

PROPOSED  
STABLE BUILDING  
AT  
AUSTIN HOUSE  
MALT KILN LANE  
CHIPPING  
HERITAGE STATEMENT

  
30/12/12

## HISTORY OF AUSTIN HOUSE

The settlement of Chipping is situated on the south westerly edge of the Forest of Bowland Leagram Park, which has its origin 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 16<sup>th</sup> century to serve as his hunting lodge as Master Forester of Bowland. The estate later passed to the Weld family, who still own it. 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..

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

Whilst the 1840 Tithe map for Chipping township (Fig 1) does not record the building this is because Malt Kiln Lane formed the boundary with Leagram-Bowland township, and the site was just outside Chipping. Since Leagram-with-Bowland was in private landed ownership, it was not surveyed. It seems likely the house originated between 1840 and 1845

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 19<sup>th</sup> century a joinery and chair making business was established at the mill, which continued until recently.

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 SO 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)

A conveyance dated 3<sup>rd</sup> 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<sup>th</sup> 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)

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On 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 & Mrs Vaughan approximately Twenty years ago. Since that time the Vaughan's have refurbished the house to a high standard and built extensions at the rear and west gable end.

During the last twenty 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.

Last year (2016) the floor layout to the house was further extended with a two storey rear extension application No 3/2016/0171 completing works to the dwelling in formation of the dwelling.

#### KIRK HALL CONSERVATION AREA

In February 2010 a conservation area was designated by Ribble Valley Borough Council with the aim of protecting the industrial hamlet of Kirk Hall. 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.

In July 2010 the Council 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.

#### Identification of Cultural Significance

The property provides evidence of the rural community that existed in the upland district of north Lancashire in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. It appears to have been erected as a smallholding with separate farm buildings on land owned by the Leagram Estate and later extended. In 1979 the house was altered, making it more imposing and architecturally unified. The process of extension and enhancement has continued in recent years with the work carried out by the present owners. This process of change, which is common in rural areas, reflects the rise in status of property owners and their life styles. It provides the mix of vernacular and polite architectural styles that make up the traditional fabric of the countryside. Whilst many rural buildings of previous times have been lost in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, others have been creatively adapted for new types of occupant, providing continues life and vitality.

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The site is just north of the village centre, overlooking the mill pond which was built to serve Kirk Mill, whilst Austin House is not historically or functionally related to the mill and its industrial heritage, it has visual connections with Dobson's Brook and the mill pond.

#### Contribution made to the setting of the Kirk Mill Conservation Area

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.

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 mills hydraulic engineering feature such as the feeder streams, weirs outlets and culverts, together with their landscape setting. The report also states the 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.

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 inot 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.

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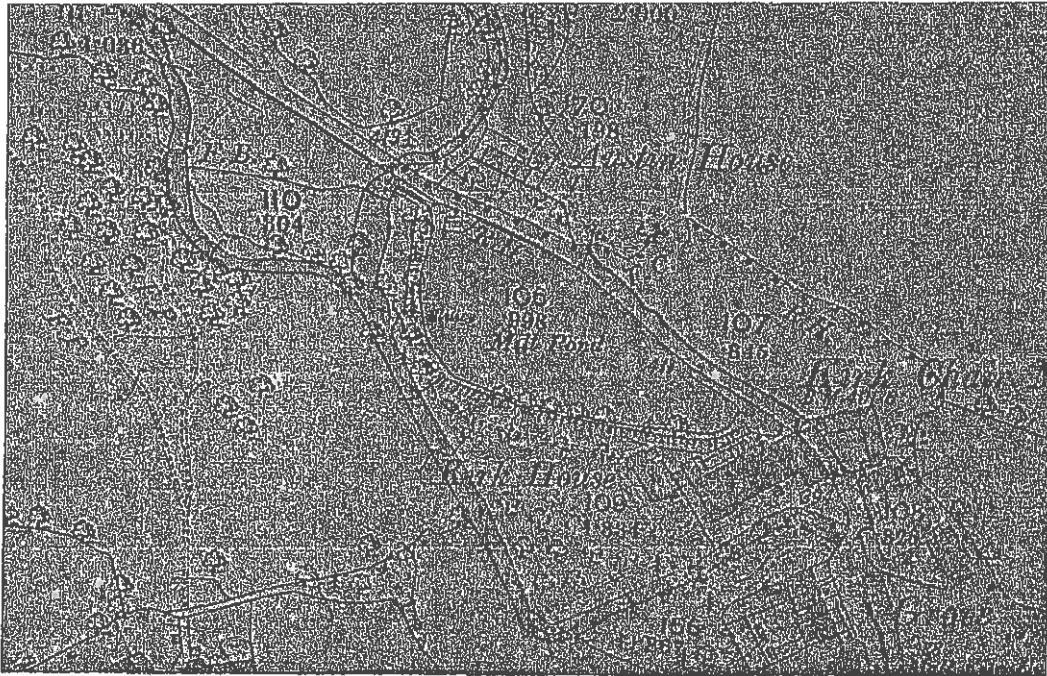


Fig. 3: OS Map 1890-91

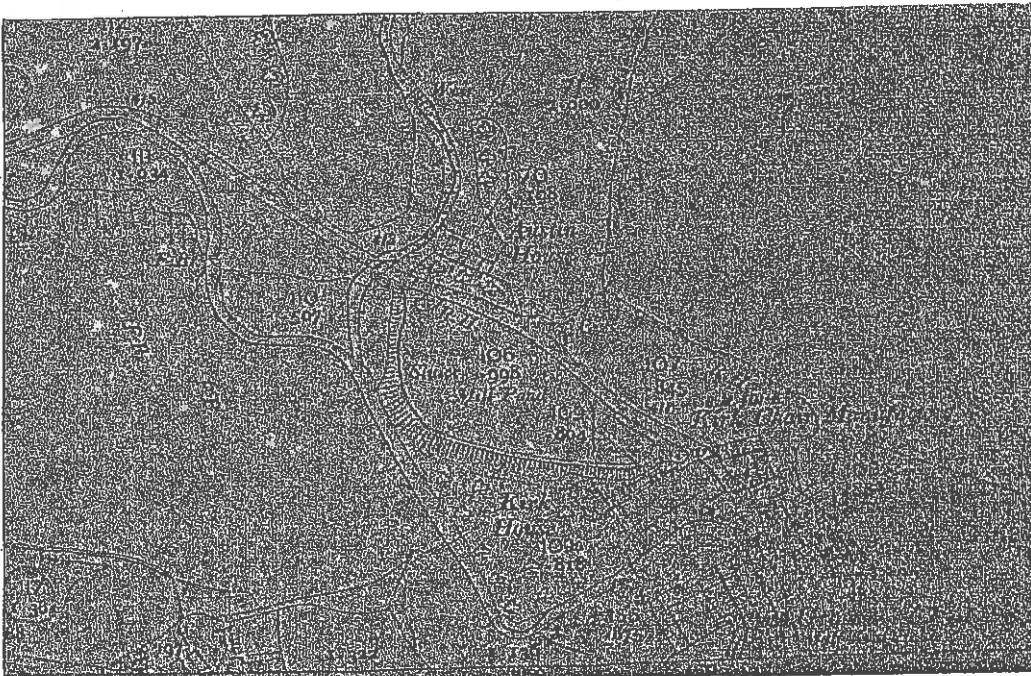


Fig. 4: OS Map 1910



Fig. 5: View from south east

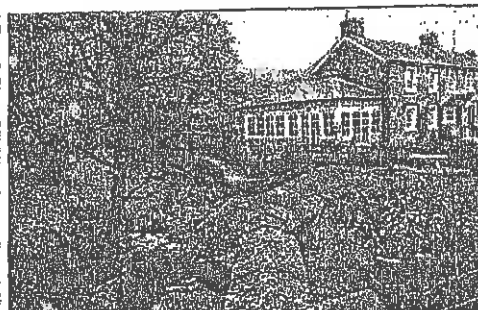


Fig. 6: View from south west