the North.

The English Heritage listing text suggests that the property is listed only for its "group value" with Castle House, with the property being described as "Cottage c.40 metres to south of The Castle".

Impact on character and appearance of the Heritage Asset and its setting

The proposals would impact upon the immediate appearance and setting of the application property, Primrose Cottage. The largest impact would be the introduction of a 1.5 storey structure upon the rear (northern) elevation, however it is considered appropriate in that it provides a transition between the existing single storey structures and the two-storey core of the property.

The proposed 1.5 storey extension will replace an existing single storey lean-to extension, with a structure that seeks to mirror the design vernacular of the 'core' building, whilst maintaining a modern and distinct appearance.

The use of a steeply dual-pitched tiles roof and rectangular footprint mirror the form of the 'core' building, whilst the lower eave and ridge heights retain the hierarchy of structures on site, enabling the history and 'evolution' of the property to remain visible.

The use of matching brickwork will provide continuity between the extensions, and the expanse of garden facing glazing will provide a more lightweight appearance and massing to the extension, allowing greater views through the extension to the 'core' building.

The use of principal timber frames to support the roof and gable glazing acknowledge the timber framed construction of the 'core' building, whilst also acknowledging the rural location of the property.

The use of vertical seamed cladding will add interest and a contemporary appearance to small sections of the elevations. It is considered that the brickwork of the previous C20 extensions is quick dominant in appearance, and thus the selective use of the seamed metal cladding will avoid further solid panels of brickwork and help to reduce the overall mass of the extension.

The use of a pitched roof/form for the Utility Boot Room is considered appropriate. Although this will create some 'inner' gutters, it was considered more appropriate than a flat roof construction, particularly as the ridge height could be kept below that of the adjacent single storey extension, meaning that its visibility is severely restricted.

The internal changes to the C20 extensions will not result in the loss of historic form, layout or materials. The inclusion of rooflights to the northern roof slope (serving the bedroom) will introduce a 'residential' feature within the streetscene, but this is considered acceptable in the wider context.

The internal changes proposed within the historic 'core' of the property will result in a small loss of historic fabric. However, this is considered, on balance, acceptable, given the greater functionality and access that this will provide to the property.

Identified level of resulting harm

The proposals represent a change to the built form on the site, but is considered to be at the low end of 'less than substantial'. The extension enables the original core of the property to remain visible, in addition to a large proportion of the later single storey additions.

As such, heritage benefits need to be justified to be offset any perceived harm. The following are identified:

- Improvement in the form, design and quality and specification of materials of the kitchen/breakfast structure to the northern elevation of the house which will have a better relationship with the listed building and the private rear amenity space.

- Greater provision for services and internal spaces associated with modern-day living, ensuring the continued functionality and thus desirability for the property to remain occupied.

- Improvement to the appearance of the property through the replacement of poorly detailed C20 joinery

Conclusion

The proposed works and alterations have been assessed with regard to the potential impact on the setting of the listed building on the site and its wider context in the Conservation Area.

The works can be fully justified on the basis of being a part-replacement structure, including improvements/enhancements to the form and fabric of the historic property. The resulting cumulative proposals have no harmful impact on the significance of the listed building and result in a high quality of development.

A pre-application enquiry was submitted to Huntingdonshire District Council which concluded that the proposals were acceptable with regard to the principle, context, design and external spaces, residential amenity and the impact on the listed building and heritage asset.

The proposals have therefore been shown to accord with the relevant provisions of the NPPFand the aims and objectives of the relevant policies in the adopted Local Plan. It is

therefore respectfully held that there are no heritage or planning reasons not to positively determine the application. The applicant welcomes engagement with the Local Authority throughout the determination process, should this be required.

Photomontage



East and northern elevations from within the driveway



Northern elevation from within rear amenity land



Aerial photograph showing context of application site with Castle House to the north east



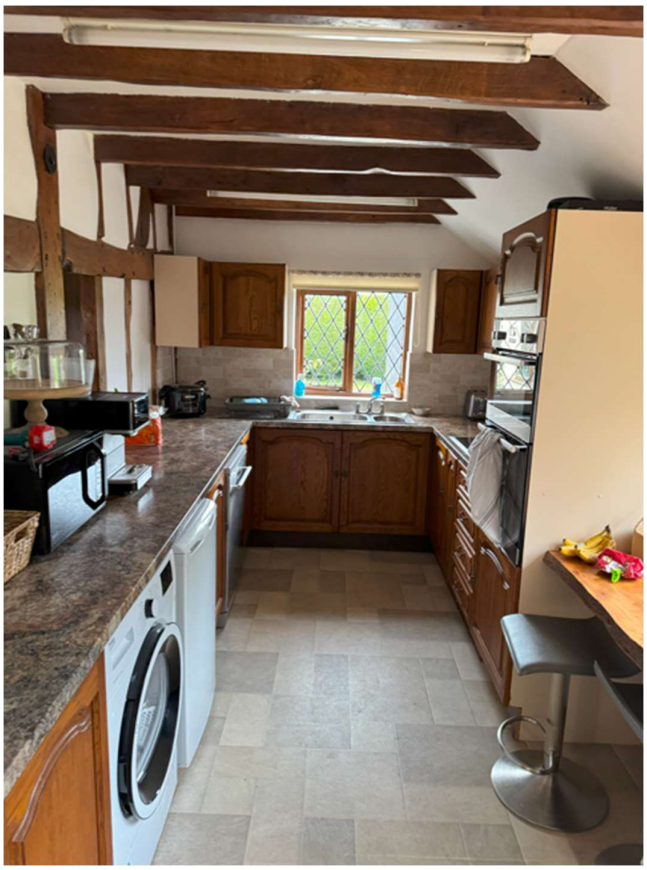
Aerial photograph of the immediate application site



Principal entrance door and porch area



Existing kitchen extension proposed to be removed/adapted.



Existing interior of Kitchen to be removed. Serving hatch visible on left hand side proposed to be enlarged to form door opening. Opening to avoid principal stud.



First floor bedroom illustrating wall/ceiling proposed to receive new structural opening into extension.