

Whittlesey Mud Wall's – Article 4 Direction

Evidence Report

1. Introduction

1.1. Historic England completed a statutory listing review in 2021 with the result that 5 new sections of wall were designated and there are now 7 grade II listed walls in total within Whittlesey.

1.2. The Whittlesey Conservation Area Management Plan, states that:

“The Council will encourage the retention and proper repair of Whittlesey’s mud walls by:

(i) exercising planning controls (where applicable) to prevent the demolition of mud walls and consider using Article 4 Directions to protect mud walls,

(ii) where a mud wall maybe beyond repair securing replacement with a new section of mud wall and

(iii) encouraging the repair of mud walls by providing repair advice and financial support through the S57 Grant Scheme (subject to budget availability) and

(iiii) fostering a greater understanding and appreciation of this aspect of Whittlesey’s heritage in collaboration with community groups such as the Whittlesey’s Mud Wall Group, Whittlesey Museum and The Whittlesey Society”,

and Policy 8 in the draft Neighbourhood Plan for Whittlesey.

1.3. Supporting this recommendation would fulfil policy LP18 of the Local Plan which states that ‘The Council will protect, conserve and seek opportunities to enhance the historic environment throughout Fenland. This will be achieved through.....making use of Article 4 Directions, where appropriate, to prevent unsympathetic alterations to buildings in conservation areas.

1.4. Supporting this recommendation would also fulfil Policy 8 of the Whittlesey Neighbourhood Plan and Whittlesey Conservation Area Management Plan.

- 1.5. The implementation of an immediate Article 4 Direction would help ensure the preservation of a unique type of structure in Whittlesey and Eastrea to the benefit of the historic character and appearance of the area and to the benefit of its residents in creating a strong sense of place and local pride.
- 1.6. The Article 4 direction is simple in its aim and in its articulation: to promote the protection of these vulnerable walls by requiring planning permission for their alteration or demolition.
- 1.7. Article 4 directions are used to bring under planning control a range of works authorised under article 3 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 as amended by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amended) Order 2015.
- 1.8. The effect of an Article 4 direction is not that development cannot be carried out, but simply that it is no longer automatically permitted by article 3 of the GDPO but must instead be subject to a specific planning application. This does not necessarily mean that the local planning authority will refuse permission for the works, but it does enable the authority to retain some control over the design and detailing of the proposed development and to grant permission subject to appropriate conditions.
- 1.9. The direction comes into force on the date on which the notice is served on the owner or occupier, or the date of the press advertisement. While there is no right of appeal against the making of an article 4 direction, the local planning authority must consider any representations made in response to the notices. It may then confirm the direction, not less than 28 days after the last notice was published and not more than six months after it was made.

2. History Of Mud Wall's In Whittlesey:

- 2.1. The use of earth as a building material can be seen around the world and has a very ancient history. Though it is not an especially common method of construction in England, certain times and places have seen earth walling in significant numbers. This is particularly so with the 'cob' tradition in the south west, where cob walls dating to the C15 have been identified. Typically, earth is bound with straw and mixed with a little water to create the raw building material. The C18 and C19 in East Anglia saw the creation of a significant number of earth structures using 'clay lump', whereby large blocks of raw

material were put into forms, allowed partially to dry, and were then assembled to make a wall. Despite Whittlesey's proximity to areas where Clay Lump had become more common, the town's mud walls were produced in line with the cob structures of the southwest; the mud walls were raised in tapering lifts without forms or shutters and would have been produced in stages over several months. The vulnerability of earth walling to English weather requires all mud walls to have a dry plinth of a more durable material (often stone or brick), in some cases a surface of render, and a coping at its top.

- 2.2. Mud walling in Whittlesey is thought to date from the late C18 and early C19, during which period a tax on brick and tile was in effect (1784-1850). The tax was initially raised in the period following the American War of Independence (1776-1783) to pay for the Government's war debts but remained in place for many decades along with other taxes on building materials such as glass, imported timber, and, briefly, stone and slate.
- 2.3. Whittlesey had grown significantly in the C17 as the draining of the Fens brought new opportunities to the town. Many properties in Whittlesey at that time had long burgage plots capable of producing goods for the town's large market. During the period of land enclosures at the end of the C18 and early C19 the demarcation of property boundaries became more important. The creation of very long boundary structures will have helped to settle property disputes and to manage the land. Stone and timber were not convenient resources for this purpose in the Fens, but high-quality clays, exposed by land reclamation, were available. Though the town would later have a significant brick making industry, with four brickworks in operation at the end of the C19, large quantities of cheap bricks were not so easily available a century before. Given the very long nature of many of these burgage boundaries, and the fact that the walls themselves were not intended to be polite structures for the display of status, the use of mud walling was a cheap and highly practical vernacular solution to an otherwise expensive problem.
- 2.4. Whittlesey's walls have some variation from one to the other: in height, in plinth material (brick, stone, or a mixture of both), and in coping material (usually thatch, pantiles, or wooden boards), but are otherwise a coherent group of structures. They are difficult to date precisely, especially as they are found on long-standing property boundaries, and their materials can routinely be replaced. By the late C20 this level of maintenance was at odds with building fashions that were faster in operation: whole sections of ready-made fence could replace a dilapidated section of wall. This tendency,

combined with the frequent subdivision of burgage plots to accommodate new housing or alterations to the road network, have resulted in a significant loss of the town's mud walls. Between 1980 and 2017 when it is thought that 570 metres of mud wall has been lost in the town. Whittlesey is the only Cambridgeshire location with a surviving tradition of mud walling, though the outlying hamlet of Eastrea contains one further example. Following Historic England's assessment and decision to statutorily list the most significant and complete sections of mud walls in Whittlesey in 2021, the remaining 16 sections of unlisted walling still retain high historical significance to the local area and are deemed worthy of protection under the provisions of an Article 4 Direction.

Locations:

1. 45 Hallcroft Road
2. 4 Finkle Lane
3. 4 Delph Street / 6c Delph Street
4. 6b Delph Street/ 8 Delph Street
5. 7 Arnolds Lane/ 25 Arnolds Lane
6. 8 Horsegate/ 14 Horsegate
7. 8 Delph Street / Delph Court
8. 27C Windmill Street, and 12, 14 and 20 Low Cross
9. 28a and 30 Bassenhally Road and 1 Bassenhally Court
10. 50, 48 and 46 Low Cross, Whittlesey
11. 72 and 78 Mayfield Road, Eastrea
12. 87 and 89 Gracious Street, Whittlesey
13. Finkle Court Car Park, 10 and 12 Finkle Court
14. Grosvenor Road, Eastgate Car Park
15. 87 Gracious Street, St Mary's House and the Whittlesey Conservative Club

16. Black Bull Public House/ Former Cinema

1.

Name: Mud Wall at southern boundary of 45 Hallcroft Road, Whittlesey

Location: 45 Hallcroft Road, Whittlesey, Peterborough, PE7 1JW

| County | District | District Type | Parish |
|----------------|----------|--------------------|------------|
| Cambridgeshire | Fenland | District Authority | Whittlesey |

Details:

A vernacular mud wall built in the late-C18 or early C19. Fragments of lime render remain on the mud surface of the wall, which stands on a brick footing laid in a rough English bond. It has a coping of corrugate tiles beneath ridge tiles. It is approximately 6m in length and 1.65m in height.

Map National Grid Reference: TL2658397394



2.

Name: Mud Wall adjoining 4 Finkle Lane, Whittlesey

Location 4 Finkle Lane, Whittlesey, Peterborough, PE7 1HT

| County | District | District Type | Parish |
|----------------|----------|--------------------|------------|
| Cambridgeshire | Fenland | District Authority | Whittlesey |

Details:

A vernacular mud wall built in the between 1841 and 1886. The un-rendered wall stands on an exposed footing of stone rubble. The southern half of the wall supports a pantiled roof and abuts the rear of 4 Finkle Lane. The northern half has no coping though the remnants of a brick core that formerly supported a tiled coping can be seen. It is approximately 7.83m in length and 2.29m in height.

Map National Grid Reference: TL2647897098



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3.

Name: Mud Wall between 4 and 6C Delph Street, Whittlesey

Location: Boundary wall between 4 and 6C Delph Street, Whittlesey

| County | District | District Type | Parish |
|----------------|----------|--------------------|------------|
| Cambridgeshire | Fenland | District Authority | Whittlesey |

Details:

A vernacular mud wall built in the late-C18 or early C19. The un-rendered wall stands on an exposed footing of stone and brick rubble and has a tiled coping. The northern half of the coping makes use of corrugated roof tiles, while the southern half has pantiles instead, all of which lies beneath ridge tiles. It is approximately 18.08m in length and 1.86m in height.

Map National Grid Reference: TL2705197460



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4.

Name: Mud Wall between 6B and 8 Delph Street, Whittlesey

Location: Boundary wall between 6B and 8 Delph Street, Whittlesey

| County | District | District Type | Parish |
|----------------|----------|--------------------|------------|
| Cambridgeshire | Fenland | District Authority | Whittlesey |

Details:

A vernacular mud wall built in the late-C18 or early C19. The un-rendered wall stands on a mostly buried footing of stone and brick rubble. A single section of coping in wooden boards with iron pegs remains at its centre. Elsewhere along its length the pegs remain. It is approximately 16.77m in length and 1.37m in height.

Map National Grid Reference: TL2703697476

Map National Grid Reference: TL2711897441



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6.

Name: Mud Wall between 8 and 14 Horsegate and Wades Yard, Whittlesey

Location: Boundary wall between 8 and 14 Horsegate and Wades Yard, Whittlesey

| County | District | District Type | Parish |
|----------------|----------|--------------------|------------|
| Cambridgeshire | Fenland | District Authority | Whittlesey |

Details:

A vernacular mud wall built in the mid-C19. The wall is aligned roughly east-west. The ground level on the south side is lower and reveals the footings, which are constructed of stone and brick rubble. The coping pantiles survive better on the south side, and all sit beneath ridge tiles bedded in mortar. Patches of cementitious render can be seen on the north side. It is approximately 11.59m in length and 2m in height.

Map National Grid Reference: TL2664597151



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7.

Name: Mud Wall between 8 Delph Street and Delph Court, Whittlesey

Location: Boundary wall between 8 Delph Street and Delph Court, Whittlesey

| County | District | District Type | Parish |
|----------------|----------|--------------------|------------|
| Cambridgeshire | Fenland | District Authority | Whittlesey |

Details:

A vernacular mud wall built in the late-C18 or early C19. The un-rendered mud wall stands on a tall plinth of roughly coursed stone rubble. It has a coping of pantiles mortared beneath ridge tiles, similar to that of the brick wall to the north. The coping is missing from a small section at the southern end of the wall and some of the mud

beneath it has been lost as a result. It is approximately 15.3m in length and 2.13m in height. A small section at the southern end of the wall has recently collapsed.

Map National Grid Reference: TL2702297474



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8.

Name: Mud Wall between 27C Windmill Street, and 12, 14 and 20 Low Cross, Whittlesey

Location: Boundary wall between 27C Windmill Street, and 12, 14 and 20 Low Cross, Whittlesey

| County | District | District Type | Parish |
|----------------|----------|--------------------|------------|
| Cambridgeshire | Fenland | District Authority | Whittlesey |

Details:

A vernacular mud wall built in the late-C18 or early C19. The un-rendered wall stands on an exposed footing of coursed stone rubble. No coping remains in place. A large section at the eastern end of the wall has collapsed. It is approximately 26.39m in length and 1.8m in height

Map National Grid Reference: TL2668997389



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9.

Name: Mud Wall between 28a and 30 Bassenhally Road and 1 Bassenhally Court, Whittlesey

Location: Boundary wall between 28a and 30 Bassenhally Road and 1 Bassenhally Court, Whittlesey

| County | District | District Type | Parish |
|----------------|----------|--------------------|------------|
| Cambridgeshire | Fenland | District Authority | Whittlesey |

Details:

A vernacular mud wall built in the late-C18 or early C19. The wall stands on an exposed footing of stone and brick rubble. Areas of render remain on the west side. Coping materials vary along its length, including some wooden boards, pieces of corrugated metal, and other scrap material. Some parts of the wall show courses of brickwork or large sections of rubble which have replaced original mud walling. It is approximately 28.58m in length and between 1.78 and 1.83m in height.

Map National Grid Reference:TL2711197508



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10.

Name: Mud wall between 50, 48 and 46 Low Cross, Whittlesey

Location: Boundary wall between 50, 48 and 46 Low Cross, Whittlesey

| County | District | District Type | Parish |
|----------------|----------|--------------------|------------|
| Cambridgeshire | Fenland | District Authority | Whittlesey |

Details:

A vernacular mud wall built in the late-C18 or early C19. The un-rendered wall stands on an exposed footing of stone rubble. Evidence of tiled coping can be found at the south

end of the wall, where the mudwork merges into a small area of brick replacement. A single wooden framework to support a (now lost) coping structure also remains but not functioning weather protection is in place. It is approximately 14.13m in length and 1.42m in height.

Map National Grid Reference: TL2664497508



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11.

Name: Mud Wall between 72 and 78 Mayfield Road, Eastrea

Location: Boundary wall between 72 and 78 Mayfield Road, Eastrea

| County | District | District Type | Parish |
|----------------|----------|--------------------|------------|
| Cambridgeshire | Fenland | District Authority | Whittlesey |

Details:

A vernacular mud wall likely to have been built in the mid-C19. The un-rendered wall stands on an exposed footing of stone and brick rubble. It is L-shaped in plan, with a small section of just over one metre in length running perpendicularly to the east from the southern end of the main wall. It has a coping of Welsh slate resting on a wooden framework, without a ridge detail. It is approximately 13.45m in total length and 2.11m in height.

Map National Grid Reference:TL2959096932



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12.

Name: Mud Wall between 87 and 89 Gracious Street, Whittlesey

Location: Boundary wall between 87 and 89 Gracious Street, Whittlesey

| County | District | District Type | Parish |
|----------------|----------|--------------------|------------|
| Cambridgeshire | Fenland | District Authority | Whittlesey |

Details:

A vernacular mud wall built in the late-C18 or early C19. The un-rendered wall stands on an exposed footing of stone and brick rubble. The coping is formed metal plates meeting at a central ridge over a wooden frame. Areas of concrete patch repair exist at the upper levels of the wall. It is approximately 15.25m in length and 1.98m in height.

Map National Grid Reference: TL2680897343



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13.

Name: Mud Wall between Finkle Court Car Park, 10 and 12 Finkle Court, Whittlesey

Location: Boundary Wall between Finkle Court Car Park, 10 and 12 Finkle Court, Whittlesey

| County | District | District Type | Parish |
|----------------|----------|--------------------|------------|
| Cambridgeshire | Fenland | District Authority | Whittlesey |

Details:

A vernacular mud wall built in the mid-C19. The wall stands on an exposed footing of stone rubble. Some small fragments of lime render remain on the mud surface. The coping, formed of pantiles and ridge tiles, is on top of a C20 Fletton red brick cornice laid in English bond. It is approximately 4.57m in length and 1.98m in height.

Map National Grid Reference: TL2652697429



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14.

Name: Mud Walls at the north of Grosvenor Road Eastgate Car Park, Whittlesey

Location: Northern boundary of Eastgate Car Park, Whittlesey

| County | District | District Type | Parish |
|----------------|----------|--------------------|------------|
| Cambridgeshire | Fenland | District Authority | Whittlesey |

Details:

Two sections of a vernacular mud wall built in the late-C18 or the first half of the C19. The un-rendered walls stand on exposed footings of stone and brick rubble. The smaller western section has a coping of pantiles topped with blue ridge tiles, while the longer eastern section has no coping detail. The western section is approximately 1.68m in length and 1.55m in height. The eastern section measures around 13.57m in length and 1.53m in height. They stand in line with each other, separated by around 10 metres, on the southern boundary of land between Blunts Lane and Eastgate Car Park.

Map National Grid Reference: TL2717497119



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15.

Name: Mud Walls between 87 Gracious Street, St Mary's House and the Whittlesey Conservative Club

Location: Boundary Walls between 87 Gracious Street, St Mary's House and the Whittlesey Conservative Club

| County | District | District Type | Parish |
|----------------|----------|--------------------|------------|
| Cambridgeshire | Fenland | District Authority | Whittlesey |

Details:

A vernacular mud wall built in the mid-C19, now in two sections running approximately north-south. Both parts of the mud wall stand on exposed footings of stone and brick rubble and have copings made of wooden boards. Between them is a section of C20 breeze block walling. The western face of the wall is exposed while the eastern side has a surface of cementitious render. The northern section is approximately 11.23m in length and 2.09m in height, while the southern section is around 23.48m long and 2.26m high

Map National Grid Reference: TL2682397324



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16.

Name: Mud Walls between Black Bull Public House/ Former Cinema and Black Bull and Market Mews.

Location: The Black Bull, 18-20 Market Street, Whittlesey, Peterborough, PE7 1BD

| County | District | District Type | Parish |
|----------------|----------|--------------------|------------|
| Cambridgeshire | Fenland | District Authority | Whittlesey |

Details:

The northern section is statutorily listed at GII as of 2021. Two further unlisted sections of vernacular mud wall originating in the late-C18 or early C19 enclose parts of the rear yard and car park of the Black Bull Inn across two parts of the eastern boundary, and a small section on the west side. Wall of mud construction with wooden copings.

To the east two sections of mud walling survive, joining the northern wall at a perpendicular angle. The two sections are divided by an area of missing mud wall roughly 7m in length. Both sections are built on stone footings. The northernmost section retains some render on its west elevation, and the southern section shows areas of surviving limewash. The small section on the western boundary, closer to the inn, has been recently reconstructed with all elements of its construction renewed. The walls measure approximately 6m long and 1.65m high at the north-east; 3.74m long and 1.83m high at the south-east; and 6.10m long at the west while the height is unrecorded.

Map National Grid Reference: TL2693297098



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