

HERITAGE STATEMENT

The Cock Inn, Twycross Road, Sibson, Leicestershire

1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of an application for Listed Building Consent for external decoration works, together with the installation of new signage and lighting at The Cock Inn, Twycross Road, Sibson, Leicestershire.

The purpose of this statement is to assess the heritage significance of The Cock Inn and its contribution to the character and appearance of the Sibson Conservation Area, and to consider the likely heritage impact of the proposed works.

The proposals comprise works to the external appearance of the public house, including external redecoration, new signage and associated external lighting. The works are intended to improve the appearance, legibility and presentation of the premises while retaining the historic character and architectural significance of the building.

2. Heritage Designations

The Cock Inn is a Grade II Listed Building (List Entry No. 1074279), first listed on 7 November 1966. Historic England describes the building as a public house and dwelling dating from the late 16th or early 17th century. It is a timber-framed building with brick nogging and a thatched roof on a rubble plinth. The building is of low, two-storey form and retains a number of characteristic historic features, including its square-panel timber framing, arched-braced posts, casement windows, eyebrow dormers and traditional chimney stacks.

The listing identifies the architectural and historic interest of the building principally through its surviving historic fabric, form and traditional construction, together with its longstanding use as a public house and dwelling.

The building is also located within the Sibson Conservation Area, which was designated by Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council in December 1995. The Conservation Area contains four listed buildings, including The Cock Inn, together with a number of unlisted buildings of local historic or architectural interest.

3. Significance of the Sibson Conservation Area

The Sibson Conservation Area Appraisal identifies the character of the village as deriving principally from its agricultural origins, expressed through the survival of former and existing farm buildings, traditional cottages and historic properties. The appraisal also identifies the ancient road pattern, with its characteristic twists and turns, as an important component of the village's distinctive character.

The setting of The Cock Inn within the Conservation Area is particularly significant. The appraisal identifies the eastern part of the village, around the church and Old Rectory, as being defined by a group of important historic buildings and mature trees, including The

Cock Inn, Old Rectory, Manor House and Carriers Croft. These buildings, through their traditional form and architectural features, contribute strongly to the public perception and historic character of the village.

Of particular relevance to this application, the Conservation Area Appraisal identifies the outbuildings of The Cock Inn as contributing to the character of the southern approach to the village and states that, at the road junction, long views towards the medieval timber-framed public house help define the eastern gateway to the village proper.

Consequently, The Cock Inn has a prominent visual and townscape role which extends beyond the curtilage of the listed building itself. Its position within the village, its historic fabric and its relationship with the surrounding buildings, road network and open landscape all contribute to its heritage significance.

4. Significance of the Listed Building

The principal heritage significance of The Cock Inn derives from its early date, surviving timber-framed construction and its contribution to the historic development and character of Sibson.

Its modest scale, traditional materials and irregular historic form are characteristic of the historic rural settlement. The timber framing and thatched roof are particularly important elements of its architectural character, while its longstanding function as a public house contributes to its historic and communal interest.

The building should therefore continue to be understood as a historic rural inn rather than simply as a commercial premises. Any external alterations should respect its architectural proportions, historic materials and prominent position within the Conservation Area.

5. Proposed Works

The application proposes external decoration works together with new signage and external lighting.

The external decoration will provide an opportunity to refresh and maintain the appearance of the building while retaining its traditional architectural character. The intention is that the proposed colour treatment and decoration will be sympathetic to the age, materials and rural character of the building and will not obscure or detract from significant historic features.

The proposed signage is intended to provide an appropriate and clearly identifiable means of advertising the established public house use. The signage will be carefully positioned so as to respond to the existing architectural composition of the building and avoid unnecessary visual competition with the historic timber framing, openings and roof form.

The proposed lighting will be designed to provide appropriate illumination of the building and signage without creating excessive glare, light spill or an unduly urban appearance. Lighting should remain subordinate to the architecture and should assist rather than dominate the building's appearance after dark.

6. Impact on the Conservation Area and Setting

The proposals have been developed with particular regard to the prominent position of The Cock Inn within the Sibson Conservation Area.

The Conservation Area Appraisal states that the maintenance of its distinctive character and appearance requires new development and alterations to contribute positively in terms of siting, scale, design and materials, and that important views of the village and surrounding countryside should be protected. It also places emphasis on the retention of listed buildings and buildings of local interest.

The proposed works are considered to be compatible with these objectives.

The works do not involve an extension to the building, changes to its overall massing, alteration to its roof form or removal of its principal historic architectural features. The essential elements which establish the building's significance — including its traditional scale, timber-framed elevations, roof form and relationship with the historic village — will remain unaffected.

The proposed signage and lighting will be read as part of the building's established public house use. Subject to their detailed design, scale, colour, positioning and illumination, they will not compete with the building's historic form or materially alter the important views towards The Cock Inn identified within the Conservation Area Appraisal.

Indeed, the careful renewal of the building's external appearance has the potential to enhance its presentation within the streetscape and reinforce its role as an important historic building and focal point within the village.

7. Heritage Impact

The proposed works are considered to result in **no harm to the special architectural or historic interest of the Grade II listed building**, provided that the works are carried out in accordance with the submitted drawings and details.

In particular:

- the historic form and massing of the building will be retained;
- significant historic fabric and architectural features will be preserved;
- the works will not compromise the appreciation of the building's historic timber-framed character;
- the signage will remain subordinate to the architecture of the listed building;
- external lighting will be appropriately scaled and controlled to avoid visual intrusion and excessive illumination;
- the prominent role of The Cock Inn within the Sibson Conservation Area will be retained; and
- important views towards the building and its contribution to the eastern approach to the village will remain substantially unchanged.

The proposals are therefore considered to preserve the special interest of the listed building and the character and appearance of the Sibson Conservation Area.

8. Conclusion

The Cock Inn is an important historic building within Sibson, deriving significance from its late 16th/early 17th-century origins, surviving timber-framed construction, traditional materials and longstanding role as a public house. Its prominent position within the Sibson Conservation Area gives it an additional townscape significance, with the Conservation Area Appraisal specifically identifying the building as an important element of the eastern gateway and the historic character of the village.

The proposed external decoration, signage and lighting are modest works which seek to maintain and improve the presentation of the building while retaining its historic character and architectural significance.

The proposals have been designed to respect the scale, form and appearance of the listed building and its sensitive position within the Conservation Area. They will not result in the loss of significant historic fabric or adversely affect the established relationship between The Cock Inn, the surrounding historic buildings, the road network and wider village setting.

Accordingly, the proposed works are considered to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of The Cock Inn and to preserve the character and appearance of the Sibson Conservation Area. The proposals are therefore considered appropriate in heritage terms and are supported by this Heritage Statement.