

## Nicola Gunn

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**From:** Planning  
**Subject:** FW: Case 3/2022/0683 - Knott Gate, Townend, Slaidburn

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**From:** Thomas Whitfield <  
**Sent:** 19 August 2022 15:52  
**To:** Planning <planning@ribblevalley.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Case 3/2022/0683 - Knott Gate, Townend, Slaidburn

### External Email

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Dear Adrian Dowd,

Thank you for consulting The Georgian Group on proposal 3/2022/0683 to undertake a scheme of works at Grade II listed Knott Gate, Townend, Slaidburn. The Group raises the following concerns with the proposal.

Knott Gate is a good example of a probable seventeenth-century two-cell cottage with a later cart shed/shippon of probable nineteenth-century date. The farmhouse retains its original two-cell planform with good legibility. Also affected by the scheme is an unlisted outbuilding to the south of the main listed building. This outbuilding is of probable eighteenth or nineteenth-century date and has been recently used as an animal shed/byre as evidenced by the feeding rack. The building is likely a fragmentary survival of a larger structure as suggested by the continuation of walls through and beyond the north-east gable. It has a good surviving vernacular roof structure highlighted in Historic, Buildings and Places letter of 11<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

The proposal is wide reaching and proposals affecting the main listed building include schemes to reroof the building including replacing stone flags with slate, remove partition walls and reorder the first floor of the farmhouse, to remove the existing staircase and install a new floor to the ground floor farmhouse, to remove an interior stone wall, and to insert a new staircase. The proposal to the outbuilding involves removing internal walls and reroofing the building.

In the interest of brevity, The Group focuses our comment on elements of the scheme with affect material dating between 1700 and 1840.

The Group supports and echoes the comments offered by Historic Buildings and Places (HBaP) in their letter of 11<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

### **Farmhouse**

We are particularly concerned with the proposal to remove the existing stone slate roof from the shippon/cart shed and to replace it in blue slate. We therefore echo HBaP's comments and recommendations that the existing stone slate roof has considerable architectural and historical significance and that once repairs to the roof have been undertaken that the stone slates should be reinstated to preserve the legibility and character of the building. We advise that the proposal to replace the stone slates is poorly justified and does not give adequate regard to the conservation of Knott Gate as a grade II listed heritage asset. We therefore direct the applicant to NPPF (2021) paragraphs 199 and 200.

We furthermore advise that if the first-floor loft door is not proposed to be functional then a handrail along the exterior stone steps is not necessary. We would recommend that the proposed handrail would harm the overall character of the cottage and it would be preferable to leave the steps un-railed.

### **Outbuilding**

The Group raises some concern over the proposed internal reorganization of the out-building which proposes the total removal of the existing internal divisions. Whilst we recognise that these removals are required to allow the building to become a useable space, we would recommend that down stands and nibs are preserved to preserve some legibility of the historic planform of the building. We would furthermore encourage the applicant to retain some internal fixtures and fittings such as the feeding rack to help preserve the character and legibility of the building as an historic animal shed.

We furthermore raise concerns with regards to the proposals to replace the roof. As HBaP note, this roof appears to be a good survival of a vernacular type particular to the area and we echo their recommendations that further investigation is needed to determine this. If the roof is a surviving original example, then we advise that the applicant repairs and restores the roof as is.

We advise that due to the survival of original features, this outbuilding has some historical, architectural, and evidentiary significance in relation to Knott Gate and as such we would recommend that it is treated and conserved sensitively.

### **Conclusion**

When making a decision on all listed building consent applications or any decision on a planning application for development that affects a listed building or its setting, a local planning authority must have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Preservation in this context means not harming the interest in the building, as opposed to keeping it utterly unchanged. This obligation, found in sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (1), applies to all decisions concerning listed buildings.

The Group advises that the proposed scheme of works has the potential to cause harm to the special historical, architectural, and evidentiary significance of Knott Gate as a Grade II listed heritage asset. The Group therefore recommends that the applicant withdraws this proposal and revises it to address the concerns raised above. If the applicant is unwilling to do so, we advise that Listed Building Consent is refused.

Yours sincerely,

Thomas Whitfield, PhD, MLitt, BA (hons)  
Conservation Adviser, Northern England

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