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HERITAGE ASSET STATEMENT

IN RESPECT OF:

A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE CONVERSION OF A
FORMER AGRICULTURAL BUILDING TO A SINGLE DETACHED
DWELLING

AT

CURTIS HOUSE
CHIPPING ROAD
LONGRIDGE
LANCASHIRE
PR3 2NB

Prepared by: Paul Fay for and on behalf of Gary Hoerty Associates
Our Ref: Par/614/1643/GH
Our Client: Mr M Paris
Date: May 2014



Chartered Surveyors ■■■■ Planning & Development ■■■■ Land Agents
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Gary Hoerty Associates have been instructed to submit a full planning application for the proposed conversion of a former agricultural building into a single storey detached dwelling, situated wholly within the curtilage of Curtis House.
- 1.2 This Heritage Asset Statement has been produced in support of an application for the above mentioned development, and will consider the impact of the development upon heritage significance.
- 1.3 This document has been prepared in line with policy guidelines set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG, 2012) and considers procedural guidance on the historic environment found in 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance' (English Heritage, 2008).

2. Background Information

2.1 Site Location

- 2.1.1 Curtis House is situated in Longridge, which is a small town and civil parish located in the Ribble Valley borough in Lancashire, approximately eight miles north-east of Preston. Curtis House is situated in an area of open countryside just outside the settlement boundary. The site is to be found off Chipping Road, with a National Grid reference of SD 60397 38874.

2.2 Site Description

- 2.2.1 The site consists of an 18th century stone built farmhouse and a detached, brick built, single storey former cowshed which is the subject of this application.
- 2.2.2 The site is in a rural location, and the surrounding area is characterised by a scattering of similar farmsteads amidst an upland terrain.
- 2.2.3 The buildings within the curtilage of Curtis House are not designated nationally or locally and are situated in an area designated as open countryside.
- 2.2.4 The Site plan is given below in Image 1;

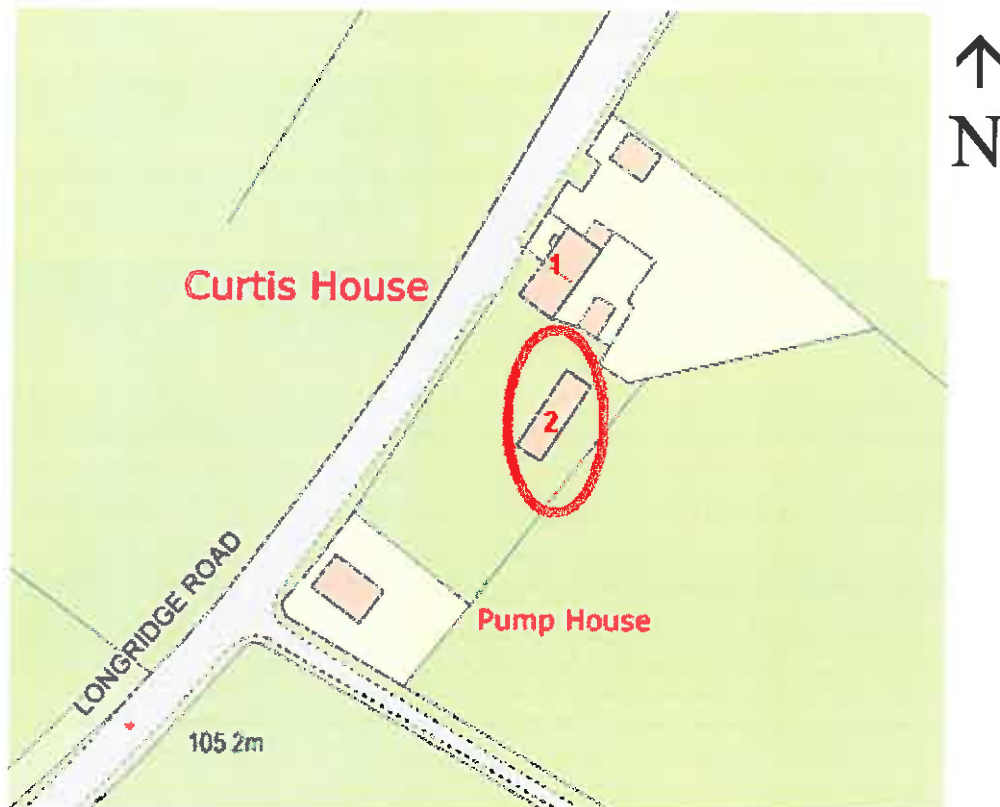


Image 1 – Site plan of Curtis House, indicating the layout of the site. Application building circled in red for clarification.

2.3 Building Description

Building 1 – see Image 1.

- 2.3.1 To the north of the site is the farmhouse. The farmhouse is aligned along the north-east to south-west axis and is two storeys in height. The farmhouse is of irregular ‘rubble’ coursed sandstone construction featuring quoins to all corners and the roof is blue slate covered. It is evident that the building has been extended / altered over its life; these alterations will be commented upon later in this statement.

Building 2 – see Image 2.

- 2.3.2 To the east of the site is the building that is subject to the application. It is constructed from solid brick walls with a dual pitch roof construction, which is clad with natural slate. The roof features a number of ventilation cowls along the ridge. The building is in a fair condition and is structurally sound, however overtime the building will fall into disrepair if no alternative use found for the building is found. There are localised areas requiring repair and attention with a large amount of spalling to the brickwork and a number of slipped roof slates.

2.4 Proposed Works

- 2.4.1 The aim of the proposals is to convert the former cowshed into a single storey, self contained dwelling house. In order to achieve this, the enclosing fabric of the building requires repair and upgrading in order to comply with modern building regulations, of particular note is upgrading to meet resistance to damp and thermal efficiency requirements.

3. Assessment of the Heritage Asset

3.1 Historical Background

- 3.1.1 This Heritage Statement contains extracts from historic maps; the larger scale maps can be found in Appendix A. The maps are from circa.1890, 1910, 1930 and 1960. The information gained from these maps is commented upon below.
- 3.1.2 The quality of the early maps is quite poor and the image shows no real detail, the plan footprint of the farmhouse building appears similar from c.1890 – c.1910; these images show the building before the addition of a single storey extension on the north elevation and the porch to the west elevation. In the images from c.1930 & c.1960 (see Image 3) the plan footprint of the building changes indicating infill construction to the northern corner of the building and the addition of the porch on the westerly facing elevation and a single storey extension to the northerly facing elevation.

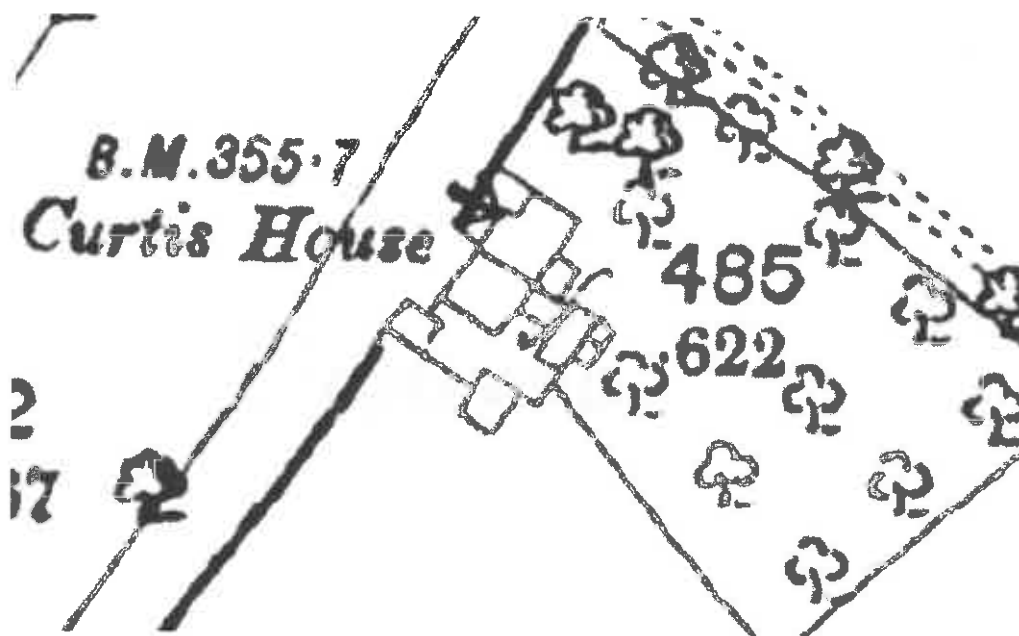


Image 2 – extract of c.1890 OS map showing plan layout similar to current layout but with front porch continuing down westerly facing elevation

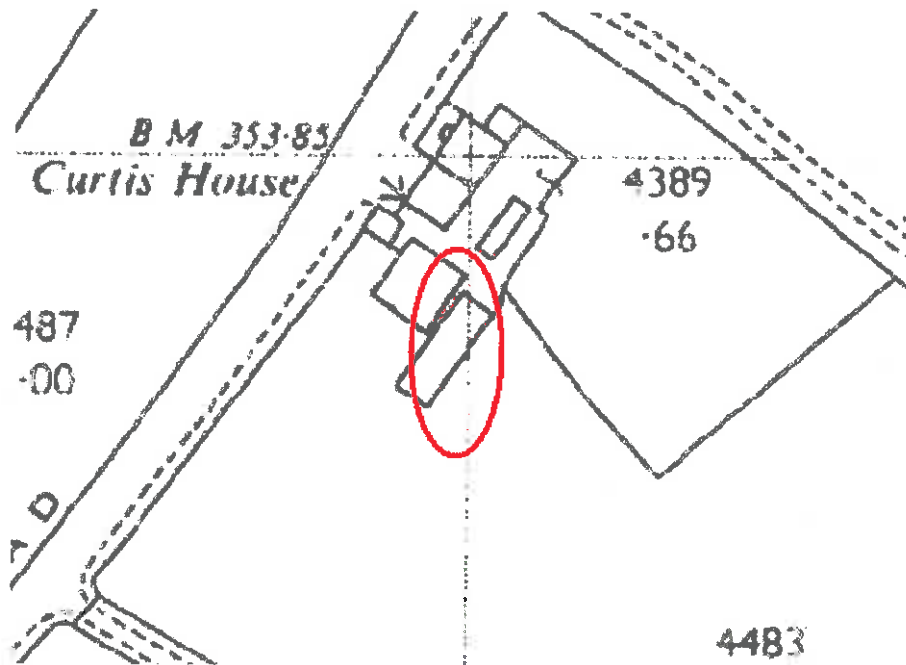


Image 3 – extract of a c.1960 OS map is the earliest map showing the presence of the cowshed building.

- 3.1.3 The map c.1960 shows the presence of the cowshed building (see Image 3). An aerial photo taken c.1940 shows the absence of the cowshed (see Image 4); this gives an approximate construction date of 1940 – 1960.



Image 4 – Aerial Photo c.1940 showing plan layout of the site but with the absence of the cowshed building.

3.2 Appraisal of Heritage Value

- 3.2.1 In considering whether the building effected by this proposal has any significant heritage value this appraisal is produced in consideration of the heritage values outlined in the 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance' (English Heritage, 2008). These values are: evidential, historic, communal and aesthetic values. An appraisal of these values allows a careful consideration of the significance possessed by the heritage asset and the guidance is intended to facilitate change through intelligent management of the historic environment. The values are commented on below;

Evidential Value

'Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity'

- 3.2.2 The assessment of evidential value considers value through the physical characteristics inherent in a structure. The building affected by this proposal offers physical evidence of farming on the site. However it has low evidential value as it is of fairly recent construction, circa 1940-1960, and has little vernacular construction materials or techniques of note, it is merely a building constructed with functionality in mind.

Historical Value

'Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present'

- 3.2.3 Curtis House has no apparent historical connections. The historical value of the proposal building is found in the physical form of the building and its association with the farmhouse which bears testament to the requirements of farmsteads historically.

Aesthetic Value

'Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place'

- 3.2.4 The aesthetic value of a building is derived from its vernacular appearance; utilising local materials, traditional construction methods and architectural features. The proposal building has no real aesthetic value as it is of fairly basic construction using standard materials and was constructed with function taking precedence over form. The absence of any notable architectural features or locally sympathetic materials further strengthens the view that aesthetic value is considered to be low. The materials used in its construction are of brick construction and natural slate roof covering.

Communal Value

'Communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory'

- 3.2.5 Minimal communal value can be attributed to the building due to the building being situated in a remote, rural location and its history of being part of a private dwelling without communal purpose. Communal enjoyment of the farmstead as a whole can be found in its setting within the landscape but in regard to the building itself the level of communal value is considered to be low.

3.3 Summary

- 3.3.1 Curtis House Farm is an extended vernacular building from the early 18th century. The building affected by this proposal is a later addition constructed from more modern materials than the original farmhouse. It is situated in an area of similar farmsteads and is not considered to be an exemplar of type. Considering the comments in the previous paragraphs the level of heritage value of this building is considered to be low.

4. Impact on the Heritage Asset.

4.1 Analysis of Proposals – National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.1.1 The adoption of the National Planning Policy Framework in March 2012 means that it is now the main national planning policy guidance influencing planning decision making and it is stated within Annex 3, of the NPPF, that the national guidance replaces a substantial number of documents, including *'PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment'*. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied, it sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so.
- 4.1.2 Paragraph 126 of the NPPF states that when drafting local plans, local planning authorities should set a *"strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment"*, which should include any assets or buildings at risk through, *"neglect or decay"*. The NPPF goes on to say that local planning authorities should recognise the importance of heritage assets and that they *"are an irreplaceable resource"* and should be conserved. The paragraph goes on to suggest criteria that local planning authorities should consider when developing local plans. Paragraph 126 sets out the main drivers that should be considered when developing these plans, these being;
- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*

- *the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and*
- *opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place*

4.1.3 These four main policy drivers must be considered in relation to the proposal contained in paragraph 2.4.1 of this statement. This is commented on below;

4.1.4 The proposed conversion seeks to sustain the use of a building which is currently in a dilapidated condition and is in danger of further decline. Such decline would not only result in obsolescence for the building affected by the proposal, but would also be of detriment to the surrounding area. The conversion of redundant agricultural buildings to domestic dwellings is a conventional approach that historically has proven to be both a practicably viable and, if managed correctly, a sustainable approach.

4.1.5 Given that the heritage significance is low, the proposals do not pose a threat to any erosion of such significance, and the overall aesthetic improvement to the site should be seen as a positive approach. The overall improvement of the visual aspect of the site as a whole should also be a consideration when considering the impact of any development.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Curtis House is a farmstead dating from the 18th century and comprises an original farmhouse that has been extended over time and a redundant agricultural building that is the subject of this application. The building is situated in a rural location within the open countryside and AONB. The prime heritage significance is in the evidence of historical farming activity associated with the farmstead. Any other heritage significance is regarded as being low.

5.2 The findings of this Statement are that maintaining active use is a fundamental philosophy of building conservation, and finding new uses for redundant buildings is to be promoted. Residential conversion, when properly managed, enables the change of a buildings use whilst protecting and enhancing rural character.

5.3 The redundant shippen at Curtis House is falling into a fair condition at present, which over time will fall into disrepair, and as a result is in need of reassignment. This statement is in regard to the proposals that have been put forward for its conversion to a dwelling. The heritage significance of the site is relatively low so any development can not really be considered a detriment to heritage values but alternatively should be considered a protection of the heritage values of the overall aspect of the farmstead.

- 5.4 The principle of the development assures sustainable long term use of the building and the desirability of the building is enhanced further with the quality of the proposed design of the development.
- 5.5 Having considered the proposals against guidance outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework, the relatively minor heritage status of the former cowshed should facilitate the approval of the proposed conversion. The permitting of the conversion would see a redundant building put to suitable use and this can only benefit the surrounding area, with this as the primary driver it is our firm opinion that the proposals conform to this guidance and that the Council should look favourably upon this application for consent.

Signed..........Date.....13.05.2014.....

Paul Fay. BSc (Hons)

For and on behalf of Gary Hoerty Associates