

Deer House, Woodfold Park

Heritage Statement

on behalf of **Mr Gow**

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Cassidy + Ashton has been instructed to prepare a Heritage Statement in support of a householder application for a small one-storey extension to Deer House, Woodfold Park to create a potting shed and tool room. The application is required as Deer House is situated within Woodfold Park which is a Grade II listed Registered Park and Garden.
- 1.2 In order to satisfy the requirements of planning policy, the application is accompanied by:
- Application form and certificates
 - Full plans, elevations and sections
 - Heritage Statement
- 1.3 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. This heritage assessment has been prepared to evaluate the significance of the heritage area and the potential impact of the proposal upon this significance.
- 1.4 The following approach was undertaken to produce the heritage assessment:
- Desktop study of existing literature including detailed listing prepared by Heritage England and associated documents;
 - Site visit to review the context in respect of the existing condition of the building;
 - Assessment of the results of the first two stages to establish the significance of the site, its heritage assets; and
 - Assessment of the impact of the proposed development upon the identified assets.

2.0 SITE CONTEXT

- 2.1 Deer House is situated within the northern extent of Woodfold Park and is located to the north-east of Woodfold Hall. Woodfold Park is located approximately 5km to the north-west of Blackburn.

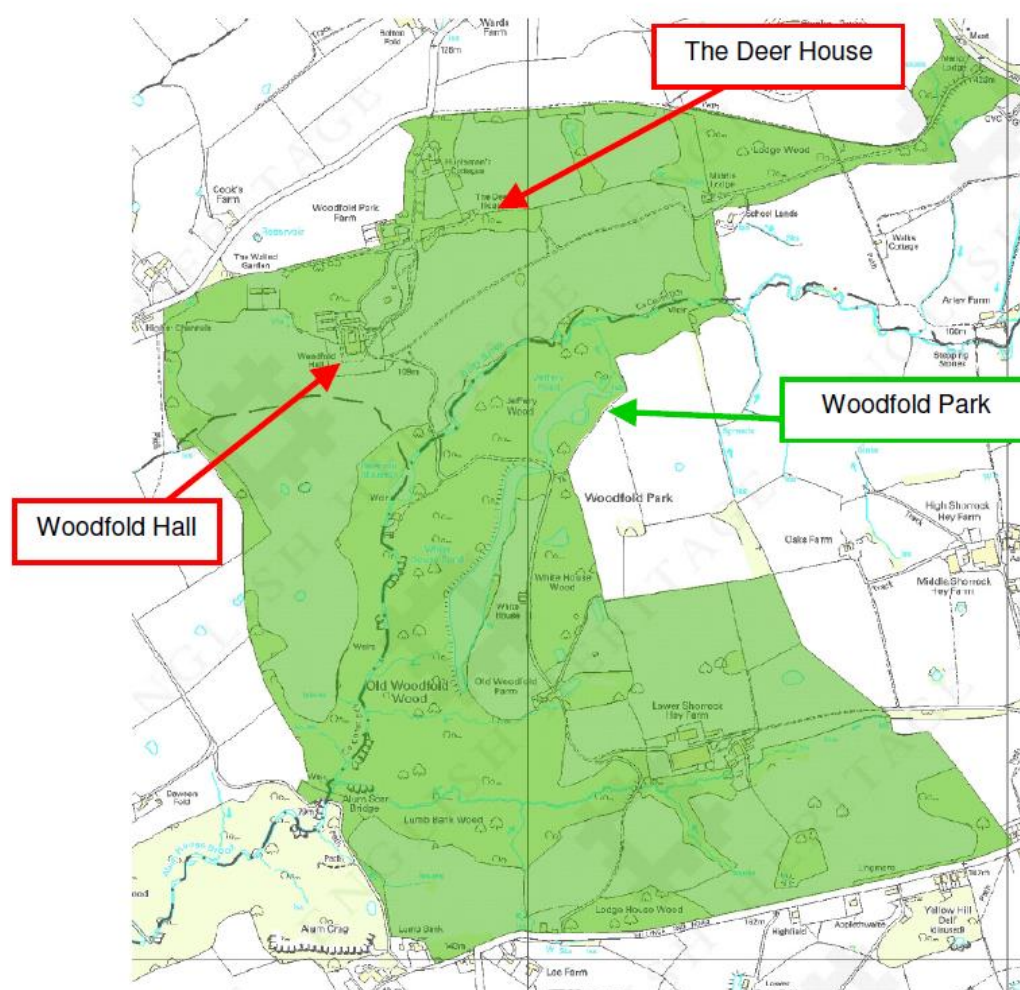


Fig. 1 Site Location

- 2.2 Woodfold Park is characterised by broad swathes of parkland, woodland, streams, brooks, weirs and large ponds and is bounded by a 3m high stone wall.
- 2.3 The application site is a small, single storey cottage with stone walls and a pitched slate roof.
- 2.4 Recent planning history for the property is as follows:

3/2013/0230

Planning permission was approved for an extension to Deer House in June 2013. The extension created a link between the existing dwelling and the adjacent garage building.

Woodfold Park - Heritage Asset

- 2.5 The site falls within Woodfold Park, a designated heritage asset, and therefore an analysis of the heritage asset is included within this statement.
- 2.6 Woodfold Park was first listed on 12th December 1995 and has Grade II listing status.
- 2.7 The park is listed under list entry number 1001341 and is given the following description:

SUMMARY OF HISTORIC INTEREST

A park laid out in the 1790s to accompany a country house.

HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT

Towards the end of the C18 Henry Sudell, a cotton manufacturer and financier of Blackburn, purchased several estates in the area, including Woodfold Park. This he imparked and, in 1798, called on Charles McNiven, an architect from Manchester, to build a new house. The house and park were sold in 1831 to Mr John Fowden Hindle, but he died shortly afterwards. The estate passed to various members of the Hindle family in fairly rapid succession. The Woodfold estate was sold c 1878 to Robert Daniel Thwaites, a brewer of Blackburn. On Thwaites' death in 1888 the estate descended to his only daughter, Elma Amy. Through Elma Amy Thwaites' marriage in 1888 to Robert Armstrong Yerburch, the estate became the property of the Yerburch family. It remains (1990s) in private ownership.

DESCRIPTION

LOCATION, AREA, BOUNDARIES, LANDFORM, SETTING

Woodfold Park, c 175ha, lies to the west of Blackburn, north of Pleasington, and c 1.75km to the east of Samlesbury Bottoms. From the northern end of the site the ground falls away steeply to the south, offering long views along the valley of the Arley Brook to south and east. Much of the park is bounded by a high stone wall, beyond which lies an agricultural landscape. Further Lane twice touches the park at its north-west corner and the southern boundary is formed by Pleasington Road.

ENTRANCES AND APPROACHES

The main drive leads off the A677 road at the north-east corner of the site, through the gateway at Mellor Lodge (listed grade II), the pair of lodge houses probably being of the 1790s, possibly to the design of James Wyatt. From here the drive runs westwards through a narrow strip of woodland before breaking out into the park at the gateway at Middle Lodge (listed grade II). This pair of lodges again probably dates from the 1790s and is likely to be the work of James Wyatt. From here the drive continues westwards across the park to arrive at the south front of the Hall.

A second imposing gateway marks the entrance to the site from the public lane to the north, the drive here leading south to Woodfold Park Farm, where it branches eastwards to run through a band of woodland to join the east drive or continues south to the Hall.

The access from the south is via the drive from Pleasington Lodge which stands on the Pleasington Road, the public road marking the southern boundary of the site. From here the drive leads northwards across the park, crossing the Alum House Brook as it runs east/west across the southern end of the park. The route continues past Old Woodfold Farm and the White House, then along the west side of White House Wood, which forms the eastern boundary of the site. The drive then bends sharply to the west to cross between two ponds, dog-legging back to run north up the steeply sloping ground to the Hall.

PRINCIPAL BUILDING

Woodfold Hall (formerly Woodfold Park, listed grade II) stands, unoccupied and derelict (1995), at the northern end of its park, enjoying views along the valley to the south and east. Built of sandstone rubble with the main facades of ashlar, the south front is of nine bays, the centre three flanked and separated by pilasters under a tetrastyle portico. To the rear (north), two wings run back to enclose a courtyard, their inner walls now collapsed.

GARDENS AND PLEASURE GROUNDS

To the south of the Hall the ground is levelled to form a rectangular platform, supported by drystone walls. North of the Hall wooded pleasure grounds lead to the track which forms the walled northern boundary of the site. Within the pleasure grounds, 100m to the north-east of the Hall, stands an early to mid C19 orangery (listed grade II).

PARK

The park is set within farmland from which it is separated by a 3m high stone wall, 6.5km in length. To the south of the Hall lies parkland, divided from the farmland to the west by a broken wooded belt, and contained to the east by Old Woodfold Wood which here clothes either bank of the Arley Brook. Within the northern end of the wood is a sawmill; at the southern end, the brook leaves the site under the Alum Scar Bridge (listed grade II).

To the east of the Hall is a broad swathe of parkland, across which runs the east drive. The land falls from the northern boundary to the stream, the Arley Brook, which runs along the valley floor, Jeffery Wood beyond enclosing the south side of this stretch of the park. The flow of the Brook is broken by a series of weirs.

On the east side of the park, within Jeffery Wood, is Jeffery Pond. Below and to the south of the lake is a second, more extensive body of water, White House Pond, the south drive crossing the dam between the two. White House Pond lies parallel to the south drive, the two being separated by a strip of parkland sloping down to the water's edge. On the west side of the Pond, within Old Woodfold Wood and 100m from the water's edge, stands an icehouse, probably of c 1800 (listed grade II).

KITCHEN GARDEN

The kitchen garden lies 200m to the north-west of the Hall. It is enclosed on three sides by high brick walls, the fourth, the southern side, being open to the park and enclosed by a retaining wall.

3.0 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

- 3.1 This application seeks consent for the construction of a small single-storey extension to the property. The extension is proposed adjacent to the garage and will involve the demolition of an existing greenhouse.
- 3.2 The proposed extension will consist of a tool room and a potting shed for the owner's use.
- 3.3 The extension will extend to approximately 17sqm.
- 3.4 Access to the tool room and potting shed will only be gained externally. Internally the space will be separated into two rooms. There will be no access to the extension internally from the main dwelling.

4.0 HERITAGE STATUS

4.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England.

4.2 The NPPF introduces a presumption in favour of sustainable development [para. 14], whereby proposed developments which correctly balance the requirements of economic, social and environmental issues should be granted planning permission unless there are strong reasons that permission should not be granted.

4.3 With regards to heritage issues the following extracts are considered of particular relevance:

17: [Core planning principles] conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life for future generations.

131: 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 use consistent with their conservation;*
- The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

132: When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting.

134: Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

137: Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the

setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

4.4 The Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2008-2028 was adopted in December 2014. In regards to heritage assets the following policies are considered to be of relevance:

Policy DME4 makes reference to development within a protected heritage asset:

Proposals which cause harm to or loss of significance to registered parks, gardens or landscapes of special historic interest or other gardens of significant local heritage interest, including their setting, will not be supported.

Policy EN5 provides guidance on development in respect of heritage assets within this document:

There will be a presumption in favour of the conservation and enhancement of the significance of heritage assets and their settings. The Historic Environment and its Heritage Assets and their settings will be conserved and enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance for their heritage value; their important contribution to local character, distinctiveness and sense of place; and to wider social, cultural and environmental benefits.

This will be achieved through:

- *Recognising that the best way of ensuring the long term protection of heritage assets is to ensure a viable use that optimises opportunities for sustaining and enhancing its significance.*
- *Keeping Conservation Area Appraisals under review to ensure that any development proposals respect and safeguard the character, appearance and significance of the area.*
- *Considering any development proposals which may impact on a heritage asset or their setting through seeking benefits that conserve and enhance their significance and avoids any substantial harm to the heritage asset.*
- *Requiring all development proposals to make a positive contribution to local distinctiveness/sense of place.*
- *The consideration of Article 4 Directions to restrict permitted development rights where the exercise of such rights would harm the historic environment.*

4.5 Deer House is also located within the Green Belt as identified in Ribble Valley Core Strategy's policy map. In regards to green belt the following policy is considered to be of relevance:

Policy EN1: Green Belt

The overall extent of the green belt will be maintained to safeguard the surrounding countryside from inappropriate encroachment. The development of new buildings will be limited to the purposes of agriculture, forestry, essential outdoor sport and recreation, cemeteries and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the green belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of the designation.

5.0 SIGNIFICANCE ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 Para. 129 of the NPPF requires applicants to identify and assess the particular significance of heritage assets or their setting, and take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal in order to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.
- 5.2 The significance of a heritage asset may comprise a number of factors, which are similar to the criteria for listing and including, but not restricted to:
- 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)
- 5.3 Taking such factors into account, the relative significance of the elements of the site can be assessed, using the following scale:
- High significance – buildings/features which make an important contribution to the architectural and historic interest and character of the site, 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 are also considered worthy of preservation or enhancement
 - Low significance – those making only a limited contribution to the site overall, although not necessarily detracting from it
- 5.4 The Registered Park and Garden (RPG) in which the application site is located is of high significance. There is no need for further assessment in this respect. In terms of those aspects of the RPG which are most notable, these are set out in section 2.

- 5.5 Woodfold Park is Grade II listed but the scale of development proposed and Deer House's location within the site, away from other buildings, means there is little tangible relationship between the Woodfold Park heritage asset and the application site.

6.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 The principle aim of the proposed development is to facilitate the creation of the potting shed and tool room as required by the applicant. The development has been designed sympathetically in accordance with its location within a Registered Park and Garden.
- 6.2 The single storey extension is proposed adjacent to the garage and on the location of an existing greenhouse. The greenhouse will be removed to facilitate the works.
- 6.3 The impact the development will have on Woodfield Park is minimal. The site is enclosed on a number of sides by mature trees. Due to the scale of the extension, being single-storey and with a footprint of approximately 17sqm, it will be unnoticed from most surrounding views. Notwithstanding this, the works will have no impact whatsoever upon the heritage asset and the setting or character of Woodfold Park.
- 6.4 Furthermore, in approving a previous infill extension at the property (ref: 3/2013/0230), consisting of a link between the dwelling and outbuilding, the case officer stated within their officers report:

The application site is located within Woodfold Park, which forms parts of the original park associated with Woodfold Hall (Grade II listed Building), largely bounded to the north, east and west by woodland and is therefore not visible from the majority of directions unless upon direct approach to the existing dwelling...

Given the modest nature of the proposed development and isolated location of the proposal site I do not consider that the proposed link extension would have any significant detrimental impact upon residential amenity.

- 6.5 It is considered that the proposed development constitutes a minor scheme to provide additional space for use by the applicant. Its scale and the property's location mean that the works will be relatively screened from outside of the site and will not impact upon the character or appearance of the heritage asset.

GREEN BELT

- 6.6 Policy EN1 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy states that the Green Belt will be maintained to safeguard the surrounding countryside from inappropriate encroachment. The development of new buildings will be limited to the purposes of agriculture, forestry, essential outdoor sport and recreation, cemeteries and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of the designation.
- 6.7 It is considered that the proposed development will not conflict against any of the purposes of the Green Belt. The works will result in the erection of a 17sqm extension to an existing residential property, the development is not of a scale whereby it would result in encroachment of the countryside. The works are proposed wholly within the curtilage of the residential dwelling and due to its location, screened by existing woodland, it is not considered it would have a detrimental impact upon openness.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The assessment undertaken during the preparation of this statement demonstrates that the development will be of no harm to the heritage of Woodfold Park.
- 7.2 The works will allow for the development of a small one-storey extension encompassing a potting shed and tool room for use by the current owners of the property.
- 7.3 It is considered that for these reasons, planning permission for the application should be granted.

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