

Initial Heritage Appraisal

Greater Manchester Growth Locations – Elton Reservoir, Radcliffe (GMA7)

March 2020

Introduction

1. This Initial Heritage Appraisal (the 'Appraisal') has been prepared by Turley Heritage on behalf of Peel Investments (North) Ltd. The purpose of the Appraisal is to provide initial advice on heritage issues associated with promotion of land at Elton Reservoir, Radcliffe (the 'Appraisal Site') for residential development (the 'Proposed Development') via the Greater Manchester Strategic Framework. The site reference is GMA7.
2. The Appraisal is based on a desk based assessment of the Appraisal Site and the surrounding area and a site visit undertaken on 28 January 2020. It identifies the heritage assets closest to the site and provides a broad assessment of significance and setting, including the contribution made by the Appraisal Site. It concludes by providing recommendations to be addressed in developing proposals for the site.
3. This Appraisal addresses above ground heritage assets. Below ground archaeology is dealt with separately by Nexus Archaeology.

The Appraisal Site

4. The Appraisal Site is located approximately 1.5km to the south west of Bury. It is a large site covering approximately 225 hectares. It is irregular in shape with boundaries defined by existing urban development, agricultural land, the metrolink to the east and the line of a dismantled railway to the north west.
5. The site contains open agricultural fields divided by field boundaries demarcated by fencing and hedgerows. Within the site to the north side of the site is Elton Reservoir, a large water body. To the south is the smaller Withins Reservoir. To the east side of the site is the Manchester Bolton and Bury Canal and River Irwell, and associated infrastructure. There are number of farmsteads and associated buildings within the site boundary.

Relevant Heritage Assets

Designated Heritage Assets

6. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) glossary identifies that a designated heritage asset is '*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*'.

7. Old Hall Farmhouse (grade II listed building) is located within the Appraisal Site and therefore has the potential to be directly affected by its development, and also indirectly affected by development in its setting.
8. The below designated heritage assets are outside the Appraisal Site, but close to it, and have the potential for their significance to be affected through development within their setting:

Heritage Asset	Asset type	Grade
Gate Piers to the North West of Old Hall Farmhouse	Listed Building	II
Church of St Andrew	Listed Building	II
Church of St Thomas and St John	Listed Building	II

9. The Church of St Andrew is located approximately 260m to the west of the site boundary, separated from it by an area of residential dwellings. The church is ascribed significance as a late 19th century ecclesiastical building by the architect J Lowe. It is located in a defined churchyard which contains gravestones, memorials and trees and is enclosed by a low stone wall. Beyond, the church is surrounded by residential streets and dwellings dating to the mid-20th century. There is no direct visual connection between the asset and the Appraisal Site.
10. The grade II listed Church of St Thomas and St John is located some distance, around 550m, to the south of the Appraisal site. It is located in an urbanised area, and there is no visual connection between the asset and the Appraisal Site due to distance and the scale and density of development in the intervening area.
11. Whilst the spire of the two churches are occasionally visible from within the Appraisal Site, these views are glimpsed. The church spires are characteristically viewed from a broad area containing various land uses. Due to intervening distance, topography and buildings, and the character of their existing setting it is not considered that development of the Appraisal Site (of the type envisaged of the type envisaged on the Illustrative Development Framework Plan within Elton Reservoir Development Framework Summary (March 2019)) would affect or influence the significance of the two listed churches. They are not discussed further within this Appraisal.

Non-designated Heritage Assets

12. The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) paragraph 039 defines a non-designated heritage asset as *‘Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets’*.
13. A search of the Historic Environment Record (HER) was carried out by Nexus Archaeology in November/ December 2019. The results have been reviewed to identify built assets either within or proximate to the site which have the potential to be affected by development at the Appraisal Site.

HER Asset	Reference
Series of milestones identifying distance from Manchester	15908.1.0/ 15909.1.0/ 15910.1.0/ 15911.1.0/ 15912.1.0

14. A number of milestones are identified on the HER and located within the Appraisal Site. The scale and nature of the significance of these assets, which is defined by their historic and functional interest, is such that they are unlikely to be affected by future development. It is assumed that all would be retained in situ.
15. In addition to the above, a number of other buildings or structures have been identified by Salford Archaeology within the 'Historic Environment Assessment Screening Exercise Bury District' (26/06/2019) prepared by Salford Archaeology.
16. These buildings or structures are not on the HER and have not been formally identified as non-designated heritage assets. They are therefore not heritage assets based on the definition(s) set out in the NPPF glossary and the guidance set out at paragraph 039 of National Planning Practice Guidance which confirms that '*a substantial majority of buildings have little or no heritage significance and thus do not constitute heritage assets. Only a minority have enough heritage significance to merit identification as non-designated heritage assets*'. For this reason, these building have not been considered further within this Heritage Appraisal.
17. Should any of these buildings or structures be identified as non-designated heritage assets in the future, the effect of development on their significance would need to be proportionately addressed in accordance with Paragraph 197 of the NPPF would be engaged which states: '*the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset*'.

Significance of Heritage Assets

Old Hall Farmhouse (Grade II) and Gatepiers to the North West of Old Hall Farmhouse (Grade II)

Architectural and Historic Interest

18. Old Hall Farmhouse is of interest as an early 18th century farmhouse; it was originally a dwelling and converted to agricultural use as a farmhouse during the 19th century. It was re-fronted in 1872 after a fire and has a distinctive facade of red brick with painted quoins and a first floor sill band. The building is symmetrical and has windows with keyed cambered heads. It has a moulded gutter cornice to the eaves and a slate roof above. Early OS maps identify the building as 'Radcliffe Hall'.
19. To the north of the Farmhouse are a pair of individually listed gate piers, which date to the early 18th century and are in rusticated stone with ball finials.

Contribution of Setting

Description of Surroundings

20. Old Hall Farmhouse and its ancillary buildings are elevated slightly above the land to its north due to rising topography. It is located to the immediate south of Elton Reservoir, which extends some distance to the north east and south west of the building and is a substantial feature in the landscape. To the immediate west of the farmhouse is an access lane which connects Hinds Lane in the north east to St Andrews Road to the south west, which lies at the bottom of the bank/retaining wall of the reservoir. To the north east, east and south of the building is open agricultural farmland. Beyond, in all directions, the open site is contained by urban development which is visible in long distance views.
21. To the immediate west of the building is a small grouping of ancillary buildings. The farmhouse and these buildings are enclosed in a walled plot.

Experience of the Asset

22. Old Hall Farmhouse is located in an enclosed garden/yard area which encloses it. It is principally experienced from within this area, and from the open land and access lane to the north where its striking principal elevation is visible, although screened partially by trees which surround it.
23. Due to the enclosing effect of the reservoir banks, views from the frontage of the farmhouse to the surrounding area are directed to the north east and distant views of urban development are available beyond the open land in the foreground. The construction of the reservoir has fundamentally changed the context and surroundings of the building which would once have stood in open agricultural land.
24. The visible and appreciable connection to the ancillary buildings to the west and enclosing walls and gate piers emphasise the status and historic character of the building and contribute to group value.

Contribution of the Appraisal Site

25. The Appraisal Site encloses the listed building and contains both Elton Reservoir, and the surrounding agricultural land. The site therefore comprises the large part of the setting of the farmhouse and contributes to significance in emphasising its agricultural origins and associations, but also to the evolving and changing character of the surroundings of the building. However it is noted that much of the site is to the south and not visible from the farmhouse.

Heritage Considerations and Review of Illustrative Masterplan

26. The Illustrative Development Framework Plan included in the 'Development Framework Summary March 2019' shows a potential illustrative layout for development at the Appraisal Site. Areas of proposed development are set back some distance to the south from Old Hall Farmhouse beyond a belt of agricultural fields, ensuring separation between the listed building and the new development. No development is proposed to the north side of the listed building, which will successfully ensure that the views towards and away from the principal northern elevation are unaffected.

27. We would recommend the incorporation of a green landscaping strategy, including retention of trees and field boundaries in the area of development to the north of the farmhouse to retain the green and rural character of its setting. Additionally, consideration should be given to the density of development and appropriate heights in the area to the south of the farmhouse.
28. Whilst the development will result in change to the wider setting of this listed building, it is noted that this is already characterised by a mix of uses and views exist towards built development to the north and north east.
29. Based on our initial assessment of the heritage assets and the proposed Illustrative Masterplan there are no significant heritage constraints to the development of the appraisal site and it is considered that future development could preserve those elements of setting which make a positive contribution to the significance of the identified designated heritage asset.