HABITAT AND HERITAGE STATEMENT

Proposed Fibre Telecommunications Installation

58 High Street, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE29 3DN

Grade II Listed Building

Prepared For

Global Services on behalf of The Co-operative Group

Installation Contractor

Openreach

Site Address

58 High Street, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE29 3DN

Building Status

Grade II Listed Building

Document Purpose

This Habitat and Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of a Listed Building Consent application for the installation of telecommunications infrastructure required to provide a fibre-optic connection to the premises.

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1. Executive Summary

This statement assesses the heritage and ecological implications of proposed fibre-optic telecommunications works at the Grade II listed building located at 58 High Street, Huntingdon.

The proposed works comprise the installation of a new fibre connection from the existing Openreach network via Royal Oak Passage, involving a short extension to existing duct infrastructure, a limited external cable run, a single new cable entry point, and internal routing to an existing communications cabinet.

The installation has been specifically designed to:

- Utilise existing telecommunications infrastructure wherever possible.
- Minimise intervention into historic building fabric.
- Avoid significant architectural features.
- Be fully reversible if removed in the future.
- Avoid adverse ecological impacts.

The assessment concludes that the proposals will preserve the significance of the designated heritage asset and will not adversely affect habitats or protected species.

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2. Site Description

58 High Street occupies a prominent location within the historic centre of Huntingdon and is designated as a Grade II listed building in recognition of its special architectural and historic interest.

The building contributes positively to the character and appearance of the historic townscape, deriving significance from:

- Its architectural design and historic fabric.
- Its evidential and historic value.
- Its contribution to the historic streetscene.
- Its communal and heritage value as a designated asset.

The property remains in active commercial use and requires modern telecommunications infrastructure to support operational requirements.

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3. Description of Proposed Development

The proposed telecommunications installation comprises:

External Works

- Interception of the existing BT/Openreach duct network located within Royal Oak Passage.
- Installation of approximately 4 metres of new underground ducting to the rear boundary of the site.
- Formation of a duct pop-out at the rear boundary.
- Installation of approximately 3 metres of externally mounted fibre cable.
- Drilling of one new external entry hole using a 10mm drill bit.
- Installation of a COF610 fibre cable, black in colour and approximately 7mm in diameter.

Internal Works

- Routing of the fibre cable internally within white flexible plastic trunking.
- Trunking positioned at high level along wall and ceiling junctions.
- Drilling of one internal access hole into the communications cupboard.
- Termination of the fibre circuit within the existing communications cabinet.

No alterations are proposed to significant historic features, principal elevations, structural elements, decorative finishes or historic joinery.

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4. Heritage Assessment

Significance of the Heritage Asset

The significance of the listed building derives primarily from its special architectural and historic interest, surviving historic fabric and contribution to the character of the historic town centre.

The proposed works have been designed to ensure these heritage values are preserved.

External Impact

The external works are limited in scale and confined to the rear of the property.

Key heritage considerations include:

- Use of existing telecommunications infrastructure wherever possible.

- Routing on a secondary elevation.
- Installation of only one small 10mm entry point.
- Discreet positioning of external cabling.
- Avoidance of decorative architectural features.
- Full reversibility of the installation.

The proposed fibre cable is small in scale and will not materially alter the appearance, character or significance of the listed building.

Internal Impact

The internal installation consists of a lightweight fibre cable contained within high-level flexible trunking.

The cable route:

- Avoids areas of known architectural significance.
- Does not alter the historic plan form.
- Requires only a minor penetration into the communications cupboard.
- Can be removed in the future without significant impact upon the building fabric.

Heritage Conclusion

The works constitute a minor and reversible intervention necessary to support continued commercial occupation and modern operational requirements.

The proposals:

- Preserve the significance of the Grade II listed building.
- Result in no loss of significant historic fabric.
- Cause negligible visual impact.
- Cause negligible physical impact.
- Do not adversely affect the setting of the heritage asset.

Accordingly, the proposal is considered to result in **no harm**, or at worst **negligible heritage impact**, to the significance of the listed building.

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5. Habitat Assessment

The proposed installation is confined entirely to previously developed land, existing service corridors and building fabric.

The scheme does not involve:

- Tree removal.
- Vegetation clearance.
- Alterations to roof spaces.
- Disturbance of eaves, soffits or loft voids.
- Removal of habitat features.

- Works to watercourses or ecological assets.

The proposed route utilises existing telecommunications infrastructure and hardstanding wherever possible.

No designated habitats, priority habitats or ecological features will be affected.

Given the limited nature of the works, the likelihood of impacts upon protected species is considered negligible.

Ecological Precaution

Should any evidence of bats, nesting birds or other protected species be discovered during the works, all activity within the affected area will cease immediately and appropriate ecological advice will be obtained before works recommence.

Habitat Conclusion

The proposal is not anticipated to result in any adverse impact on habitats, biodiversity or protected species.

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6. Mitigation Measures

The following measures will be implemented throughout the works:

- Existing service routes will be utilised wherever practicable.
- The shortest practical cable route will be adopted.
- External cable fixings will be kept to the minimum required.
- New penetrations will be limited to those described within this statement.
- Installation will avoid architectural detailing and significant historic fabric.
- Any disturbed surfaces will be appropriately reinstated.
- Works will be undertaken by suitably qualified Openreach engineers.
- Ecological best-practice procedures will be followed throughout construction.

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7. Planning and Heritage Policy Context

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The proposal has been prepared having regard to Sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which require special regard to be paid to preserving listed buildings and their special architectural and historic interest.

The works have been designed to minimise intervention into historic fabric and preserve the significance of the designated heritage asset.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The proposal accords with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework by:

- Conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.
- Supporting sustainable economic growth through improved digital connectivity.
- Facilitating modern communications infrastructure.
- Ensuring any impact upon heritage significance is minimised through sensitive design.

The proposals preserve the significance of the listed building whilst enabling essential telecommunications infrastructure.

Local Planning Policy

The site lies within the administrative area of Huntingdonshire District Council and has been assessed against the adopted Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036. [huntsdc.gov.uk], [huntingdon...bsites.net]

Policy LP11: Design Context

Policy LP11 requires development to respond positively to local character and context. The proposal utilises existing infrastructure where possible, minimises visual intrusion and preserves the character of the listed building. [huntsdc.gov.uk]

Policy LP12: Design Implementation

Policy LP12 promotes high-quality design and successful integration into the existing built environment. The proposed cable route, discrete fixing methods and limited interventions ensure compliance with the aims of this policy. [huntsdc.gov.uk]

Policy LP34: Heritage Assets and Their Settings

Policy LP34 requires development affecting designated heritage assets to preserve their significance and minimise harm.

The proposal complies with Policy LP34 because:

- No significant historic fabric will be lost.
- Physical interventions are minimal.
- The works are fully reversible.
- The character, appearance and significance of the listed building will be preserved.
- The proposals support the continued viable operation of the building. [huntsdc.gov.uk]

Planning Policy Conclusion

The proposed works accord with:

- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- The National Planning Policy Framework.
- Policy LP11 (Design Context).
- Policy LP12 (Design Implementation).
- Policy LP34 (Heritage Assets and Their Settings) of Huntingdonshire's Local Plan to 2036. [huntsdc.gov.uk], [huntingdon...bsites.net]

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8. Method Statement

Scope of Works

The installation comprises the provision of a new fibre-optic telecommunications connection between the existing Openreach network and communications equipment located within the building.

Stage 1 – Pre-Commencement

Prior to works commencing:

- The proposed route will be inspected and confirmed.
- Existing underground services will be identified.
- Access arrangements will be agreed.
- Health and safety procedures will be implemented.

Stage 2 – External Duct Installation

- Intercept the existing BT/Openreach duct network within Royal Oak Passage.
- Install approximately 4 metres of new underground ducting to the rear boundary.
- Create a duct pop-out at the rear boundary.
- Reinstate all disturbed surfaces following completion.

Stage 3 – External Cable Installation

- Install approximately 3 metres of COF610 fibre cable.
- Fix cable using low-profile fixings.
- Route cable to avoid architectural detailing and minimise visibility.
- Maintain a neat and orderly installation throughout.

Stage 4 – Building Entry

- Drill one 10mm diameter cable entry hole.
- Install cable through the opening.
- Seal penetration using suitable weatherproof materials.

Stage 5 – Internal Installation

- Route cable within white flexible trunking at high level.
- Follow wall and ceiling junctions where practicable.
- Minimise visual impact within occupied areas.

Stage 6 – Communications Cabinet Connection

- Drill one minor access hole into the communications cupboard.
- Terminate the fibre service within the existing communications cabinet.
- Complete testing and commissioning procedures.

Historic Fabric Protection

The following measures will be adopted:

- Existing routes used wherever possible.
- Minimal fixings and penetrations.
- Avoidance of architectural detailing.
- Immediate reporting and repair of any accidental damage.
- Fully reversible installation methodology.

Ecological Protection Measures

- Works confined to approved areas only.
- No vegetation removal.
- No disturbance to roof voids or potential roosting features.
- Immediate cessation of works should protected species be identified.

Completion

Upon completion:

- Remove all materials and waste from site.
- Reinstate any disturbed surfaces.
- Undertake final testing.
- Commission the new fibre service.

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9. Conclusion

The proposed telecommunications installation at **58 High Street, Huntingdon** represents a carefully designed and proportionate intervention required to support the continued operation of the building through enhanced digital connectivity.

The proposed development utilises existing telecommunications infrastructure wherever practicable and is limited to:

- A short extension of underground ducting.
- A discreet external cable route.
- One minor external building penetration.
- Limited internal cabling to an existing communications cabinet.

The assessment concludes that:

- The significance of the Grade II listed building will be preserved.
- No significant historic fabric will be lost or adversely affected.
- The works are minor, proportionate and fully reversible.
- No adverse impacts upon habitats, biodiversity or protected species are anticipated.
- The proposal complies with national and local heritage planning policies.
- The development supports the continued viable use of the building through the provision of essential telecommunications infrastructure.

Accordingly, the proposed development is considered acceptable in heritage, ecological and planning terms and is respectfully submitted in support of an application for Listed Building Consent.