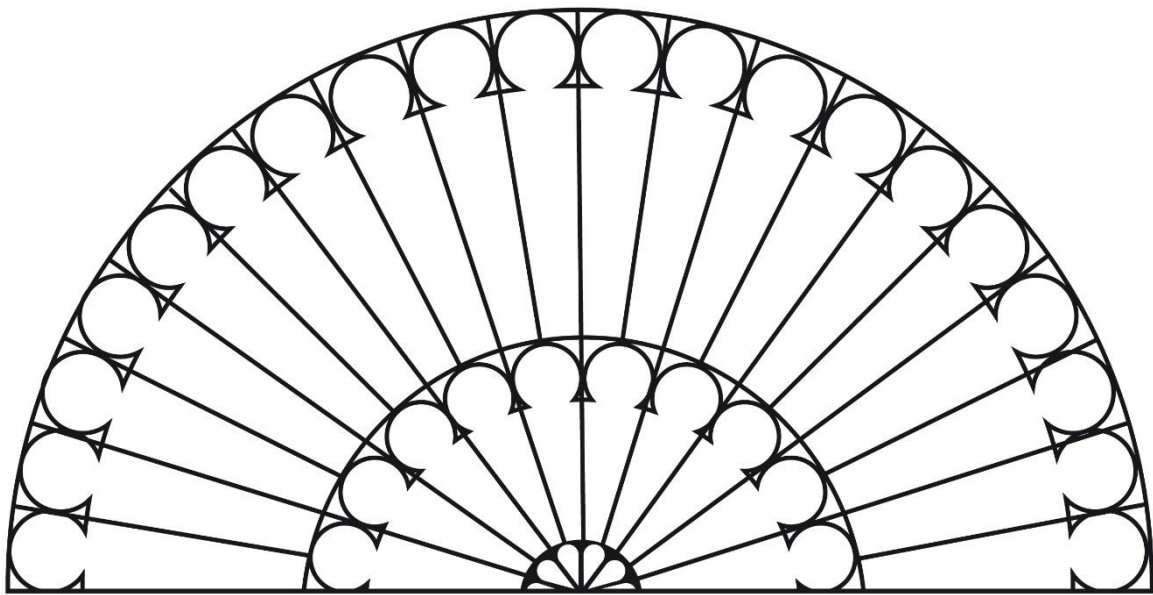


Heritage Impact Assessment

....including Heritage Statement, Conservation Management Plan, Design & Access Statement and Viability Assessment



LISTED BUILDING CONSENT APPLICATION:
Minor adaptations to Turner's Memorial to enable festive
lighting and occasional decorations to be fitted



1. Introduction

The *Friends of Buxton Station* Group (FoBS) are a nationally recognised voluntary community group, rewarded many times with National Community Rail Network Awards and the prestigious Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in June 2021.

When covid-19 came along, the group made a significant shift to work more in the wider Buxton community, and amongst other things, took on the task of working with fellow volunteers from Buxton Town Team to 'look after' Turner's Memorial by keeping the drainage outlets clear, cleaning off algal growth and moss as well as adorning it with battery operated Christmas lights over the festive season and knitted flowers throughout the Carnival season.

FoBS revere Samuel Turner as the person 'most responsible for bringing the railways to Buxton, making it the spa resort known today.' The group care for the memorial and would do nothing to endanger it.

FoBS is applying for Listed Building Consent (LBC) to make minor adaptations to allow a secure timber framework to be temporarily installed to suspend festoon LED Christmas lights connected to the nearby mains supply and knitted flower adornments. This will involve small diameter drilled holes in each corner of each façade, within each would be a 'Rawlplug' and small eye-bolt, capable of attaching the lightweight timber frame, which in turn supports the festive adornments.

Turner's Memorial is a Grade II Listed structure, hence the need for LBC, even though these adaptations are minor, will be barely visible and will not detract from the integrity, nor visual aspect of the structure.

FoBS are a voluntary community body with no formal connections with the owner of the monument, indeed the ownership is not fully understood as both Derbyshire County Council and High Peak Borough Council seem to freely permit the voluntary groups to carry out cleaning and maintenance tasks. Specific questions of ownership to both Authorities have never been answered.

This assessment has been prepared to comply with Paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and is intended to support and justify the application for LBC, evaluating historic interest, the condition and what works are to be undertaken. We believe this assessment to be appropriate and proportionate for the proposed works.

It should be noted early in this report that **all of our proposals are removable and fully reversible**: in time if it is deemed unsuitable or inappropriate, then all items can easily be removed with absolutely no detriment to the heritage asset.

It should also be noted that the report contains the required "Design and Access Statement," "Conservation Plan" and "Viability Assessment" within this required "Heritage Impact Assessment." As such, it is not FoBS's intention to separately submit these constituent parts unless formally required to do so.

We hope that this assessment will explain:

- Why we would like to carry out the proposed work;
- If the requirements could be met in a different way;
- What the benefits of the proposed work will be;
- If the proposed work could harm the heritage asset or put it at risk;
- That the benefits will outweigh any harm;
- How we can avoid (mitigate) any minor impacts on the heritage asset; and
- That the scale, design and materials proposed are appropriate.

2. Historical Assessment

Buxton Station is Listed by Historic England as having a Grade II structure; below is the full Listing:

Heritage Category: **Listed Building** Grade: **II**

List Entry Number: **1257899**

Date first listed: **31-Jan-1997**

List Entry Name: **TURNER MEMORIAL DRINKING FOUNTAIN**

SAMUEL TURNER MEMORIAL DRINKING FOUNTAIN, THE CRESCENT

County: **Derbyshire** District: **High Peak (District Authority)**

Parish: **Non-Civil Parish** National Grid Reference: **SK 05868 73558**

Details

BUXTON, SK0573NE THE CRESCENT 616-1/3/87 (South East side) Samuel Turner Memorial Drinking Fountain. GV II

Drinking fountain surmounted by a lamp. 1878, restored late C20. Ashlar with cast-iron lamp. 4 step octagonal ashlar base, with square ashlar drinking fountain above. Each face has a chamfered animal drinking bowl with rusticated round arch, keystone and plain flanking pilasters. Above a moulded round arch between Ionic pilasters topped by a segmental pediment, with a marble bowl fed by water from a carved ashlar lions head. North-east face inscribed 1878/ ERECTED/ BY PUBLIC SUBSCRIPTION/ AS A MEMORIAL OF/ SAMUEL TURNER/ WHO DIED OCT 4 1876. AGED 73 YEARS, south-east inscribed TREASURER TO THE/ DEVONSHIRE HOSPITAL AND/ BUXTON BATH CHARITY/ AND A MEMBER OF/ THE BUXTON LOCAL BOARD, south-west inscribed CHURCHWARDEN/ OF THE PARISH/ DURING FORTY THREE YEARS and north-west inscribed A NATIVE OF BUXTON/ AN ACTIVE AND USEFUL TOWNSMAN/ A GOOD NEIGHBOUR/ AND A KIND FRIEND. Topped by an ashlar dome with a very ornate iron standard supporting a large octagonal lantern.

Listing NGR: SK0586873558

It provides just one point of interest in one of the *most significant views* of Buxton, so described in the Council's *Buxton Conservation Area Appraisal* document of April 2007.

However, the monument is not given any prominence afforded to many of the town's buildings, giving the impression of lesser importance. Possibly because much of the setting is dominated by the surrounding hard paving surfacing and associated highways paraphernalia. The setting is further eroded by the adjacent parking of vehicles.

Our proposal seeks to incorporate this remarkable architectural feature into its naturally surrounding environment, to enhance its uniqueness with removeable heritage-appropriate festive adornments to herald it as the key feature of its setting.

3. Background and Policy implications

We are very proud of "our adopted" heritage asset, seeking ways to improve its value and innovative worth.

In recent years, we have been major players in commemorations to highlight the return of a water supply to the Memorial and have decorated it at the traditional 'Wells Dressing' time surrounding Buxton Carnival. Additionally, we have attached lightweight battery-operated Christmas lights to promote it right next to the town's significant Christmas tree, where it sat in relative darkness beforehand. All of these activities have been undertaken in partnership with fellow volunteers from Buxton Town Team and U3A's 'Knit & Natter Group' (who made hundreds of knitted flowers) as well as the organisers of the town's Christmas lights switch-on, Jane Fletcher & Trevor Zoppi. We have received many favourable comments about our care for the Monument.

Most of the National Awards mentioned above were given to FoBS in recognition of our passion for heritage-sensitive improvements.

Our proposals appreciate the value of the Monument and we believe that we have a scheme that recognises its value to the town and beyond, i.e. we propose an enhancement of the character, quality and usefulness of the asset.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, para 6) states the purpose of planning as being "to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development," acknowledging that the planning system must respond to the three dimensions of that concept: economic, social and environmental. The latter includes "contributing to protecting and **enhancing** our natural, built and **historic environment** (para 7)."

The NPPF continues to place weight on local planning policy including existing Local Plans, in so far as they are consistent with the NPPF itself. The purpose of Local Plans is stated as to "meet the objectively assessed needs (of all kinds) unless adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits (para 14)."

The High Peak Local Plan of April 2016, under review, mentions within Strategic Objective SO1, not only ‘to maintain and conserve,’ but also to ‘enhance’ the ‘historic environment.’ FoBS believe that by sensitively decorating Turner’s Memorial, it is enhanced.

Similarly, in the Local Plan, Policy S7 (Buxton Sub-area) extends a desire to do the same ‘as a catalyst for tourism.’ There can be no doubt that enhancing Turner’s Memorial, by ‘dressing it like a Well’ and by ‘dressing it with Christmas decorations’ makes it much more visible, engaging and enlarging its part in the town’s tourism and visitor offer.

In paragraph 5.56 of The Local Plan, the Council ‘recognises that heritage assets are irreplaceable resources and - through conservation measures - will manage change to assets, in ways that sustain and where appropriate, **enhance their significance.**’ FoBS truly believe that the minor adaptations, to allow temporary installation of a framework to display heritage-sensitive adornments will render Turner’s Memorial much more significant by making sense of its commemorative intention – meaning that it was erected as a glorious tribute, to add to it, extols that accolade. This amplifies the connection to the past, whilst celebrating the present.

Section 12 of NPPF deals with heritage issues. Paragraph 128 requires applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by planning proposals and evaluate the impact on them, identifying appropriate design and other mitigation measures to ensure that they are not adversely affected. This Heritage Impact Assessment is intended to fulfil that requirement.

One of the ‘core planning principles’ within the NPPF is that the planning system should “conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations (para 17).”

The Buxton Design and Place Making Strategy on page 28 mentions ‘It is fundamental to expressing the character of the town centre that any ... structure that contributes rather than detracts from either the continuity of the built fabric, local distinctiveness, historic interest or townscape merit is retained’ as an anchor to the past. It goes on to explain that the Strategy intends to ensure considerate enhancement of the town centre, taking these structures forward into the future, whilst acknowledging the past. Structures like Turner’s Memorial can be actively enhanced by adornment projects like the one FoBS proposes.

We contend that provision of a controlled and removable timber framework, which supports adorning decorations during festivities is more likely to be enjoyed by the majority of onlookers than the existing stonework unadorned. The adornments are both sympathetic and heritage-inspired: ‘Well dressing inspired knitted flowers’ and ‘Christmas LED lights connected by lightweight tracery gauge cabling.’

It is evident that National and Local Policies fully appreciate that conservation is not a static or stagnant affair and that character may be enhanced when proposed changes intends to bring about positive transformation.

We fully believe that our proposals will achieve a positive enhancement that will *“minimise the impact on the asset’s significance”* and is *“informed by a level of historical, architectural and archaeological evidence proportionate to the asset’s significance.”* What we propose is enhancement using appropriate imagery.

The policy framework outlined above has common themes. We strongly believe that our proposals are consistent with the objectives of all the policies. The stance in NPPF is the guiding principle reflected in the Local Plan: the conservation of listed buildings is best secured by keeping them alive and visible.

4. Scope of Works

The following is a summary of the scope of works proposed at Turner’s Memorial:

- Drill suitably-sized holes into the structure to allow eye-bolts to be secured, which in turn will be used to secure a slight timber frame upon which will be attached festive adornments. It is envisaged that holes of around 7mm would be sufficient, with sympathetic-coloured plastic ‘Rawlplugs’ inserted to allow small eye-bolts to be screwed into place. It is anticipated that a minimum of eight 7mm diameter holes and a maximum of 16 will be required, if each facade requires four eye-bolts to provide a balanced display;
- Prior to festive celebrations only, securely fix the slight timber framework. The timber will be pressure-injected to provide a strong degree of weather-proofing, but painted a sympathetic colour, to blend into the background, i.e. stone-coloured;
- It should be noted that for the majority of the time, only the small eye-bolts will be visible. It could be argued that these could be removed until required at times of festivities to secure the stone-coloured timber frame, but then small holes with plastic ‘Rawlplugs’ would be visible – it is question of which provides least visual distraction.

5. Photos

Below in Appendix One are a series of photographs showing elements of the proposal. Each photograph is described here:

- a. Knitted flower display provided by FoBS and 'Knit & Natter' group.
- b. FoBS celebrate the return of water supply to Turner's Memorial.
- c. Insubstantial battery Christmas lights provided by FoBS
- d. Brighter mains-fed Christmas light display in 2023.
- e. Overview of a metal repair-piece inserted into the Memorial at some stage to hold together damaged stone. Very difficult to see, even from a relatively close viewing distance
- f. Close-up of repair-piece identified in photograph e.
- g. A mocked-up photograph to show how the proposed timber frame will sit on the horizontal and vertical surfaces and façades.

6. Design & Access

There is no change to access arrangements, so it is not considered appropriate nor proportionate to provide an expansive D&A Statement other than this inclusion.

- **Use:** The use of the site will remain as an area of open space with Turner's Memorial monument accessible by four ashlar octagonal surrounding steps from the street level. Although not accessible to those with mobility issues or to those using wheelchairs, this is unchanged.
- **Amount:** The only additions are small eye-bolts and their securing 'Rawlplugs'. At times of festivities, a slight timber frame will be attached to the eye-bolts. The additional weight is negligible, probably coming somewhere between 10Kg and 15Kg, depending if knitted flowers or LED festoon string is used.
- **Layout:** The layout will not alter as a result of the works.
- **Scale:** The timber frame stretches across the width of each of the four façades, being attached under the ashlar dome and down each side of the four façades
- **Landscaping:** There is no change to any of the landscaping.
- **Appearance:** The Memorial is visible during daylight hours. If permission is granted to provide a framework for the addition of festive illumination in the form of a low-energy LED Christmas bulbs, then it will be visible day and night over the festive period, providing a cheery display, fully connected in timing and relevance to the adjacent town Christmas tree.

The monument will be more visible during Carnival and other times when knitted flowers are attached, increasing relevance to other town commemorations.

FoBS seek not to significantly alter the appearance of the Memorial, but to simply enhance views of the iconic structure at certain times of celebration.

- **Access:** There will be no change to the ability to access the monument.

7. Assessment of significance

Advice from English Heritage - *Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance*, April 2008, Principle 3, page 21 states that “understanding the significance of places is vital” and that “articulating the (heritage) values and significance is necessary to inform decisions about the future.” The guidance goes on to describe a range of inter-related *heritage values* that may be attached to historic places and can be used to help understand which places are important, to whom, and why:

Evidential value: the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity. The Memorial quite literally tells a story about Samuel Turner’s benevolence to the people of the town. He was once a major influencer in the town, as such prompting questions about his exact role in several areas of influence;

Historical value: the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present – it tends to be illustrative or associative. The Memorial is not dominant, but part of the built environment in which it sits. The carved stone descriptions tell something of Buxton’s history, through the involvement of this one man and provides ‘a nod’ to the town’s development as a spa resort of importance;

Aesthetic value: the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place. The monument is and remains an iconic, imposing and beautiful structure. The addition of heritage-sensitive adornments enhances visual appreciation; and

Communal value: the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience of memory. The carvings on the monument literally records something of the history of the town: the coming of the spa resort and it tells of the promised future prosperity when The Crescent development will help the town rise again. It heralds Buxton as a remarkable place and is something to be communally celebrated at times of festivity.

8. Discussion & Conclusion

FoBS hope that within this assessment they have presented a compelling case, having explained:

- **Why we would like to carry out the proposed work**
 - To add value to the monument by providing an enhanced connection between a commemorative Memorial and town commemorations;
 - To add public art (knitted flowers and Christmas lighting) to a stone monument to enliven it;
 - To link the past with current celebrations, enhancing a visual aspects of a well-loved monument to a well-loved individual.
- **If the requirements could be met in a different way**
 - No obvious alternatives present themselves. The photographs show temporary 'William Heath Robinson' affairs to display knitted flowers and battery-operated Christmas lights. It would be much better to see properly secured and constructed iterations.
- **What the benefits of the proposed work will be**
 - The monument will look better and show investment in and share local community-created art and link Christmas festivities.
- **If the proposed work could harm the heritage asset or put it at risk**
 - All items are totally removable and all effects totally reversible;
 - Any fixtures or fittings will minimise any surface damage;
 - We believe that the visual aspect will be improved, not diminished.
- **That the benefits will outweigh any harm**
 - Physically, the harm is infinitesimal. Ecologically, there is no change. Socially, the benefits outweigh. Psychologically, some may take offence to the addition of artwork, preferring the structure to remain *set-in-stone* and not become part of a *living and changing entity*.
 - Public art invokes appreciation and discussion, anecdotal comments received from people who saw our temporarily added battery-operated Christmas lights and knitted flowers indicate a great worth.
- **How we can avoid (mitigate) any minor impacts on the heritage asset**
 - All work is minimally invasive, minor and totally reversible.
- **That the scale, design and materials proposed are appropriate.**
 - That is a matter of judgement by those reading this Assessment and our arguments for a positive change. We remain confident that all are proportionate and totally sympathetic to the heritage asset. The additional weight is minimal as is the effect on appearance. It should be noted that in 1959, the Memorial mostly withstood an impact crash with a van, something many degrees greater in loading than our proposals!

The relevant policies place significance on both preserving and enhancing heritage assets and ensuring that future work will not be detrimental to the character of the listed structure, making sure that work done will not remove or detract from the character for which they are designated.

We appreciate that anyone intending to protect a heritage asset of national significance when viewing this application will be asking, “*what is the significance of the heritage asset?*” and “*how is that significance enhanced or damaged by the proposals?*” In the above submission, we are confident to have answered the first question very well.

As regards the latter question, we might add that the addition of festive adornments will enable people to understand the heritage of the monument, the man it has been erected to celebrate and the spa town resort of Buxton much better. Because it will reinforce Samuel Turner was once a man at the centre of the spa resort development: it was and continues to be more than just a stone structure, it is part of a continuing spa resort (hi)story.

The proposed works have been designed with the listed status of the monument in mind, considering the relevant principles of conservation and heritage-sensitive enhancement.

We believe that it has been clearly demonstrated how FoBS aims to enhance a local heritage asset. It is considered that the works will positively contribute to the character and appearance of the monument and its setting. They are commended as a result. We hope that our proposals will be supported.

Appendix One – Photographs in support of LBC application



Presented by Friends of Buxton Station (FoBS)
in support of our application.

2 February 2024

- a. This photograph shows an overview of Turner's Memorial. Note: the temporary knitted flower display provided by FoBS as part of a recent Carnival 'Wells Dressing' celebration.



- b. FoBS Chairman, Dave Carlisle making a speech to the assembled crowd as part of the celebration to commemorate the return of a water supply to Turner's Memorial, 13 April 2019.



- c. FoBS's temporary display of battery-operated Christmas lights as part of the town's festive celebrations in an attempt to link the Memorial to the town's festivities and Christmas tree (on the right)..



- d. Hard-wired festoon lighting on the cast iron top of the Memorial provided by Trevor Zoppi as part of the Buxton Town Team's Christmas festivities 2023. This LBC proposal will allow this source to provide power to additional lightweight LED lights down each façade.



- e. Overview of southern duel-façade. A red-circled inserted metal repairing 'link-piece,' seen in close-up in following photograph is 'invisible' from the viewing distance. It is anticipated that the eye-bolts will be equally hard to see, not negatively impacting the visual aspect. A similar repair-piece is on the northern corner too.



- f. Close-up of the repairing link-piece referred to in photograph e.



- g. Christmas lights temporarily secured to top lamp of Turner's Memorial. The idea is to fix a small timber frame around the top part of the inscribed faces and vertically down (shown in red) so that festoon lights (shown blue) can hang securely down as part of an enhanced lighting display. The lights will obscure the vertical stone-coloured timber parts and possibly the horizontal.

