Heritage Statement for Listed Building Consent Application

Property: Flint Cottage (formerly Lilac Cottage)

Address: 22 London Lane, Great Paxton, St Neots, Cambridgeshire, PE19 6RH

Listing Grade: Grade II

List Entry Number: 1130272

Date First Listed: 3 June 1983

Proposal: Repainting existing black timber windows and associated external timber details to a sage-green colour.

Introduction & Context

This Heritage Statement accompanies a Listed Building Consent application for repainting works at Flint Cottage, a Grade II listed 18th-century thatched cottage in Great Paxton. The purpose of this document is to describe the heritage asset, assess its significance, evaluate the impact of the proposed repainting, and demonstrate compliance with national and local heritage-conservation policy.

Site Location and Ownership

Flint Cottage is located on London Lane in the historic village of Great Paxton, Huntingdonshire. The property is privately owned and used as a single residential dwelling. It sits within a rural village setting characterised by traditional cottages, mature landscaping, and a historic streetscape.

Description of the Asset

Architectural Features

Historic England identifies the cottage as an 18th-century timber-framed, roughcast-rendered dwelling with a thatched roof, two dormers, and a gault brick ridge stack.

- Traditional thatched roof with protective netting
- White rendered walls with dark timber trim
- Timber casement windows currently painted black
- Small-pane glazing typical of rural Georgian vernacular
- Brick chimney with terracotta pot
- Timber doors in natural stained finish
- Low stone steps and gravel forecourt
- Rural garden setting with mature trees and traditional outbuildings

The cottage retains a high degree of authenticity and architectural integrity.

Historical Development

The cottage dates from the 18th century and was originally constructed as two separate dwellings. Its timber frame, roughcast render, and thatched roof are characteristic of Cambridgeshire vernacular domestic architecture of the period.

The building has remained in residential use throughout its history, with its external appearance largely unchanged aside from routine maintenance and modern domestic additions.

Legal Designation

Flint Cottage (listed as Lilac Cottage) is protected under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as a Grade II listed building, recognised for its special architectural and historic interest.

Assessment of Significance

What Makes the Asset Important?

The cottage's significance derives from:

- Architectural interest — thatched roof, timber framing, roughcast render, dormers, casement windows, and brick chimney
- Historic fabric — surviving 18th-century construction methods and materials
- Evidential value — insight into rural domestic life and craftsmanship of the Georgian period
- Aesthetic value — its picturesque appearance contributes strongly to the historic character of London Lane
- Group value — part of a wider cluster of traditional cottages in Great Paxton

Evidence Through Historical Mapping, Records and Photographs

Historic England's listing confirms the building's age, structure, and original form.

Your photographs demonstrate the survival of key historic features, including the thatched roof, timber joinery, and traditional massing.

Impact Assessment

Nature of the Proposed Works

The proposal seeks consent to repaint the existing black timber windows and associated timber details to a sage-green colour.

No physical alterations, replacements, or changes to the window structure are proposed.

The works are purely cosmetic.

Visual Impact

- The change from black to sage green is minor and reversible.
- Sage green is a heritage-appropriate colour, historically used on rural cottages and sympathetic to natural materials such as thatch and render.
- The new colour will soften the contrast between the windows and the white render, enhancing the cottage's traditional appearance.

Structural Impact

- No historic timber is removed or altered.
- Only surface repainting is proposed.
- Existing glazing, frames, and joinery remain unchanged.

Contextual Impact

- The cottage retains its historic form, massing, and materials.
- The proposed colour harmonises with the rural setting and neighbouring vernacular buildings.
- The works do not affect the building's contribution to the wider streetscape.

Overall, the proposal results in no harm to the building's significance.

Mitigation & Justification

Measures to Avoid, Reduce or Compensate Harm

- Use of a heritage-appropriate colour (sage green)
- Retention of all historic timber joinery
- Reversible intervention
- Careful preparation and painting to protect timber
- No changes to glazing, frames, or structural elements

Design Response and Alternatives

Alternative colours were considered, but sage green was chosen because it is historically sympathetic, visually softer than black, and commonly used on traditional rural cottages.

The proposal represents the least impactful option while improving the building's aesthetic harmony.

Conclusion

The proposed repainting works are minor, reversible, and entirely sympathetic to the building's historic character. They preserve the architectural and historic significance of Flint Cottage while enhancing its visual harmony within the rural streetscape.

The impact on the heritage asset is negligible and fully compliant with:

- The NPPF (Sections 16 & 194–202)

- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- Local Huntingdonshire heritage policies

The application should therefore be supported.