

## **PROSPECT HOUSE, SAWLEY ROAD, GRINDLETON:**

### **HERITAGE STATEMENT TO SUPPORT PROPOSALS FOR EXTENSION AND ALTERATION**

#### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This heritage statement has been produced to support a planning application to Ribble Valley Borough Council for the extension and alteration of Prospect House, Grindleton. It has been commissioned by the owners, via their agent IWA Architects Ltd.
- 1.2 Prospect House lies within the Grindleton Conservation Area, a designated heritage asset. Under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (Section 69), conservation areas are defined as “*areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance*”. The planning application requires a statement of significance of the asset, to enable the planning authority to consider the application, in accordance with paragraph 128 of the *National Planning Policy Framework*.
- 1.3 This statement has been produced by Stephen Haigh MA (a buildings archaeologist with 20 years professional experience of assessing, investigating and recording historic buildings in the region), following a site visit on 4 June 2018.

#### **2 The existing site**

- 2.1 Prospect House stands on the south side of Sawley Road, a principal thoroughfare through the village of Grindleton (NGR: SD 75974 45514). It comprises a three storey house with a large single storey extension containing music room and garages at the east side, attached by a linking entrance hall.

#### **3 Development proposals**

- 3.1 The owners propose various works to the house, not all of which require planning consent. The works include the extension of the entrance hall to south and north, and the addition of a storey over it, as well as the extension of the music room and garages, and modifications to their roofs.

## 4 Historical background and present character of the building

- 4.1 From a cursory inspection, Prospect House appears to date from the early 19th century<sup>1</sup>, and was built as a substantial, three storey, double-fronted and double-depth dwelling with a simple rectangular plan. It is built from local sandstone with slated roof, with a plain exterior typical of the district, the windows and doorways having monolithic, flat-faced surrounds. The house faces approximately south over the garden, and originally its front doorway was central, set between a pair of windows, and the house name obviously refers to the far-ranging views from it, across the Ribble Valley towards Pendle Hill. A single storey lean-to or outshut stands against the west gable, likely to be a 19th century addition.



The south-facing garden front

- 4.2 The house's traditional appearance was much modified in the second half of the 20th century. The extension at the east end was built in 1953<sup>2</sup> in a distinctly modernist style of that period, very different from the traditional character of the early 19th century house. The music room which dominates it has a glass-fronted gable under a large overhanging, asymmetric, felted roof, while the entrance hall which links it to the house also has a glazed garden front, and a flat roof. A partly exposed stone wall and tall, tapering stone chimney mark the division between these domestic elements and the garages and boiler room to the east, the latter being plainer, under a flat roof, and with openings in the side away from the house. The elevation to the street provided a new entrance to

<sup>1</sup> reportedly built in 1842

<sup>2</sup> by the architects Tom Mellor & Partners

Prospect House, but this north side of the extension is very much plainer than the garden front.



Elevation to Sawley Road



Flat-roofed garages at east side

- 4.3 Other alterations from this period or later included the blocking-up of the front door in the south side of the 19th century house, and the creation of French windows to either side by enlargement of the original openings. Dormer windows were also added to the north elevation.

## 5 The Grindleton Conservation Area

- 5.1 The *Grindleton Conservation Area Appraisal*<sup>3</sup> notes the various features that give the conservation area (which was designated in 1974) its special architectural and historic interest.
- 5.2 The appraisal notes that “*Grindleton’s historic character is that of a compact village of farmers and handloom weavers. It has two public houses and a Wesleyan chapel, but the streetscape is largely made up of vernacular houses, without church (until 1805), manor, rectory or ‘polite’ houses.* It should be noted that the historic core of the village runs up Main Street, perpendicular to Sawley Road, so Prospect House is very much peripheral to that part of the settlement.
- 5.3 The appraisal goes on to assert that the special interest of the conservation area derives from:
- *Its highly visible position within the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, located on a terrace above the River Ribble, where it can be seen from the river and from neighbouring villages;*
  - *The survival of the medieval (possibly Saxon) street plan, with tenement plots running at right angles to the main street, linked by side alleys to a back road [ie. Back Lane];*
  - *Its important place in non-conformist history as the village that gave birth to the Grindletonian sect in the 1600s;*
  - *Numerous historic buildings, including 17th and 18th century weavers’ cottages, given extra height and bigger windows in the 19th century;*
  - *Local details such as wells, farmhouses and barns, a pinfold, stone field boundaries and other reminders of the agricultural history of the village;*
  - *The close proximity of relatively wild moorland and open fields, which provide a rural setting to the village;*
  - *Panoramic views to Chatburn, on the opposite side of the River Ribble, and to the shoulder and scarp of Pendle Hill.*
- 5.4 Prospect House is not noted within the conservation area appraisal.

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<sup>3</sup> Conservation Studio, 2005

## 6 Statement of heritage significance

- 6.1 The heritage significance of Prospect House, as an unlisted building within the conservation area, derives from its early 19th century origins as a substantial detached house, built in traditional style with local, traditional materials, but it is not of special interest as an example of the type. There is also some contribution made by the obviously contrasting 1953 extension, which is work of some merit, its architectural interest being chiefly found in the glass-fronted, overhanging south gable which projects into the garden.
- 6.2 Views of the house from Sawley Road are not of particular interest, this being the architectural rear, and the addition of dormers to the main house devalues this aspect of the site and makes a negative contribution. Of the 1953 extension, it is also worth noting that the north and east sides are very plain and functional, and the felt covering to the roof is strikingly incongruous as a non-traditional material within the conservation area.

## 7 Impact assessment of the proposals

- 7.1 The proposals are relatively modest in relation to the existing building, and will have a positive impact on the conservation area. The most obvious component of the scheme is the enlargement of the existing 1953 link building. This would bring the road-side elevation in line with the 1842 house, and give it a finish in walling and roofing materials which are in keeping with that main building, while the garden elevation would retain the existing modernist feel of the 1953 work in the large areas of glazing. The minor alterations to the music room and garages would similarly keep the essence of their modernist designs, while providing them with roofs which would be more sustainable and better suited to the conservation area setting than their present felt coverings.
- 7.2 The low-key nature of the proposals and their thoughtful design mean that no identifiable harm to the significance of the conservation area would result, but rather they would preserve and enhance its appearance, through the removal of visually incongruous elements on the 1842 house and the positive, proportionate modification of the 1953 extension.

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