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AUSTIN HOUSE
MALT KILN LANE
CHIPPING
LANCASHIRE

HERITAGE STATEMENT

BY

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Austin House is a residential property overlooking the mill pond on the northern edge of Chipping. It dates from the early-mid 19th century, and was probably built by the Weld family of Leagram Park as an agricultural smallholding. In the later 19th century it was enlarged, possibly for livestock.
- 1.2 The property was sold in 1979 to the owners of Kirk Mill, who adapted and regularised the building, giving it its present appearance. The current owners have carried out further alterations and extensions during the past ten years and improved its landscape setting.
- 1.3 The owners now wish to add a study for home working, and have looked at a number of options for extending the house. Since the building stands within the setting of the Kirk Mill Conservation Area, a historic and architectural appraisal of the building and its setting has been commissioned to inform the design and to support a planning application.
- 1.4 This PPS5 Statement, which has been prepared by Peter de Figueiredo, provides an assessment of the building within its historic context, and an understanding of its development based on historical research, building recording and comparative analysis. The Statement of Significance has been used to guide the development project. Also included in the document is an assessment of the impact of two options on the significance of the building and the setting of the conservation area as required by PPS5 and local planning policy.

2 HISTORY OF AUSTIN HOUSE

- 2.1 The settlement of Chipping is situated on the south westerly edge of the Forest of Bowland. Leagram Park, which has its origins as one of the medieval deer parks of the Forest, was bought by Sir Richard Sherburne of Stonyhurst from the Earl of Leicester in the 16th century to serve as his hunting lodge as Master Forester of Bowland. The estate later passed to the Weld family, who still own it¹. George Weld built Leagram Hall in 1822, though this was replaced in 1963 by the present small neo-Georgian house to the design of Fulke Fitzherbert-Brockholes.
- 2.2 At the time Austin House was erected, the land formed part of the Leagram estate, and it is likely that it was built as a farm or small holding by the Weld family. On the basis of its style and construction, the house appears to date from c.1840.
- 2.3 Whilst the 1840 Tithe map for Chipping township (Fig. 1) does not record the building, this is because Malt Kiln Lane formed the boundary

¹ John Martin Robinson, *A Guide to the Country Houses of the North West*, 1991

with Leagram-with-Bowland township, and the site was just outside Chipping. Since Leagram-with-Bowland was in private landed ownership, it was not surveyed. Nonetheless a building close the site of Austin House is shown in faint outline on the Chipping Tithe map, and is also recorded on a map dated 1845, on which Austin House, then called Dam Side (Fig.2) also features. It seems likely therefore that the house originated between 1840 and 1845.

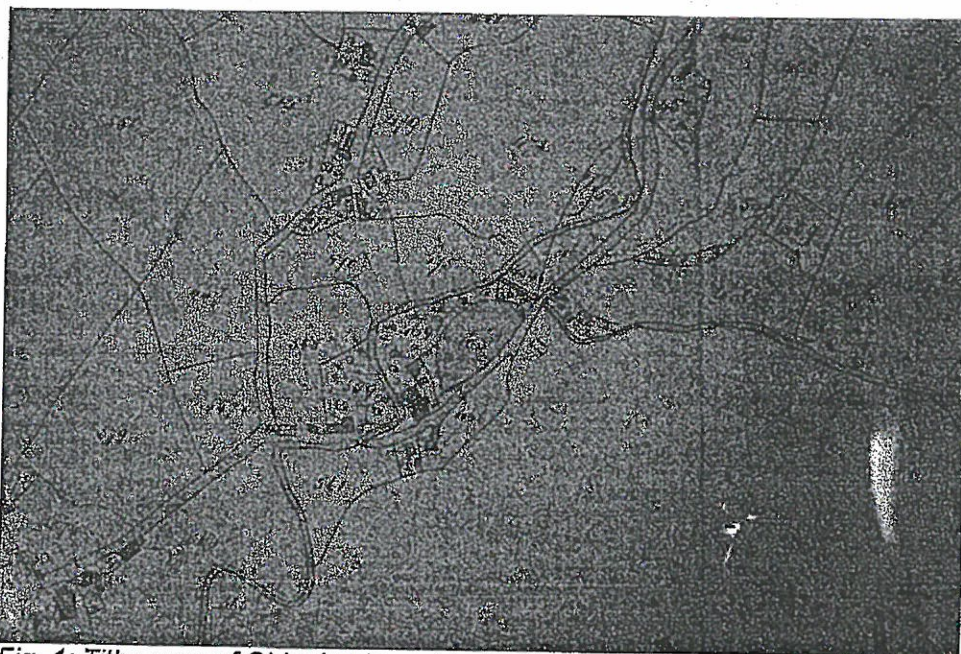


Fig. 1: Tithe map of Chipping township 1840

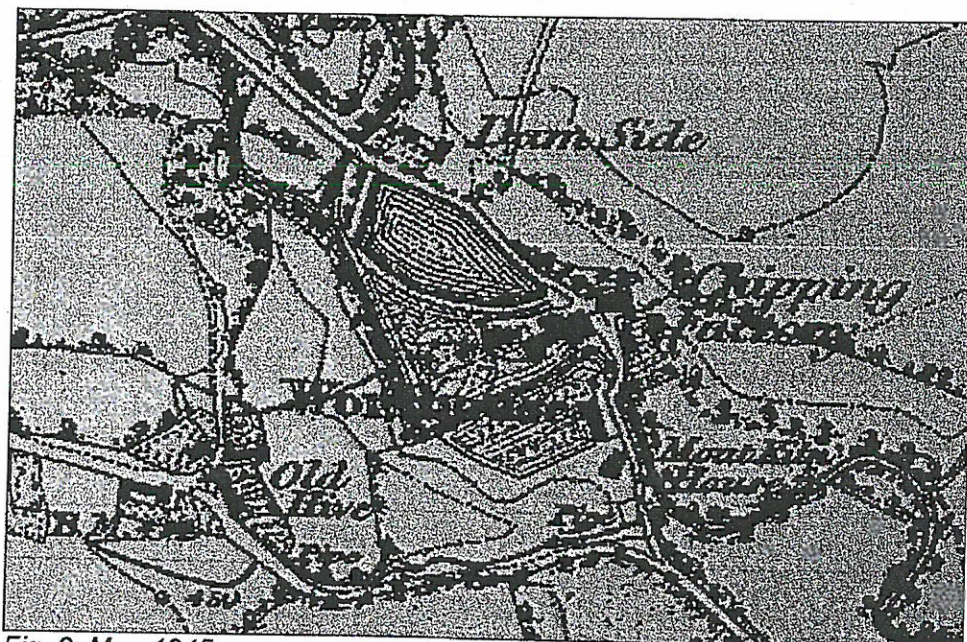


Fig 2: Map 1845

- 2.4 First named Dam Side, since there was a dam adjoining the property, Austin House was built overlooking the mill pond that provided the water supply for Kirk Mill. With its origins as a medieval corn mill, Kirk Mill developed into a cotton mill in 1785 with water-powered machinery based on the designs of Richard Arkwright. Cotton spinning was discontinued in 1866 when supplies of raw cotton were affected by the American Civil War, and in the late 19th century a joinery and chair-making business was established at the mill, which continued until recently.
- 2.3 By 1890, the date of the first OS map (Fig 3) Austin House had been extended, whilst the adjoining building, shown on the earlier maps, had been removed. The extension, which increased the frontage width of the property, is marked with a dividing wall, which suggests that it was either in separate occupation or used for animals. The OS map revision of 1910 shows the house to be still in two parts, with a small extension added at the rear of the original house (Fig. 4).



Fig. 3: OS Map 1890-91

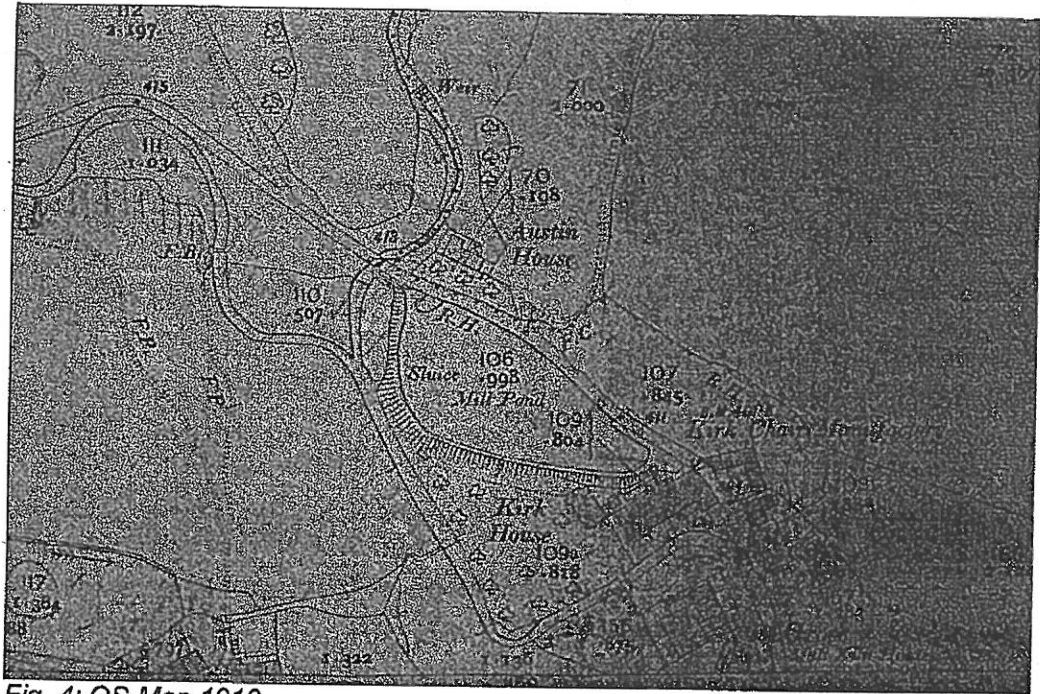


Fig 4: OS Map 1910

- 2.4 A conveyance dated 3 October 1979 involved the transfer of ownership of Austin House from Charles Joseph Ignatius Weld-Blundell of Leagram Park to H J Berry and Sons, the owners of Kirk Mill, at a cost of £43,500. Planning permission was granted on 29 November of that year for an extension, change of use of a barn to a dwelling, and the installation of a septic tank. A plan of the property dated July 1979 shows it prior to commencement of works, when it can be seen that a large shed was situated to the rear (Fig. 5). Photographs from July 1979 and June 1981 (Figs. 6 and 7) show views before and after the works.
- 2.5 On 15 July 1986, Austin House was sold by H J Berry and Sons to Ronald and Elizabeth Hamlet for £84,000. They sold it to the present owners, Mr and Mrs Vaughan, approximately ten years ago. Since that time, the Vaughans have refurbished the house to a high standard, and built extensions at the rear and west gable end.

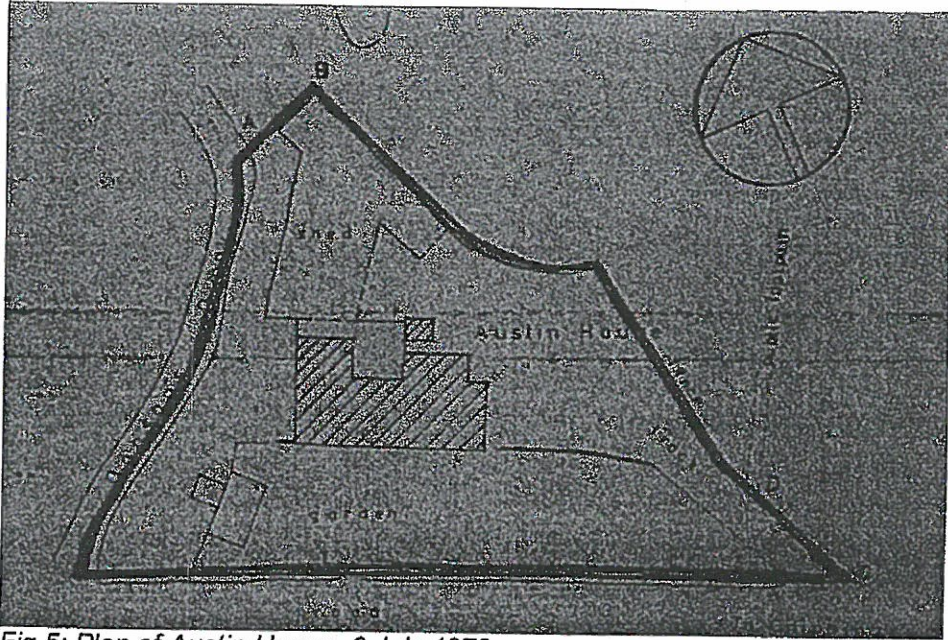


Fig. 5: Plan of Austin House, 6 July 1979



Fig. 6: Photographs of frontage, July 1979

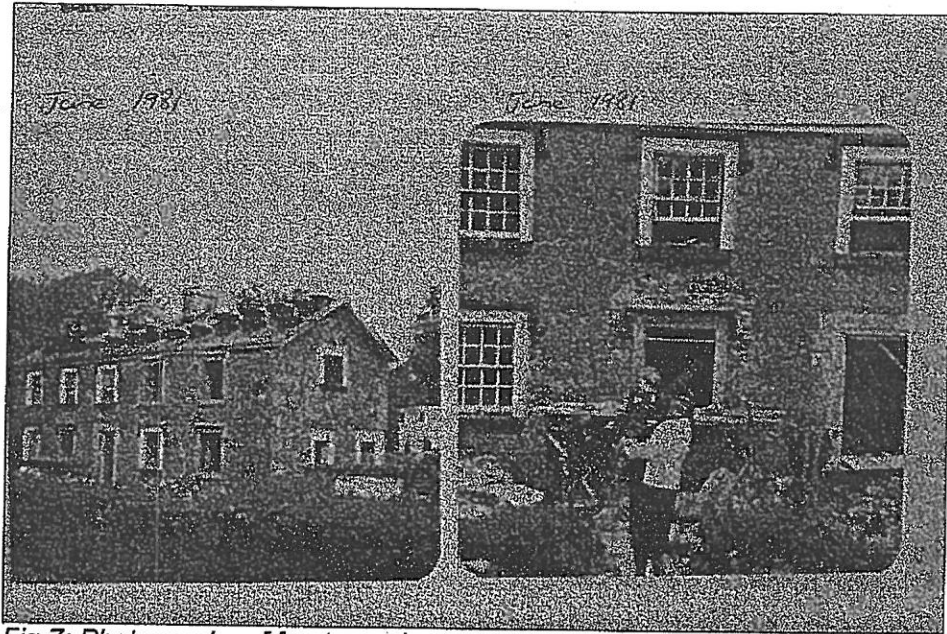
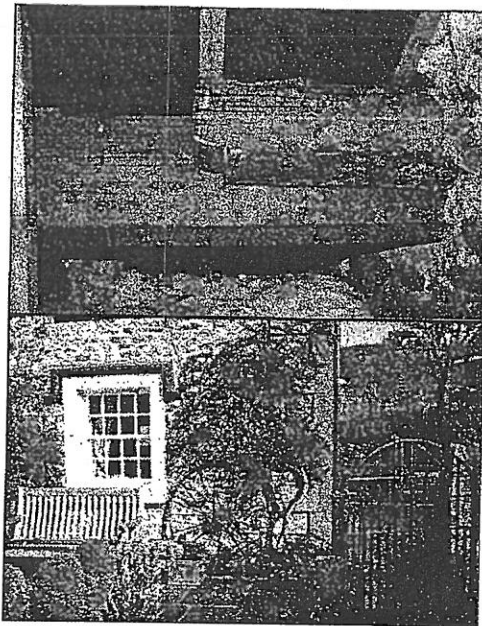


Fig. 7: Photographs of frontage, June 1981

3 ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS OF AUSTIN HOUSE

- 3.1 As originally built, Austin House was just three bays wide with a central doorway and two windows to each side. The symmetrical frontage was punctuated at ridge level by two matching chimney stacks. This can be seen in Fig 6, which shows the original sash windows with dressed stone architraves and Tudor-style hood moulds. At each of the corners there were dressed stone quoins, and the slate roof overhung the gable ends, supported on shaped brackets. The bracket ends can still be seen projecting from the original gable end within the roof space of the later extension (Fig. 7).



- 3.2 The house would originally have contained a parlour and kitchen, with two bedrooms above, but between 1845 and 1890, the house was enlarged by the addition of a cottage or possibly a barn for livestock on the east gable end. The front elevation of the extension, which can be seen in Fig 7, lacked the 'polite' architectural character of the original house.

- 3.3 In 1980, the property was extensively altered. Within the original house, the front door was moved to its present position, and the porch was added, whilst all the sash windows apart from one were replaced. The 19th century extension was substantially rebuilt, including the stone gable end. The quoins were removed from the original gable end and used to contain the east gable wall of the extension. Four new window openings were formed to line up with the bays of the original house, with new stone architrave and hood moulds made to match (one was reclaimed from the window opening that was converted into the entrance). Additional windows were added in the rebuilt gable wall. The roof was reconstructed with new rafters, fascias and bargeboards.
- 3.4 During the last ten years, the current owners have carried out further alterations. The two pre-1979 rear extensions were replaced to create a larger sitting room and an improved kitchen, and a single storey orangery was added on the west side. Planning consent was also granted in 2010 for a small single storey addition to the kitchen. With the exception of the orangery, these extensions are not visible from the road frontage. Extensive repairs and improvements have been made to the fabric of the building both externally and internally, and the grounds have been enhanced with exceptional sensitivity.



Fig. 5: View from south east



Fig. 6: View from south west

4 KIRK MILL CONSERVATION AREA

- 4.1 In February 2010 a conservation area was designated by Ribble Valley Borough Council with the aim of protecting the industrial hamlet of Kirk Mill. The boundary was drawn around the mill buildings, the former manager's house, the workhouse and cottages, together with the mill pond and feeder section of Chipping Brook. It did not include Austin House or Mill Pond House, the latter a largely modern property that occupies a commanding position above the mill pond just east of Austin House.
- 4.2 In July 2010 the Council's Planning and Development Committee considered a further report suggesting that the conservation area should be extended to take in more of the landscape setting to the north and west of the designated area, which would include both Austin House and Mill Pond House.

- The vernacular character of the building, with its refined architectural detailing to window surrounds, quoins and roof verges, which have been respected in all phases of development
- The robust external stone walls of the house.
- The layout and design of the garden including the boundary and retaining walls, trees and planting.

5.3 Contribution made to the Setting of the Kirk Mill Conservation Area

- 5.3.1 Austin House was not included in the conservation area when it was designated in February 2010. The designation decision was based on the importance of the complex of industrial buildings and its significance as an early and rare example of an Arkwright Mill.
- 5.3.2 The later proposal made to Ribble Valley BC Planning Committee proposed consultation be carried on an extension to the conservation area. The reason for proposing an extension was so as to include the mill's hydraulic engineering features such as the feeder streams, weirs, outlets and culverts, together with their landscape setting. The report also states that Austin House and Mill Pond House are prominently sited adjacent to the mill pond, and development at these sites could have a significant impact on the conservation area. There is, however, no suggestion that they contribute specifically to the defined significance of the conservation area, which is based on its industrial heritage
- 5.3.3 Austin House and Mill Pond House are very different in character and setting. Austin House retains its historic character to a significant degree, and is well integrated into the landscape. Mill Pond House, in contrast, has been largely rebuilt in an unsympathetic manner and is prominently situated on an elevated site. As such Austin House complements the landscape character of the area, whilst Mill Pond House detracts from it.

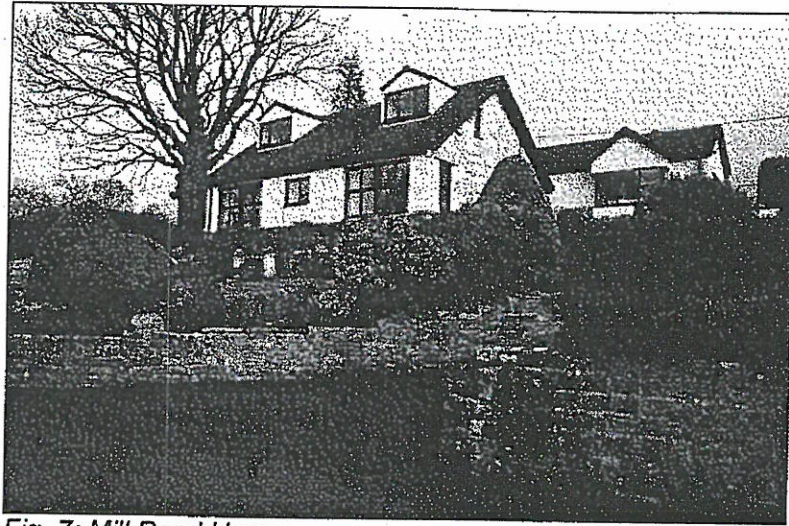


Fig 7: Mill Pond House

5.3.4 The way that Austin House relates to the landscape can best be appreciated in a series of kinetic views from Malt Kiln Lane moving east and west. Approaching the site from the west, the house only comes into view at the point where the road crosses Atkinson's Bridge (Fig. 9). Here, it contributes positively to the landscape, and the recent orangery is a sympathetic and well-designed addition. Seen from the east, the house is only gradually revealed (Figs. 10-13), and can at no point be seen in its entirety. The fullest view is where the driveway enters the site, at which point it is glimpsed obliquely across the forecourt (Fig. 12). Seen front-on, the house is largely concealed by a mature hedge (Fig. 13)

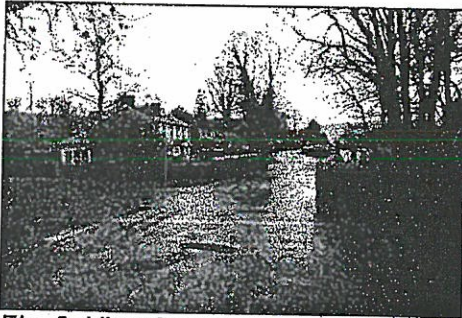


Fig. 8: View from west bridge

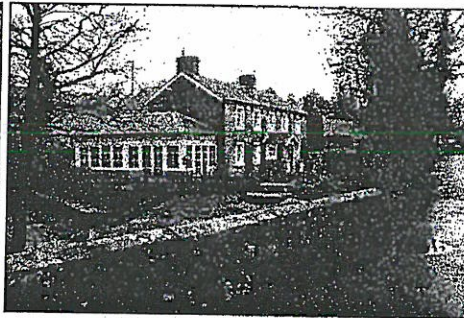


Fig. 9: View from west at the

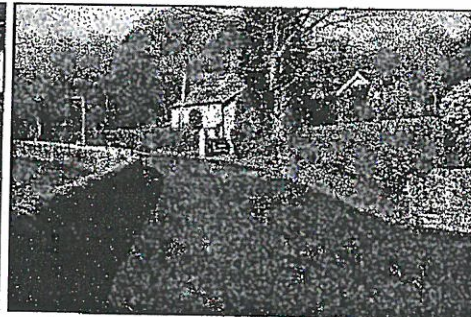
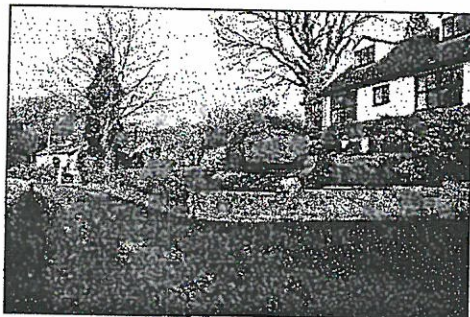


Fig. 10: View from east at Mill Pond House Fig. 11: View from east

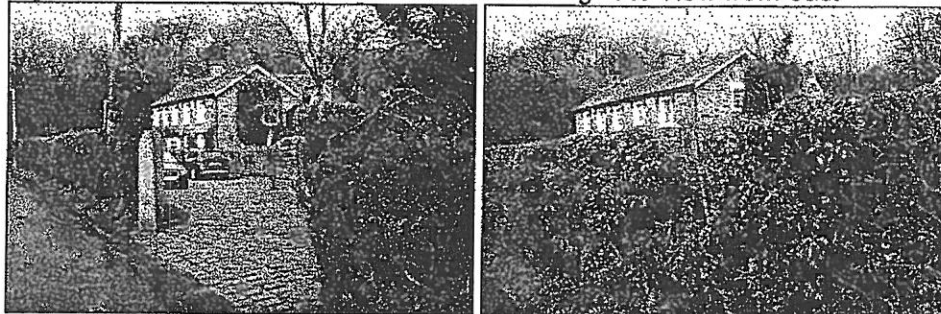


Fig. 12: View from east at driveway Fig. 13: View from south east

- 5.3.5 Thus it can be seen that whilst Austin House does not relate directly to the theme of the conservation area, it contributes positively to the landscape setting, and complements the visual character of the area. Recent changes to the building have enhanced rather than harmed the significance of the conservation area.

6 HERITAGE PLANNING CONTEXT

6.1 National Planning Policy and Guidance

- 6.1.1 As set out in PPS5, the Government's overarching aim is that the historic environment and its heritage assets should be conserved and enjoyed for the quality of life they bring to this and future generations. In delivering these objectives, the Government recognises that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term.
- 6.1.2 The Government seeks to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance by ensuring that decisions are based on the nature, extent and level of that significance, investigated to a degree proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset.
- 6.1.3 Policy HE9 4 states that where a proposal has a harmful impact on the significance of a designated heritage asset which is less than substantial harm, in all cases local planning authorities should:
- (i) weigh the public benefit of the proposal (for example, that it helps to secure the optimum viable use of the heritage asset in the interests of its long-term conservation) against the harm; and
 - (ii) recognise that the greater the harm to the significance of the heritage asset the greater the justification will be needed for any loss.
- 6.1.4 Policy HE9.5 states that not all elements of a Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance. When considering proposals, local authorities should take into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area as a whole. Where an element does not positively contribute to its significance, local planning authorities should take into

account the desirability of enhancing or better revealing the significance of the Conservation Area, including, where appropriate, through development of that element. This should be seen as part of the process of place-shaping.

- 6.1.5 Policy HE7.5 of PPS5 states that local planning authorities should take into account the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to the local distinctiveness of the historic environment. The consideration of design should include scale, height, massing, alignment and use.
- 6.1.6 Paragraphs 15-22 of PPS1 address the importance of good design. Paragraph 20 states that particular weight will be given to the impact of development on existing buildings and the character of areas recognised for their landscape or townscape value.