



## **Built Heritage Assessment**

In respect of  
Land at Grovehurst Farm,  
Grovehurst Road,  
Sittingbourne,  
Kent,  
ME9 8RB.

On behalf of  
G. H. Dean and Co.

CgMs Ref: JCG16022  
December 2013, updated October 2017

# CONTENTS

Prepared by:

Henry Ryde BA (Hons), MSc

Updated by:

Eleanor Grace BA (Hons), MSc

Authorised by:

Jason Clemons BA (Hons), DipUD, MA, MSc, MRTPI, IHBC

Report Status:

DRAFT

CgMs Ref:

JCG16022, JCH00308

Issue Date:

December 2013, updated October 2017

COPYRIGHT © CgMs Part of RPS

The material presented in this report is confidential. This report has been prepared for the exclusive use of the client and shall not be distributed or made available to any other company or person without the knowledge and written consent of CgMs, part of RPS

© Ordnance Survey maps have been reproduced with the sanction of the controller of HM Stationery Office. Licence No: AL 100014723

CONTENTS		Pages
1.0	Introduction	3
2.0	Legislative and Planning Policy Framework	
2.1	Legislation and National Planning Policy	4
2.2	National Planning Guidance	5
2.3	Local Planning Policy and Guidance	7
3.0	Architectural and Historical Appraisal	
3.1	Historic Map Appraisal of Site and Immediate Area	9
3.2	Site Assessment	11
3.3	Assessment of Statutory Listed Buildings	13
3.4	Assessment of Undesignated Heritage Assets	14
4.0	Proposals and Assessment of Impact	
4.1	Proposals	15
4.2	Assessment of Impact	16
5.0	Conclusions	17
Appendices		
	Appendix A: Statutory List Description	
	Appendix B: GGF Site Development	

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report has been prepared by CgMs on behalf of G. H. Dean and Co and considers proposed development on land at Great Grovehurst Farm (GGF) in Kent. The site is centred at National Grid Reference TQ 904 666 (please see figures 1-3).

Great Grovehurst Farm site lies 150 metres to the south east of the A249, 3.7 km north of the town of Sittingbourne, on the northern tip of the suburb of Kemsley where it meets the southern boundary of the Parish of Iwade and the village of Iwade itself 1.6 km further north. The 4.86ha site is located between both Swale Way and Grovehurst Road (where it can be accessed) and remains within the remit of Swale Borough Council when considering applications for consent.

The immediate study site includes a complex of agricultural buildings, some of which have been located at Great Grovehurst Farm since the 19th century. To the south, on the eastern side of Grovehurst Road is the original Grade II Listed Great Grovehurst Farmhouse, designated as such on the 10th of September 1951. Further to this there is Featherbed House, which although no longer Listed (it was in actual fact removed from the statutory list in May 2007) will be given consideration in this report. This is located immediately south of the roundabout, in the triangle between the A249 and Grovehurst Road. The site itself does not reside within a designated Conservation Area. The emerging proposals seek to provide new residential units at the north west of Sittingbourne, in line with Policy MU1 of the Local Plan *Bearing Fruits 2031*.

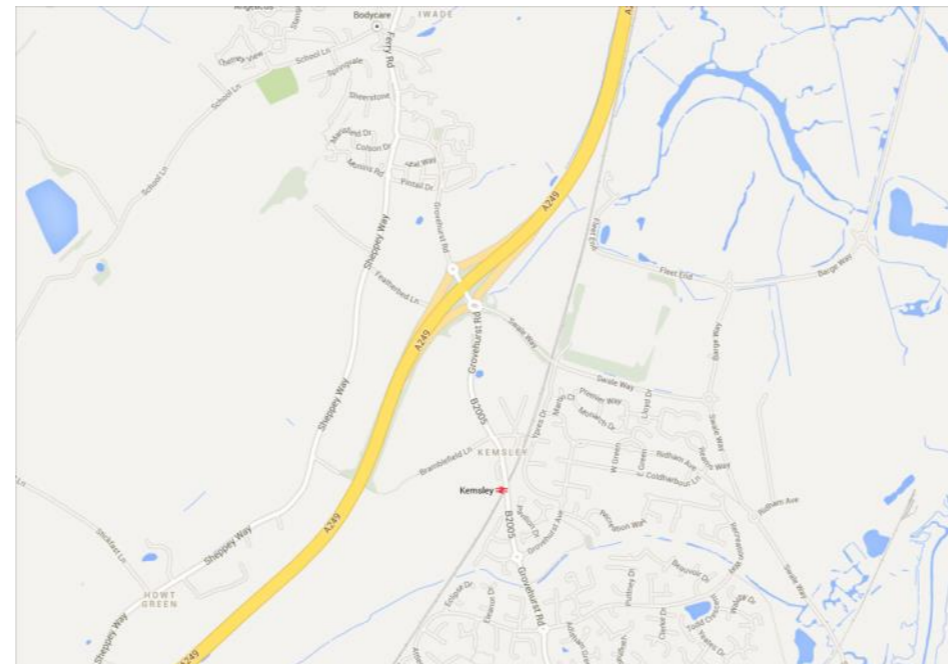
In support of these proposals, this document will present a summary of the relevant legislative framework and planning policy at both national and local levels with particular reference to policies that relate to listed buildings and conservation areas. An historical and architectural appraisal of the significance of the site and its surroundings has informed an assessment of the impact of the proposals in order to assist those involved in considering these applications, specifically with regard to aspects concerning the setting of heritage assets.



**Figure 1:** The following map shows the site location, with all the Parishes and non-parished area (shaded in light blue) which make up the Sittingbourne portion of the Borough of Swale.



**Figure 2:** Map of the Great Grovehurst Farm site. The proposed development site is marked in red including the farm complex. The remaining off site buildings included in this assessment are identified with red rings. Source: English Heritage (2013).



**Figure 3:** An aerial view of the Great Grovehurst Farm site location. NTS. The site is marked in red. Source: Google maps (2013).



**Figure 4:** GGF site from Swale Way. Source: Site Visit (2013).

## 2.0 LEGISLATIVE & PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 LEGISLATION & NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

The current national policy system identifies, through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), that applications should consider the potential impact of development upon 'heritage assets'. This term includes: designated heritage assets, which possess a statutory designation (for example Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, and Registered Parks and Gardens); and non-designated heritage assets, typically compiled by Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) and incorporated into a Local List.

#### Legislation

Where any development may affect designated heritage assets, there is a legislative framework to ensure proposed works are developed and considered with due regard for their impact on the historic environment. This extends from primary legislation under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Section 66 states that special regard must be given by the authority in the exercise of planning functions to the desirability of preserving or enhancing listed buildings and their setting.

#### National Planning Policy

*National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)* (Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG), March 2012)

The NPPF is the principal document that sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It has been purposefully created to provide a framework within which LPAs and the local populace can produce their own distinctive Local and Neighbourhood Plans, respectively. Such Plans consequently reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.

When determining planning applications, the NPPF directs LPAs to apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development; the 'golden thread' that is expected to run through the plan-making and decision-making process. Nonetheless, NPPF Paragraph 14 states that the presumption in favour of sustainable development is only applied unless certain policies indicate that such development should be restricted; these include policies protecting sites identified as: designated heritage assets; Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs); Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs); and the Green Belt.

The NPPF defines a heritage asset as: "A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest". The definition of a heritage asset includes 'designated' heritage assets: "A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected

*Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation".* In addition, other 'non-designated' heritage assets identified by LPAs are included in a Local List.

Section 7 *Requiring Good Design* reinforces the importance of good design in achieving sustainable development, by ensuring the creation of inclusive and high quality places. NPPF Paragraph 58 affirms the need for new design to: function well and add to the quality of the area in which it is built; establish a strong sense of place; and respond to local character and history, reflecting the built identity of the surrounding area.

Section 12 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* contains NPPF Paragraphs 126-141, which relate to development proposals that have an effect upon the historic environment. Such policies provide the framework that LPAs need to refer to when setting out a strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment in their Local Plans.

The NPPF advises LPAs to take into account the following points when drawing up strategies for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and preserving them in a viable use consistent with their conservation;
- the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that the conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- the desirability of new development in making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

These considerations should be taken into account when determining planning applications and, in addition, the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities, including their economic vitality.

In order to determine applications, NPPF Paragraph 128 states that LPAs should require applicants to demonstrate the significance of any heritage assets likely to be affected by development proposals, including the contribution made by their setting. The level of detail provided should be proportionate to each heritage asset's significance and sufficient to understand what impact will be caused upon their significance. This is supported by NPPF Paragraph 129, which requires LPAs to take this assessment into account when considering applications.

NPPF Paragraphs 132-136 consider the impact of development proposals upon the significance of a heritage asset. Paragraph 132 emphasises the

need for proportionality in decision-making and identifies that, when a development is proposed, the weight given to the conservation of a heritage asset should be proportionate to its significance, with greater weight given to those assets of higher significance. NPPF Paragraph 134 states that, where less than substantial harm will be caused to a designated heritage asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the development proposals, which include securing the heritage asset's viable optimum use.

## 2.2 NATIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE

### National Guidance

#### *Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (DCLG)*

This guidance has been adopted in support of the NPPF. It reiterates the importance of conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance as a core planning principle.

It also states conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change, requiring a flexible and thoughtful approach. Furthermore, it highlights that neglect and decay of heritage assets is best addressed through ensuring they remain in an active use that is consistent with their conservation.

Key elements of the guidance relate to assessing harm. It states, an important consideration should be whether the proposed works adversely affect a key element of the heritage asset's special architectural or historic interest. Adding, *'it is the degree of harm, rather than the scale of development that is to be assessed'*. The level of 'substantial harm' is stated to be a high bar that may not arise in many cases. Essentially, whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision taker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the NPPF.

Importantly, it is stated harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting. Setting is defined as *'the surroundings in which an asset is experienced, and may be more extensive than the curtilage'*. A thorough assessment of the impact of proposals upon setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.

Importantly, the guidance states that if *'complete or partial loss of a heritage asset is justified, the aim should then be to capture and record the evidence of the asset's significance, and make the interpretation publically available.'*

#### *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (English Heritage, April 2008)*

This document outlines Historic England's approach to the sustainable management of the historic environment. While primarily intended to ensure consistency in their own advice and guidance through the planning process, the document is commended to LPAs to ensure that all decisions about change affecting the historic environment are informed and sustainable.

This document was published in line with the philosophy of PPS5, yet remains relevant with the NPPF and PPG, the emphasis placed upon the importance of understanding significance as a means to properly assess the effects of change to heritage assets. Guidance within the document

describes a range of 'heritage values' that constitute a heritage asset's significance to be established systematically; the four main heritage values are: aesthetic, evidential, communal and historical. The document emphasises that 'considered change offers the potential to enhance and add value to places...it is the means by which each generation aspires to enrich the historic environment' (Paragraph 25).

#### **Overview: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning**

In March 2015 Historic England (formerly English Heritage) withdrew the PPS5 Practice Guide document and replaced with three Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes (GPAs): 'GPA1: Local Plan Making', 'GPA2: Managing significance in Decision-Taking in the historic Environment', and 'GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets. A fourth document entitled 'GPA4: Enabling Development' has yet to be adopted.

These GPAs provide supporting guidance relating to good conservation practice. The documents particularly focus on how good practice can be achieved through the principles included within national policy and guidance. As such, the GPAs provide information on good practice to assist LPAs, planning and other consultants, owners, applicants and other interested parties when implementing policy found within the NPPF and PPG relating to the historic environment.

#### *GPA1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans (March 2015)*

This document stresses the importance of formulating Local Plans that are based on up-to-date and relevant evidence in relation to the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of an area, including the historic environment, as set out by the NPPF. The document provides advice on how information in respect of the local historic environment can be gathered, emphasising the importance of not only setting out known sites, but in understanding their value (i.e. significance). This evidence should be used to define a positive strategy for the historic environment and the formulation of a plan for the maintenance and use of heritage assets and for the delivery of development, including within their setting, which will afford appropriate protection for the heritage asset(s) and make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

Furthermore, the Local Plan can assist in ensuring that site allocations avoid harming the significance of heritage assets and their settings, whilst providing the opportunity to *'inform the nature of allocations so development responds and reflects local character'*.

Further information is given relating to cumulative impact, 106 agreements, stating *'to support the delivery of the Plan's heritage strategy it may be considered appropriate to include reference to the role of Section 106 agreements in relation to heritage assets, particularly those at risk.'* It also

advises on how the heritage policies within Local Plans should identify areas that are appropriate for development as well as defining specific Development Management Policies for the historic environment. It also suggests that a heritage Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in line with NPPF Paragraph 153 can be a useful tool to amplify and elaborate on the delivery of the positive heritage strategy in the Local Plan.

#### *GPA2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (March 2015)*

This document provides advice on the numerous ways in which decision-taking in the historic environment can be undertaken, emphasising that the first step for all applicants is to understand the significance of any affected heritage asset and the contribution of its setting to its significance. In line with the NPPF and PPG, this document states that early engagement and expert advice in considering and assessing the significance of heritage assets is encouraged, stating that *'development proposals that affect the historic environment are much more likely to gain the necessary permissions and create successful places if they are designed with the knowledge and understanding of the significance of the heritage assets they may affect.'*

The advice suggests a structured staged approach to the assembly and analysis of relevant information, this is as follows:

1. Understand the significance of the affected assets;
2. Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
3. Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF;
4. Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;
5. Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance and the need for change; and,
6. Offset negative impacts on aspects of significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected.

The advice reiterates that heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Assessment of the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting at an early stage can assist the planning process resulting in informed decision-taking.

This document sets out the recommended steps for assessing significance and the impact of development proposals upon a heritage asset, including examining the asset and its setting and analysing local policies and

## 2.2 NATIONAL PLANNING GUIDANCE

information sources. In assessing the impact of a development proposal on the significance of a heritage asset the document emphasises that the cumulative impact of incremental small-scale changes may have as great an effect on the significance of a heritage asset as a larger scale change.

Crucially, the nature and importance of the significance that is affected will dictate the proportionate response to assessing that change, its justification, mitigation and any recording which may be necessary. This document also provides guidance in respect of neglect and unauthorised works.

### *GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (March 2015)*

This advice note focuses on the management of change within the setting of heritage assets. This document replaces 'The Setting of Heritage Assets' (English Heritage, March 2011) in order to aid practitioners with the implementation of national policies and guidance relating to the historic environment found within the NPPF and PPG. The guidance is largely a continuation of the philosophy and approach of the 2011 document and does not present a divergence in either the definition of setting or the way in which it should be assessed.

As with the NPPF the document 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'. Setting is also described as being a separate term to curtilage, character and context. The guidance emphasises that setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, and that its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset. It also states that elements of setting may make a positive, negative or neutral contribution to the significance of the heritage asset.

While setting is largely a visual term, with views considered to be an important consideration in any assessment of the contribution that setting makes to the significance of an asset, setting, and thus the way in which an asset is experienced, can also be affected by other environmental factors including noise, vibration and odour, while setting may also incorporate perceptual and associational attributes pertaining to the asset's surroundings.

This document provides guidance on practical and proportionate decision making with regards to the management of proposed development and the setting of heritage assets. It is stated that the protection of the setting of a heritage asset need not prevent change and that decisions relating to such issues need to be based on the nature, extent and level of the significance of a heritage asset, further weighing up the potential public benefits associated with the proposals. It is further stated that changes within the setting of a heritage asset may have positive or neutral effects. It is stated that the contribution made to the significance of heritage assets by their settings will vary depending on the nature of the heritage asset and its setting and that different heritage assets may have different abilities to

accommodate change within their settings without harming the significance of the asset and therefore setting should be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Although not prescriptive in setting out how this assessment should be carried out, noting that any approach should be demonstrably compliant with legislation, national policies and objectives, Historic England recommend using the '5-step process' in order to assess the potential effects of a proposed development on the setting and significance of a heritage asset, with this 5-step process continued from the 2011 guidance:

1. Identification of heritage assets which are likely to be affected by proposals;
2. Assessment of whether and what contribution the setting makes to the significance of a heritage asset;
3. Assessing the effects of proposed development on the significance of a heritage asset;
4. Maximising enhancement and reduction of harm on the setting of heritage assets; and,
5. The final decision about the acceptability of proposals.

The guidance reiterates the NPPF in stating that where developments affecting the setting results in 'substantial' harm to significance, this harm can only be justified if the developments delivers substantial public benefit and that there is no other alternative (i.e. redesign or relocation).

### Overview: Historic England Advice Notes in Planning

In addition to the above documentation, Historic England has published three core Historic England Advice Notes (HEANs) that provide detailed and practical advice on how national policy and guidance is implemented. These documents include: *HEAN1: Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management* (February 2016), *HEAN2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets* (February 2016), *HEAN3: The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans* (October 2015), and *HEAN4: Tall Buildings* (December 2015). Previously adopted documentation by Historic England that provide further information and guidance in respect of managing change within the historic environment include *Seeing the History in the View* (May 2011), and *Managing Local Authority Heritage* (June 2003).

### *HEAN3: The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans (October 2015)*

This document provides information for those involved in the site allocation process, particularly when implementing historic environment legislation, relevant policy within the NPPF and related guidance found within the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

The inclusion of sites within a Local Plan can provide the opportunity to ensure that new development will avoid harming the significance of both designated and non-designated heritage assets, including effects on their setting. Furthermore, this document highlights the ways in which the process of site allocation may present opportunities to better reveal the historic environment. It sets out a five-step methodology which can assist in appropriate site selection:

- Step 1: Identify which heritage assets are affected by the potential site allocation;
- Step 2: understand what contribution the site (in its current form) makes to the significance of heritage asset(s);
- Step 3: identify what impacts the allocation might have on that significance;
- Step 4: consider maximising enhancements and avoiding harm; and,
- Step 5: determine whether the proposed site allocation is appropriate in light if the NPPF's tests of soundness.

## 2.3 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY & GUIDANCE

---

*Swale Borough Local Plan: Bearing Fruits 2031 (adopted July 2017)*

The Local Plan is part of the development plan for the Borough and is the primary planning document used to guide development in the Borough during the Plan period up until 2031. The Local Plan must have regard to national planning policy and guidance and is the principal document against which planning applications are determined.

Below are the policies considered relevant to the emerging proposals at Great Grovehurst Farm.

### Core Planning Policies

#### **Policy CP 8 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment**

*To support the Borough's heritage assets, the Council will prepare a Heritage Strategy. Development will sustain and enhance the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets to sustain the historic environment whilst creating for all areas a sense of place and identity. Development proposals will, as appropriate:*

- 1. Accord with national planning policy in respect of heritage matters, together with any heritage strategy adopted by the Council;*
- 2. Sustain and enhance the significance of Swale's designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings in a manner appropriate to their significance and, where appropriate, in accordance with Policies DM30-DM34;*
- 3. Respond to the integrity, form and character of settlements and historic landscapes;*
- 4. Bring heritage assets into sensitive and sustainable use within allocations, neighbourhood plans, regeneration areas and town centres, especially for assets identified as being at risk on national or local registers;*
- 5. Respond positively to the conservation area appraisals and management strategies prepared by the Council;*
- 6. Respect the integrity of heritage assets, whilst meeting the challenges of a low carbon future; and*
- 7. Promote the enjoyment of heritage assets through education, accessibility, interpretations and improved access.*

#### **Policy DM 14 General development criteria**

This policy provides ten general criteria to guide development proposals in the Borough. These emphasise the importance of considering other

policies within the Borough's development plan, including Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance. Of particular relevance here is the aim to 'conserve and enhance the natural and/or built environments taking in to account the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets'.

### Land allocations for new development

#### **Policy MU 1 Land at north-west Sittingbourne**

This policy addresses the capability of parcels of land to the north west of Sittingbourne to accommodate new development in the area, which includes the site at Great Grovehurst Farm. This policy considers the area suitable for the provision of a minimum of 1,500 dwellings, community facilities and structural landscaping and open space adjacent to the A249. Any application for development in the area to the north west of Sittingbourne should involve all landowners developing a masterplan for the area together and will be expected to be in accordance with the policies in the rest of the Local Plan. Proposals should 'integrate heritage assets, having regard to their setting'.

Land at Great Grovehurst Farm is included in Policy MU 1. This allocation describes the site as a largely flat area of land in agricultural use and with a number of former agricultural buildings on, now converted for various uses. The site is well defined and separated from its surroundings by Swale Way, the B2005 and the railway. To the south is existing residential development which could provide secondary access to the site. The Grade II listed Great Grovehurst Farm is adjacent to the site. Approximately 120 dwellings are suggested for development on this site.

## 2.3 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY & GUIDANCE

### Local Planning Guidance

#### Supplementary Planning Documents

Throughout the Local Plan reference is made to Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD). These publications set out, in more detail than is possible in the Local Plan, certain standards and approaches of which developments should normally take account. SPDs replaced SPGs in the new planning system introduced under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004 and perform the same function. That said the Government considers that both SPGs and SPDs can be taken into account when considering planning applications, and that weight accorded to them will be increased if they have been subject to public consultation (all the SPGs and SPDs agreed by Swale Borough Council have been subject to public consultation). The relevant documents in this case are highlighted below.

#### ***The Kent Design Guide (2008)***

This Guide is produced by the Kent Design Initiative, a unique partnership of Kent's local authorities, developers, builders, communities and interest groups who have joined forces to campaign for good design in Kent. It updates 'Kent Design – a Guide to Sustainable Development' published in 2000, with new policy context, references and examples. The Guide is designed to provide criteria for assessing planning applications, to provide assistance to building designers, engineers, planners and developers in achieving high standards of design and construction. It is further stated that the guidance will inform planning decisions by the Council. The Guide outlines a process by which good design may be achieved, in Section 2 it specifically highlights a series of 'steps' that should be taken to ensure good design proposals are formed, one of which may be considered relevant with regard to the study site. In Section 2.1 *Step 1 'Understanding the site'* states that any new development needs to be based on a good understanding of the local context and landscape, with positive features of the area identified and reinforced in any new proposal.

Appendix C: Sustainability includes a section on Conservation which summarises the typical local building materials as well as the legislative, policy and guidance background for development affecting the built environment in Kent.

#### ***SPG 2: Listed Buildings: A Guide for Owners and Occupiers***

The Council has yet to prepare an SPD relating to Listed Buildings, but in the meantime the Council's Supplementary Planning Guidance note entitled *Listed Buildings: A Guide for Owners and Occupiers*, remains a

material consideration to the determination of proposals, in due course this will be reviewed and re-issued as a SPD as outlined in the Local Development Scheme. Although dated the interim purpose of this document is to provide additional guidance for householders, architects and developers for listed buildings in the Swale Borough, and to assist the successful implementation of the policies within the emerging Development Plan, including the saved policies in the current Swale Borough Local Plan (2008) and the emerging policies in the Draft Local Plan: *Bearing Fruits 2031* (published for consultation in August 2013).

With regard to the proposed GGF scheme, Section 6 'Setting of Listed Buildings' of the aforementioned SPG stipulates that the setting of a listed building is often an essential feature of its character, defining that the setting of a listed building may be its immediate surroundings, or may include land some distance from it. Adding that if development takes place near a listed building, it should have careful regard not only to its existing landscape features, which may contribute to its character and setting, but also any proposed new landscaping. Tree and shrub planting should be typical of that which may have been planted at the time of construction of the building. Further adding that the Swale Borough Council will have special regard to preserving setting when considering planning applications which affect them.

#### ***SPG 6: Planting on New Development: A Guide for Developers***

This document is designed to ensure that high quality boundary treatments and more specifically planting is utilised as integral part of development proposals. It states that schemes submitted should show the full extent of planting and boundary treatments intended and that planting has a central role to play in the design of development otherwise it can appear to be an after thought. Thus the Council wishes to ensure the best possible standard of planting within developments and in order to do so it must be considered at the earliest stage of planning new developments.

#### ***SPG 3: Conservation of Traditional Farm Buildings***

SPG 3 states that owing to Swale Borough's past and present agricultural economy it has a broad range of farm buildings across its landscape. In particular it has inherited a rich heritage of historic farm buildings, ranging from large barns and oast house to small granaries and stables. It highlights that changing patterns of farming and rural life have led to demands for new uses to be found for these buildings and sites. Adding that whilst development and progress are essential, the preservation of the best of the tradition farm buildings is encouraged. As the Borough Council wishes to protect the very best of its rural building it has outline that or the purpose of the guidelines "traditional farm buildings" refer to the following;

- Buildings included in the Statutory List of Buildings of Special

Architectural or Historic Interest, or those worthy of inclusion on that list by meeting the principles of selection used.

- An unlisted but traditionally constructed building which is grouped with one or more listed building in such a way as to contribute positively towards the setting of the listed building(s).
- Exceptionally specialist buildings of quality, which are not listed or grouped with listed buildings. The suitability will be determined on whether the building at present would contribute to the character of the Kentish countryside. Principally this will include good examples of Kentish oast houses and barns.

This guidance document therefore sets out the parameters for the conservation of high quality historically significant agricultural buildings located within the Borough, specifically when considering development proposals that affect them.



## 3.0 ARCHITECTURAL & HISTORICAL APPRAISAL

### 3.1 HISTORIC MAP APPRAISAL OF SITE AND IMMEDIATE AREA

#### Great Grovehurst Farm (GGF) Site

This historic map progression shows the development of the site and immediate area from the mid to late 18th century through to the late 20th century. The red line indicates the current location of the GGF site.

N.B. please read the following in conjunction with the annotated map supplied in appendix B. This map identifies buildings A-D referred to in this text.

The 1769 Andrews, Drury and Herbert Map clearly highlights a farm at 'Grove Hurst' almost definitely as a precursor to the existing GGF complex. Thus it can be stated that the study site has been occupied by agricultural buildings since at least the late 1770's and may have been developed as a farm at the time the open fields in this area were enclosed.

The Ordnance Survey map of 1867 shows the GGF site in greater detail. At this time the GGF site is occupied by the ancillary buildings of a farm complex known as 'Great Grovehurst'. The farmhouse itself lies to the south of the study site, Featherbed House or as it was then known "Little Grovehurst" to the north west and within the GGF complex the central barn and red brick stables are also visible in the same location as they are now.

Between 1867 and 1897 few alterations took place on the study site, save for the eastern extension of the central barn at the complex - as can be seen in the Ordnance Survey map for the latter year. Again the Ordnance Survey map of 1908 shows only minor changes from that of 1897. This is also the case with the Ordnance Survey map of 1938.

By 1964 New House had been added to the north of the farm complex, together with two substantial agricultural buildings, the westernmost of which is warehouse A.

Between 1964 and 1979 all of the pre twentieth century agricultural buildings on the site were demolished, save for the stables and central barn. Subsequently a number of early twentieth century buildings were demolished and the remaining buildings now date to the mid to late twentieth century, as shown by the 1979 map many of the warehouses (B, C and D) had evolved in this period. The 1979 OS map also depicts the development of the housing development to the south of the GGF site, again reiterated in the later 1991 OS map.



Figure 5: Andrews, Drury and Herbert Map of 1769.



Figure 6: OS Map of 1867.



Figure 7: OS Map of 1897.



Figure 8: OS Map of 1908.

### 3.1 HISTORIC MAP APPRAISAL OF SITE AND IMMEDIATE AREA



Figure 9: OS Map of 1938.



Figure 10: OS Map of 1964



Figure 11: OS Map of 1979.



Figure 12: OS Map of 1991.

## 3.2 SITE ASSESSMENT

### Overview of Great Grovehurst Farm (GGF) Site

The site and surrounding heritage asset do not reside within a designated Conservation Area. The present GGF site comprises a central area of hardstanding where a number of former agricultural buildings (which had been largely converted into commercial use) had been located. All these buildings are in the process of being demolished.

The site is accessed from Grovehurst Road to the west.

All of the above are wrapped within 5 hectares of associated undeveloped agricultural land. This land is bounded and banked by Swale Way to the north, the Sheerness/Sittingbourne railway line to the east, Grovehurst Road to the west, and a mid 20th century housing development and walled gardens of Great Grovehurst Farmhouse to the south. Great Grovehurst Farmhouse sits outside the site boundary, on the eastern side of Grovehurst Road and is identified as a Grade II Listed property (designated as such on the 10th of September 1951). Further to this there is Featherbed House, again located 200 metres outside the GGF site boundary, immediately south of the roundabout, in the triangle between the A249 and Grovehurst Road to the sites west.

The quality of the existing plant screening to the site is variable. To the north, east and west it is ineffective with semi mature deciduous trees and bushes providing a visually permeable barrier to existing transport routes. Immediately to the south west existing plant screening is strong throughout the year due to the location of large fully established non deciduous trees and dense further vegetation screening Great Grovehurst Farmhouse from the current GGF complex. The central half of the southern boundary is formed by Great Grovehurst Farmhouse's 2.5-2.8 metre high northern and eastern garden walls, these form a substantial boundary structure.



Figures 13: Railway and recent residential development to the east of the site. Source: Site Visit (2013).



Figures 14: Railway along the eastern boundary of the site (the site is shown to the right of the image).



Figures 15: Looking north west along Swale Way, to the north of the site.



Figures 16: Garden wall at Great Grovehurst Farmhouse, at the south of the site.



**Figures 17:** Looking south across the site from the raised Swale Way. Source: Site Visit (2013). NB the former agricultural/commercial buildings visible are in the process of being demolished (2017).



**Figures 18:** Looking south across the site from within the northern boundary. Source: Site Visit (2013). NB the former agricultural/commercial building visible at the far right of the image is in the process of being demolished (2017).



**Figures 19:** Looking south west across the site from above the railway. Source: Site Visit (2013). NB the former agricultural/commercial buildings visible are in the process of being demolished (2017).

### 3.3 STATUTORILY LISTED BUILDINGS

This section deals with the value and location of prominent historical buildings surrounding the GGF site. It includes structures and areas that represent important architectural landmarks and thus contribute to the area's character.

#### Great Grovehurst Farmhouse

Great Grovehurst Farmhouse is located 200m to the South of the GGF site and the associated walled garden of the property abuts the agricultural land surrounding GGF farm complex further to the north. The Farmhouse is Grade II Listed and was first designated as such in September 1951 with further amendments being carried out to the listing in December 1974. It is highlighted as providing an example of a largely 18th century Georgian building with earlier origins, retaining most of its Georgian features including sash windows, a steeply pitched hipped tiled roof above an eaves cornice and a particularly fine pedimented doorcase with pilasters semi circular fanlight and string course included within a stuccoed façade. The building is set within a substantial tree lined plot, specifically the northern perimeter of the plot includes mature deciduous and non deciduous trees, which provide year round screening from the GGF complex, thus preserving the immediate setting of the building. At present the substantial 2.5-2.8 metre high walled gardens to the north east also ensure the setting of the property remains enclosed to the north east.

In summary the building provides attractive architectural detailing and historical significance associated with the Georgian period and warrants protection under the aforementioned Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 due to the desirability of preserving or enhancing Listed Buildings and their setting.

The site is located to the north and east of Great Grovehurst Farmhouse's substantial garden and is largely screened by mature deciduous and non deciduous trees and the tall garden wall. As a result there is very limited intervisibility between the site and the Grade II listed building. There is a historical connection between the Farmhouse and the site, which was once associated with the Farmhouse. However, the site has most recently used for commercial purposes separate from the Farmhouse and there is no legible connection remaining between the Farmhouse and site. Due to the historical connection with the Farmhouse, the site is considered to be a minor contributor to the significance of Great Grovehurst Farmhouse.



Figure 20: View of Great Grovehurst Farmhouse from Grovehurst Road (to the west of the Farmhouse). Source: Site Visit (2013).



Figure 21: North eastern setting of Great Grovehurst Farmhouse, viewed from the site. Walled gardens. Source: Site Visit (2013).



Figure 22: North façade of Great Grovehurst Farmhouse. Source: Site Visit (2013).



Figure 23: Substantial existing deciduous and non deciduous planting obscuring the view of the GGF site from Great Grovehurst Farmhouse. Source: Site Visit (2013).

## 3.4 UNDESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

### Featherbed House

Featherbed House (formally known as Little Grovehurst) is located 200 metres west of the GGF site boundary, immediately south of the roundabout, in the triangle between the A249 and Grovehurst Road to the sites west. Although no longer Listed (it was removed from the statutory list in May 2007) Featherbed House has been given consideration in this report due to its proximity to the GGF site and its previously identified heritage attributes, that prior to 2007 ensured it was included within the statutory list. As highlighted by Swale Borough Council's Planning Team the area does not have an established local list and although Featherbed House is no longer included on the statutory list it is still considered an undesignated heritage asset.

The timber framed three bay building was previously Grade II Listed and is considered to be of late 16th or early 17th century, undergoing subsequent alteration and restoration in the 20th century. The building has a rendered ground floor façade and plinth, first floor studding with brick infill and sections of diagonal braces (all of which is now covered over by an upper tile hung façade). In addition, a small amount of 16th century English bond brickwork is visible at ground floor level of the building's eastern corner. The entirety of the building is capped by a later (renewed) tiled and pitched roof with north east catslide roof and lean-to porch.

The setting of the building has been severely altered by the establishment of the A249 to the west. It sits within a sunken, banked plot, with considerable mature coniferous trees lining the entirety of the boundary, save for the tree lined access road and gateway to the east connecting to Grovehurst Road. It therefore shares no intervisibility with the site and there is no legible historical or functional relationship with the site. It is therefore considered that the site does not contribute to the significance of this undesignated heritage asset.



Figure 26: North eastern façade of Featherbed House. Source: Planning application SW/03/1337 at Swale Borough Council (2003).



Figure 24: South western façade of Featherbed House. Source: Planning application SW/03/1337 at Swale Borough Council (2003).



Figure 27: Eastern corner of Featherbed House. Source: Planning application SW/03/1337 at Swale Borough Council (2003).



Figure 25: Access road and setting of Featherbed House. Source: Site visit (2013).



Figure 28: Tree lined plot and setting of Featherbed House. Source: Site visit (2013).

## 4.0 PROPOSALS & ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

### 4.1 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

#### Proposals

The illustrative masterplan of the site (Figure 29) shows the emerging proposals for development on the site. This illustrative masterplan has been informed by Swale Borough Council's adopted Local Plan: *Bearing Fruits 2031* (July 2017). Policy ST 4 'Meeting the Local Plan development targets' of the Plan includes land at Great Grovehurst Farm as part of residential allocation to the north west of Sittingbourne. 120 dwellings are allocated for this site.

Before construction begins, brickearth will be extracted from across most of the site, resulting in approximately a 600mm fall in ground level.

The emerging proposals indicate the residential units are likely to be a mix of detached, semi-detached and short terraces set in individual plots. It is assumed the residential units will continue the general scale, massing and density of twentieth century residential development already established to the south of the site.

Planting along the site boundary will be retained and new open green spaces introduced. Notably, a large open space will be retained to the north of Great Grovehurst Farmhouse, along with the mature trees along this part of the boundary. The open space between the garden wall and edge of the built development will be further ensured by a 10m wide great crested newt mitigation corridor (which will not be subjected to brickearth extraction) between the garden wall of the Farmhouse and the proposed building line.



Figure 29: Illustrative Masterplan of proposals on the site.

## 4.2 ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

---

### Overview

English Heritage's *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2011) provides guidance on the management of change within the setting of heritage assets and seeks to provide a definition for the term of 'setting' itself, as well as guidance to allow councils and applicants to assess the impact of developments upon the settings of heritage assets. The document 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.*' It provides guidance on practical and proportionate decision making with regards to the management of proposed developments and the setting of heritage assets. It is stated that the protection of the setting of a heritage asset need not prevent change and that decisions relating to such issues need to be based on the nature, extent and level of the significance of a heritage asset, further weighing up the potential public benefits associated with the proposals. It is through this guidance and with regard for the earlier detailed relevant policy that this report has been structured. It is for this reason that the identified heritage assets (Great Grovehurst Farmhouse and Featherbed House) and their relative sensitivity to change have been outlined and assessed.

### Impact

The GGF study site is located to the north of Great Grovehurst Farmhouse, the two of which are substantially divided from one another by a stretch of mature non deciduous woodland, thus providing year round screening. In addition the 2.5-2.8 metre high historic red brick walling of Great Grovehurst Farmhouse further to the north east provides lower level screening. This height difference is expected to increase with the removal of brickearth from the site before construction of the proposed development, with the ground level of the site expected to be approximately 600mm lower than it is currently. This will further reduce the intervisibility between the listed building and the proposed development and help to mitigate any adverse impact on the setting of the listed building.

The illustrative masterplan shows that, in accordance with Swale Borough's Local Plan, approximately 120 residential units form part of the emerging proposals for development on the Great Grovehurst Farm site. Such development will have an impact on the identified setting of the Grade II Listed Great Grovehurst Farmhouse, however there will be very limited intervisibility between the site and the listed building due to the retention of the mature coniferous trees and the tall garden wall. The historical functional relationship between the site and the Farmhouse would be affected, however this is considered to be a minor contributor to the significance of the listed building and would not diminish the architectural or primary historical significance of the designated heritage asset. It is therefore considered that the emerging proposals for development on the site have the potential to cause negligible harm to the significance of Great

Grovehurst Farmhouse. It is considered that the introduction of more higher level natural non deciduous screening at the north east boundary of Great Grovehurst Farmhouse plot would further reduce intervisibility with the development site and could ensure that the impact of any proposed development on the setting of Great Grovehurst Farmhouse is mitigated. Further mitigation will be provided by the inclusion of a 10m wide great crested newt corridor between the garden wall and the proposed building line which will further ensure there is an area of open space between the garden plot of Great Grovehurst Farmhouse and the proposed development.

Featherbed Farmhouse is further away from the GGF site and is set in an insular and heavily screened plot. It is therefore considered that the impact of proposed future development on the setting of Featherbed House would be neutral and the development would have no harm to its heritage significance.



## 5.0 CONCLUSIONS

---

This report has been prepared by CgMs Heritage (part of RPS) on behalf of G. H. Dean and Co and considers proposed development on land at Great Grovehurst Farm (GGF) in Kent. This Heritage Assessment has presented a summary of the relevant national, strategic and local policy with regard to developments which affect designated and undesignated heritage assets. Particular consideration has been paid to those policies which concern the management of developments which have an impact on Listed Buildings and their setting.

Following the identification of the GGF site's surrounding heritage assets which are likely to be affected by proposals, it is considered that the proposals fall solely within the extended setting of the Grade II Listed Great Grovehurst Farmhouse. We believe that whilst the development is capable of affecting Great Grovehurst Farmhouse's setting or the appreciation of its significance this can be considered to be negligible in the spectrum of less than substantial harm. This should be weighed against the public benefit provided by the likely provision of approximately 120 residential units at the north west of Sittingbourne, in line with Swale Borough's Local Plan, *Bearing Fruits 2031*.

An informed assessment of the proposals has been undertaken which has demonstrated that the identified landscaping measures to be introduced to the north of the Grade II listed Farmhouse's walled garden will successfully accommodate potential development within the site whilst preserving the special interest of the listed building. As such, it has been found that the proposals accord with the relevant local and national planning policies.

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: STATUTORY LIST DESCRIPTION

### List entry Summary

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

**Name:** GREAT GROVEHURST FARMHOUSE

**List entry Number:** 1057685

**Location:** GREAT GROVEHURST FARMHOUSE, GROVEHURST ROAD

The building may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County	District	District Type	Parish
Kent	Swale	District Authority	N/A

**National Park:** Not applicable to this List entry.

**Grade:** II

**Date first listed:** 10-Sep-1951

**Date of most recent amendment:** 13-Dec-1974

### Legacy System Information

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

**Legacy System:** LBS

**UID:** 175729

### Asset Groupings

This list entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

### List entry Description

#### Summary of Building

1. 5282 GROVEHURST ROAD (East Side) MILTON REGIS Great Grovehurst Farmhouse TQ 96 NW 7/55 10.9.51. II 2. C18 front. 2 storeys stuccoed. Steeply-pitched hipped tiled roof. Stringcourse. 5 sashes with glazing bars intact. Doorcase at the back with pilasters, pediment and semi-circular fanlight.

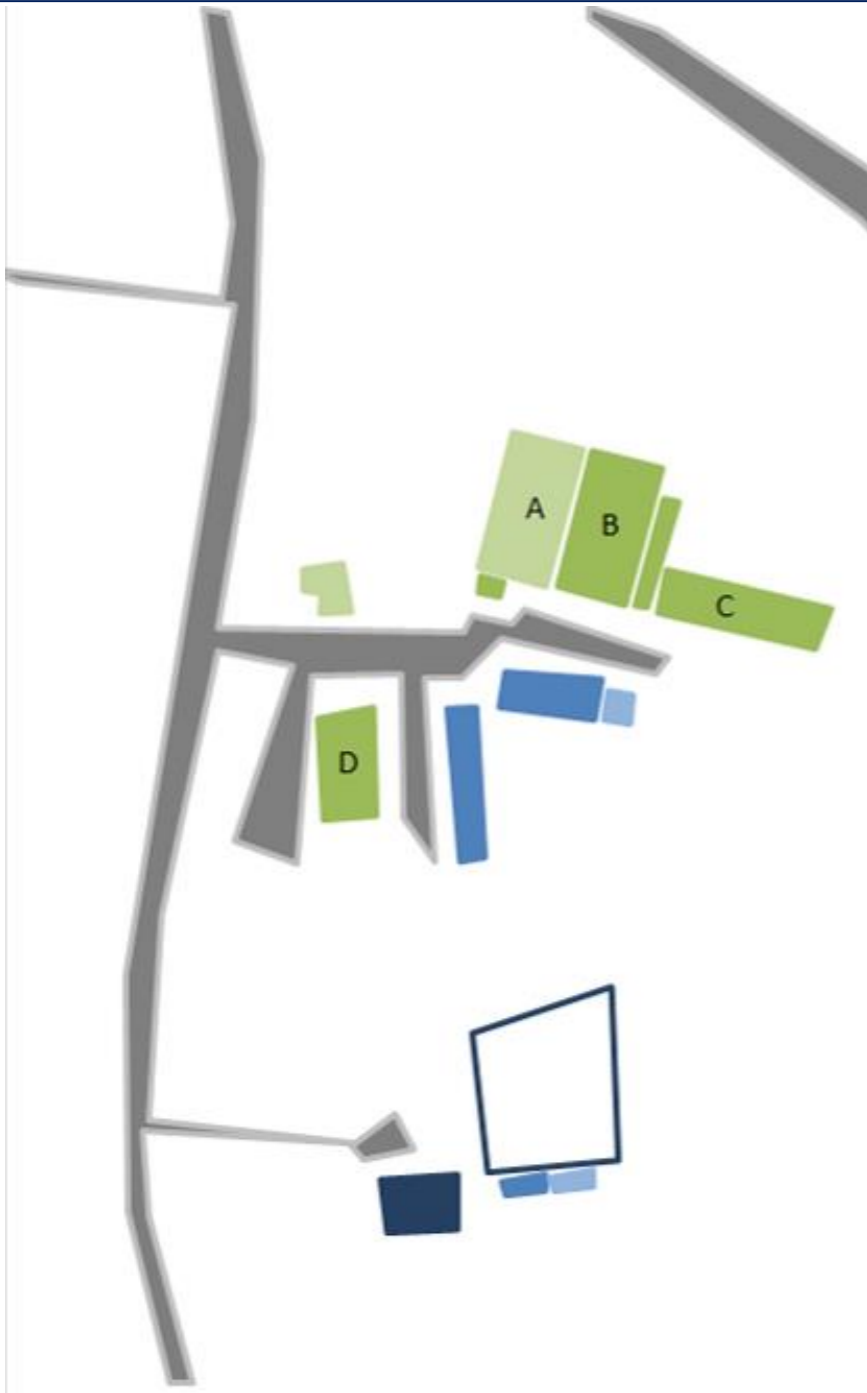
Listing NGR: TQ9046166529



Figure 62: Great Grovehurst Farmhouse site location plan. Source: English Heritage (2013).

## APPENDIX B: GGF SITE DEVELOPMENT

---



GGF site progression.

**Cgms**

[www.cgms.co.uk](http://www.cgms.co.uk)

Cgms