

Heritage Statement

in connection with

**Proposed Extension,
Susie Cottage, Rimington, Lancashire**

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1 INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Methodology

- 1.1 This heritage statement has been prepared to assess proposals to extend Susie Cottage, Rimington Lane, Rimington. Ribble Valley Borough Council (RVBC) considers the building a non-designated heritage asset therefore care is needed to conserve its significance in line with the requirements of planning law and policy.
- 1.2 The statement assesses heritage significance and guides proposals for change in a manner that conserves significance and avoids harm. The approach adheres to the principle of managing change intelligently, which lies at the heart of national planning policy for conservation of the historic built environment. The methodology employed involves the following sequential steps:
- Establish the nature of the proposed change(s), including the overall aim of the change and any emergent design proposals
 - Identify any designated and/or non-designated heritage assets potentially affected by proposals for change
 - Evaluate the heritage values and significances of the heritage assets, placing particular focus on values and significances that might be affected by the proposed change(s)
 - Produce a statement of significance which is to be used to guide the design of changes in a manner that places conservation of significance as a priority
 - Analyse the potential impact of the finalised design upon the significance(s) of the heritage asset(s)
- 1.3 The statement has been prepared in accordance with the general guidelines set out in the Historic England publications 'Informed Conservation'ⁱ and 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance'ⁱⁱ and in particular responds to heritage policies outlined in Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG, 2012). The legal context is set by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act of 1990. Further guidance has been obtained from the following Historic England publications:
- GPA2 - Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (2015)
 - GPA3 - Setting and Views
 - Historic England Advice Notes (HEAN) 1-9

The Author

- 1.4 Chris O'Flaherty, the author, is a Chartered Building Surveyor and professional member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (MRICS). With a background in the recording, analysis and conservation of historic buildings, the author holds a Master's Degree in Building Heritage and Conservation and specialises in heritage planning matters.

Methods of Research and Investigation

- 1.5 Inspections of the site were carried out in May 2018 to assess its physical nature. Background research has also been conducted to ascertain all relevant contextual matters appertaining to the proposals. In accordance with the NPPF, background research has been proportionate to the nature of the building/site, the proposed change(s) and the likely impact of the change(s).

2 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Location

- 2.1 The property is located on the south side of Rimington Lane, just west of the junction with Stoops Lane, to the east of Rimington village centre.

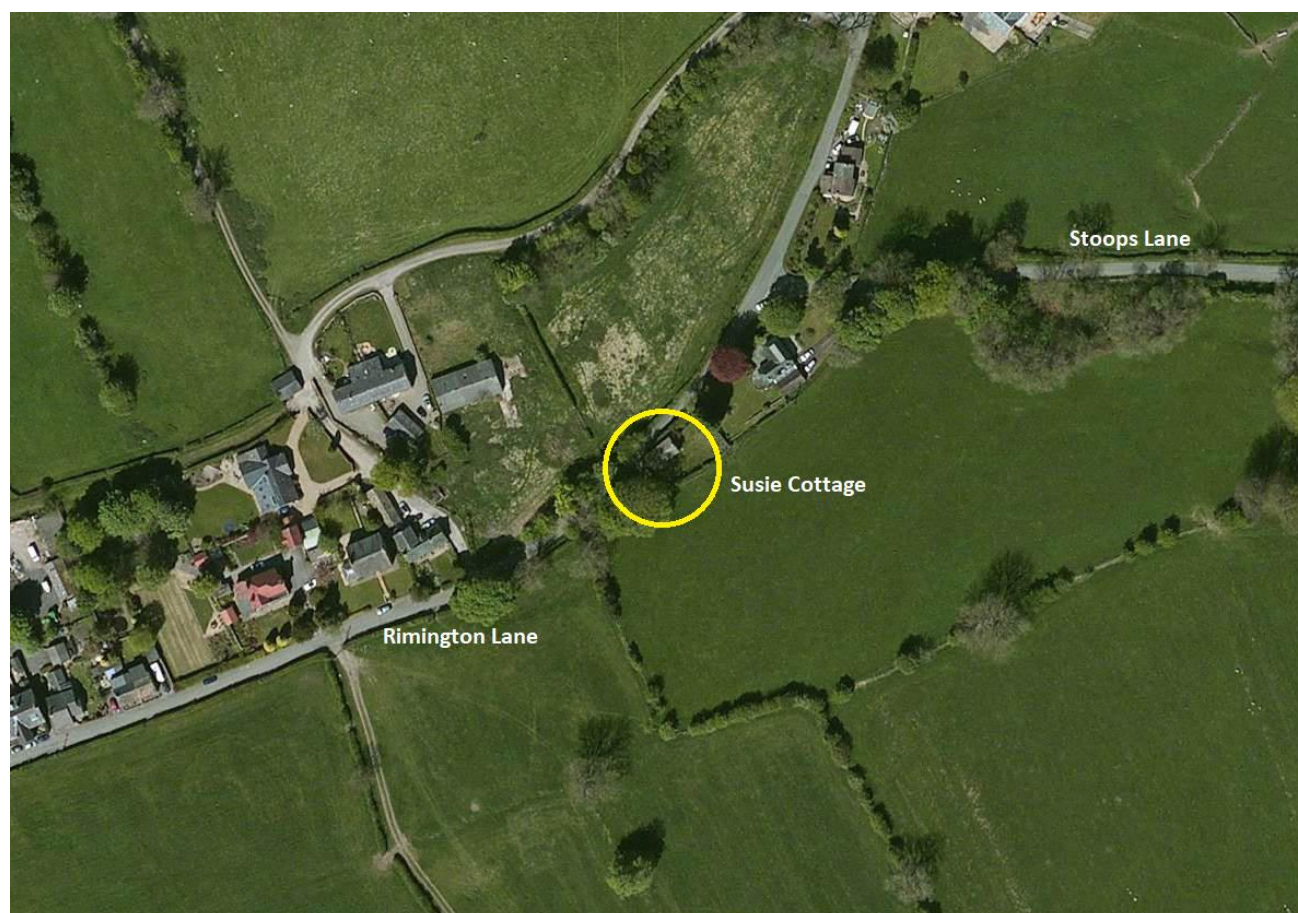


Figure 1) Site location

Outline Description & Historical Background

- 2.2 The property appears on mid C19th mapping (figure 2). It is a simple two-unit two-storey cottage, single pile in depth, with sandstone rubble walls (with some brick parts) and a slated gabled roof (the eastern bay has a central truss). It has an entry door at the rear (south), which accesses the western bay. The ground floor has a central chimney on the west side of a full height division wall (between bays) and a further chimney on the eastern gable in the eastern bay. Stairs to the first floor rise against the central division

wall.

- 2.3 The recent removal of render from the external walls of the cottage has revealed a number of past alterations. It would appear that the western bay is an addition built in two phases, with the upper floor added to an older ground floor level. This indicates the cottage was, prior to C19th mapping, a single unit cottage. Infill repairs around the windows to the eastern bay also suggest that former stone mullioned windows might have been removed and the windows remodelled in shape.
- 2.4 Brunskillⁱⁱⁱ suggests single pile two-unit vernacular houses tend to date from the C17th to the mid C18th and whereas it is difficult to determine exactly how the building changed over time, it seems likely it dates from the C18th.
- 2.5 In 1848 and subsequently in 1907 (figure 3) the building is shown as having a minimal share of land on the south side of Rimington Lane. Owing to the modest size of the dwelling, it seems likely it was tenanted by manual workers (e.g. weavers, agricultural labourers) and in 1907 the cottage appears to be split as two dwellings.
- 2.6 The origins of the name Susie Cottage are unclear, but it seems likely the name related to a previous owner or occupant. Of potential interest is an 1881 census entry for a household of three occupants, the head of the householder being named as Susy Briggs of Rimington (b.1816) living with her son and a boarder.



Figure 2) 1848 OS map with Susie Cottage central

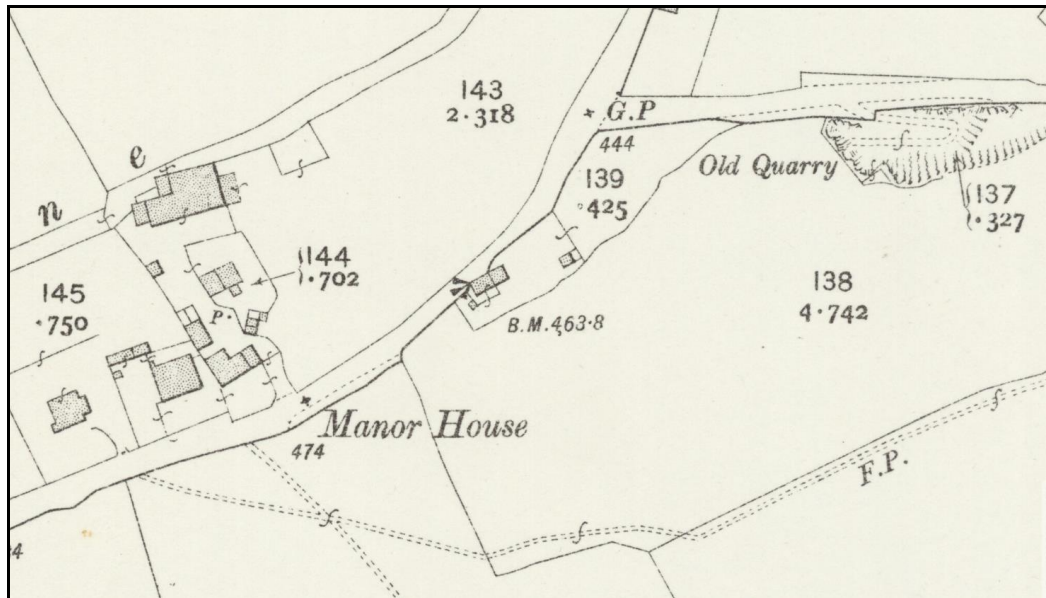


Figure 3) OS map 1907 with Susie Cottage central



Figure 4) Rear (southern) elevation prior to removal of render



Figure 5) Rear elevation during render removal showing full height joint right of doorway and partial brick walling at first floor and beneath the ground floor window.

Heritage Asset Designations

2.7 Susie Cottage is considered a non-designated heritage asset by RVBC. It is not contained on any local heritage lists.

3 HERITAGE APPRAISAL

Introduction

- 3.1 The following appraisal adheres to guidance published by English Heritage (2008)^{iv} and relates specifically to the requirement contained in paragraph 128 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), given in extract below:
- 3.2 *"In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary."*
- 3.3 The appraisal begins by identifying and assessing any heritage values that might be affected by the proposals, before evaluating these values and expressing them concisely within a 'Statement of Significance'. The essential purpose of this Statement is to set priorities for conservation of significance and enable an objective assessment on the likely impact of the proposals.

Heritage Values

- 3.4 The heritage values explored below are distilled under the following headings: *evidential value; historic value; communal value; aesthetic value*^v. The exploration focusses specifically on those values deemed of relevance to the proposals, and is therefore not an exhaustive assessment of the relevant heritage assets.

Evidential Value

- 3.5 Historic England (2008) suggests that "Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity".
- 3.6 Susie Cottage provides altered evidence of a two-unit cottage (formerly single unit) possibly dating from the early to mid C18th. It seems likely that many original features of the building have been altered, including the addition of the additional western bay. The evidential value of the building is low due to a lack of authenticity and integrity.

Historical Value

- 3.7 Historic England (2008) suggests that - "Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative".
- 3.8 Susie Cottage holds some illustrative value through the manner in which it portrays historical rural lifestyles, possibly from the early to mid C18th. Some associative value might also exist through connections to the naming of the cottage.

Communal Value

- 3.9 Historic England (2008) suggests that: "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".
- 3.10 As a small private dwelling the cottage is unlikely to possess any communal heritage value worthy of note, albeit the age and position of the building means it has a minimal degree of landmark status.

Aesthetic Value

- 3.11 Historic England (2008) suggests that: "Aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place".
- 3.12 The cottage has no aesthetic heritage value worthy of note, being a small and non-descript building. The vernacular interest (architectural) of the building lies primarily within the interior.

Statement of Significance

- 3.13 Having assessed the heritage values associated with the site, it is now possible to take a more informed approach to the assessment of site significance. This will give specific consideration to prioritising conservation, in light of the proposals for change. In this context, a statement of significance is given below.
- 3.14 Susie Cottage is an enlarged two-unit, two-storey vernacular cottage that may date from the early to mid C18th. It has been altered and extended in the past and in the late C19th/early C20th period mapping shows that it was split into two dwellings. The building retains very few recognisable vernacular features on the exterior and holds minimal

heritage significance.

- 3.15 Owing to its age RVBC consider the building a non-designated heritage asset, therefore some care must be employed in conserving its significance in line with the requirements of the NPPF. This can be readily achieved by retaining the original plan form of the building and ensuring any alterations (including extension) leave interpretable evidence of the building's extant composition. This is mindful that, as a non-designated heritage asset, permitted development rights still apply to the building.

4 ANALYSIS OF THE PROPOSALS

General Principles

- 4.1 General guidance on assessing proposed changes to heritage assets is given in chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012). The policy establishes the premise that conserving significance should be a guiding principle when developing proposals for any new scheme. In order to do this, it is first necessary to conduct an appraisal of heritage values and identify the significance(s) of heritage assets before commencing with design work. Part 3 of this appraisal fulfils this need, and the findings of part 3 have informed the development of the proposals. There follows, here in section 4, an objective review of the finalised scheme to verify to what extent conservation of significance has either been secured or compromised.

Summary of the Proposals

- 4.2 The proposals involve extension of the building. It is understood that the form of this extension is the product of dialogue with RVBC, who refused a previous application to extend partly on account of the dominant scale of the proposed new part.
- 4.3 The revised proposals have the extension set back from the original cottage and with a ridge height that is lower. The extension, built on the eastern end of the cottage, comprises a T-shaped plan. It will be faced in stone and the roof will be slated with a leaded flat part to the front (north) acting as a contrasting, contemporary feature adjacent to the historic part.
- 4.4 The new proposals are shown below.

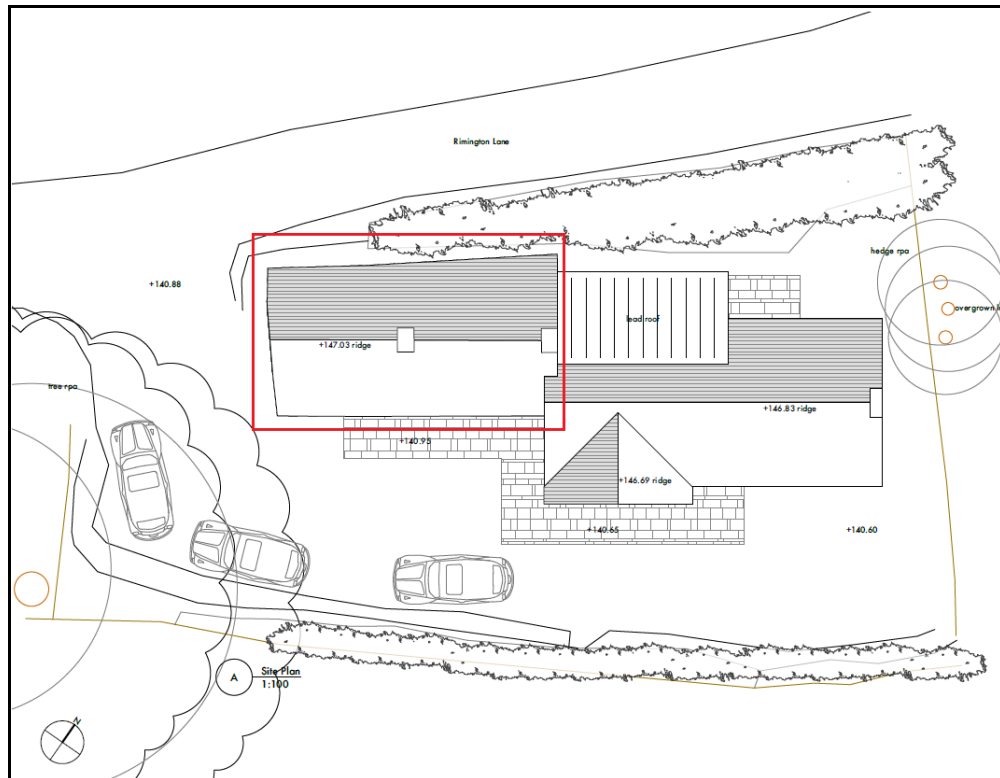


Figure 6) Site plan showing existing part outlined red.



Figure 7) Proposed elevations showing existing part outline red

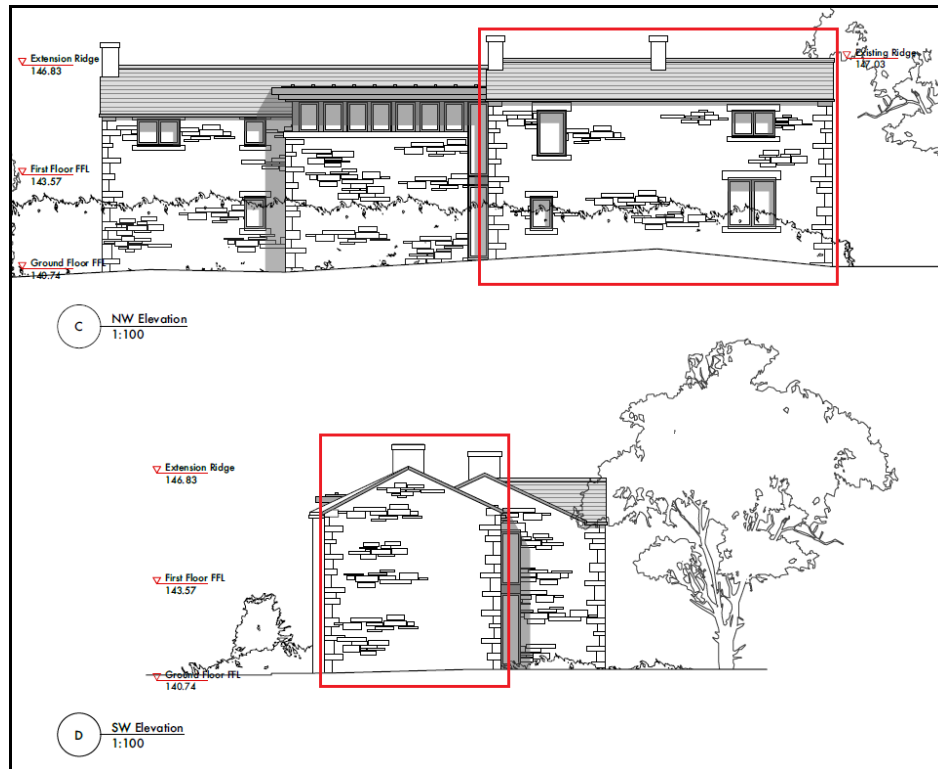


Figure 8) Proposed elevations – original building outlined in red



Figure 9) Proposed plans – original building outlined in red

Analysis of the Proposals: National Planning Policy Framework

4.5 As discussed earlier, section 12 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of the NPPF (2012) considers heritage planning and identifies the following key drivers in the decision making process:

- *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.*

4.6 The NPPF unifies the overall approach to planning, in order to ensure that deliberations over decisions relating to heritage assets are made in the full planning context. Securing sustainable development is the primary driver of the NPPF: in the heritage context this relies on maintaining active use (long term) in a manner that seeks to limit potential harm to significance.

NPPF Policy 135

4.7 Paragraph 135 of the NPPF states: *"The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset."*

4.8 As previously noted the building is deemed a non-designated heritage asset by RVBC. It is not believed to be on a local list nor has it been the subject of research and investigation by the Council, therefore it is assumed that the non-designated status has been awarded on account of its apparent age. In line with paragraph 135 of the NPPF the significance of the building must be taken into account during consultation on the planning application to extend.

4.9 As identified earlier, Susie Cottage has been subject to much prior alteration and extension. The building holds very little heritage significance, particularly of a nature

interpretable from the exterior. From the Lane it would appear to be a simple two-unit single pile cottage, which in itself is of some limited architectural and historic interest, however this interpretation does not accurately reflect the nature of the 'original' building (i.e. a single unit cottage).

- 4.10 The extension therefore poses very little risk of harming anything of significance. Notwithstanding this, the positioning of the structure back from the frontage line of the extant building, the reduced height of the extension ridge and the clearly identifiable contemporary feature of the flat roof element fronting the Lane, all serve to ensure the older part remains an interpretable older element of an extended building. Herein whatever significance the cottage does hold has been conserved, likewise its extant interior plan form has been retained (albeit permitted development rights apply for interior alterations).

Analysis of the Proposals: Local Planning Policy Framework

- 4.11 Local heritage planning policy does not deviate from that of the NPPF therefore separate assessment against local policy is deemed unnecessary here.

5 SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This heritage statement explores the likely impact of an extension to Susie Cottage, Rimington on the heritage significance of the building (a non-designated heritage asset). The findings of the statement are that the Cottage, parts of which probably date from the C18th, holds very minimal significance because it has been much altered and extended in the past. Whereas in some instances past alterations to historic buildings can contribute to significance, the changes at Susie Cottage hold little heritage value worthy of note.
- 5.2 The proposed extension has been well designed and responds to its historical context, in terms of composition and material quality. It will adjoin the eastern end of the Cottage, sitting back from the Cottage frontage, and will not alter the Cottages extant plan form. The historic element of Susie Cottage will remain interpretable from the public highway and no harm will otherwise accrue to the minimal significances of the existing building. The proposals therefore satisfy the requirements of the NPPF as they apply to non-designated heritage assets.

ⁱ Clarke, K, *Informed Conservation*, Historic England 2003

ⁱⁱ Historic England, *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance: Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*, 2008

ⁱⁱⁱ Brunskill, RW, *Houses & Cottages of Britain*, Gollancz 1997

^{iv} Ibid

^v Ibid