

Heritage Assessment



Land at Tile Lodge Road, Charing Heath

On behalf of Shepherd Neame

February 2018

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This heritage assessment has been prepared for Shepherd Neame by Heritage Collective. It relates to the proposed development of five new houses on Land at Tile Lodge Road, Charing Heath. The application site (Figure 3) is some 70m to 130m from the rear of the Red Lion public house (Figure 4), a grade II listed building on the edge of Charing Heath, Kent, as a consequence of which the proposed development will be within the setting of the listed building

1.2 Originally built as a farmhouse in the mid-16th century, an ale and cider license was granted in the early 18th century, and it became an inn later in that century. The Red Lion public house was listed grade II on 14 February 1967 and is officially described as follows:

"C18 exterior to a timber-framed building. Steeply-pitched hipped tiled roof with large modern brick chimney stack. Four modern casement windows. Later porch built on. Heavily restored."

1.3 There are various other listed buildings in the area, namely Yew Tree Farmhouse (circa 17th century, listed grade II on 14 February 1967, amended 10 October 1980), Forge House (18th century, listed grade II on 14 February 1967), and Cherry Tree Cottage (late 17th century/ early 18th century and listed grade II on 10 October 1980, amended 28 July 2008). These listed buildings have been scoped out of the impact assessment because the proposed development will have no material impact on their setting and will not affect their significance. Reference is made to Yew Tree Farm and Forge House in terms of the setting and context of The Red Lion public house.

1.4 A site visit was undertaken on 15 December 2017.

1.5 The following assessment examines the impact of change on the setting of the listed building known as The Red Lion Inn, in accordance with advice in paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

2.0 RELEVANT HERITAGE POLICY AND GUIDANCE

2.1 The decision maker is required by section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting. The decision maker must also give considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the listed building. There is a strong presumption against the grant of permission for development that would harm the special interest of the listed building, though the presumption can be overcome if the harm is mitigated or outweighed by public benefits, as is explained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

2.2 For the purposes of this assessment “preserve” means to do no harm.¹ Harm is defined by Historic England as change which erodes the significance of a heritage asset.²

2.3 The significance of a heritage asset is defined in the NPPF as being made up of four main constituents, architectural interest, historical interest, archaeological interest and artistic interest. The setting of the heritage asset can also contribute to its significance. Setting is defined in the NPPF as follows:

“The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.”

2.4 The assessments of heritage significance and impact are normally made with primary reference to the four main elements of significance identified in the NPPF.

2.5 The advice of Historic England on the setting of heritage assets (Historic Environment Good Practice Advice Planning Note 3 [GPA3], revised in December 2017) has been taken into account in this assessment.

¹ South Lakeland 1992.

² Paragraph 84 of *Conservation Principles* 2008 and 2015.

- 2.6 The NPPF requires the impact on the significance of a designated heritage asset such as the Red Lion public house to be considered in terms of either “substantial harm” or “less than substantial harm” as described within paragraphs 132 to 134 of that document. National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) makes it clear that substantial harm is a high test, and recent case law describes substantial harm in terms of an effect that would vitiate or drain away much of the significance of a heritage asset.
- 2.7 Paragraph 132 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset when considering applications that affect its significance.
- 2.8 Local policies of Ashford Borough Council have been taken into account in this assessment.
- 2.9 This assessment is confined to the significance of heritage assets and the impact of change on that significance. It does not address the planning balance in which public benefit is weighed against the degree of harm, if any.

3.0 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HERITAGE ASSET

The Red Lion Inn

Historical development of the area

- 3.1 Charing, approximately two miles east of the application site at Charing Heath, is first recorded in 799 as *Ciorringc*. The settlement is sited on the Pilgrim's Way from London to Canterbury, and there has been an Archbishop's Palace at Charing from circa 8th century. The town has been served by train since 1884, with subsequent growth to accommodate increased commuter demand.
- 3.2 The small settlement of Charing Heath is situated two miles to the west of Charing township, with the earliest remaining buildings comprising the 16th century Red Lion Inn, a 17th century farmhouse and cottage and an 18th century forge concentrated at the south-western fringe of the heath.
- 3.3 The Red Lion Inn dates from the mid-16th century, and was first built as a thatched farmhouse. An ale and cider license was granted in 1709, before the Red Lion officially became an inn later in the 18th century. The Red Lion Inn was acquired by Shepherd Neame Brewery in 1873, and has been operated by the Brewery since that time.³

Significance of the listed building

- 3.4 The Red Lion Inn is a building of special architectural and historic architectural interest that has a long association as an inn and public house serving the local community. Its significance can be summarised as follows:
 - Archaeological interest: The timber frame within the building is of archaeological particular interest, as is the other early (pre-1700) fabric of the public house.
 - Architectural interest: The Red Lion public house is a good example of a vernacular Kentish building. Although the list description does

³ <https://www.shepherdneame.co.uk/tenancies/12926>

not suggest as much, the front elevation of the building suggests that it may possibly have been of Wealden house form when first built.

- Historical interest: The Red Lion is a building that has long served the local community and which stands as a physical link with a remote time in the past.
- Artistic interest: While the listed building is not of specific artistic interest, it is nevertheless an aesthetically pleasing building.

Setting of the listed building

3.5 The Red Lion public house is set at a Y-shaped junction where Egerton Road diverges to become Tile Lodge Road and Charing Heath Road, either side of the listed building. This is clearly an ancient road layout in which the Red Lion was part of a cluster of buildings near a funnel-shaped opening onto Charing Heath – a typical medieval morphological feature of commons, heaths and the like (Figure 1). Two other buildings within this cluster are also listed grade II, namely Yew Tree Farm and Forge House, demonstrating that the best preserved and most important part of the context and setting of the Red Lion public house lies to the west, in Egerton Road.

3.6 The land historically associated with the inn formed a wedge-shape that widened to the east, bounded by Wind Hill Lane (Figure 2). At the time of the tithe survey this triangle of land was owned by the Right Honourable George John Mills and occupied by Henry Jennings, who appears in the 1841 census as the innkeeper of the Red Lion together with nine immediate family members, and two agricultural labourers and a drover. While the whole block is historically connected with the Red Lion, the tithe map and apportionment show that there were four internal divisions, as follows:

- i. The Red Lion itself (Plot 249), at the apex of the triangular block, described as a house and buildings in the apportionment.
- ii. An orchard (Plot 250), which formed the wider and more splayed second “layer” within the landholding.

- iii. An "Upper garden" (Plot 251), which was the next and wider layer within the landholding.
 - iv. Vents Field (Plot 253), which was in arable use and which formed the majority of the landholding.
- 3.7 Henry Jennings also occupied two other fields of arable, and two fields of pasture, some distance to the north of Tile Lodge Road, so he clearly farmed land as well as running the Red Lion. Therefore, there is no reason to suppose that Vents Field is any more historically significant than the other parcels of land that he held c.1840.
- 3.8 It should be noted that Vents Field was partly developed in the 20th century with a cul-de sac of twenty or more dwellings known as Wind Hill.
- 3.9 The setting of the Red Lion public house has evolved over time, and is strongly connected with the Yew Tree Farm and Forge Cottage Group to the west, in Egerton Road. The land formerly known as Vents Field, which stood to the east beyond an orchard and a garden, was formerly in agricultural use and has been partly developed. It plays a lesser role in the setting and significance of the listed building.

4.0 EFFECTS ON HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The application proposal

- 4.1 It is proposed to build five houses (one single storey unit and four two-storey units with associated garages) on land to the north-east of the Red Lion public house, Charing Heath (Figure 3). The units are proposed to be grouped around a common courtyard with each having private gardens to the rear. Of the two storey units a pair are semi-detached and two detached. The largest unit to the east has a converted barn style appearance with larger roof area and supporting single storey outbuildings. Building materials include brickwork and painted weather boarding. The two storey units are typically 8-9m to ridgeline. The proposed houses will relate to the existing residential development in the vicinity, and will be separated from the listed building by the existing car park and a stand of established trees and new planting.

Effect on the setting and significance of the listed building

Effects on setting

- 4.2 Vents Field, as it was known c.1840, does not have a particularly strong historic connection with the Red Lion public house, and it has been partly developed. Therefore, the proposed development will not have a contextually harmful effect on the listed building, and the more important relationships with Forge House and Yew Tree Farm to the west will remain.
- 4.3 There will be changes in view when looking along Tile Lodge Road, but these will really be changes to the former land known as Vents Field rather than changes to the Red Lion public house. The effect on views within the surroundings of the listed building will be small.
- 4.4 When looking eastwards, either side of the listed building, the roofs of the proposed buildings will be filtered through trees to varying extents, depending on the time of year. However, the intervening distance and the quantity of vegetation will reduce these effects. They will not be significant effects within the setting of the listed building.

Effects on significance

4.5 The proposed development will have no impact on the fabric or the archaeological significance of the listed building, which will be preserved unaffected. In terms of the other components of significance are concerned, the effects will be as follows:

- Historical significance: The listed building will continue to be a tangible link with the past, serving the community as it has done for centuries. It will still have a strong visual and spatial connection with the listed buildings to the west, Forge House and Yew Tree Farm.
- Architectural significance: The vernacular architecture of the listed building will be preserved, and its contribution to its surroundings will endure.
- Artistic significance: The aesthetic qualities of the listed building will remain after the completion of the proposed development. While there may be some changes in views, these will be filtered by vegetation and they will not reduce the aesthetic significance of the listed building.

4.6 The proposed development will preserve the setting and significance of the listed building within the context of the duty under section 66(1) of the Act. Paragraphs 133 and 134 will not be engaged and there will be no harm to the setting or significance of any listed buildings.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- 3.10 The Red Lion Inn is a grade II listed building dating from the mid 16th century. It was first built as a thatched farmhouse, with an ale and cider license granted in 1709, and officially becoming an inn later in the 18th century, with significant alteration to the exterior also occurring about this time. It is a structure of special architectural and historic interest, as one of the oldest surviving buildings in the immediate area, forming a contextual group with Yew Tree Farm and Forge House.
- 5.1 The application site is on land east of Tile Lodge Road, on what was once Vents Field, at a distance of c.70m to c.130m from the Red Lion Inn, with a stand of established trees separating it from the listed building.
- 5.2 The development of the application site will have little effect on views of the grade II listed building known as The Red Lion Inn, or on its contribution to its surroundings. The relationship between the new housing and the listed building will be neutral, and there will be no loss of those parts of the context and setting of the public house that contribute to its significance.
- 5.3 Paragraphs 133 and 134 of the NPPF are not engaged and there will be preservation for the decision maker's duty under section 66(1) of the Act.

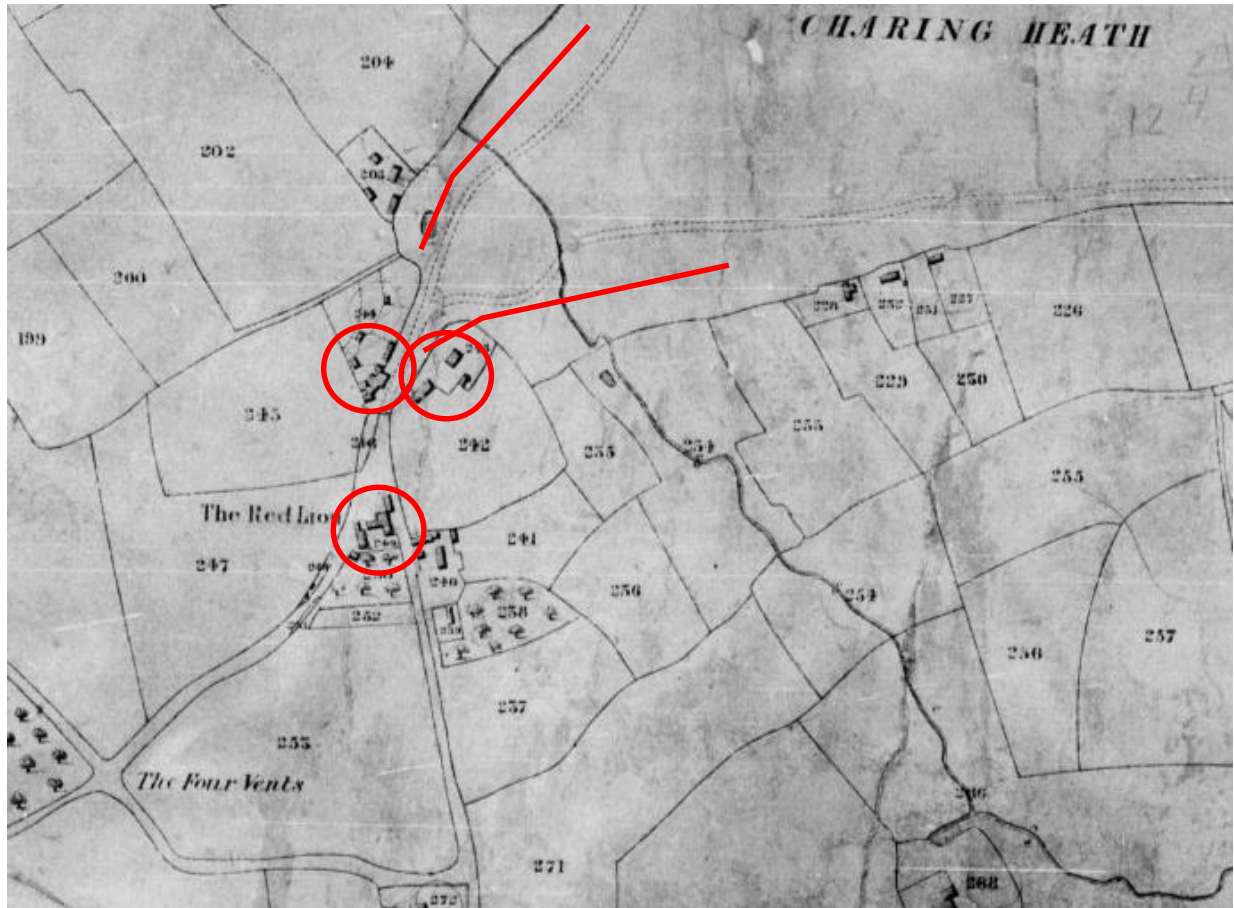


Figure 1 – Extract from the Charing tithe map of 1839 showing the Red Lion and the cluster of buildings at Forge House and Yew Tree Farm at the point where unfenced tracks funnelled outward onto what was then Charing Heath.

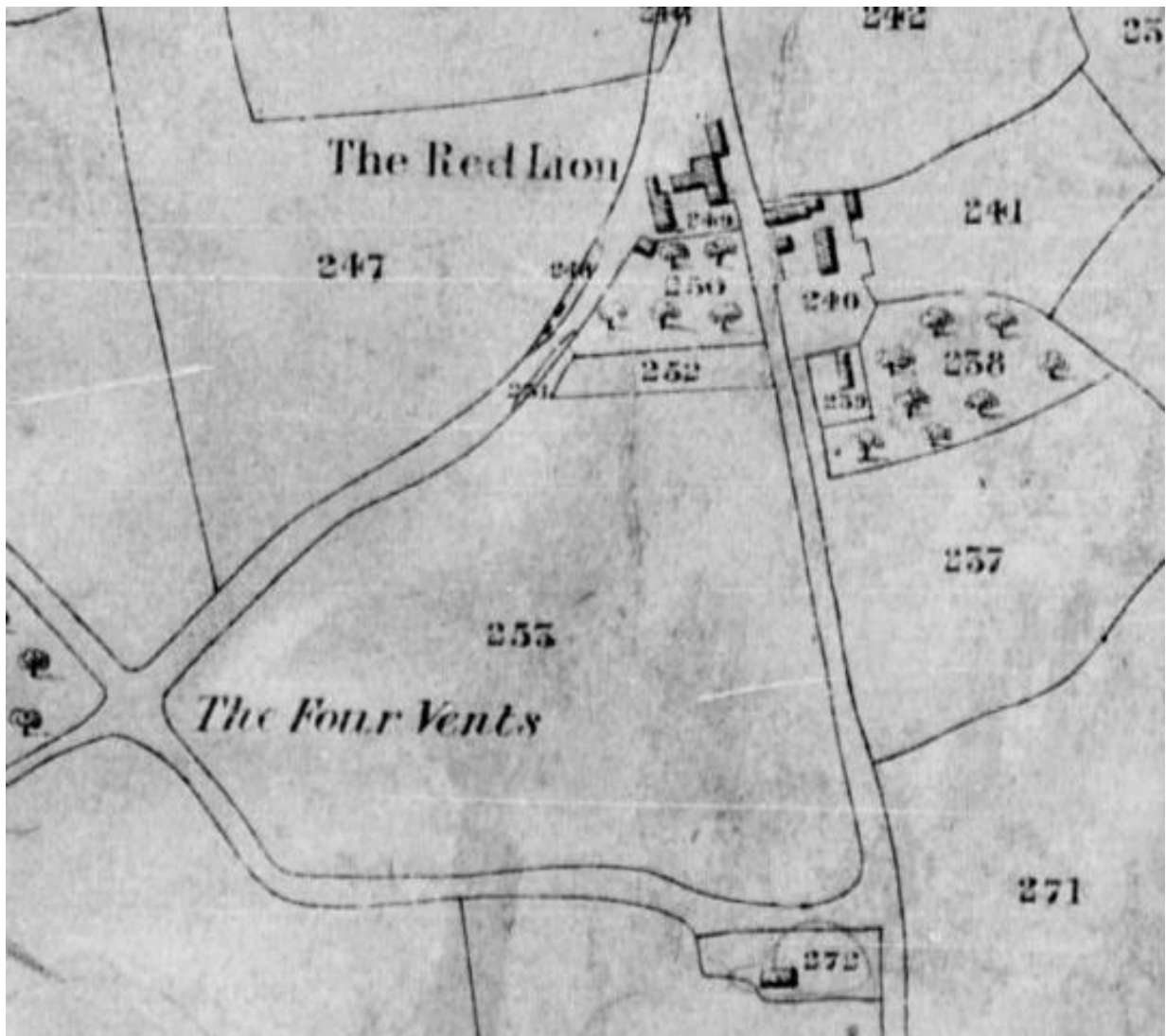


Figure 2 – Extract from the Charing tithe map of 1839 – detail of the triangular land parcel occupied by Henry Jennings c.1841, parcel 253 being Vents Field.



Figure 3 – Looking across the application site (Vents Field) westward towards the Red Lion public house (arrowed), which can just be seen through the trees in winter (photograph taken in December 2017).



Figure 4 – Front elevation of the Red Lion public house, looking east.