

Heritage Statement

Listed Building Consent Application

The Chalk Hare, Royston

1. Site and Heritage Significance

The Chalk Hare occupies a listed building within the historic core of Royston and lies within the designated Royston Conservation Area. The building makes a positive contribution to the architectural and historic character of the conservation area through its traditional form, historic fabric, and prominent presence within the streetscape.

The Royston Conservation Area is designated for its special architectural and historic interest, characterised by a rich collection of historic buildings, traditional materials, varied roofscape, and well-preserved street pattern. The Chalk Hare contributes to this significance by reinforcing the historic commercial character of the town centre and forming part of a cohesive group of heritage assets.

The significance of the listed building derives from its architectural interest, historic fabric, traditional detailing, and its contribution to the wider setting of neighbouring listed buildings and the conservation area.

2. Description of the Proposed Works

The application seeks Listed Building Consent for the installation of new external signage together with associated external lighting.

The proposed signage has been designed to provide clear identification of the premises while remaining sympathetic to the historic character of the building. The scale, positioning and appearance of the signage have been carefully considered to ensure they complement, rather than compete with, the architectural features of the listed building.

The proposed lighting has similarly been designed to provide discreet illumination of the signage. The fittings are intended to be modest in scale and sensitively located to minimise their visual impact on the historic fabric and wider streetscene.

Where practicable, fixings will utilise existing joints or mortar beds to minimise intervention into historic fabric. Any new fixings will be limited to those necessary for secure installation and will avoid decorative architectural features.

3. Impact on Heritage Significance

The proposals have been developed with careful regard to the significance of both the listed building and its location within the Royston Conservation Area.

The new signage and lighting represent minor alterations that do not affect the principal architectural features of the building. The proposals are reversible in nature and involve

minimal physical intervention to the historic fabric. The scale and design have been selected to respect the proportions of the building and maintain its visual prominence within the conservation area.

The introduction of discreet lighting will improve legibility of the signage during evening hours without introducing excessive illumination or detracting from the character of the surrounding historic environment. Appropriate luminance levels will ensure that the lighting remains subordinate to the building itself and avoids unnecessary light spill.

Overall, the proposals preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building and maintain its positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Royston Conservation Area. The works are considered to result in no harm to the significance of the designated heritage assets.

4. Planning Policy Context

Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires special regard to be paid to the desirability of preserving a listed building, its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Section 72 of the Act places a duty on the local planning authority to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of conservation areas.

The proposals accord with these statutory duties by preserving the significance of the listed building and maintaining the character and appearance of the Royston Conservation Area.

The proposals are also consistent with the heritage objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework, which seeks the conservation of designated heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance. The limited and sympathetic nature of the proposed works results in no harm to the significance of the listed building or the conservation area.

5. Conclusion

The proposed signage and associated lighting have been designed as modest and sympathetic additions that respect the architectural character of The Chalk Hare and its important position within the Royston Conservation Area.

The proposals involve minimal intervention to the historic fabric, are readily reversible, and have been carefully designed to complement the building's traditional appearance. They preserve the significance of the listed building and its setting, maintain the character and appearance of the conservation area, and enable the continued viable commercial use of this historic building.

It is therefore concluded that the proposals satisfy the statutory duties of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and are consistent with national heritage policy. The works will preserve the significance of the listed building and the character and appearance of the Royston Conservation Area while providing an appropriate enhancement to the building's commercial function.