

F/YR16/0182/FDC
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Applicant: Mr Trevor Watson
Fenland District Council

Agent : Mr Mark Wedge
Fenland District Council

War Memorial, Queen Street, Whittlesey, Cambridgeshire

Erection of a 4.8 metre high flag pole and display of associated flags

Reason for Committee: Fenland District Council application

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This proposal seeks advertisement consent and listed building consent for the installation of a flagpole and the display of flags to the rear of the existing war memorial in Whittlesey.
- 1.2 Whilst Historic England have raised some concern relating to the impact of the proposal on the war memorial in heritage terms they also identify that this impact has to be weighed against any community benefits derived from the introduction of the flagpole
- 1.3 The flagpole will have some degree of reversibility and its location has been carefully selected so as to not compete with the war memorial. It is considered that it will provide another layer of interpretation with regard to the memorial and strengthen the sense of community within the town; as such it is felt on balance the scheme may be favourably recommended in accordance with Policy LP2 and LP18 of the Fenland Local Plan, adopted May 2014.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION:

- 2.1 The site comprises the town War Memorial which dates from the early 1920s. It is an impressive monument, comprising a sculpture of St. George standing above the slain dragon, raised on a tall stone plinth which bears copper plaques and memorial inscriptions, and enclosed within cast iron railings on a plinth. The memorial was constructed by Mr T. W. Ford and unveiled in 1923. It stands on an island in Queen Street, adjacent to the Market Place at the heart of the town and Whittlesey Conservation Area.
- 2.2 The memorial is now listed at grade II on account of its special architectural and historic interest. Within the vicinity of the site are a number of listed structures namely Market Cross (Grade II* and SAM), 2 Market Street (grade II) and 14 Market Place (grade II).

3 PROPOSAL:

- 3.1 It is proposed to add a flagpole at the left-hand rear corner of the railed enclosure. The flagpole will be 4.8 metres high and constructed from fibreglass finished in white; the pole will be tapered and will feature an internal halyard with winch

handle. It will be slightly lower than the statue. The idea for the flagpole originates locally as it would enable flags to be flown on commemorative dates.

- 3.2 Two planning submissions have been received; the first F/YR16/0182/FDC seeks advertisement consent to display the flags on the flagpole, i.e. commemorative and organisational flags for the Army Cadet Force, Air Training Corps, Royal British Legion and Scouts.
- 3.3 The second submission relates to Listed Building consent for the flagpole which sits within the curtilage of the Grade II Listed War Memorial.

4 SITE PLANNING HISTORY

F/99/0375/LB	Alterations to existing railings and gate erection of new section of railings and wall and installation of 2 no. ground lights	Granted 13/10/1999
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5 CONSULTATIONS

- 5.1 **Town Council:** Will be considered at the Full Council meeting on the 13th April, and comments will be forthcoming post this meeting.
- 5.2 **The Whittlesey Society:** The Society have no objection. It is an excellent idea to honour those who gave their lives in the many conflicts over the years.
- 5.3 **CCC Highways:** No highways objections. The appropriate license under the Highways Act should be obtained for its erection within the public highway. Any approval is subject to this license being obtained.
- 5.4 **Historic England:** Historic England question the appropriateness of the proposed addition (for detailed comments see main body of the report).
- 5.5 **FDC Conservation:** On balance, the proposal put forward is acceptable.
- 5.6 **Local Residents/Interested Parties:** None received

6 POLICY FRAMEWORK

6.1 Fenland Local Plan 2014

Policy LP2 - Facilitating Health and Wellbeing of Fenland Residents
Policy LP16 - Delivering and Protecting High Quality Environments across the District
Policy LP18 – The Historic Environment

6.2 National Planning Policy Framework

Para 11 – Applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise
Para 56. - Good design
Chapter 12 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

7 KEY ISSUES:

- 7.1 This proposal relates to the installation of a flagpole and the display of associated flags pertinent to the memorial and covers both the listed building and advertisement consent aspects of the scheme. Key issues to resolve are whether

the flagpole will have a negative impact on the character of the area and the listed structure, whether it is appropriate development in the context of the heritage asset and the benefits of the scheme in terms of community cohesion and the contribution the proposal will make in terms of creating a built and social environment in which communities can flourish.

- **Background**
- **Principle of Development**
- **Heritage considerations**
- **Community cohesion**

8 **BACKGROUND:**

- 8.1 It is understood that The Royal British Legion have been bequeathed a sum of money which, within the parameters of the gift, they would like to spend on erecting a flag pole or flag poles by Whittlesey's war memorial for the purpose of displaying a flag(s) and as a commemoration to all fallen servicemen. It is understood that the intention is to have a flag(s) permanently raised on the flag pole displaying the Union Flag or a Royal British Legion flag.
- 8.2 Whittlesey's Royal British Legion maintain the war memorial and actively promote remembrance of those who have fallen in war. In Summer 2015, prior to the submission of this application, the Royal British Legion sought advice from the Conservation Officer (Katie McAndrew) as to the possibilities of erecting a flag pole at Whittlesey's War Memorial. At that time and in this specific instance no objection was raised to the erection of 1 flag pole and flag at the memorial subject to it being of an appropriate height. The proposal put forward reflects the advice given at that time.

9 **ASSESSMENT**

- 9.1 **Principle of Development:** The proposal comprises the installation of a flagpole and display of flags which have a direct linkage with the war memorial and local organisations. Policy LP18 of the Fenland Local Plan, adopted May 2014 is explicit in its text that the Council will protect, conserve and seek opportunities to enhance the historic environment throughout Fenland.
- 9.2 **Heritage Considerations:**
- 9.2.1 The War Memorial dates from the early 1920s. As indicated by Historic England it is an impressive monument, comprising a sculpture of St. George standing above the slain dragon, raised on a tall stone plinth which bears copper plaques and memorial inscriptions, and enclosed within cast iron railings on a plinth.
- 9.2.2 It is proposed to add a flagpole at the left-hand rear corner of the railed enclosure. The flagpole would be slightly lower than the statue. It would enable flags to be flown on commemorative dates. The Whittlesey memorial is a careful composition, with the monument placed symmetrically in the railed enclosure, central on the short axis but set back on the long so as to leave space for ceremony.
- 9.2.3 Whilst Historic England consider that to add an asymmetric flagpole would detract from the balance of the composition, our own conservation officer highlights that the pole and flag will sit behind St George's right shoulder as a back drop to the monument itself. As the war memorial is surmounted by a sculpture of a person

they consider that there is a defined front aspect to the monument and defined rear aspect to the monument. In this respect it is felt that the proposed pole and flag will be interpreted as sitting behind the monument and will not unduly interfere with how the monument is viewed within the streetscene or key views of the monument.

- 9.2.4 As the flag pole will sit in the corner of the enclosure it does sit in front of any of the monuments elevations and will not obscure any views of, or the ability to read, any of the plaques which appear round the tapered base of the monument. Accordingly it may be argued that the proposed flag pole and flag will not harm the setting of this listed war memorial and should complement this specific war memorial structure.
- 9.2.5 In determining this application, Historic England note that due regard must be given to the relevant policies of the National Planning Policy Framework. The Framework establishes that great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets and their significance, and that harm to such assets or their significance should require clear and convincing justification (NPPF, 132). Should proposals entail such harm, and should there be such justification, the Framework requires local planning authorities to weigh the harm arising against such public benefits as would follow from the proposals (NPPF, 134).
- 9.2.6 In this case Historic England recommend that in determining this application it is necessary to consider the harm to the symmetry of the war memorial that would follow from the addition of the proposed flagpole, and weigh that harm against any public benefit implicit in the wish to add the flagpole to enhance the memorial's meaning.

9.3 Community Cohesion:

- 9.3.1 It is acknowledged by Historic England that the significance of war memorials lies not only in their historic and architectural value - but also in their communal value - the value derived from the meaning they have for the community. In this regard Historic England appreciates that it may be considered by the community to enhance the memorial's meaning. In this regard it is noted that the monument serves as a regular meeting place for the Whittlesey Memorial Day Service each year.
- 9.3.2 The proposed flag pole and flag will have a direct impact on the setting of the war memorial as it is intended to do so. The flagpole is intended to complement the monument in that it will provide the infrastructure to fly the national flag at the side of the monument or other flags, as the community see fit, on special occasions. It is understood and appreciated that at times of remembrance such as Remembrance Sunday the war memorial this will enhance the status of this meeting point for reflection and thought and galvanize a sense of community within the town.

10 CONCLUSIONS:

- 10.1 Whilst the comments of Historic England are noted and it is recognised that there may be some impact on the form of the war memorial in heritage terms this impact has to be weighed against the positive aspects of the scheme in terms of community cohesion and celebration. The flagpole will have some degree of reversibility and its location has been carefully selected so as to not compete with the war memorial; indeed it will provide another layer of interpretation and

strengthen the sense of community within the town and as such it is felt on balance the scheme may be favourably recommended in accordance with Policy LP2 and LP18 of the Fenland Local Plan, adopted May 2014.

11.0 RECOMMENDATION: Grant

F/YR16/0182/FDC

1

The advertisement permitted shall only be displayed for a period of 5 years from the date of this consent. On or before the expiry of this period the advertisement shall be removed unless a further application for renewal is submitted prior to that date.

Reason - To ensure compliance with Regulation 15 (2) of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007.

2

a) No advertisement is to be displayed without the permission of the owner of the site or any other person with an interest in the site entitled to grant permission.

b) No advertisement shall be sited or displayed so as to -

- (i) endanger persons using any highway, railway, waterway, dock, harbour or aerodrome (civil or military);
- (ii) obscure, or hinder the ready interpretation of, any traffic sign, railway signal or aid to navigation by water or air; or
- (iii) hinder the operation of any device used for the purpose of security or surveillance or for the measuring of speed of any vehicle.

c) Any advertisement displayed, and any site used for the display of advertisements, shall be maintained in a condition that does not impair the visual amenity of the site.

d) Any structure or hoarding erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements shall be maintained in a condition that does not endanger the public.

e) Where an advertisement is required under these Regulations to be removed, the site shall be left in a condition that does not endanger the public or impair visual amenity.

Reason - To safeguard the visual amenity of the area in accordance with Policy LP18 of the Fenland Local Plan, adopted May 2014

F/YR16/0183/FDC

1 The works permitted shall be begun not later than 3 years from the date of this consent.

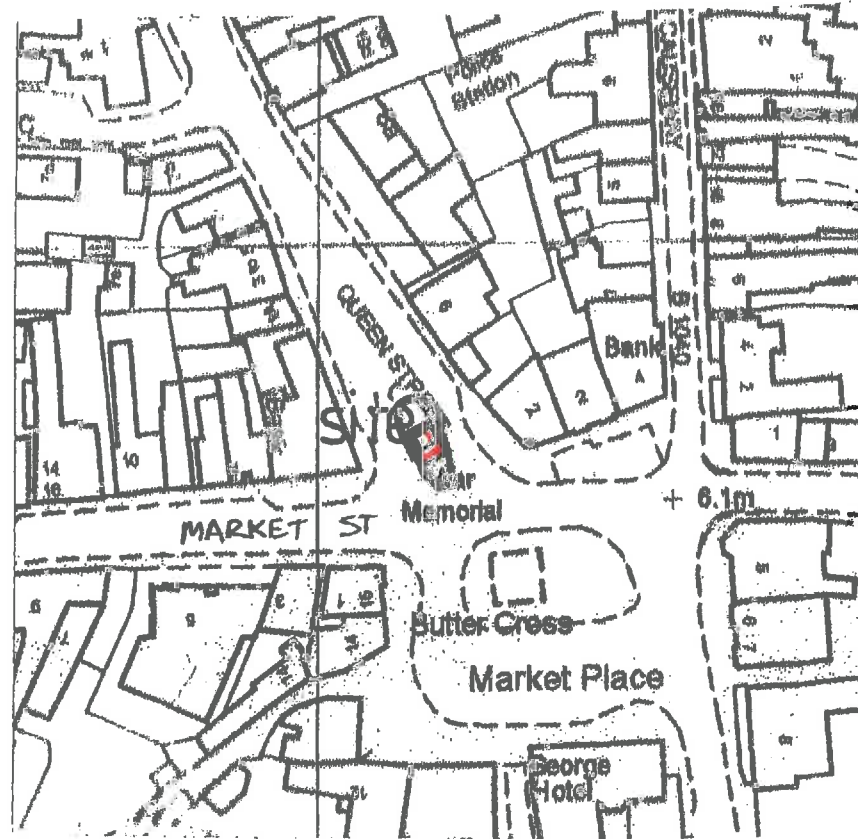
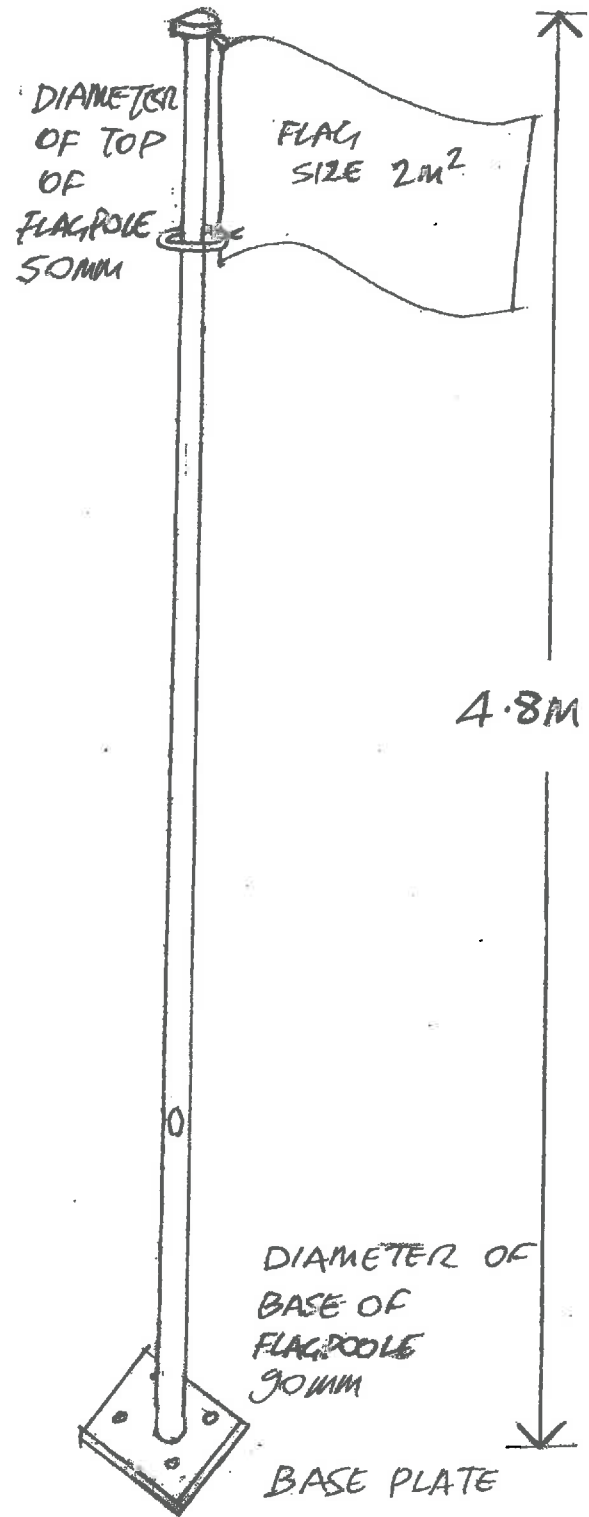
Reason - To ensure compliance with Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2 Should the flag pole become redundant and is not be used to fly any flag over a period of 12 months then it shall be removed permanently.

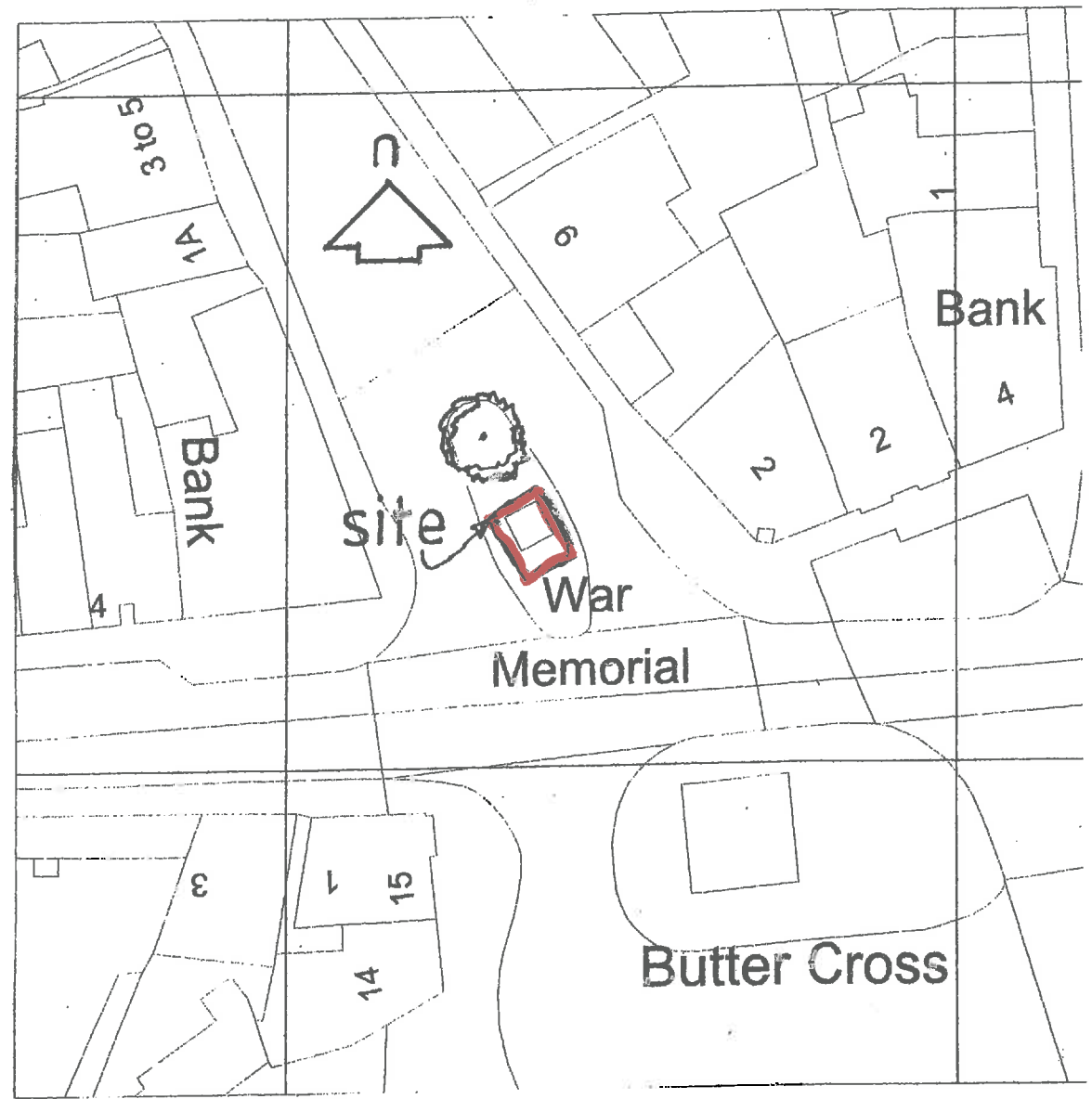
Reason - To safeguard the visual amenity of the area in accordance with Policy LP18 of the Fenland Local Plan, adopted May 2014

Fibreglass flagpole with internal halyard
with winch handle.

1:250



Location plan 1:1250



Block plan 1:500

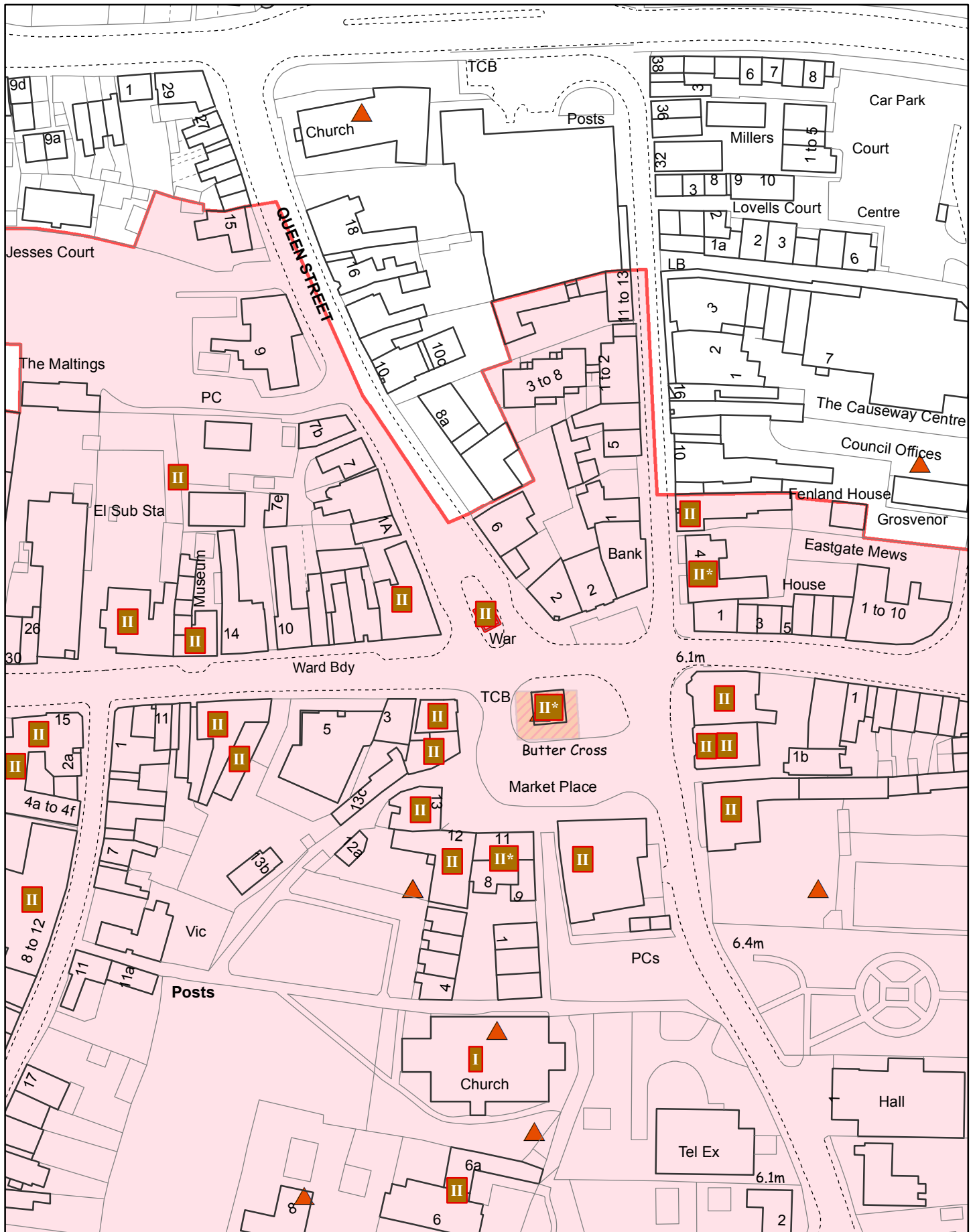
Hodsons
Chartered Surveyors
8A Market Street
Whittlesey
Peterborough
PE7 1BD

01733 203064

Flag Pole at the
Whittlesey War
Memorial, Queen
Street,
Whittlesey.

1 of 2

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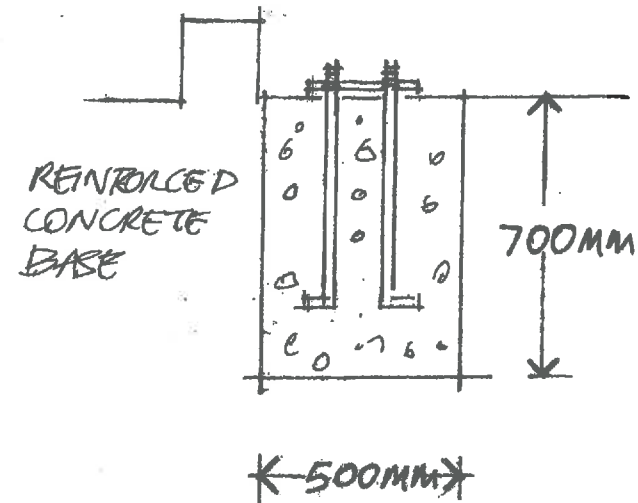
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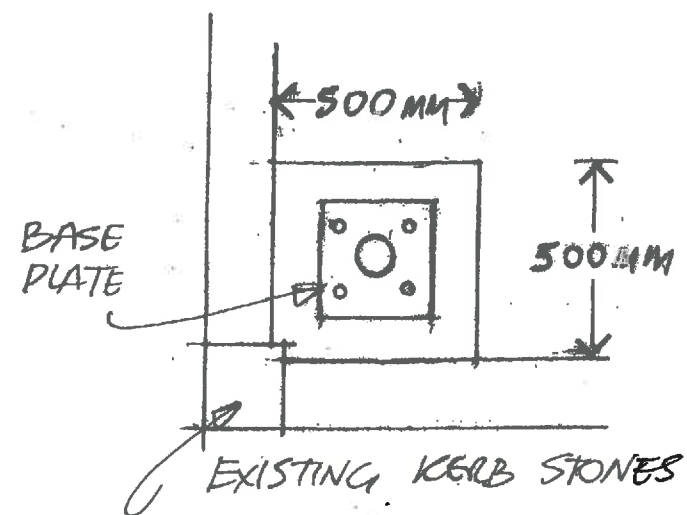
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Scale = 1:1,250





Section through Flag Pole base 1:20



Plan of Flag Pole base 1:20



Photograph of War Memorial showing proposed Flag Pole 1:50

Hodsons
 Chartered Surveyors
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01733 203064

Flag Pole at the
 Whittlesey War
 Memorial, Queen
 Street,
 Whittlesey.

2 of 2

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