2 ABBEYCROFT

WHALLEY, BOROUGH OF RIBBLE VALLEY, LANCASHIRE

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

GARRY MILLER
HISTORIC BUILDING CONSULTANCY

2 ABBEYCROFT

WHALLEY, BOROUGH OF RIBBLE VALLEY, LANCASHIRE

HERITAGE ASSESSMENT, SEPTEMBER 2012

GARRY MILLER
HISTORIC BUILDING CONSULTANCY

Crosby House, 412 Prescot Road, Eccleston Hill, St Helens, Lancashire WA10 3BT
Telephone: 01744 739675, 07803 100995
garry_miller@tiscali.co.uk
© Garry Miller 2012

CONTENTS

Section A: Introduction 4

A1: Key Data 5
A2: Executive Summary 6
A3: Location and Setting 7
A4: Proposal and Relevant Policies 9

Section B: The Heritage Asset 12

B1: Context of the Site 13
B2: Historical Context 14
B3: Development of Abbeycroft 17
B4: Description of 2 Abbeycroft 20

Section C: Significance Assessment 33

C1: Introduction 34
C2: Overall Significance of 2 Abbeycroft 35
C3: Relative Significance of Individual Features 37

Section D: Impact Assessment 40

D1: Introduction 40
D2: Analysis of Impact 42

Appendix 1: Garry Miller Historic Building Consultancy 44

Cover image: the façade of 2 Abbeycroft

SECTION A: INTRODUCTION

A1: KEY DATA

Heritage asset: 2 Abbeycroft

Location: off The Sands, Whalley, Borough of Ribble Valley, Lancashire

NGR: SD7292836141

Designation: Grade II nationally-designated heritage asset

Building function/ type: domestic; part of terrace of four properties

Date: early 17th century; altered late 17th century and mid-late 19th century

Development proposal: alterations and refurbishment

A2: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report has been produced in connection with proposals for alteration and refurbishment of 2 Abbeycroft, a Grade II nationally-designated heritage asset situated off The Sands in the small historic town of Whalley, within the borough of Ribble Valley in Lancashire. Now four dwellings, Abbeycroft appears to have been built as a single property probably in the early 17th century but thereafter experienced a complex rebuilding prior to an extensive makeover in the late 19th century which accompanied its subdivision.

Abbeycroft occupies an important site on the fringe of Whalley, within the precinct of the Cistercian abbey whose ruins still visually dominate the town and close to the huge northwest gateway of circa 1320 which was among the earliest elements to be built. A tall, linear stone-built terrace, Abbeycroft is an important element of the historic streetscene and looking westward along The Sands can be viewed against the backdrop of not only the gateway but also the towering railway viaduct of 1850 beyond.

The somewhat plain 19th century exterior of Abbeycroft conceals possible origins as a timber-framed structure of the early 17th century that was subsequently clad in stone. The present Number 2 may have been its housebody, on evidence of a large firehood and baffle entry arrangement, and originally marked the end of the building before the present Number 1 was added probably at the end of the 17th century. A crosswall within Number 2 containing traces of a former window shows where the original house terminated.

The owners of 2 Abbeycroft are seeking listed building consent for refurbishment and internal alteration of the building. In accordance with national planning policies concerning the historic environment, this assessment has been produced to provide the planning and design processes with an account of the significance of the building, and the impact of the proposal upon that significance. Abbeycroft is an important heritage asset, significant for its architectural interest, group value and setting and for the contribution it makes to the Whalley Conservation Area; in general terms, the proposal will preserve this significance.

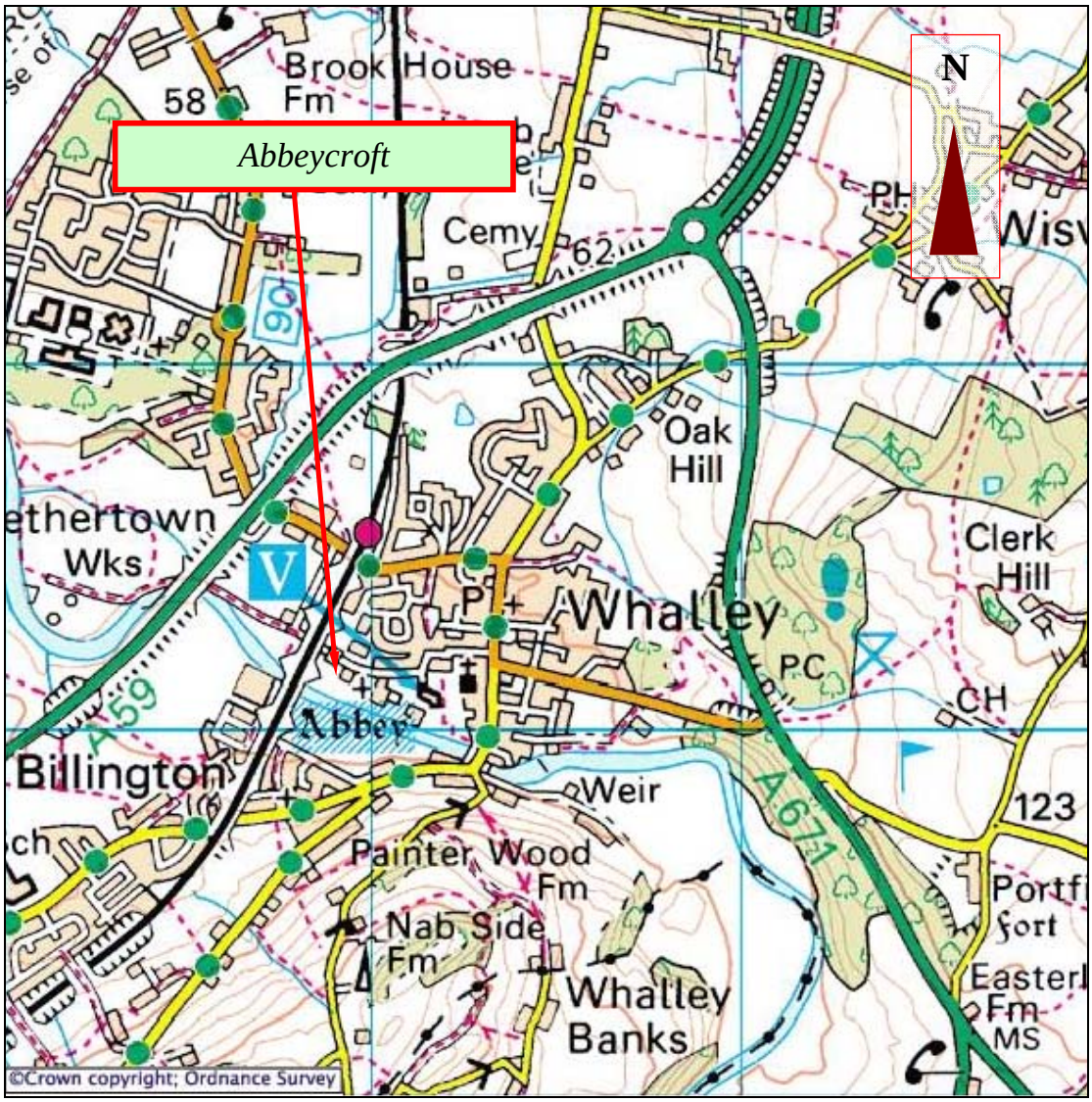
.

A3: LOCATION AND SETTING

Abbeycroft is located on the western fringe of Whalley, within the former precincts of the abbey founded in 1306 and whose ruins visually dominate the streetscene of this small town set above the River Calder. The properties form a tall terrace of four houses lying south of The Sands, a winding road whose character becomes more rural as it progresses westward from the town centre. They immediately face the 1926 mock timber-framed English Martyrs RC church, although the wider area is characterized by the abbey ruins: around 30 metres west of Abbeycroft is its huge northwest gateway, with the main site lying around 100 metres east. Looking west from The Sands, Abbeycroft features in the foreground of an impressive view against a multi-layered backdrop formed by the gateway, the towering 48-arch brick railway viaduct of 1850 and open countryside beyond (Plate 1, below).

Abbeycroft's location, relative to Whalley town centre, is shown on Map 1 (following page).

1.Setting: Abbeycroft on left, looking west from The Sands with the gateway and railway viaduct beyond



Map 1. Location of Abbeycroft from OS 1:50000 map (enlarged). Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number 100045053.

A4. PROPOSAL AND RELEVANT POLICIES

A4.1 Proposal

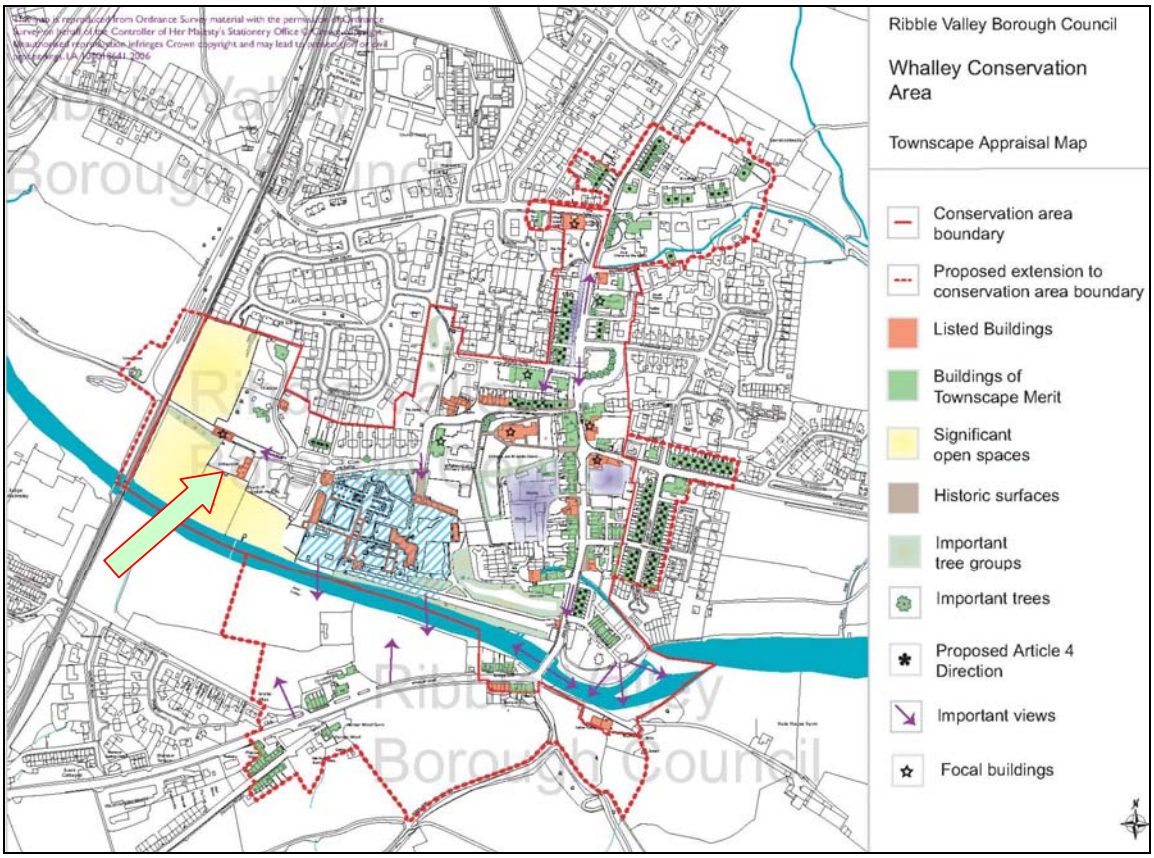
The owners of 2 Abbeycroft are applying to Ribble Valley Borough Council for listed building consent for refurbishment and alterations to the building.

A4.2 Designation

2 Abbeycroft is a nationally-designated heritage asset awarded Grade II status in the Department of Culture, Media and Sport's list of buildings of special architectural and historic interest for the Borough of Ribble Valley. The listing description, compiled probably in the early-mid 1980s, and headed *Nos. 1, 2 and 3 Abbeycroft*, reads:

> *Row of 3 houses, probably originally one, mid C17, altered late C19. Sandstone rubble with roof of slate and stone slate. 2 storeys, with attic and with drip course. Windows C19, chamfered with central mullion. Doors have chamfered stone surrounds. No.3, at the left, is of 5 bays and has stone attic gabled dormers over the 3rd and 5th bays, with one-light chamfered windows. Doors in 3rd and 4th bays. No.2 is of one bay and has a door at the left and has 2 attic dormers. No.1 has a window to the left of and one above the door, and an attic dormer. Chimneys on left-hand gable and between houses. Inside, the door of No.2 opens against a firehood baffle. The heck post and bressumer are moulded and stopped. Above the bressumer is a ceiling beam, 2 studs remaining of the plastered infill which must have joined them. No.3 not accessible at time of survey, but said to have bressumer for a firehood which backed onto that in No.2, and an outshut which contains a dog-leg stair with turned balusters and moulded handrail. Nos.2 and 3 have ceiling beams with quarter-round mouldings. Interior of No.1 said to contain no C17 features. RCHM report by Sarah Pearson dated August 1979.*

Furthermore, Abbeycroft also lies within the Whalley Conservation Area, designated by Ribble Valley Borough Council under Section 69 of the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, which defines these areas as being '*…of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'*. Its location relative to the area is shown on Map 2 (following page).



Map 2. Site of Abbeycroft within Whalley Conservation Area (Ribble Valley Borough Council)

A4.3 Relevant planning policies

As 2 Abbeycroft is a designated heritage asset, both national and local planning policies relating to the historic environment are relevant to this application.

Nationally, these policies are contained within Section 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012), and locally by policies ENV 19 and ENV 20 of the Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan (1999), along with policy EN 5 of Ribble Valley Council's published Draft Core Strategy (April 2012). These policies are examined further in Section D.

A4.4 Heritage assessment/methodology

Paragraph 128 of the NPPF states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected, including the contribution made by their setting. Consequently, Garry Miller: Architectural Historian has been appointed to produce this heritage assessment to evaluate the significance of 2 Abbeycroft, and the impact of the proposal upon this significance.

To reach an understanding of its significance, the following approach was adopted:

1. Rapid documentary research to place the building in its historic context, principally using historic maps and other sources identified in the text.

2. A rapid exterior survey of the building to gain an understanding of its date, evolution and historic character; the relative importance of its surviving internal and external features; and the merits of its group value and setting.

3. Synthesis of the research and survey findings (Section B of this report, *The Heritage Asset*).

4. Analysis of the research and survey to establish the significance of the building and the relative significance of its surviving features (Section C).

5. Assessment of the impact of the proposal, with reference to designs produced by the owners' agent, Anthony Flanagan Architectural Designer and Surveyor (Section D).

SECTION B: THE HERITAGE ASSET

B1: CONTEXT OF THE SITE

Abbeycroft is a linear building on a southwest-northeast axis, and comprises four properties in terrace formation, with Number 2 located right of centre (see Figure 1 below). A two-and a-half storey, single depth property, Number 2 contains a single room on each floor with a further ground floor room projecting into the rear of Number 1 and forming an L-shaped footprint at this level and a similar vertical arrangement (see Figure 1 and Plate 3).

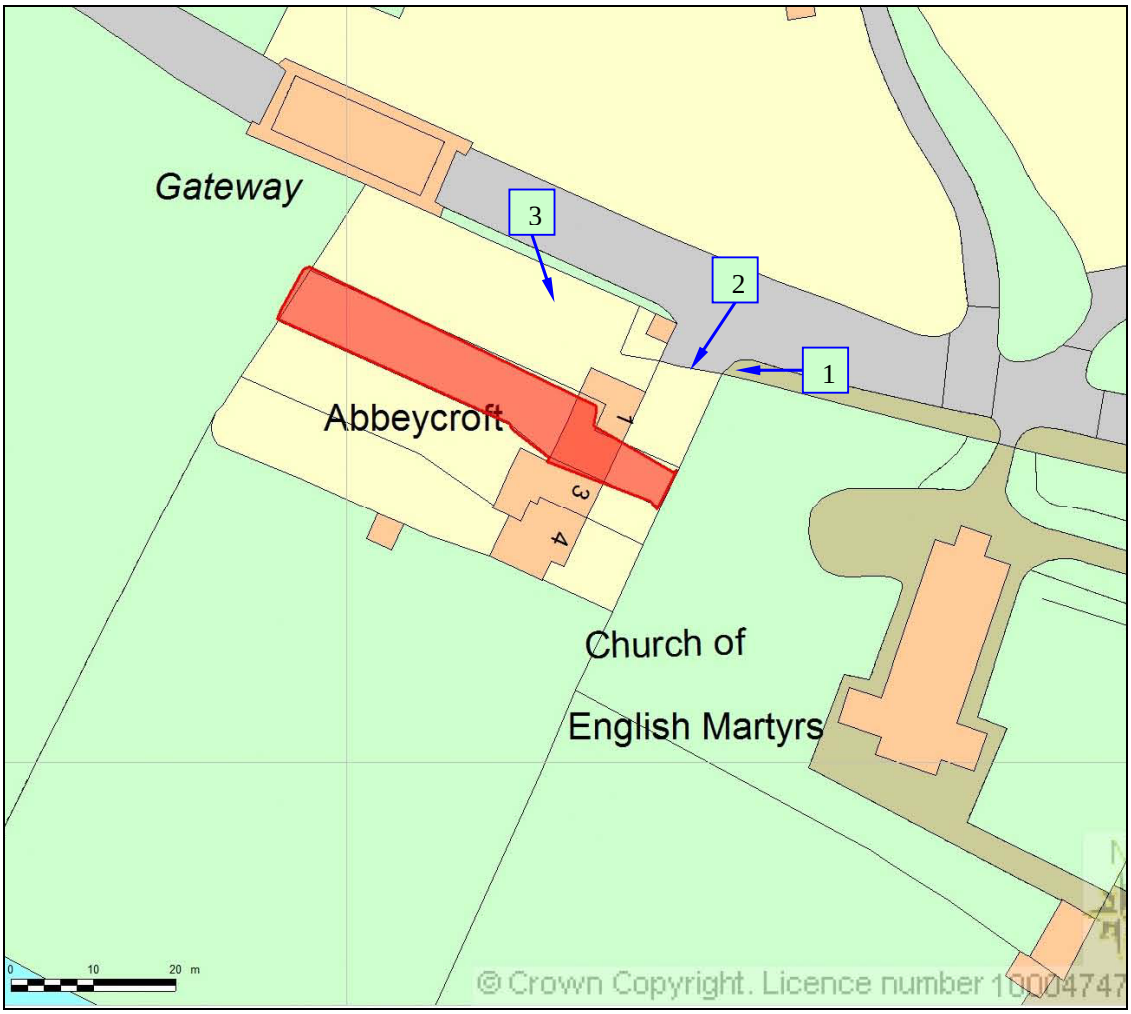


Figure 1. Elements of Abbeycroft, with Number 2 highlighted; also viewpoints of images 1-3 (Streetwise Maps; licence no 100047474)

2. Southeast-facing facade of Abbeycroft, with Number 2 indicated

3. View of the rear of Abbeycroft, Number 2 indicated, showing L-shaped arrangement

B2: HISTORICAL CONTEXT

B2.1 Setting

Abbeycroft lies within the former precincts of the important Cistercian abbey consecrated at Whalley in 1306 but upon which work did not begin until 1319. The northwest gateway, close to Abbeycroft, is one of the earliest elements to survive of a building programme that continued for more than a century. Following its dissolution, the abbey was sold in 1553 to John Braddyl and Richard Assheton, the latter turning the abbot's lodgings into his own residence, named Assheton House. Demolition of the abbey church and other buildings occurred in the 17th century, and alterations to Assheton House were made by later generations of the family in the 18th century and new owners the Hargreaves family in the second half of the 19th century. The relationship of Abbeycroft to the abbey site is illustrated well by the six-inch Ordnance Survey mapping of 1844-46 (Map 3, below).

General sources:
(1) Claire Hartwell and Nicholas Pevsner, *The Buildings of England: Lancashire, North* (2009)
(2) The Conservation Studio for Ribble Valley Borough Council, Whalley Conservation Area Appraisal (2005)

Map 3. Enlargement of 1844-46 six-inch OS mapping showing relationship of Abbeycroft to the abbey ruins

B2.2 Possible origins

The substantial size of the building, and certain elements of its fabric, indicate Abbeycroft originated as a substantial single structure of early 17th century date, thus post-dating the life of the abbey although the site is possibly earlier. It may have been a farm associated with Assheton House; it is said to be shown upon an estate map of the Curzon family, successors by marriage to the Asshetons, dated 1762 (1). The rear of the building, similar to its present appearance but with now-vanished lower structures evident to the southwest, is depicted in an illustration to Whitaker's *History of Whalley*, first published in 1801 (Figure 2, below). By the later 19th century its status had declined, with the building subdivided into a number of small dwellings by the 1890s (Map 5).

(1) Whalley Conservation Area Appraisal, page 8

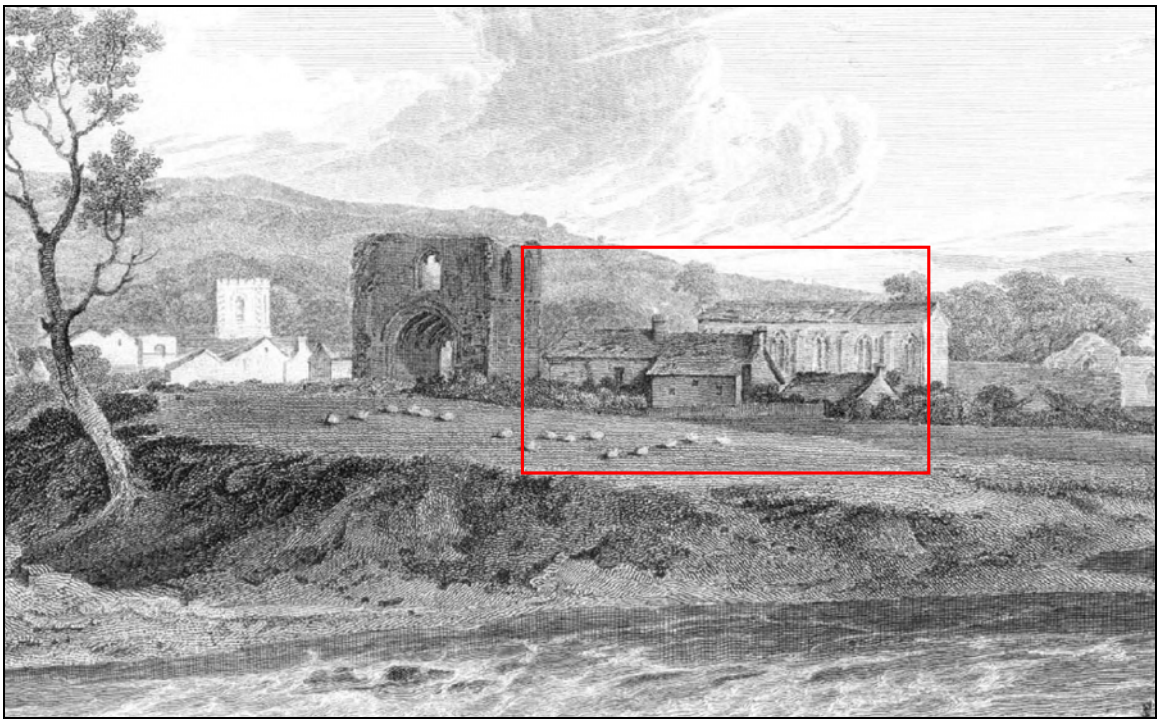


Figure 2. What is now Abbeycroft (indicated), from Whitaker's History of Whalley, *showing now-vanished lower buildings on right*

B3: DEVELOPMENT OF ABBEYCROFT

B3.1 Introduction

Behind an exterior which in the main appears 19th century, Abbeycroft as a whole is a building of complex development. It has been examined in some detail by two previous reports – in its entirety by Sarah Pearson in 1979 (1) and Number 1 only by JWRC in 2010 (2) – so a full examination is considered unnecessary here. The essence of these findings is that Sarah Pearson determined that the building was originally one 17th century house, of likely pre-1660 date, except Number 1 which was a 19th century addition; however JWRC concluded that Number was in fact 17th century.

(1) Sarah Pearson RCHM, report on Abbeycroft dated August 1979
(2) JWRC Chartered Building Surveyors and Historic Building Consultants, heritage statement regarding 1 Abbeycroft, 2010

B3.2 Form of Abbeycroft

Abbeycroft is a tall, linear two-and-a-half storey structure, comprising a narrow single-depth main range with rear outshut behind Number 3. It now comprises four properties but at the time of listing in the early-mid 1980s there were apparently three.

B3.3 Construction

Abbeycroft has slobbered rubble walling and a flag roof, the latter supported on triangulated roof trusses, one of which lies within Number 2. There is some evidence however, not entirely conclusive, that the building has timber-framed origins, in the form of what may be part of a wallplate at the rear of Number 3 (Plate 4) and reused timber fragments in Number 2.

B3.4 Possible evolution, based on examination of Number 2

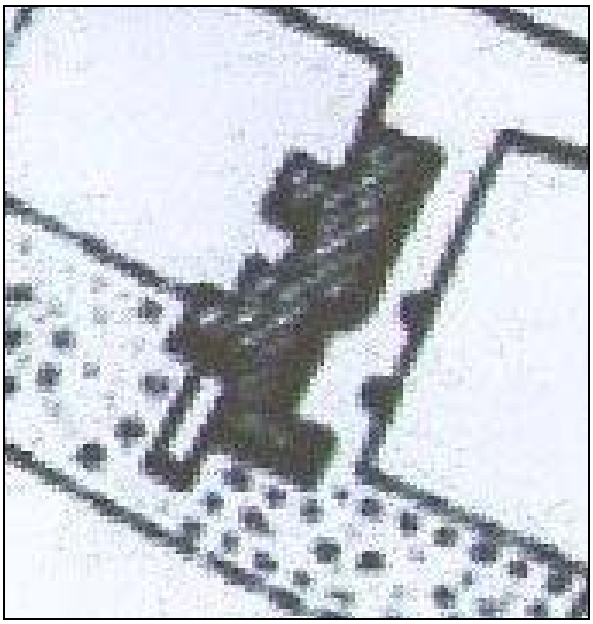
Firstly, a date of the early 17th century is implied by the roll-moulded chamfers of the firehood bressumer and ground floor beam of Number 2. The fragmentary re-used timbers and possible exposed wallplate may denote that at this stage the building was timber-framed. Cladding in stone, and possible heightening, followed later in the 17th century; evidence of an earlier quoined entrance to Number 2 indicates a baffle-entry arrangement existed against the firehood during this phase. This suggests the ground floor of Number 2 acted as the housebody, and that the house was of yeoman status (baffle entries generally being synonymous with houses of this standing). However this stone-clad building appeared to have terminated at Number 2, on evidence of a window in a former outer wall now within the building, and partially-surviving quoins on the

front wall between it and Number 1. The latter must have been added towards the later 17th century, as the continuous string course along the façade suggests this period.

4. Rear of Number 3 Abbeycroft showing timber which may be former wallplate, suggesting possible timber-framed origins and the heightening of the building during its cladding

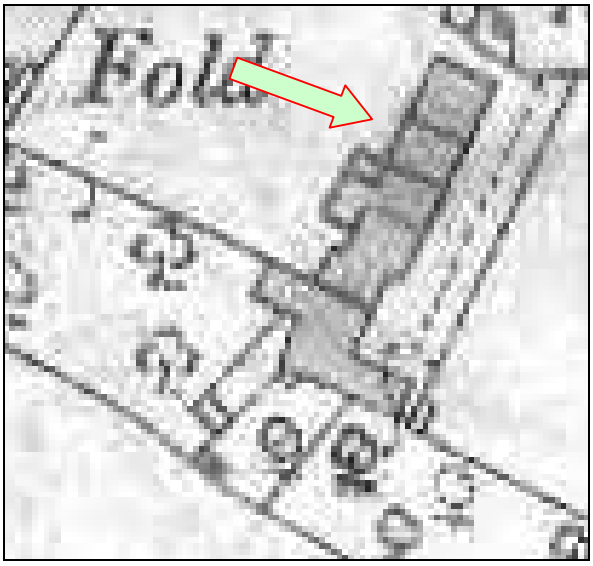
B3.5 Map evidence for development

Comparison of historic mapping implies Abbeycroft experienced remodelling in the mid-later 19th century which probably resulted in much of the building that now stands. The six-inch mapping of 1844-46 (Map 4, following page) shows a house of different form than now, with a rear projection that appears to be in the vicinity of Number 2 and further structures at its southwest end that are probably those shown in Figure 2.



Map 4.
Enlargement of 1844-46 six-inch OS mapping (Digital Archives; author's library)

However the 25-inch OS mapping surveyed in 1889-92 shows the projection appears to have shifted southeast along a much-subdivided building, within which the footprint of what is now Number 2 (except the present L-shaped kitchen arrangement) is evident (Map 5, below).



Map 5.
Enlargement of 25-inch OS mapping surveyed 1889-92 with Number 2 indicated (Lancashire Maps Online)

B4: DESCRIPTION OF 2 ABBEYCROFT

B4.1 Exterior

The simple front elevation has a batten-plank doorway, one two-light window per floor and two eaves dormers with single-light windows in each. The door and window surrounds, like those of the other Abbeycroft houses, have plain chamfers and are 19th century; the dormers have kneelers of probably similar date. Evidence of earlier building is indicated however by long-and-short quoins flanking the door, stopping short of the doorhead and thus suggesting an arched entrance once existed; indistinct traces of blocked first floor windows; the horizontal string course; and fragmentary evidence of quoins at the junction with Number 1, indicating the latter's addition. The rear elevation has a doorway to the kitchen, its plain surround indicating it was inserted during the 19th century subdivision or even later. Evidence of another door, now blocked, occurs in the centre of the rear, with quoins remaining on its left side; this opening is more evident internally. It may have been blocked during the 19th century alterations. The rear windows are again 19th century and two-light, but in contrast to the façade each has a hoodmould. There is also a narrow modern first-floor window.

5. Front elevation of 2 Abbeycroft, showing evidence of quoins at right end and blocked windows on first floor

6. Detail of entrance showing earlier long-and-short quoins on either side of 19th century surround

7. Dormer with kneelers

8. General view of rear, showing extent of Number 2; ground floor entrance to kitchen on left

9. Evidence of blocked doorway to left of window

10. The entrance to kitchen with plain 19th century or later surround

B4.2 Interior

The ground floor comprises a living room and kitchen, the former with a large timber-framed firehood which extends into approximately one-third of the room. It has a wooden stop-chamfered heckpost and a single remaining rail of the spere structure, along with bressumer with three short studs to a beam in the ceiling above; no infill, which was probably of wattle-and-daub, remains. The bressumer has a roll-moulded chamfer, a feature also found on the single ceiling beam, and suggesting an early 17th century date. Beneath the firehood is a brick chimney, perhaps a 19th century insertion, with an odd shouldered stone lintel on bearers which must be a modern alteration. The rear wall clearly shows the blocked external door with, to its left, a re-used timber with vacant stave holes; this may be a now-redundant lintel of a taller window preceding the present one. A thick crosswall dividing this room from the kitchen contains a 20th century door cutting through what appears to be a blocked window with wooden surround, the latter providing further evidence that Number 1 is an addition. Adjoining is a probably mid-20th century quarter-turn staircase. The kitchen has, above the external door, a rail re-used from a timber-framed building with vacant post mortices and groove for staves supporting wattle-and-daub. It may have acted as a window lintel prior to insertion of the door. A further reused timber is found above the front window, which appears, unusually, to be a former door jamb still containing a gudgeon pin. The first floor has a brick chimney flue with blocked small hearth and a massive stone at floor level, along with a stop-chamfered beam which is the tie of the roof truss above. The attic floor has a roof truss with raking angle struts (similar that in Number 1, shown in the JWRC report) and a blocked doorway to Number 3.

11. Interior of ground floor living room, showing skeletal firehood structure

12. Detail of chamfered heck post supporting bressumer

13. Stopped roll- moulded beam on ground floor

14. Fireplace beneath firehood has experienced modern alteration

15. Probably mid-20th century stair, along with inserted door to kitchen

16. Outline of blocked window in crosswall pierced by later inserted door

17. Rear wall of living room showing blocked door and redundant lintel high above window

18. Fragment of rail in rear wall above doorway, possibly originally reused as window lintel

19. Re-used timber door jamb, gudgeon pin remaining, now inner lintel of front window

20. Blocked first floor hearth

21. Chamfered first floor beam (tiebeam of roof truss)

22. Part of roof truss showing angle strut and lower purlin

23. Blocked doorway to Number 4 in attic, left of flue

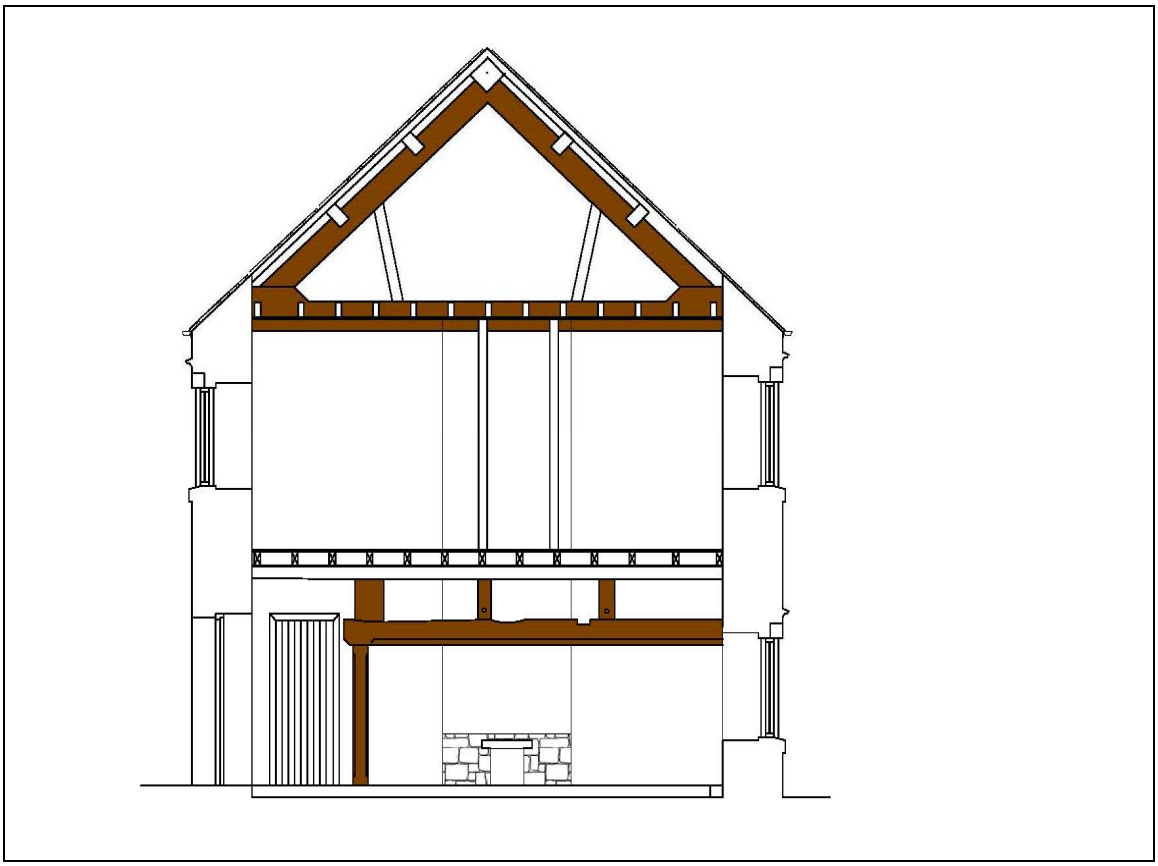


Figure 3. Section showing roof truss and firehood (Anthony Flanagan)

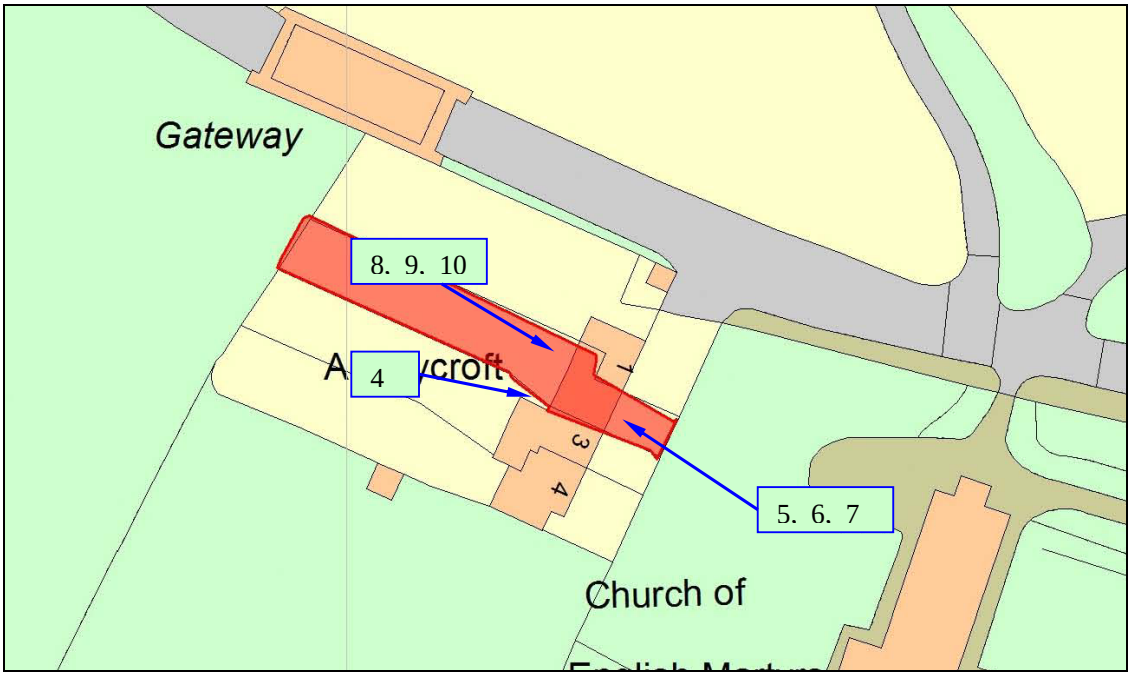


Figure 4. Viewpoints of external images 4, 5-10 in this section

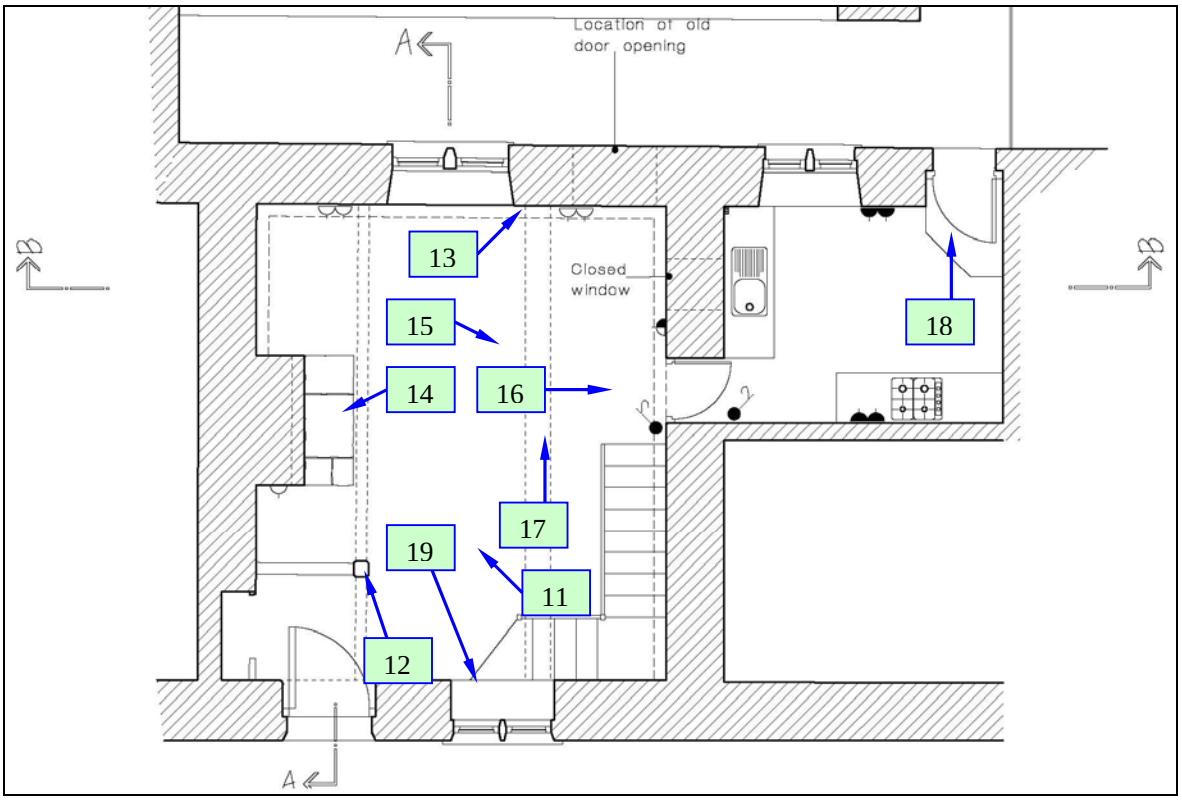


Figure 5. Ground floor layout showing image viewpoints *(Anthony Flanagan)*

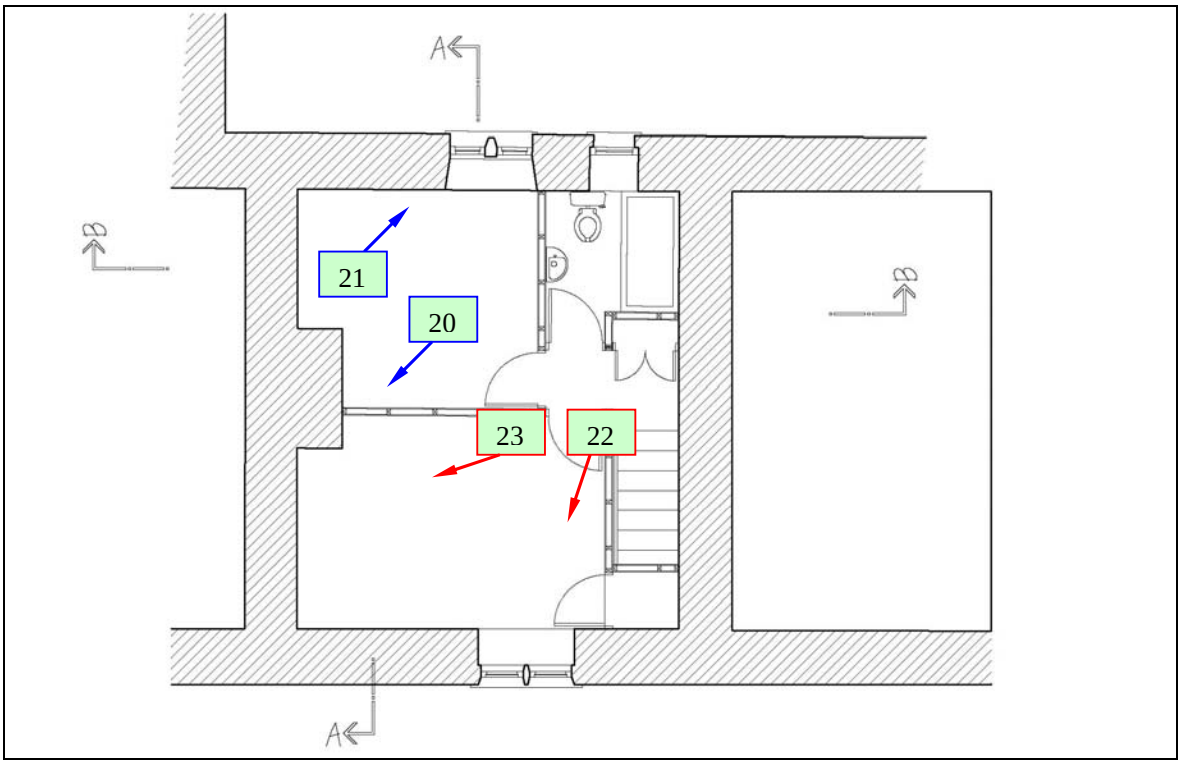


Figure 6. First floor viewpoints; attic viewpoints above in red. *(Anthony Flanagan)*

SECTION C: SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

C1: INTRODUCTION

C1.1 Relevant policy: Section 12 of NPPF

The need to understand the significance of a heritage asset when determining an application is specified by Paragraph 129 of the National Planning Policy Framework. This requires local planning authorities to identify and assess the particular significance of the heritage asset or its setting, and take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal in order to avoid or minimize conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

C1.2 Methodology

The nature of a building's significance may be varied and complex. A means of evaluating the significance of a heritage asset is to apply the criteria used when assessing a building for listing purposes, which are:

- **Age and rarity:** most buildings built before 1700 which survive in anything like their original condition are listed, as are most built between 1700 and 1840
- **Architectural interest:** through architectural design, decoration and craftsmanship and also important examples of particular building types and techniques
- **Historic interest:** encompassing buildings which illustrate important aspects of the nation's social, economic, cultural or military history, or close historical association with nationally-important people or events
- **Group value:** especially where buildings are part of an important architectural or historic group or are a fine example of planning (such as squares, terraces and model villages)

Furthermore, a heritage asset derives significance from its **setting**, as this represents the surroundings in which it is experienced.

The following sections will therefore examine:

a. The significance of 2 Abbeycroft as a whole, along with that of its group value and setting (Section C2)

b. The relative significance of the external and internal features of the building (Section C3)

C2: OVERALL SIGNIFICANCE OF 2 ABBEYCROFT

C2.1 Evaluation

Using the criteria in Section C1.2, the significance of 2 Abbeycroft is evaluated thus:

- **Age and rarity:** The building dates from at least the early 17th century and thus has rarity value as only a limited building stock survives from this period
- **Architectural interest:** the highly-complex evolution of the building, demonstrating several stages of building, is significant, as are the surviving interior details which provide evidence of this phasing
- **Historical interest:** while the site may be earlier, 2 Abbeycroft and its neighbours appears to have originated as a substantial house of yeoman standing whose status later declined on evidence of subdivision by the late 19th century
- **Group value:** 2 Abbeycroft has immediate group value with its neighbours at 1 and 3, and on a wider level with the heritage assets which form the historic nucleus of Whalley, such as the gateway, viaduct, English Martyrs RC church and abbey remains
- **Setting:** the building lies in the historic context of the ancient town centre and contributes to positive public realm views, especially westwards where it is seen against the multi-layered background of the gateway, railway viaduct and countryside beyond (Plate 1)

All the above qualities can be considered to equally apply to the adjoining houses at Abbeycroft.

C2.2 Conclusions

Along with its neighbours at Abbeycroft, Number 2 is a heritage asset of extensive significance, recognised statutorily by Grade II national designation. The nature of this significance lies chiefly lies in its age and rarity, architectural interest, group value and setting. It is significant on the first two counts as a building of early 17th century origins that were possibly timber-framed, and which has subsequently undergone a highly-complex evolution involving phased rebuilding in stone followed by alteration and eventual subdivision in the 19th century. Its possesses group value, not only with its neighbours in Abbeycroft but also with the heritage assets beyond that form the historic town of Whalley. In this context the building can be viewed in a little-altered setting, and features prominently in the attractive views westwards to the abbey gateway and

railway viaduct beyond. The wide extent of this significance means Abbeycroft is an important local heritage asset to Whalley and in particular to its Conservation Area, as it contributes to the special character upon which the area was established; and thus to the borough of Ribble Valley generally. Regionally, the building is of significance as one of the early 17th century houses surviving in Lancashire, and would in this regard be of value to any future academic study of the county's vernacular buildings.

C3: RELATIVE SIGNIFICANCE OF INDIVIDUAL FEATURES

C3.1 Introduction/criteria

The purpose of this section is to guide the design and planning processes by highlighting the relative significance of the features which survive. This is assessed using the following scale:

- **High significance** – features which make an important contribution to the architectural and historic interest and character of the building, through age, rarity, architectural merit or historical association or group value, and whose preservation and enhancement is considered essential

- **Medium significance** – those making a lesser contribution, but which nevertheless also considered worthy of preservation or enhancement

- **Low significance** – those making only a limited contribution overall, although not necessarily detracting from it

- **No significance** – those which make no contribution to the interest of a building or could be considered to detract from it

C3.2 Features of high significance

a. Exterior:

- **Front and rear elevations, including all original openings and features**
  Reason: establish historic character of the building both individually and in relation to the remainder of Abbeycroft; both elevations are visible from public realm

b. Interior:

- **Firehood, including bressumer, heck and remains of original framing**
  Reason: important original feature of early 17th century

- **Crosswall separating living room from kitchen**
  Reason: former outer wall of the building containing evidence of blocked window

- **Ceiling beams on all floors**
  Reason: important 17th century features

- **Roof truss and purlins**
  Reason: important 17th century feature

C3.3 Features of medium significance

- **Chimney flue and brick/stone fireplaces on both floors**
  Reason: not original, perhaps inserted during 19th century; modern alterations

- **Timbers re-used as door lintels etc**
  Reason: provide limited evidence of possible timber-framed origins of the building

C3.4 Features of low significance

- **Staircase**
  Reason: 20th century and therefore of no historic interest

.

SECTION D: IMPACT ASSESSMENT

D1: INTRODUCTION

D1.1 Relevant Policies

The impact of the application will be considered in the context of both national and local planning policies concerning the historic environment.

Nationally, the NPPF states (Paragraph 131) that in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation. It adds (paragraph 132) that *'great weight'* should be given to the conservation of a heritage asset; the more important the asset, the greater that weight should be; and that significance can be lost through development within its setting. Paragraph 133 states that where a proposal will lead to substantial harm to, or total loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset, consent should be refused unless it can be demonstrated that either the public benefits of loss outweigh that harm, or that the asset is non-viable.

Locally, guidelines for conservation of the historic environment are contained within the Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan (1999). Applicable to the current proposal is policy ENV 20, which deals with alteration or repair of listed buildings and the relevant portions of which are:

4.7.20 …*Proposals for the alteration or repair of listed buildings should be sympathetic to their character and appearance. The most important features of any listed building will be preserved.*

4.7.21 *Listing covers the whole of the building, inside and out, including its curtilage. The features mentioned in the list description provide a useful guide but are not an exclusive record of features of interest. The council will seek to preserve all features which contribute to the special interest of the building*

4.7.22 *The original building is of paramount importance. This is especially so in cases where works involve addition or demolition. In considering applications for listed building consent the council will protect the built heritage of the borough.*

In relation to the setting of a heritage asset, RVBC's policy ENV 19 states:

> *Development proposals on sites involving the setting of buildings listed as being of special architectural or historic interest which cause harm to the setting of the building will be resisted.*

Further local policies relating to the historic environment are outlined in Ribble Valley Council's published Draft Core Strategy (April 2012), whose policy EN5 states:

There will be a presumption in favour of the conservation of heritage assets and their settings where they are recognised as being of importance. The authority recognises that the best way of ensuring the long term preservation of heritage assets is to find an optimum viable use that strikes the correct balance between economic or other uses and the impact upon the significance of the asset.

D1.2 Methodology

In context of the above policies, the impact of the proposal will be examined (Section D2) as follows:

1. The principle of refurbishment and alterations generally
2. The impact of specific aspects of the proposed works, with reference to two alternative designs produced by Anthony Flanagan Architectural Designer and Surveyor (identified in drawings as Scheme 1 and Scheme 2).
3. The impact upon the building's group value and setting, and upon the Whalley Conservation Area.

D2: IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL

D2.1 The proposal generally

In principle, the proposal for refurbishment, and most of the proposed alterations, appear favourable to the building as they seek to enhance its viability and ensure its conservation; with the exceptions discussed in points D2.2 c and d below, the scheme appears to involve little or no impact upon the significance of 2 Abbeycroft and thus in general terms aligns with the principles of paragraphs 131 and 132 of the NPPF and RVBC policy ENV 20.

D2.2 Specific aspects of the proposal

Certain aspects of the proposal seek alteration or removal of fabric and thus merit individual comment:

a. **Removal and replacement of the present staircase and extension of staircase into attic (both schemes).** The present staircase is of 20th century date and no significance, and thus its loss will not harm the building. Extension into the loft will bring this currently disused part of the building into viable everyday use and is thus a positive step.
b. **Introduction of internal walls on first floor (both schemes).** While historically this would have been a single room, the introduction of new walls is not considered to be of harm, providing it is done in such a manner that could be easily reversed to restore the original arrangement at a future date.
c. **Blocking of external entrance to kitchen in rear wall/reopening of blocked entrance (Scheme 1).** This involves alteration to the rear elevation, a feature of high significance. However the impact may be considered to be limited by the fact that re-opening the blocked entrance reinstates an original feature, and blocking the kitchen door affects a non-original 19th century or later feature.
d. **Removal of section of crosswall left of door to kitchen (both schemes).** This feature is of high significance as it contains evidence of being an original outer wall; it has already been compromised by insertion of the present doorway in the 20th century. Given the high significance of the wall therefore, any further loss may be deemed contrary to ENV20 by RVBC.

D2.3 Impact upon group value, setting and Conservation Area

Given that the proposed works are largely internal, the proposal is not considered to entail harm to the group value of 2 Abbeycroft, its setting, the contribution it makes to the Whalley Conservation Area and to the character of the Conservation Area in general.

APPENDIX 1:
GARRY MILLER HISTORIC BUILDING CONSULTANCY

Garry Miller is an architectural historian who has spent more than 35 years studying buildings of town and countryside, in particular those of North West England. His career as a consultant began in the mid-1980s with the Preston-based Nigel Morgan Historic Building Consultancy, of which he became a partner in 1992 upon its rebranding as Datestone. In 1997 he was commissioned by the Heritage Trust for the North West, a buildings preservation trust based at Barrowford, Lancashire, to produce an in-depth regional study of vernacular houses in southwest Lancashire: the result, *Historic Houses in Lancashire: The Douglas Valley, 1300-1770* was published in 2002. Among its many positive reviews, it was described as *'scholarship as its best'* by *Country Life* (June 2003), and *'well analysed and presented'* in *Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society* (Vol 48, 2004). Since the book's publication, Garry Miller has formed his own consultancy, producing analytical and interpretive reports on historic buildings, now principally in the form of the heritage assessments required by planning policies governing the historic environment.