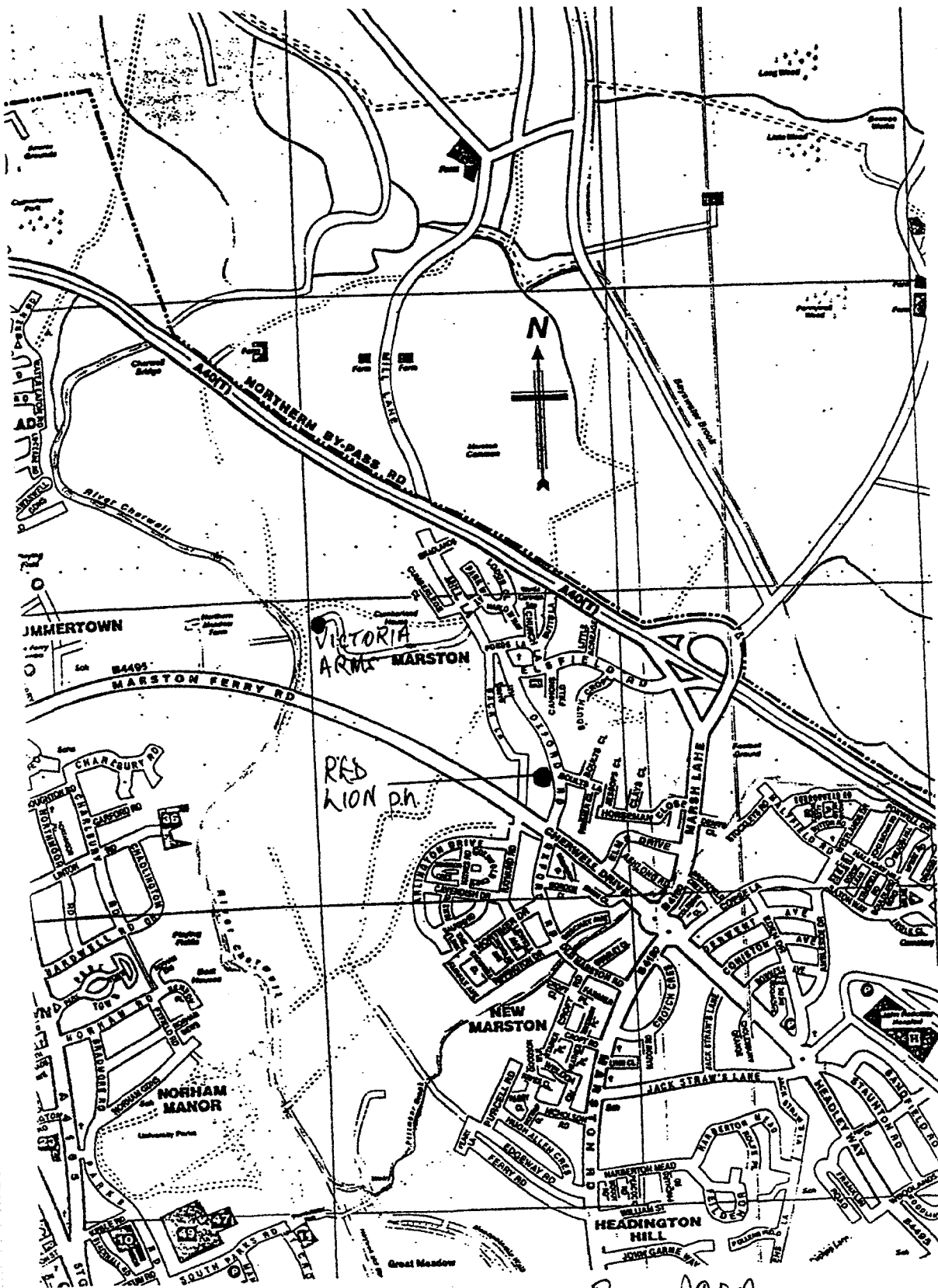


Old Marston Parish Council

Nomination proposal for
Asset of Community Value



OLD MARSTON P.C. AREA

Old Marston Parish Council

Nomination proposal for Asset of Community Value



THE RED LION PUBLIC HOUSE

42, Oxford Road,
Old Marston,
Oxford. OX3 0PH.
Tel 247761
(See attached maps)

Names of occupiers: Stewart and Diane BERRY

Names of owners: GREENE KING plc.
Westgate Brewery
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk IP33 1QT
T: 01284 763222. F: 01284 706502. Company reg. no. 24511

Description: A stone-built public house -with dwelling accommodation above-
consisting of separate bar and lounge (furnished for the provision
of meals) with an outdoor seating and recreation area, children's
play area with wooden structures, car park and attached land.

Nominating Body: OLD MARSTON PARISH COUNCIL
www.oldmarston-pc.gov.uk
Clerk: Tim Cann, 8 Nicholas Ave. Old Marston. OX3 0RN.
Tel. 01865 203139. email clerk@oldmarston-pc.gov.uk

Nomination proposal for Asset of Community Value



THE RED LION PUBLIC HOUSE Old Marston

Background:

This (possibly 18th c) building was originally one of the first that a traveller from Oxford would see as they entered the village of Old Marston to the north of it along Oxford Road. It is difficult to discover when it first became a 'public' house, but records show that it was being kept as an ale house by Charles Cotmore in 1895 and it has been in use continuously since, serving travellers, villagers and others during that time. It lies within the Old Marston Conservation Area.

Including this pub, there were eventually 5 public houses in Old Marston village (the White Hart, Three Horseshoes, Bricklayers Arms and the Victoria Arms near the ferry), a more recent pub (the Jack Russell) was built on a newer housing estate south of the Red Lion. There were then 6 public houses in Old Marston parish; *of these only the Red Lion and the Victoria Arms survive* – the Jack Russell being last to close in 2015. Geographically, the Red Lion, being situated in the 'old village' as it is, can be regarded now as the only 'village pub' (the Victoria Arms being physically isolated down a long drive away from Mill Lane and near the river).

The kind of social changes which forced the closure of other Old Marston pubs put the Red Lion itself in jeopardy shortly after Greene King took over ownership. There was a danger that falling trade might lead the owners to sell the land and this caused great concern in the community. New licensees (the Berrys) arrived and soon afterwards about a dozen local volunteers gathered together a five-figure sum of money to help install the licensees on a sure footing. This enabled the business to stabilise, improve and develop.

Physical description:

Probably as a result of the efforts made by the licensees and the support they had received, the owners Greene King invested heavily in upgrading the interior and exterior of the pub in consultation with the ambitions of the licensees. This was to prove the most extensive upgrade in facilities and appearance in the pub's long history.

The lounge was completely overhauled, with great emphasis on serving food but with access to a bar. The tasteful décor and wooden furniture transformed the area.

The separate bar was upgraded but retained a steadfastly traditional bar atmosphere.

Outside, a very large (about 100 sq.m.) 'barbecue' area with tables and benches (and umbrellas) was built and next to it a purpose-built children's play area.

There is a large car parking area with a further grassed area beyond.

Usage:

The improvements and extensions led to much-increased use by customers and the catering skills and business acumen of Diane Berry proved vital to a vibrant trade in the 'restaurant' side of the pub's activities. Sunday lunches are served from 12 until 3pm and on most Sundays the lounge is full of diners, both local and from outside Old Marston. Meals are also served in the evenings during the week, although this is a lighter trade.

There is a quiz night monthly and a music night monthly, both being very well attended.

The restaurant area is a very useful social facility and is used for one-off events such as birthday parties, post-funeral gatherings and even a pre-Christmas buffet for the Parish Council.

The bar is very popular and even though the pub is open 'all day' from midday the bar is rarely empty, being particularly busy at lunchtime and evening with regular local clientele.

Among the regular activities in the bar are a darts team, crib playing and a poker night every week.

In the summer, the barbecue area is very popular with families, to which it is ideally suited.

Outside activities are an aunt sally pitch with competitions and Stewart Berry organises golf competitions for customers at local courses.

A Bonfire Night celebration, with fireworks paid for by the Parish Council, is held every year at the grassed area at the end of the car park and is extremely popular with local families.

From this it will be seen that this is indeed a thriving village pub with the sort of trade that some town pubs would be proud of.

Community Value:

It is difficult for anyone living in Old Marston to imagine life without the Red Lion. There are probably few residents who haven't used the pub at one time or another, some of them as very regular customers visiting the same time and/or same night every week. Many of them pass it by on Oxford Road on their way in or out of the north end of Old Marston.

Its social value to the community could be gauged by the sense of disbelief when rumours of its demise, just a few years ago, brought to many of us.

Its contribution to the social wellbeing of the area is immeasurable, it acts as a social hub: To return to its location, if this pub were to cease trading Old Marston would have no public house *within its confines* at all. That is a measure of how valuable it is to this community.

Old Marston Parish Council strongly support this nomination for the Red Lion to be listed as an Asset of Community Value, we know that the residents of Old Marston support it and we trust that it will be accepted as such.

SIGNED

DATED