



Omega St Helens/T.J. Morris Limited

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# **SUBJECT STATEMENT OF ELIZABETH MURRAY (FOR THE APPLICANTS) ON CULTURAL HERITAGE**

Call-in by the Secretary of State of an application  
made by Omega St Helens/T.J. Morris Limited

Land To The West Of Omega South & South Of The M62.  
Bold, St. Helens

LPA REF: P/2020/0061/HYBR

PINS REF: APP/H4315/V/20/3265899

CD 38.10

March 2021



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 PERSONAL STATEMENT

- 1.1.1. This Subject Statement has been prepared by Elizabeth Murray BA, MCIfA, and represents my true and professional opinions based on my knowledge and experience. This Subject Statement has been prepared on behalf of Omega St. Helens and T.J. Morris Ltd., the Applicants, in reference to Cultural Heritage. The evidence detailed within is formed irrespective of by whom I have been instructed.
- 1.1.2. I am a graduate of the University of Liverpool (BA Hons) with a degree in Archaeology. I am also a Member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (MCIfA) and, as with all members, adhere to high standards of ethical and responsible behaviour in the conduct of archaeological affairs. WSP is also a ClfA Registered Organisation, adhering them to the same professional principles.
- 1.1.3. I have been a Principal Heritage Consultant and Manchester Team Lead at WSP since January 2020 and have been with the company since July 2014. My previous role was Archaeological Project Officer with Archaeological Project Services. I have 10 years' experience in Commercial Archaeology and almost 7 years' experience in consultancy, the bulk of my work having been undertaken across the North West and East Midlands. As a Principal Consultant I regularly review, and author, heritage focused EIA documentation and represent WSP in Issue Specific Hearings as part of the Examination process for Development Consent Order applications. I have experience across a broad spectrum of sectors including Highways, Airports, Energy Transmission and Generation, Housing and Public Realm.
- 1.1.4. In my capacity as Principal Consultant and Team Lead, I oversaw the undertaking of the fieldwork and the production of the subsequent report for the Archaeological Landscape survey. As such I am familiar with the planning application and the application site.

## 1.2 BACKGROUND

- 1.2.1. The WSP Cultural Heritage and Archaeology Team prepared an Environmental Statement (ES) Chapter (CD 33.56) for the planning application that detailed the likely significant effects on the Historic Environment. In this instance, the Historic Environment assets assessed included Built Heritage, Archaeology and Earthworks. The ES Chapter was supported by a Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment (HEDBA) (CD 33.75) and an Archaeological Landscape Survey (CD 33.153). The findings of these documents are not detailed here, other than where they are relevant to address the points outlined below.

## 1.3 DOCUMENT STRUCTURE

- 1.3.1. This Subject Statement addresses two points of concern raised in the St. Helens Council Planning Committee Report (CD 35.1).
1. The non-designated Bold Hall Estate and deer park, and the perceived impact
  2. Changes to the setting of designated assets and how this conforms to policy
- 1.3.2. The Subject Statement will make reference to the following documents:
- Amended ES Chapter 9: Biodiversity (CD 33.57)
  - ES Volume 1 Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage (CD 33.56)



- ES Volume 2 Appendix 8: Historic Environment Desk-based Assessment (CD 33.75)
- Archaeological Landscape Survey Report (CD 33.153)
- ES Volume 2 Appendix 09.07 Arboricultural Survey (CD 33.81)

## 1.4 LEGISLATION AND POLICY

1.4.1. The legislation and policies relevant to the points raised in this Subject Statement are set out below:

### Legislation

- Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (CD 4.150)

### National Policy

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - Paragraphs 189-199 (CD 1.1)

### Local Policy

- St. Helens Unitary Development Plan (1998) Saved Policy ENV 25: Listed Buildings (CD 2.1)
- St. Helens Unitary Development Plan (1998) Saved Policy ENV 23: Archaeology (CD 2.1)
- St. Helens Core Strategy (2012) Policy CQL 4: Heritage and Landscape (CD 2.2)
- St. Helens Core Strategy (2012) Policy CP1 Ensuring Quality Development in St. Helens (CD 2.2)

## 2 POINT 1: THE NON-DESIGNATED BOLD HALL ESTATE AND DEER PARK, AND THE PERCEIVED IMPACT

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- 2.1.1. The HEDBA (CD 33.75) noted the potential for four non-designated heritage assets to lie within the application site boundary, comprising:
- the site of the medieval and post-medieval park at Old Bold Hall and Bold Hall (MME8654);
  - Booth's Wood (possible historic woodland - WSP001);
  - the site of "Big Dam" (WSP002), shown on the 1850 and successive Ordnance Survey maps; and
  - an area of former ridge and furrow identified from the National Mapping Programme (NHL1605040).
- 2.1.2. Only the park (MME8654) was mentioned in the Merseyside Historic Environment Record (HER); the other assets were noted through the assessment process. The Archaeological Landscape Survey (CD 33.153) was undertaken to investigate the presence and survival of these features.
- 2.1.3. Old Bold Hall moated site, and the manor of Bold, is known to have been present since the early 13th century. The presence of a deer park is attested to through documentary sources. However, Saxton's map of 1577 does not show a park in this area. Documentary sources from 1609 (Document on Condition of Buildings at Old Bold Hall, 1609. Lancashire Record Office DL44/773 IP/417) note that several outbuildings and features at Old Bold Hall had fallen into disrepair and notes specifically that *'The Parke pailles alsoe in Decaie and verie much if the Inner pailles thereof removed... Whereby the qualitie of the Parke is much altered Neyther is there anie Deare therin Kepte at all'*. The *'Parke pailles'* [park pale] was a large bank often associated with a ditch constructed to keep the deer within a park. The document notes that these are in *'Decaie'* [decay] and removed, the final sentence noting that there are no longer deer kept within it. In addition, the HER entry for the park also notes that Jane, the widow of Richard Bold (d. 1603), later married John Edwards of Chirk, and *'was in possession of the manor-house and charged with wasting the park, her husband had killed and worried many of the deer'*. This evidence suggests that by the early 17th century, the deer park was either no longer extant or was much degraded.
- 2.1.4. Peter Bold developed the Bold Hall Estate in the early 18th century. When Bold Hall was completed in 1732, to the designs of Giacomo Leoni, Old Bold Hall became a farmhouse. The estate associated with the hall was undeniably substantial and is noted to have been the second largest in South Lancashire.
- 2.1.5. The Bold Hall estate was broken up and sold off from the mid-19th century onwards. After falling out of family ownership, Bold Hall and the remaining 1500 acres of the estate were sold to a syndicate of colliery proprietors at the end of the 19th century, at which point the house was demolished. The mining industry had a notable impact on the estate and the wider area. Clock Face Colliery sunk its shafts in the north-west corner of the park, to the immediate west of the former hall. Settlements expanded in response to the requirement for workers housing, for example Clock Face grew a small hamlet to a significant settlement. Colliery infrastructure and slag heaps would have dominated the landscape in the late 20th century. Since then, most of the mine workings have been regenerated into community woodland sites and nature reserves.
- 2.1.6. Whilst elements of the former Bold Hall estate can still be recognised, most of the land has been turned over to arable farming. The M62 bisects the estate and reduces the ability to appreciate the

estate and former deer park as cohesive entities. The former North Lodge of the estate now only lends its name to North Lodge Farm, in the same general location. West Lodge and South Lodge are no longer extant.

- 2.1.7. As noted in the Archaeological Landscape Survey (CD 33.153), the use of the term plantation, as seen in the name of a number of the tree groups, is often an indication that a woodland is of recent origin. Nineteenth century adverts from local papers suggest that large quantities of timber from the estate were regularly sold by auction: an advert from the Liverpool Mercury in 1826 noted the sale of 1519 trees. The modern origin of those areas labelled plantation is supported by the Biodiversity ES Chapter (CD 33.57), which notes there is no Ancient Woodland on or near to the application site.
- 2.1.8. The Bold Hall Estate is a non-designated heritage asset of low value. Although elements of the estate remain, such as the Grade II listed Walled Garden of the former Bold Hall and a number of modern plantations, the ability to interpret and appreciate the asset has been compromised by a number of factors including; the current land use, the construction of the M62, historic mining, and the loss of original park features.
- 2.1.9. The Archaeological Landscape Survey (CD 33.153) was undertaken in order to investigate any potential remaining archaeological features associated with two non-designated assets (Site of Medieval and Post-Medieval park, Old Bold Hall and Bold Hall, Bold (MME8654) and Booth's Wood, possible ancient woodland (WSP001)). The results of the survey suggest that there is no remaining above-ground evidence of the features that would normally signify the presence of a deer park, such as the park pale. With the exception of a single low bank, there were no earthworks noted within the plantation areas. The survey also noted that the area of ridge and furrow noted by the National Mapping Programme has been ploughed out. It should be noted that other than the three trees identified for removal in the Arboricultural assessment (CD 33.81) the scheme does not propose that Booth's Wood is to be affected.
- 2.1.10. As a result of the survey, the MEAS Planning Archaeologist is content that no further work is required, and no archaeological conditions need be placed on the planning application (CD 34.36). In addition, there are no objections to the Proposed Development on the grounds of impacts to archaeology.

### 3 POINT 2: CHANGES TO THE SETTING OF DESIGNATED ASSETS AND HOW THIS CONFORMS TO POLICY

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- 3.1.1. Paragraph 193 of NPPF (CD 1.1) states that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation.
- 3.1.2. Paragraph 196 states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 3.1.3. Policy CQL 4 of the St. Helens Core Strategy (2012) (CD 2.1) reflects this, adding that St. Helens Council should ensure that 'all development is located and designed in a way that is sensitive to its historic landscape and setting...'. Details of saved policy ENV 25 note that St. Helens Council will 'seek to protect Listed Buildings, and their settings from harmful development'.
- 3.1.4. The Cultural Heritage ES Chapter (CD 33.56) notes the potential for harm to the setting of three designated assets, comprising:
- The Old Bold Hall moated site, Bold (SM1010703);
  - The Farmhouse at former Bold Hall Estate (LB1031890); and
  - Farm outbuilding, formerly Stables, at Former Bold Hall Estate (LB1031889).
- 3.1.5. The detail of that assessment is not repeated here but can be found in the HEDBA (CD 33.75), with the conclusions of that assessment repeated in the Cultural Heritage ES Chapter (CD 33.56).
- 3.1.6. To outline the impacts, the Old Bold Hall moated site will be harmed by the loss of features that give significance to its setting. The removal of sections of Duck Wood will reduce the level of natural screening, and the presence of the Proposed Development will mean that, whilst relevant setting characteristics can be appreciated, it will be less readily. For those assets at the former Bold Hall location, there will be impacts on the intended views from the assets, to the south. The existing logistics infrastructure and the M62 have already impacted on those views, and the Proposed Development will cause some additional harm. This harm will be partly mitigated by screening on the boundaries of the application site. None of the changes outlined above would constitute substantial harm as they will not cause the contribution of the setting to be lost or substantially reduced.
- 3.1.7. The Conservation Officer at Growth Lancashire is in agreement with the assessment of harm outlined in the HEDBA and ES Chapter (CD 34.15). The Proposed Development was considered as having less than substantial harm and of a low level, on the built heritage assets affected. It should be noted that Historic England has no objection to the Proposed Development (CD 34.32).
- 3.1.8. Whilst the harm to the significance of the designated assets through changes in their setting is contrary to legislation and policy for the Historic Environment, it is at the lowest end of the scale of less than substantial harm.
- 3.1.9. As per NPPF (CD 1.1, Para. 193 - 196), whilst great weight should be given to an asset's conservation, and considerable importance and weight should be given to the desirability of preserving or enhancing setting of a designated heritage asset, it is for the Inspector to decide whether the harm to the historic environment assets is outweighed by the stated benefits of the





Proposed Development. Evidence with regard to the balancing exercise itself is given by Mr Bashforth.

### **Conclusion**

- 3.1.10. The Proposed Development will not physically impact any known buried archaeological remains. The assessment and survey undertaken by WSP concluded that the deer park was no longer extant and that the potential to impact on buried remains associated with the park was negligible.
- 3.1.11. The Archaeological Landscape Survey noted elements of modern plantations, but nothing to suggest they may have had earlier origins, a conclusion supported by the Biodiversity assessment. The Archaeological Landscape Survey forms a permanent record of these plantations.
- 3.1.12. The MEAS Planning Archaeologist agreed with these conclusions and as a result no further archaeological consultation was required – with no archaeological conditions placed on the planning application.
- 3.1.13. There will be a change to the setting of three designated assets that is on the lowest end of the scale of less than substantial harm. The assets exist within a much altered landscape, and whilst the Proposed Development adds to that change, it does not cause the contribution of the setting to the value of the asset to be lost or substantially reduced. Whilst any harm is contrary to Historic Environment policy, the scale of the harm, at the lowest end of less than substantial harm, should be weighed against the perceived public benefits of the Proposed Development.



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