



Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities

Time and Date

11.00 am on Thursday, 19th June, 2025

Place

Diamond Room 2 - Council House

Public Business

1. **Apologies**
2. **Declarations of Interest**
3. **Minutes** (Pages 3 - 6)
 - a) To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2024
 - b) Matters arising
4. **Local Listing Nomination and Recommendation (Post Public Consultation) - The Hearsall Church, Queensland Avenue** (Pages 7 - 26)

Report of the Director of City Services and Commercial
5. **Local Listing Nomination and Recommendation (Post Public Consultation) - Blacker Bombard Mortar Spigot, Land off Bennetts Road** (Pages 27 - 46)

Report of the Director of City Services and Commercial
6. **Outstanding Issues**

There are no outstanding issues
7. **Any other item of public business which the Cabinet Member decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved**

Private Business

Nil

Julie Newman, Director of Law and Governance, Council House, Coventry

Wednesday, 11 June 2025

Note: The person to contact about the agenda and documents for this meeting is
Carolyn Sinclair, Governance Services Officer
Email: carolyn.sinclair@coventry.gov.uk

Membership: Councillors S Agboola (Deputy Cabinet Member), N Akhtar (Cabinet Member) and R Bailey (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Public Access

Any member of the public who would like to attend the meeting in person is encouraged to contact the officer below in advance of the meeting regarding arrangements for public attendance. A guide to attending public meeting can be found here: <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/publicAttendanceMeetings>

Carolyn Sinclair, Governance Services Officer
Email: carolyn.sinclair@coventry.gov.uk

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities held at
11.00 am on Friday, 20 September 2024

Present:

Members: Councillor N Akhtar (Cabinet Member)
 Councillor S Agboola (Deputy Cabinet Member)
 Councillor R Bailey (Shadow Cabinet Member)
 Councillor M Lapsa (Shadow Cabinet Member)

Other Members: Councillor G Lloyd (Chair of Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee)

Employees
(by Service Area):

City Services and R Back, C Styles
Commercial

Law and Governance O Aremu, M Salmon

Apologies: There were no apologies

Public Business

7. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

8. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th June 2024 were agreed and signed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

9. Consultation Response to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on Proposed Reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities considered a report of the Director of City Services and Commercial, that had also been considered at the meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee on 19th September 2024, which outlined the consultation currently being undertaken by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and sought approval to submit a proposed response to the consultation.

The Government was consulting on a series of proposed changes to national planning policy that included specific changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and broader reforms relating to planning fees, local plan

intervention and the thresholds used for determining applications under the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) regime. The consultation ran from 30th July – 24th September 2024 with the Government indicating that a new version of the NPPF would be published before the end of 2024.

Paragraph 6 of Part 2 A of the Constitution sets out how the Council will respond to Government Consultation papers. Due to the short timescale and complexity, it had not been possible to submit a report to either Council or Cabinet. Where time did not permit the submission of a report to Council or Cabinet, the Constitution required that responses should be agreed by the Leader, the appropriate Cabinet Member and the appropriate Director, following consultation with the appropriate Shadow Cabinet Member. In this case, the appropriate Cabinet Member had the authority, at their discretion, to refer a consultation to the relevant Scrutiny Board in light of the importance and high profile of the consultation process.

With the agreement of the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities and the Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee, given the importance and high profile of this consultation and in order to ensure transparency and afford cross party consideration of the response, it had been agreed that Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee and the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities would formally consider the proposed response prior to recommending the response to the Leader of the Council, in accordance with the Constitution. The Shadow Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities was invited to attend both the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee and the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities meetings.

Since December 2022, the City Council had been undertaking a Local Plan Review in order to update the 2017 Local Plan. To this end, a Regulation 18 (Issues and Options) consultation was undertaken between July and September 2023. Led by the Local Plan Advisory Panel, officers were now at an advanced stage of the Local Plan Review process and a Regulation 19 (draft revised Local Plan) consultation was scheduled to commence before the end of 2024.

The report gave an overview of the proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework highlighting any implications for Coventry. An appendix to the report provided the National Planning Policy Framework: Draft Text for Consultation and a further appendix provided a Draft Response to Consultation.

The Cabinet Member received a briefing note from Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee's consideration of the report (their Minute 27/24 referred) that had been circulated and requested that the following be considered as part of the Council's response to the consultation:

- A covering letter which included the following alongside consultation response submission:
 - The Council stress the primacy of the local plan in decision making notwithstanding the national planning policy framework
 - Further reinforce the needs of an ageing population and the necessity for the highest regard to be given to designing for healthy communities.
 - Re-introduction of financial support for 'planning aid', in order to support local residents in their ability to engage with the planning system.

- Additional comments or amendments to specific questions:
 - Question 4 – add reference to the need for family housing and the considerations of how family housing with appropriate garden, space standards and parking standards may be met alongside the NPPF's promotion of increasing density in urban areas.
 - Question 7 – refer to Annual Monitoring Statements (AMR's) produced by all authorities which demonstrate housing supply – and reinforce their role in the definition of a local authorities supply position.
 - Question 12 – reinforce local circumstance and the Coventry and Warwickshire context being distinct from other areas of the WMCA
 - Question 17 – strengthen response to identify the need for local affordability metrics to inform calculations.
 - Question 20 – strengthen response on the lack of clarity on brownfield passports and suggest reference is removed
 - Question 23 – Strengthen wording further to promote that grey belt should only be identified through plan making process and not be open to speculative application processes.
 - Question 70 – Strengthen wording to further emphasis the role of public open space in the creation and sustainability of healthy communities and positive individual health.
 - Question 78 – Further strengthen that climate change standard should be delivered on a national level and through the building regulations system in order to meet climate goals and ensure equitability and promote the easiest integration of retrofit renewables.
 - Question 80 – Strengthen to state that CCC do not support development within areas of flood risk.
 - Question 84-86 – Further wording to support the inclusion of considerations of water security as both a national and local priority.
 - Question 92 – State that there should be a fee uplift to retrospective applications to disincentivise development taking place where consent should have been sought.
 - Question 92 – Fee uplift for significant major developments should be set, whilst a reduction in fees to support small businesses and support economic growth should also be considered.
 - Question 92 – Add additional reference for the necessity of funding for planning aid to support local residents in understanding and making representation in the planning system.
 - Question 105 – Add in comment of support of standardisation and digitisation of the planning system to promote ease of access for residents.

The Committee also requested that Planning Officers arrange Elected Members seminars and/or briefings on the review of the Coventry Local Development Plan ahead of consideration at the meeting of the Council in December 2024.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities:

- 1) **Agrees the comments and requests made by the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee following their consideration of this matter at their meeting on 19th September 2024.**

2) Recommends that the Leader of the Council approves the draft consultation response attached at Appendix II to the report in accordance with the Constitution.

3) Delegates the submission of the approved consultation response to the Strategic Lead for Planning before the deadline on 24th September 2024.

10. Outstanding Issues

There were no outstanding issues.

11. Any other item of public business which the Cabinet Member decides to take as matters of urgency because of the special circumstances involved

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 11.30 am)

Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities

19th June 2025

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities – Cllr Naeem Akhtar

Director approving submission of the report:

Director of City Services and Commercial

Ward(s) affected:

Whoberley Ward

Title:

Local Listing Nomination and Recommendation (Post Public Consultation) - The Hearsall Church, Queensland Avenue

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive summary:

Nomination for a new local listing to be included on Coventry's Local List of Heritage Assets was received by Council, which if approved, would introduce additional considerations in the planning assessment of any future applications.

Local List of Heritage Assets, and additional information for public nominations is available to the public via the authority's website at

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/heritage-ecology-trees/listed-buildings/8>

Further to officers' assessment, the nomination was found to be valid and approved for a six-week public consultation between 8th July and 16th August 2024 to further inform decision making post public consultation, and the recommendation is now being made.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member is requested to:

1. Note the contents of the ePetition appended at Appendix 2 of this report.
2. Endorse the nomination for the Hearsall Church Hall (original building) for inclusion on Coventry's Local List of Heritage Assets, for the reasons set out in the report.

3. Delegate authority to the Strategic Lead for Planning, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, to finalise the details of the designation.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix One: The Hearsall Church Local Listing Nomination - Officer Report. V3.

Appendix Two: The ePetition – Save Hearsall Baptist Church Christmas Star.

Background papers:

City of Coventry Local List of Heritage Assets – criteria

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/heritage-ecology-trees/listed-buildings/8>

Cabinet Reports

[Agenda for Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities on Monday, 17th June, 2024, 1.00 pm - Coventry City Council](#)

Other useful documents

Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage, Historic England Advice Note 7 (Second Edition)

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/local-heritage-listing-advice-note-7/heag301-local-heritage-listing/>

Has it or will it be considered by scrutiny?

The role of Locally Listed Heritage assets in the planning system was presented to Scrutiny Panel 6th October 2022.

Has it or will it be considered by any other council committee, advisory panel or other body?

The Local Listing Nominations – Process Review was considered and endorsed by cabinet on 24th February 2023.

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: The Hearsall Church (Hall) Local Listing Nomination-Post Public Consultation

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 A public nomination for the Hearsall Church to be considered for inclusion onto the Local List of Heritage assets was received by the Local Authority in 2024.
- 1.2 This report makes recommendation to the Cabinet Member regarding the proposed addition to the local list, further to examination of the findings from public consultation, review of heritage and planning context, and local research findings. The case for nomination was presented as the officer review for public consultation, this has now been revised, updated and included as appendix one of this report.
- 1.3 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, section 1 and the National Planning Policy Framework emphasize the importance of approving a 'list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest' as a guide to Local Authorities as part of their planning functions. These are known as Designated Heritage Assets i.e. Statutory Listed Buildings, graded by significance based on a national criteria set out by Department of Culture, Media and Sport.
- 1.4 Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Planning Act 1990, further states that a building which have been designated because of its special architectural or historic interest and includes not only the building itself, but also:
 - any object or structure fixed to the building
 - any object or structure within the curtilage of the building which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1 July 1948.
- 1.5 Locally listed buildings are buildings within the local planning authority's area which make a positive contribution to its local character and sense of place because of their heritage value. The Local Listing of the non-designated heritage asset of local interest by their local planning authorities is a complementary process identified in the government guidance and follows the same assessment criteria.
- 1.6 The creation and maintenance of a Local List is a way to identify and celebrate historic buildings and sites which enrich the area, this identification and publication of designations also contributes to the Coventry Plan in the promotion of Coventry as a visitor destination and centre for the arts and culture.
- 1.7 A subject matter officer report on listing of the nomination was presented to Cabinet Member on the 17th of June 2024, which upon consideration from Members progressed to public consultation for six weeks between 8th July and 16th August 2024 to further inform local decision making.
- 1.8 Further to the findings of the public consultation, overview of planning, and planning policy context and review of the submitted information, the addition to the local list of heritage assets of the nomination is being recommended.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

2.1 Decline the nomination

Based entirely on the findings from public consultation, the council could consider declining the nomination, however this is not recommended in the interests of promoting and respecting the local heritage of the city and the alignment with the Coventry Plan.

2.2 Endorse the nomination

Members may choose to progress the nomination based on a balanced and objective view, as the 'Hall' relates to the historical significance of being perceived as a source of local identity, landmark value, social interaction and contributes to the collective memory of a place, encompassing of the 'Star of Hope' moveable fixture.

The listing could make it eligible for Listed Building consent in the future for any major repairs or works which incurs no planning fee.

2.3 Do nothing

However, this is not recommended action in the interests of promoting and respecting the local heritage of the city and the alignment with the Coventry Plan.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

3.1 The council received 59 public responses, of which six were in favour of the local listing, four abstained and the rest were largely unsupportive of the listing yet strongly recommended retention of the Christmas "fixture" i.e. Star of Hope mounted on the Hall annually as being of high communal and historical value to the local community.

3.2 Of the representations received in favour of the local listing nomination, considerations were made for a positive contribution the original buildings (Hall) to the city's heritage. Officers concur with the recognition of the artistic and architectural value alone which is considered to be medium to high for the Hall (with/without the temporary fixture) and assigns weight in support of the nomination accordingly.

3.3 The overall findings from public consultation predominantly relate to local interest in gaining continuity for the 'star of hope' fixture to the Hall however does not fully demonstrate the weight of opinion in favour for the Hall's rarity, architectural and artistic local value within its setting and wider community.

3.4 Largely the objections were found to be invalid in planning legislative terms as these were based on perceived risks associated with current and future ownerships, functionality of the building as a church, risk to the 'star of hope' amidst pending sale of the building, implications of its inclusion which is of non-material consideration in heritage matters as such.

3.5 Of the representations received opposing the local listing nomination, the following topics were raised for consideration of officers and are responded to as below:

- The importance associated with the communal and historical value of the 'temporary' Christmas fixture to the building was diligently considered by the

officers and found to be within the current planning legislation, which refers to any object or structure within the curtilage of the building which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1 July 1948 to be valid and applicable, in this case as the original building was completed in 1930s for use as Sunday School.

- Amidst the consultation process the council was made aware of the commitment received from the new owners of the church to ensure the 'star of hope' continues to be a monument within the community.

- 3.6 A petition has been received and attached at appendix two. The ePetition ran from 16th December 2023 to 17th February 2024 and contains 1033 signatures. The petition is in favour to Locally List and protect this section of Hearsall Baptist Church, including the spire and the Christmas Star from any future demolition and for the Council to work with partners to secure community use of the building. It should be noted that the proposal is to locally list the building itself and not specifically the Christmas Star. The star is a moveable structure and not something that can be specifically included within the local list. It should also be noted that adding a building to the Local List does not afford the same protection as a statutory Listed Building and cannot prevent demolition if required but it would recognise its heritage value through the local list and any demolition of a locally listed building would require consent through prior notification or a planning application. It would not require Listed Building Consent for demolition. This petition has not yet been formally considered at committee and is included as part of the recommendation for Local Listing.

4 Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 The decision will be implemented and updated on the council's records at the earliest opportunity.

5 Comments from the Director of Finance and Resources and the Director of Law and Governance

5.1 Financial Implications

The recommendation will have no budgetary impact.

5.2 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

6 Other implications

6.1 How will this contribute to the Council Plan (www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/)?

Local List nominations contribute to the Coventry Local Plan Policy HE2: Conservation and Heritage Assets, by identifying and protecting heritage assets of local significance, influencing planning decisions to conserve and enhance the city's character and heritage strategy.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

There is no risk identified associated with the recommendation

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

There is no identified impact associated with the recommendation

6.4 Equalities / EIA?

A full Equality and Impact Assessment (EIA) was undertaken as part of developing the Local Plan. As part of that analysis, the Council had due regard to its public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act (2010).

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment?

There is no direct impact from the recommendations of the report.

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None

Report author(s):

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Service:

Planning, City Services Directorate

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Enquiries should be directed to the above person

Contributor/ approver name	Title	Service Area	Date doc sent out	Response received or approved
Contributors:				
Carolyn Sinclair	Governance Services Officer	Law and Governance	3/6/25	4/6/25
Rob Back	Strategic Lead for Planning	Planning, City Services Directorate	3/6/25	
Anne Lynch	Head of Development Management	Planning, City Services Directorate	3/6/25	4/6/25
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)				
Finance: Cath Crosby	Lead Accountant	Finance	3/6/25	4/6/25
Legal: Oluremi Aremu	Head of Legal and Procurement Services	Law and Governance	3/6/25	9/6/25
Director: Andrew Walster	Director of City Services	City Services	3/6/25	4/6/25
Members: Name				
Cllr Naeem Akhtar	Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities			

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The Hearsall Church Local Listing Nomination - Officer Report

1.0 Context

Hearsall Baptist Church Hall (original building) is located on Queensland Avenue, Coventry. Formerly constructed as the Baptist Sunday School by the local architects and builders in September 1928, later becoming Hearsall Baptist Church.

Architect: George Arthur Steane

Builder: Mr. Player and Son

Built: 1927-1928



Figure 1: Former Hearsall Baptist Church Hall, Queensland Avenue, Coventry (2024)

2.0 Site

The Hearsall Baptist Church sits on a small, 0.45 acres of a corner plot between Fife Road and Queensland Avenue consisting of two distinct buildings blocks. The site is broadly rectangular in plan with principal vehicular access direct from Queensland Avenue to a car parking area sited between the two buildings that occupy the site. To the north of the site is the former Hearsall Baptist Church, and Sunday School (blue on the site plan) and the modern day Hearsall Baptist Church is located south of the site, the buildings sit apart from each other and are connected by a modern internal corridor that is located at the rear of the carpark.

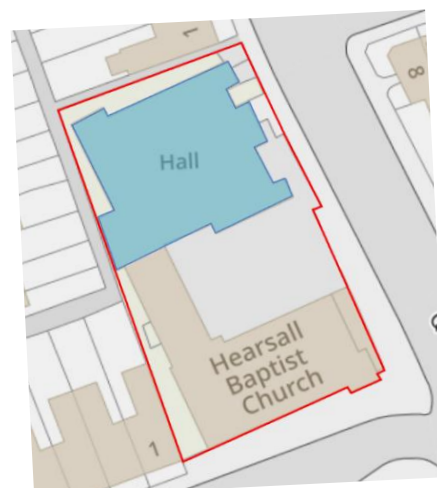


Figure 2: Site plan showing Former Hearsall Baptist Church in blue.

Local List of Heritage Assets

3.0 Assessment – Discussion and Detail

The Baptist Lord Street Sunday School was outgrown by the school group, and the building was falling into disrepair. The Church council approved a scheme for the erection of a new girls and boys' school and chapel, at a cost of between £700 and £800. In 1915 a plot of land was bought at the top of Queensland Avenue big enough for a chapel and Sunday school.

The Sunday School was designed by the Coventry architect G. A. Steane, works began on the building in 1927, the school was built by local builders, W.A. Player, and Son (former Scholar of Lord St. Sunday School). Dr Townley Lord opened the Sunday School with a golden key on a Saturday in September 1928.

The thriving Sunday School comprised infants, juniors, and seniors, over the next years the numbers of attendees doubled. By 1937 the community of Hearsall had developed to such a point that it was felt it should have its own church, on April 25th, 1938, a new constitution was approved by Hearsall Council which allowed the Sunday School to become Hearsall Baptist Church.

In November 1940 following the first blitz, some of the rooms at the church were used for temporary shelter by people who had lost their homes. In the subsequent years, a new Building Fund was created, for a new Church on a plot of land adjacent to Hearsall Baptist Church, this time dealing more specifically with the spiritual needs of the community. Donations came from various groups that attended Hearsall Baptist Church and other

Baptist communities within the city. By 1956, £500 had been donated to the Building Fund and the date of 1960 was planned for the building of the new church, to be located on the corner of Queensland Avenue and Fife Lane. Further donations of £5,000 and £2,000 were added to the fund in 1958. The following year a Coventry firm of Architects, C.F. Redgrave and L.A. Clarke who had considerable experience in building churches were appointed to design the new Church (figure 3). The builders were A.G. Gale. The 1950's church is a modernist brick building with a stone-faced vestibule and memorial chapel. In 1963 there were seats for 180, and 132 church members.

It should be noted that the modern day Hearsall Baptist Church is not part of this assessment and is therefore not individually assessed. It is within the existing site, to the south of Former Hearsall Baptist church and connects to the former Church by a corridor to at the rear of the car park. The modern day Hearsall Baptist Church (built 1962) can be seen in figure 3.

Figure 3: Modern day Hearsall Baptist Church
<https://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/7003652>



Local List of Heritage Assets

External appearance

Italianate in style the former Hearsall Baptist Church (Figure 1) is a tall two storey L-plan with a two-storey road facing range, and two storey rear projecting range. There is a single storey pitched roof element within the angle, creating a square plan form. The building is steel framed clad with red brick and has a low pitched hipped and slate covered roof.

There is a projecting three storey tower terminating in a square cupola with hipped roof on the south side, the north side has a corresponding projecting gable and matching white stone string course at first floor, both gable ends have blue painted doors at ground level, flanked by carved memorial stones within the piers at their base. There are two smaller gables with overhanging eaves and paired decorative brackets in the main facade.

The building contains tall and narrow windows topped with shallow segmental brick arches, there are dark brick surrounds which reach to the base of the floor level. The windows are separated by central brick piers of dark colour with white painted stone string courses above first floor. The building has an interesting and rare use of polychromatic brickwork and stacked tile detailing in the façade. It is not common to find stacked tiling used in this manner. Originally the windows would have had been wooden framed, these have been replaced with UPVC framed windows.

The central single storey porch is stepped forward, with two plain wooden doors and flat roof. It has a parapet with single, cusped, flat topped gable over main entrance. It contains a decorative art deco style date plate with blue painted relief lettering, reading A1928D in overlapping font. The porch has a stucco surround of white painted ashlar.

The road facing elevation has a red brick dwarf wall with coping stones, with disabled access behind, and alongside are three steps leading up to the entrance. Located at the rear of the car park is a modern corridor, it connects into the 1960's Baptist Church facing Fife Lane. The building is in good repair, generally unaltered externally though the painted areas including the porch and string course are in need of repair.

Internal appearance

Internally the building is utilitarian, there is a large high ceilinged main hall with a stage, and hidden proscenium that is has been carefully adapted to the front to contain performance stage. Behind this is a vestment room. The ground floor contains an entrance hall, large sitting room with serving hatch from the kitchen, offices, and W.C.'s. There are internal partitions along corridors with fanlights and sidelights, letting generous amounts of light through the building.

The first floor has two large high ceilinged open plan rooms, with several smaller rooms around it. The original layout is largely intact with some areas of modernisation. There are typical finishes of the period, largely unaltered but in need of refreshment.

Local List of Heritage Assets



Figure 3: Main stage, ground floor, and upstairs classroom



The Christmas Star

The Hearsall Christmas star was created in 1952 by Bernard Baker, a member of the church, who, finding some discarded florescent tubes, created a large, illuminated Christmas Star for Hearsall Baptist Church. He mounted the tubes onto a metal star shaped frame and connected it electrically. It was initially hauled into place by a group of church members.

The star quickly became a Christmas fixture, and in 1961 Cyril Cobb, a member of the church decided to make it a permanent, by fixing a homemade I-beam into the ground, which acted as a bracket for the metal frame of the star to connect into. The star would then be winched into place with the help of volunteers. The practice continues in the same way today, except the Christmas Star has been upgraded to include LED lights, and removal of the star is done using a cherry picker.

Local List of Heritage Assets

The star is understood to hold local favour and a local petition was created seeking to protect it



Figure 4: Photograph; Kirsty Brewton.

BBC Article: Petition to protect Coventry Church Dec. 22, 2023



For most of the year the star stored inside the church. The star is approximately 3m in diameter and when displayed at Christmas time the illuminated star is raised to a height of approx. 2m above the church cupola and can be seen in distant views.

Local List of Heritage Assets

4.0 Assessment – Criteria

Assessing the heritage asset against the Local List criteria, the heritage asset is valued locally for the following:

Historic:

The former Hearsall Baptist Church and Sunday School may be described as a local landmark, given the associative connection to the community of Hearsall. The former Baptist Church was built by a community of local people from Coventry. It acted as a gathering place for children, women's, and men's groups through generations. Every year, since the Star has been a Christmas fixture, and during the pandemic lockdown the star remained on the church, and was coined 'the star of hope,' there was 4-minute broadcast on BBC CWR on 28th January 2021 talking about its relevance to the community during the pandemic.

Historic value considered medium to high.

Artistic:

Coventry Architect George Arthur Steane (d.1957) designed the Unitarian Church at 116 Holyhead Road, and the West Orchard United Reford Chapel at 83 Baginton Road. Both churches are non-designated heritage assets, and sophisticated examples of Art Deco architecture. George Arthur Steane was the son of local architect George Steane (d.1914). The father George, partnered in architectural practice with his brother Isaac. Isaac is known to have trained under the noted architects Edward Pugin and Alfred Waterhouse and worked on the prestigious Natural History Museum. The two brothers designed Warwick Road United Reform Church, and Earlsdon Primary School¹ amongst others.

Italianate architecture was a popular style between 1840 -1885. It was applied to both, residential and commercial architecture and was favoured by the railways becoming known as the Railway Style. Given its short-lived popularity, there are not many churches in England of this style.

Artistic and architectural value considered to be medium to high.

Community:

Constructed by a local builder who as a child attended the Lord Street Sunday School, a precursor to the former Hearsall Baptist Church. The church is a physical representation of these communal memories, evidenced through a century of published and archival history of the Sunday School and latterly church, and its contribution to the Baptist community in Coventry. Due to a lack of attendance and the building becoming hard to maintain, the church is due to close in March.

Community value considered to be medium.

¹ <https://www.coventrysociety.org.uk/2023/06/09/something-in-the-earlsdon-water-perhaps/>

Local List of Heritage Assets

Integrity:

The building has lost its original windows, but the fabric survival, both internally and externally is high.

Integrity is considered to be medium to high.

Rarity:

Italianate designed churches are infrequent. There are known to be a small number across England, generally this is a style underrepresented in Church architecture, and *is therefore considered relatively rare of its type.*

Rarity value considered to be high.

Age:

The Sunday School was designed by the Coventry architect G. A. Steane, works began on the building in 1927, the school was built by local builders, W.A. Player, and Son (former Scholar of Lord St. Sunday School). Dr Townley Lord opened the Sunday School i.e. the existing structure marked as 'Hall' on the site plan, with a golden key on a Saturday in September 1928.

Age Value is medium.

Group Value:

Compliments the period and set of existing locally listed Church buildings within the vicinity, i.e. St Mary Magdalene (circa 1934) and Church of The Precious Blood And All Souls (circa 1924) adjoining the Chapelfields Conservation Area.

Group value considered medium.

Coventry's identity:

Hearsall Baptist Church contributes to the understanding of Chapelfields development and gives a sense of community that wanted to define its local identity, as well as providing a timeline of development to the pre-war city.

Local List of Heritage Assets

Evidence:

Although late for the period, the interwar Hearsall Baptist Church is understood to be representative of a unique and short-lived period in Italianate Church design. The external appearance of the former Hearsall Baptist Church is high quality and well detailed, containing influences of Art Deco, with a delicately designed art deco date plate over the main entrance of the building. The Coventry architect G.A. Steane was an accomplished architect, evidenced by the sophisticated examples of the Art Deco and Italianate buildings he designed in Coventry alone. See also:

- 'One Hundred Years of Baptist Witness in Chapelfields pamphlet held at CCC.
- 'The Hearsall Star Shines on,' archive, Hearsall Baptist Church, copy held at CCC.
- 'Campaign to save cherished Coventry church and Christmas landmark' Coventry Evening Telegraph 26 Dec. 2023
- 'Star of Hope' BBC CWR Breakfast show on 28th Jan. 2021.
- 'Petition to protect Coventry church Christmas star backed by hundreds' BBC 22 Dec. 2023
- 'Hearsall Baptist Church – building the new church 1960/61' video on Echo Community Newspaper, Facebook
- Thanks also to the historic notes provided by local Architect Robert Davies and local Historian David Porter.

Evidential value considered to be high.

5.0 Public Consultation

A six-week consultation on the Hearsall Church was held in July and August 2024 in accordance with governments Community engagement: guidance for local authorities, to enable public participation.

The findings from this public consultation predominantly relates to the local interest in gaining continuity for the 'star of hope' fixture and does not fully demonstrate the weight of opinion in favour for the building's rarity, architectural and artistic local value for benefit of this assessment.

Majority were objections received on grounds of practical considerations regarding the building's current and future functionality as a church, its alignment with broader environmental and community goals, and the potential implications of its inclusion on the local list which is relatable yet a non-material consideration in this matter concerning the local significance of the building.

Local List of Heritage Assets

6.0 Conclusion

After a comprehensive review of the information presented, taking into consideration a careful review of the public responses, subject matter expert views, site visits and desktop research of the nomination, the application is assessed to be valid and considered of local architectural and historic significance to its local community.

Based on the objective expert assessment of the heritage listing criteria which is found to be mostly 'medium to high' in this officer report,

- **Rarity value is considered high.** Italianate designed churches are infrequent and generally this is a style underrepresented in Church architecture and is therefore considered relatively rare of its type. Rarity value considered to be high.
- **Evidential Value is considered high.** The Coventry architect G.A. Steane was an accomplished architect, evidenced by the sophisticated examples of the Art Deco and Italianate buildings he designed in Coventry alone.
- **Integrity and Historical value is high.** Limited construction in this style of architecture and building category from George Arthur Steane, a local architect is clearly noted.
- **Artistic and architectural value is considered to be high.** The church is a physical representation of the communal memories since 1930s, evidenced through a century of published and archival history of the Sunday School and latterly church, and its contribution to the Baptist community in Coventry.

The Officer recommendation is for the Hall (original building) to be locally listed.

This report dated: 17th June 2024

Report updated post consultation: 2nd June 2025

<http://www.coventry.gov.uk/localist>

Report Ends.

<i>Report Document Control</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Officer</i>	<i>Checked</i>
<i>Site visit</i>	<i>16th February 2024</i>	<i>C Stranks</i>	<i>Afreen PS</i>
<i>First Cabinet</i>	<i>17th June 2024</i>	<i>C Stranks</i>	<i>Afreen PS</i>
<i>Revised & updated</i>	<i>2nd June 2025</i>	<i>C Stranks</i>	<i>Afreen PS</i>
<i>Second Cabinet</i>	<i>19th June 2025</i>	<i>Afreen PS</i>	<i>Anne Lynch</i>

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Title: Save Hearsall Baptist Church & Christmas Star

Statement:

We the undersigned petition the Council to Locally list and therefore protect the much loved original section of Hearsall Baptist Church, including the spire and Hearsall Christmas Star, from any future demolition. We also urge the Council to actively work with partners in the public and community sectors to preserve community use for this building. The Hearsall Baptist Church has served the local community and the city for several generations, and everything must be done to preserve this fantastic asset - especially as it approaches its 100th Birthday.

Justification:

The site has been put up for sale.

Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without Hearsall's Christmas Star.

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Public report Cabinet Member Report

Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities

19th June 2025

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities – Cllr Naeem Akhtar

Director approving submission of the report:

Director of City Services and Commercial

Ward(s) affected:

Bablake Ward

Title:

Local Listing Nomination and Recommendation (Post Public Consultation) – Blacker Bombard Spigot Mortar(s)

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive summary:

A nomination for a new local listing to be included on Coventry's Local List of Heritage Assets was received which, if approved, would introduce additional considerations in the assessment of planning applications where such designations are affected.

The Local List of Heritage Assets, and additional information for public nominations is available to the public via the authority's website at <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/heritage-ecology-trees/listed-buildings/8>

Further to officers' assessment, the nomination was found to be valid and approved for a six-week public consultation between 8th July and 16th August 2024 to further inform decision making post public consultation, and the recommendation is now being made.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member is requested to:

1. Note the contents of the e-Petition appended at Appendix 2 of this report
2. Endorse the nomination for Blacker Bombard Spigot Mortar(s) for inclusion on Coventry's Local List of Heritage Assets, further to the reasons set out in the report.

3. Delegate authority to the Strategic Lead for Planning, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, to finalise the details of the designation.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix One: Nomination Report - Blacker Bombard Mortar Spigot.V3. Final

Appendix Two: The ePetition - Spigot - Bablake

Background papers:

City of Coventry Local List of Heritage Assets – criteria

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/heritage-ecology-trees/listed-buildings/8>

Cabinet Reports

[Agenda for Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities on Monday, 17th June 2024, 1.00 pm - Coventry City Council](#)

Other useful documents

Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage, Historic England Advice Note 7 (Second Edition)

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/local-heritage-listing-advice-note-7/heag301-local-heritage-listing/>

Has it or will it be considered by scrutiny?

No - However, the role of Locally Listed Heritage assets in the planning system was presented to Scrutiny Panel 6th October 2022

Has it or will it be considered by any other council committee, advisory panel, or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title: Spigot Mortar Nomination – Post Public Consultation

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 A public nomination for a Mortar Spigot to be considered for inclusion onto the Local List of Heritage assets was received and reviewed by the Local Authority. The nomination was found to be valid and approved for six-week public consultation between 8th July and 16th August 2024.
- 1.2 This report makes recommendation to the Cabinet Member regarding the proposed addition to the local list, further to an examination of the findings of public consultation, review of planning context, and desktop research findings. The case for nomination was presented in a draft report for public consultation, this has since been updated and included as appendix one of this report.
- 1.3 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 section 1 and the National Planning Policy Framework emphasise the importance of approving a list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest as a guide to Local Authorities as part of their planning functions. These are known as Statutory/Designated Heritage Assets i.e. Listed Buildings which are designated a level of national significance based on the statutory criteria set out by Department of Culture, Media, and Sport.
- 1.4 Locally listed structures are within the local planning authority's area which make a positive contribution to its local character and sense of place because of their heritage value. Local listing of the non-designated heritage asset of local interest by local planning authorities is a complementary process as identified in the government guidance and follows the same assessment criteria.
- 1.5 The creation and maintenance of a Local List is a way to identify and celebrate historic buildings and sites which enrich the area, this identification and publication of designations also contributes to the Coventry Plan in the promotion of Coventry as a visitor destination and centre for the arts and culture.
- 1.6 A subject matter review from officers was drafted and presented to Cabinet Member as appendix one of the cabinet report on the 17th of June 2024, which upon consent from Members progressed onto public consultation for six weeks between 8th July and 16th August 2024 to further inform local decision making.
- 1.7 Public consultation has confirmed support for the local listing of the Mortar Spigot and reflects its importance as part of Coventry's World War Two heritage. Out of the nine responses, six were in support, one abstained (Nuneaton BC) and one highlighted the presence of two additional spigots similar to the one being consulted upon which suggests the presence of Coventry City's WWII defence line and emphasises the heritage group value on the whole.

- 1.8 Further to the findings of the public consultation, overview of planning, and planning policy context and review of the submitted information, the addition to the local list of heritage assets of the nomination is being recommended.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

2.1 Withhold the nomination

The Cabinet Member could choose not to progress the nomination and allow individual consultations on each of the known spigot mortars however noting the potential interest and alignment to the criteria for Local Listing this is not recommended.

2.2. Endorse the nomination

The recommendation is to endorse the nomination's addition to the local list of heritage assets as it relates to the historical significance of the city's defence as part of Coventry's WWII heritage and contributes to the local significance of this place and delegate to the Head of Development Management to finalise the details of the designation.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1 Further to public consultations invited during July and August 2024, nine responses specific to this nomination were received, of which six were supporting the nomination's promotion to the local list of heritage assets.
- 3.2. Of the representations received in support of the local listing nomination, the following topics which are material in consideration of the nomination were raised for consideration of officers and are responded to as below:

Supporting the nomination, two similar structures within Coventry's boundary were put forward for consideration and such links should be recognised in the local listing.

Officers agree with the importance of recognition of this key element of the City's WWII defence line and have assigned weight in support of the nomination accordingly. The officer report and City Council's Historic Environment Records have since been updated to include the additional spigots made known via this public consultation process and need to be considered through this listing nomination but have not been individually consulted on and thereby referred to Cabinet members for approval given the local support to be considered as part of this current listing recommendation.

- 3.3 A petition was submitted which ran from 6th August 2024 to 19th September 2024. The petition sought to protect the World War 2 artefacts within the developments planned for Keresley (the Pill Box off Bennetts Road, the underground shelter, and the Spigot Mortar). The petition received 53 signatures and was considered by Planning Committee at their meeting on 12th September 2024 in respect of planning application reference RMM/2022/0679 for Land at Fivefield Road and Tamworth Road where the resolution was to grant planning permission subject to conditions. The officer report noted comments from the Council's Archaeologist in respect of the Mortar Spigot and its proposals for Local Listing.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 The decision will be implemented and updated on the councils register at the earliest opportunity.

5. Comments from the Director of Finance and Resources and the Director of Law and Governance

5.2. Financial Implications

The recommendation will have no budgetary impact.

5.3. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

6. Other implications

6.2. How will this contribute to the Council Plan (www.coventry.gov.uk/councilplan/)?

Assessment of Local List nominations contributes toward raising the profile of Coventry through promoting Coventry as a visitor destination and centre for the arts and culture, sports and leisure, music, and events.

6.3. How is risk being managed?

There is no risk identified associated with the recommendation

6.4. What is the impact on the organisation?

There is no identified impact associated with the recommendation

6.5. Equalities / EIA?

A full Equality and Impact Assessment (EIA) was undertaken as part of developing the Local Plan. As part of that analysis, the Council had due regard to its public sector equality duty under section 149 of the Equality Act (2010).

6.6. Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment?

There is no direct impact from the recommendations of the report.

6.7. Implications for partner organisations?

None

Report author(s):

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Service:

Planning, City Services Directorate

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Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

Contributor/approver name	Title	Service Area	Date doc sent out	Response received or approved
Contributors:				
Carolyn Sinclair	Governance Services Officer	Law and Governance	3/6/25	4/6/25
Rob Back	Strategic Lead for Planning	Planning, City Services Directorate	3/6/25	
Anne Lynch	Head of Development Management	Planning, City Services Directorate	3/6/25	4/6/25
Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)				
Finance: Cath Crosby	Lead Accountant	Finance	3/6/35	4/6/25
Legal: Oluremi Aremu	Head of Legal and Procurement Services	Law and Governance	3/6/25	9/6/25
Director: Andrew Walster	Director of City Services	-	3/6/25	4/6/25
Cllr Naeem Akhtar	Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities	-		



The Spigot Mortar(s) Local Listing Nomination - Officer Report

1.0 Context

A 29mm Blacker Bombard spigot mortar located within a hedgerow on land off Bennetts Road, Keresley (Fig. 2). Reported to the Coventry Historic Environment Record in 2022 by a member of the public and confirmed during archaeological works undertaken by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services.

Following public consultation last year presence of two additional spigot mortars came to light, located at Staircase Lane, Allesley and along Oxford Canal, south-east of Shilton Lane, Potters Green. A third has also been identified in proximity to Shilton Lane but is just outside of Coventry's boundary.

This report has since been updated by city council's archaeology officer to reflect the overall group value of line of defence to which these WWII structures relate to, identified within our geographical boundary with grid references as given here,

Location and Grid Reference (Fig. 1)

Bennetts Road, Keresley	SM 1	SP 32023 83357
Staircase Lane, Allesley	SM 2	SP3013 8110
Oxford Canal, Shilton Lane, Potters Green	SM 3	SP3762 8295

2.0 Visits

A site visit was undertaken by the Council's Archaeological Officer on 5th April 2023 at Keresley. Subsequent site visits to the two additional Spigot Mortars were completed on visited 20th May 2025 by the Council Officers.

The reported Spigot at Staircase Lane was found to be inaccessible due to overgrowth however its location has been confirmed on the Historic Environment Record and photographic evidence is indicated in an article in the Allesley Parish Magazine (Fig. 3).

Local List of Heritage Assets

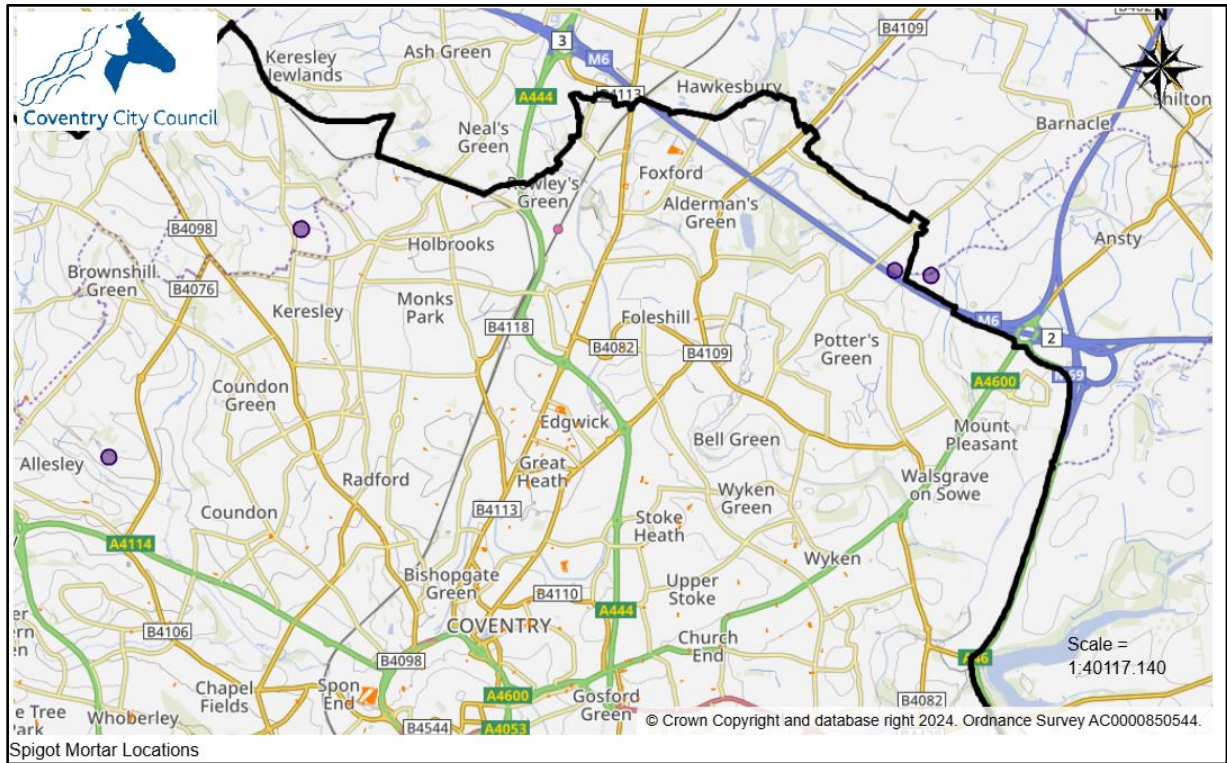


Figure 1: Spigot Mortar Locations



Figure 2: Spigot Mortar at Bennetts Road (looking north)

Local List of Heritage Assets

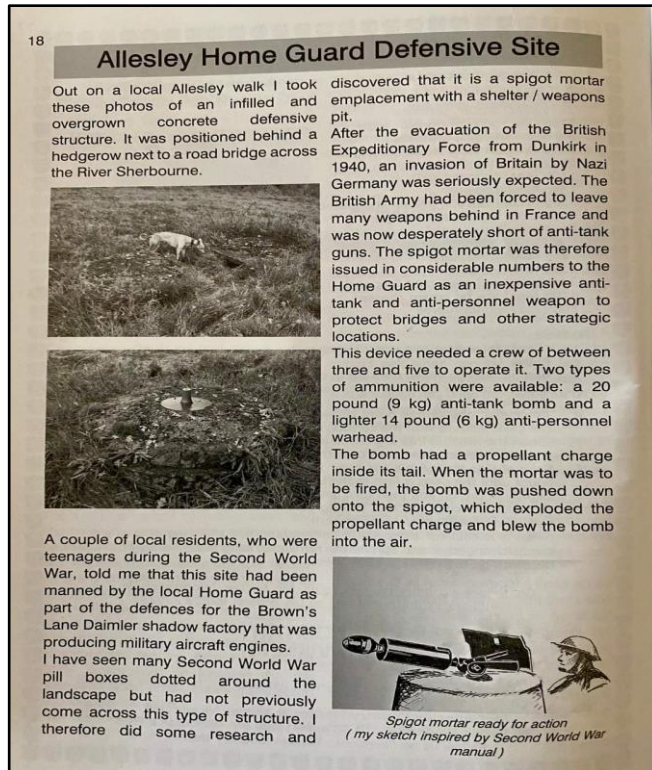


Figure 3: Spigot Mortar Staircase Lane, article from Allesley parish magazine



Figure 4: Spigot Mortar with ammunition locker at Oxford Canal, Shilton Lane (looking north-west)

Local List of Heritage Assets

3.0 Assessment – Discussion and Detail

From the summer of 1940 England's defences were strengthened against the threat of German invasion and a variety of defensive structures were built across the country.

These included 29mm spigot mortars which were developed between 1940 and 1941 and were used to engage static or mobile armoured targets, as anti-tank defence (Fig 2 to 4).

Designed by Lieutenant Colonel VVS Blacker they were also known as 'Blacker Bombards'. In addition to mobile units, a large number of static emplacements were issued. They were placed at points of local tactical advantage often as part of linear defences schemes such as 'stop-lines', composed of a number of defensive structures which were designed to obstruct the enemy's advance.

Drawings issued by the Directorate of Fortifications and Works in September 1941 show that the fixed emplacements were designed to consist of a circular or octagonal concrete pedestal or 'thimble' with a metal pintle at its centre onto which a weapon could be swivel mounted. A narrow pit around the outside of the pedestal allowed the operating crew a degree of protection and the ability to turn the mortar in any direction. The pits could also incorporate approach trenches and up to four brick or concrete ammunition lockers. It is estimated that around 8000 fixed emplacements were issued, though far fewer survive.

The majority of spigot mortar emplacements that are represented on the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) are designated as components of wider scheduled sites; however, three examples are scheduled in their own right. The spigot mortars at Hapton, Lancashire (NHLE 1432881) Farnham Park (NHLE 1444575) and RAF Kenley (1487945), these examples survive remarkably well and have readable layouts which retain a diversity of original features including ammunition lockers. They also have group value with other listed assets that form part of a wider Second World War group.

The spigot mortar emplacements identified as part of this application are all located on the northern outskirts of Coventry and were probably constructed around 1941 or 1942. They will have formed part of an inland defensive stop-line, along with further defence structures (as seen in Fig 1).

The first spigot mortar is situated in the tree line / hedgerow between two fields east of Bennetts Road. It is composed of a round concrete pedestal, or 'thimble', mounted with a central steel pintle (Fig 5). There is no visible evidence of an associated pit, trench or ammunition lockers however an undesignated red-brick pillbox approximately 270m to the north-west.

At the time of application for scheduling, no other associated defensive structures had been identified, and it was assumed that others forming part of the defensive line had been lost. Since a further two spigot mortars have been identified through public consultation within Coventry's boundary and a third just outside. Information on Keresley's well preserved underground shelter on Tamworth Road has been come forward which sheds more light on city's defence line.

Local List of Heritage Assets

Of the additional spigot mortars identified one is located at Staircase Lane, Allesley (Fig 3). The site is largely covered with overgrown shrubbery and foliage and so the Spigot Mortar is not visibly identifiable. The spigot is however recorded in an article in the Allesley Parish magazine in which photographs indicate on the very top of the spigot was visible, this is now likely covered by the overgrowth.

The second one identified on the Oxford canal off Shilton Lane has a similar structure to that of Bennetts Road but had lost part of the casing of the concrete pedestal. Of significant note this spigot mortar had a surviving ammunition locker (Fig 6). There was also some evidence in the surrounding landscape of structural remains.

Although outside Coventry's boundary a third Spigot Mortar was identified further along Oxford canal and displays an anti-tank structure to the south-west c. 20m, likely part of the same line of defence, covering the outer perimeter of Coventry. The pedestal was much larger in diameter and the concrete top has been lost exposing the iron supports (Fig7).

Historic England have recently assessed the original site at Bennetts Road (Fig 1) for formal designation but determined that it did not quite meet the requirements of national listing, stating that while the spigot mortar was of clear local interest as one of a small number of recorded defensive structures in Warwickshire, it did not meet the level necessary to recommend it for listing in the national context. It is representative of the wartime value of Coventry, with its vast contribution to the military efforts, and a site type which has hitherto not been recorded within the city and was therefore suggested for Local Listing. The mortar sits within the tree protection zone of a number of mature oaks and therefore is outside of the area of proposed redevelopment. As part of the planning consent, the mortar spigot will be protected and a historic building survey completed, recording all elements of the structure. National designation maybe revisited should further surviving elements be uncovered, such as ammunition lockers and when considering emerging evidence that further suggest a WWII Coventry defence line.

Local List of Heritage Assets



Figure 5: Spigot Mortar close-up, Bennetts Road



Figure 6: Spigot Mortar, Oxford Canal, close-up with ammunition locker

Local List of Heritage Assets



Figure 7: Spigot Mortar, Oxford Canal outside of boundary close-up

4.0 Public Consultation

A six-week consultation on the 29mm Blacker Bombard Mortar Spigot in Keresley was held in July 2024 in accordance with governments Community engagement: guidance for local authorities, to enable public participation. Public responses received for the proposed addition to the Coventry Local List of Heritage Assets has been hugely positive. Out of the nine responses received, seven were in support, one abstained and one nominated two additional spigot mortar sites.

The two spigot mortars revealed through public responses have emplacements spread across a wider area in this part of Coventry, one being at Staircase Lane, Allesley and two off Shilton Lane, along the canal, Potters Green.

These sites suggest that the Bennetts Road Spigot Mortar is part of a group of surviving WWII defences indicating Coventry City's defence line.

Conferred with these additional locations the original Local Listing nomination report was then updated by the officers with subject matter expert's advice to provide a comprehensive overview of all the identified spigot mortars in Coventry.

Local List of Heritage Assets

5.0 Assessment – Criteria

Assessing the heritage asset against the Local List criteria, the heritage asset is valued locally for the following:

Historic:

The original accessed site displays substantial historic, social and community significance and was felt by Historic England to only fall short of national importance. The addition of further spigot mortars with associated defensive structures gives higher value to the historic significance.

Historic value considered medium to high.

Age:

The sites were likely constructed in 1941-42 and although not of great antiquity, dates from a period when there was a massive change in the very fabric of the lives of Coventrians. The specific structures relate directly to war defence and are therefore characteristic of the period.

Rarity:

The original site was the first known surviving 29mm Blacker Bombard from Coventry, it has highlighted further Coventry WWII defences, including identification of the other two Spigot Mortars within Coventry's boundary. It is suggested the examples may show regional construction trends as they do not show a domed construction over the concrete pipe sealing the pedestal and is missing the circular platform below the steel pintle.

Rarity is considered to be medium to high.

Integrity:

The spigot emplacements themselves are relatively complete although it is uncertain whether any associated elements have survived although surrounding landscape suggest unknown structural and landscape features.

Integrity is considered to be medium to high.

Local List of Heritage Assets

Group Value:

The Spigot Mortars formed part of a wider defensive network, at the time of National Heritage List for England application the spigot mortar identified at Bennetts Road was the only identified remnant of this network.

It was determined that it may be associated with a pillbox 200m to the northwest. The pillbox is of red brick and concrete construction, with walls of red brick and a roof of corrugated iron or asbestos sheeting covered in a later of concrete. It has a square plan form with wall 2.75m in length and 1.75m. To the south there is a central entrance opening, which steps down onto a sunken concrete floor. The entrance has suffered damage to its brickwork in addition, may have had a concrete/brick blast guard in front of it – several large lumps of concrete were lying on the ground on the east side of the structure. Its northern wall has a single firing embrasure offering a good field of fire along the line of Bennetts Road to the north and is positioned close to a small bridge over the Hall Brook. It is a non- standard design, but the nearest comparable examples architecturally are the Royal Ordnance Factories (ROFs) type. It is not proposed at this stage to locally list the pillbox.

The two additional Spigot Mortars indicated in the report at: Staircase Lane, Allesley, SP3013 8110, and along the Oxford Canal south-west of Shilton Lane, SP3762 8295. A third also identified in proximity to the second on Shilton Lane but outside of Coventry's boundary establishing City's WWII defence line and thus being recorded on group value for the first time through this report.

Group value is considered low to medium.

Coventry's identity:

These sites represent a rare or potentially unique example of the wartime defensive circuits around Coventry. There are now a growing number being recognised and incorporated into Coventry Historic Environment Record. Potential remains to research the Blacker Bombards as part of a group along with the other Spigot Mortar's to understand firing range and defensive position as well as characterising the regional construction techniques.

Coventry's local identity value is considered medium to high.



Figure 8: Home Guard soldiers operate a 'Blacker Bombard' spigot mortar during training at No. 3 GHQ Home Guard School in Shropshire, 20 May 1943

Local List of Heritage Assets

Evidence:

These sites show high potential contributing to the narrative of wartime history of Coventry, being rare survivor of the WWII outer defence perimeter as a small, distributed group.

The Spigot Mortars may offer insight into regional construction techniques and should be recognized with the others coming to light as part of a wider defensive network.

Although the structure at Bennetts Road is legible as a spigot mortar emplacement, it lacks the level of survival and diversity of original features that are better demonstrated in designated examples and therefore is deemed to be of local to regional significance. It is possible that further evidence survives such as ammunition lockers, which may be hidden by overgrowth or buried now beneath the soil.

The additional spigot mortars identified have further suggested this. Along the Oxford Canal surviving ammunition lockers are visible as well as rubble in the surrounding landscape that may be associated (Fig 9 and 10). Furthermore, the spigot mortar outside of Coventry's Boundary was within distance of an anti-tank defence and was surrounded by areas of raised landscape (Fig 11).



Figure 9: Spigot Mortar, Oxford Canal ammunition locker (looking north-west)

Local List of Heritage Assets



Figure 10: Spigot Mortar, Oxford Canal surrounding rubble



Figure 11: Anti-tank defensive structure, Oxford Canal beyond Coventry Boundary

Local List of Heritage Assets

Consequently, the sites have clear historical value and the potential for further archaeological significance. It is only now through recognising the Spigot Mortar at Bennetts Road that a further understanding of Coventry's WWII defence line is being recorded.

Further scope for expert investigation is indicated to fully understand the nature and role of these war defences from this period of history in the wider Warwickshire area and how they relate to one another.

The evidential value is considered medium to high.

5.0 Conclusion

After a comprehensive review of the information presented, taking into consideration the public responses, subject matter expert views, site visits and desktop research of the nomination, the application is assessed to be valid and considered of local importance to Coventry. Public consultation has presented support for the application which reflects its importance as part of Coventry's World War Two heritage.

Therefore, officer recommendation is to list the Spigot Mortar(s).

This report dated: 23rd April 2024

Report updated post consultation: 22nd May 2025

<http://www.coventry.gov.uk/localist>

Report Ends.

<i>Report Document Control</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Officer</i>	<i>Checked</i>
<i>Site visit</i>	<i>16th February 2024</i>	<i>Matt PW</i>	<i>Afreen PS</i>
<i>First Cabinet</i>	<i>17th June 2024</i>	<i>Matt PW</i>	<i>Afreen PS</i>
<i>Revised & updated</i>	<i>30th May 2025</i>	<i>Sara F</i>	<i>Afreen PS</i>
<i>Updated</i>	<i>2nd June 2025</i>	<i>Sara F</i>	<i>Afreen PS</i>
<i>Second Cabinet</i>	<i>19th June 2025</i>	<i>Afreen PS</i>	<i>Anne Lynch</i>

APPENDIX TWO:

Petition

We the undersigned petition the Council to protect the World War 2 artefacts within the developments planned for Keresley. The first is the Pill Box off Bennetts Road on application FUL/2020/0748. A very rare and preserved example. The second is the underground shelter on application OUT2019//0022. Well built, right next to a boundary hedge and not within the footprint of an intended dwelling. The CCC conservationist in his report argued this should be preserved as being of historical importance. The third is a Spigot Mortar. These were laid around Coventry for defence, very few are left.

Keresley has a long history. It is part of the Forest of Arden. Over the years many interesting archaeological artefacts have been discovered. The four ancient woods in the area were first listed in documents as early as the 13th Century. Indeed, many of the hedgerows in this area can be dated to over 500 years old. A 'more modern' history and artefacts found in Keresley are relating to World War 2. The Spigot Mortar was a wartime defence and these were placed all around Coventry. A Pill Box, built as a concrete fort, a very substantial construction which served as a look out and machine gun post. Also in Keresley we have an underground shelter. This shelter was close to houses on the Tamworth Road. Several of these houses were used for billeting medical staff from the nearby Keresley Hospital. This is a very good example of an underground shelter, built extremely well with good drainage and looks today as it probably did eighty years ago. These all need protected status.

This ePetition runs from 06/08/2024 to 17/10/2024.

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