

PROPOSED GARAGE AT WILKINSON'S FARMHOUSE

SIMONSTONE, BOROUGH OF RIBBLE VALLEY, LANCASHIRE



HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

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JULY 2019

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1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report supports a proposed new garage at Wilkinson's Farmhouse, Simonstone, in the borough of Ribble Valley, Lancashire. The building is listed at Grade II, with an adjoining freestanding pig sty separately listed at II.

The heritage issue arising is the impact upon the setting and therefore the significance (i.e. heritage interest and value) of the listed buildings. The scope and purpose of this report is to identify this significance and to assess the proposal's impact upon it.

The property was first listed in 1985 on the basis that it was considered to possess special architectural and historic interest as a farmhouse of likely early 18th century date. The pig sty dates from the mid-to-later 19th century. The original farmyard setting that they once occupied has now been lost, and the buildings are now seen within a residential context dating from the conversion of the house in the late 20th century and its subsequent extensions and alterations. As the setting of the buildings has changed greatly, its contribution to the significance of the listed buildings has been devalued. This significance now therefore resides primarily in the intrinsic interest of the buildings themselves, as examples of their type and the group value they share.

The proposal seeks consent for a detached single-storey double garage located to the south of the house, with walling faced in stone and a slate roof. The building has been designed in the manner of a cartshed, with arched entrances that can typically be found in a structure of that type. Its appearance, modelled upon a building of vernacular tradition, is therefore entirely appropriate and in its scale and appearance it causes no harm to the setting or significance of the listed buildings. Furthermore it occupies the site of an outbuilding of similar scale which is known to have existed from map and photographic evidence, and in effect it preserves the memory of this building. Importantly also, the proposed garage will be entirely invisible in public views of the site, which offer only a glimpse of the front of the farmhouse and none at all of the pig sty.

The proposal will essentially preserve the intrinsic interest which defines the significance of the listed buildings and is in accordance with the residential character of their present-day setting. It is therefore compliant with national planning guidance along with the local development plan, and therefore it is considered approval should be granted without delay.

2: THE SITE

2.1 Location

The application site is Wilkinson's Farmhouse, which is located on the west side of Simonstone Lane in Simonstone, one of the communities within the borough of Ribble Valley, Lancashire. The property was built as a farmhouse, but has been a private residence for some decades.



Map 1. Location of Wilkinson's Farmhouse

2.2 Elements of the site

The site contains two buildings, both separately listed at Grade II:

- 1** The house itself, probably originally early 18th century but extensively altered and extended in the mid-late 20th century and around 2013
- 2** A freestanding pig sty with poultry loft above, mid-later 19th century



Map 2. Elements of the site



1. Wilkinson's Farmhouse, originally early 18th century but much altered and extended



2. The pig sty, mid-later 19th century

3: THE PROPOSAL/SCOPE OF THIS REPORT

3.1 Designations

Both Wilkinson's Farmhouse and the adjacent pig sty are each listed at Grade II. They were first designated on February 12, 1985.

3.2 The proposal

Proposals have been submitted to Ribble Valley Borough Council for a double garage within the gardens to the south of Wilkinson's Farmhouse.

3.3 Heritage impact

The heritage issues raised by the proposal are its impact upon the setting and therefore the significance (i.e. heritage interest and value) of the listed buildings.

3.4 Scope and purpose of this report

Paragraph 189 of the Revised National Planning Policy Framework (July 2018) states local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected, including the contribution made by their setting. The scope and purpose of this report is therefore to describe the significance of the listed buildings and to evaluate the impact of the proposal upon it. It is considered the level of detail is proportionate to this significance, in accordance with paragraph 189, and no more than is sufficient to understand the proposal's impact. The report is to be read in conjunction with other documentation supporting the application.

3.5 Report structure

This is as follows:

1. A summary of the historical background relating to the garage site (Section 4)
2. A brief description of the listed buildings of the site (Section 5)

3. A summary of their heritage significance, including the contribution made by their setting (Section 6)
4. A summary of the heritage planning policies against which the application will be assessed (Section 7)
5. An assessment within this context of the proposal's impact upon the setting and significance of the listed buildings (Section 8)

4: HISTORICAL CONTEXT

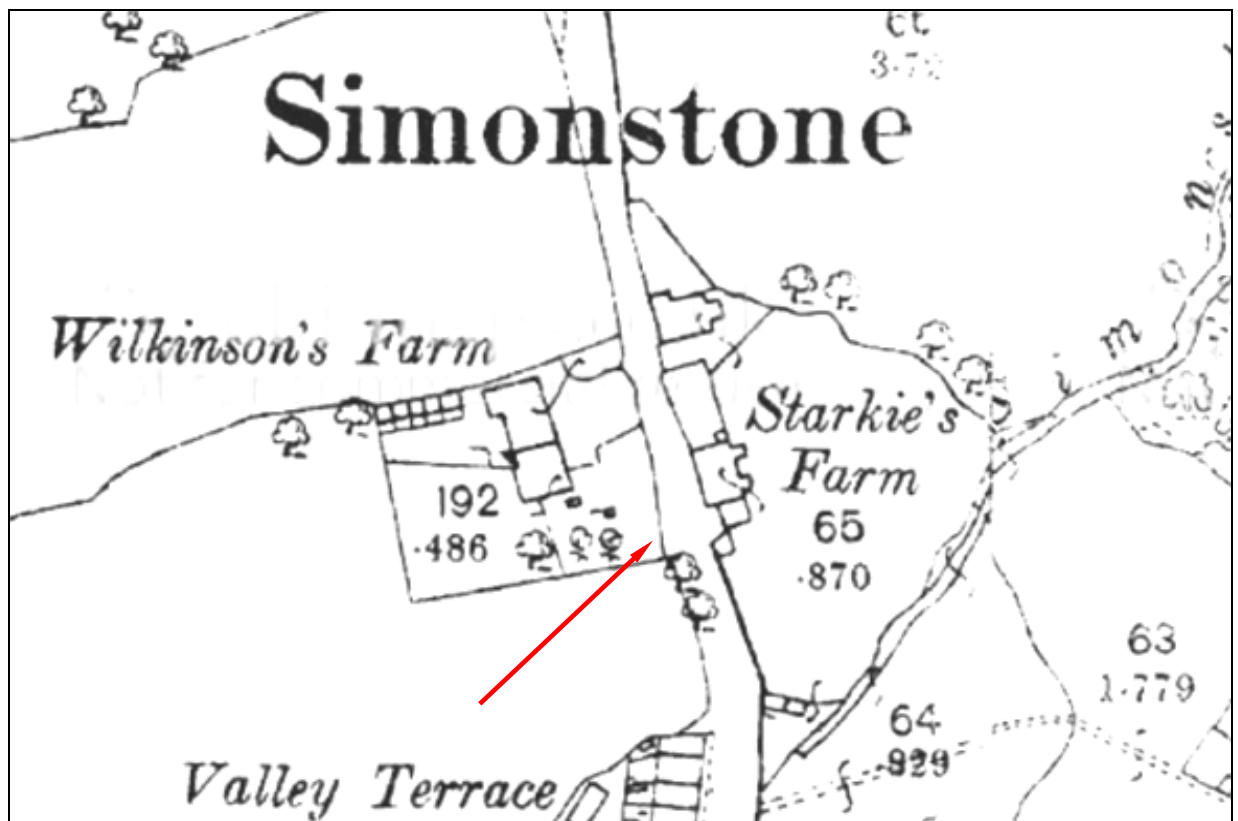
Evidence shows that a building originally stood on the proposed site of the garage in the 19th century. It was in existence by the mid-1840s, when the six-inch mapping of that period (Map 3, below) shows it to have been a rectangular structure to the east of the house. The building is no longer shown by the 25-inch mapping of 1893 (Map 4, following page), yet appears to be existing in a photograph of likely late 19th century date (Plate 3, following page). This image suggests it was single-storeyed and by then overgrown.



Map 3. The six-inch OS mapping of 1844-1846 shows a building on the site of the proposed garage



3. Undated but probably late 19th century photograph seems to show it was a single-storey structure, somewhat overgrown



Map 4. The 1893 25-inch mapping no longer records the building

5: THE LISTED BUILDINGS

5.1 List descriptions/further analysis

The National Heritage List for England description of Wilkinson's Farmhouse was compiled at the time of designation in 1984 and notes the exterior only:

Farmhouse, probably earlier C18, altered, now house. Coursed sandstone blocks (end and rear walls now rendered and painted white), tiled roof with chimney at left gable. Rectangular 3-bay plan. Two storeys; at junction of 1st and 2nd bays a doorway with large jambstones and rectangular lintel, windows of 4 lights to the left, 3 lights to the right, and 2, 2 and 3 lights above, all with flush mullions and plain surrounds; 3rd bay has 3 square windows at ground floor. End and rear walls altered; interior not inspected.

The house was extensively altered probably during the mid-late 20th century with the result that beyond the front elevation little of its historic character now remains. The rear is masked by an extension and the interior has been altered throughout with few features remaining.

The pig sty, which is identified in the List as *Pigsties with poultry loft, c.15 metres northwest of Wilkinson's Farmhouse*, is described thus:

Pigsties with poultry loft, probably C18. Random sandstone rubble with quoins, slate roof. Rectangular 2-storey range built back-to-slope, containing 5 pigsties, the 1st somewhat larger and projecting; 5 rectangular doorways with punched lintels, and 5 smaller rectangular windows to the poultry loft above, a slit breather to each pigsty (some blocked); at right gable end a raised doorway to the loft approached by external steps. Listed as good example of type of agricultural building rare in this area.

The pig sty is in fact mid-later 19th century, as it is not shown upon the six-inch OS mapping of the mid-1840s (Map 3).

5.2 Setting of the listed buildings

The setting of the listed buildings was greatly altered in the late 20th century, when the house became a residence and was altered and extended, with a further rear extension consented around 2013. They are no longer experienced in the farmyard surroundings within which they were originally sited, but are now located within a residential context, with driveway, gardens and rear patio. The contribution of their setting is therefore much devalued. Furthermore the public views of the listed building are restricted, with only a glimpse of the house obtained from Simonstone Road when passing the entrance to the site. The pig sty cannot be seen publicly at all.



3. The original farmyard setting of the buildings, captured in a probably early 20th century photograph



4. Public views of the house are now restricted to glimpses only from the entrance to the site



5. Site of the proposed garage, to the south of the house within private gardens



6. Rear of the house showing extension of circa 2013 facing modern patio

6: SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

6.1 Introduction

Paragraph 190 of the National Planning Policy Framework states local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of a heritage asset, including its setting, and take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal in order to avoid or minimize conflict between the asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal. Significance is defined in the NPPF Glossary as:

The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

6.2 The farmhouse

The Grade II designation of Wilkinson's Farmhouse denotes it is considered a building of importance in the national context for its special architectural and historic interest. Its significance derives essentially from this intrinsic special interest, which is that of a stone farmhouse built on a linear plan probably in the early 18th century. However this special interest has been diluted owing to extensive modernisation which occurred in the mid-late 20th century and subsequently. This significance therefore now essentially resides in the appearance of the building's front elevation, as the rear is masked by an extension and the interior has been altered throughout with few features remaining. Beyond its intrinsic qualities, the farmhouse also shares group value with the pig sties owing to their historic relationship and proximity.

6.3 The pig sties

As a Grade II building, it is considered of national importance for their special architectural or historic interest, and its significance resides in this special interest as an example of combined pig sties and poultry loft. While the listing text ascribes the building to the 18th century, it is in fact mid-later 19th century but this is not considered to materially affect its special interest as it is a rare building type for the area. Again the building enjoys group value with the farmhouse, for the reasons given above.

6.4 Contribution of their setting

It has been demonstrated in this report how the listed buildings now stand within an altered setting context, which is that of a private residence rather than the farmyard they originally occupied. The altered nature of this setting renders therefore devalues the contribution it makes to the significance of the listed buildings.

7: POLICY CONTEXT

7.1 Statutory duty

Sections 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to give special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest.

7.2 Relevant policies

Chapter 16 of the Revised National Planning Policy Framework (*Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment*, July 2018) provides the guidance on how this statutory duty is to be put into practice. Paragraph 192 states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses 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

Regarding designated heritage assets, paragraph 193 states that ‘*great weight*’ should be given to their conservation and the more important the asset, the greater that weight should be; that significance can be lost through development within its setting. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

The most up-to-date local policy relating to the historic environment is Key Statement EN5 of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy 2008-2028, adopted December 16, 2014. This states:

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.

The policy goes on to state (among other things) that 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.*
- *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.*

8: IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL

8.1 Summary of the scheme

The proposal seeks consent for a detached single-storey double garage located to the south of the house, with walling faced in stone and a slate roof. The building has been designed in the manner of a cartshed, with arched entrances that can typically be found in a building of this type.



7. The proposed garage, looking south from the house

8.2 Effect upon setting of the listed buildings

It has been established in this report that the significance of the listed buildings resides primarily in their intrinsic qualities, and that the contribution made by their setting has been devalued as a result of extensive late 20th century change. That setting now has a residential character rather than that of the farmyard in which the buildings were originally sited. The proposed garage is therefore not out of keeping with this residential character. Its appearance, modelled upon a building of vernacular tradition, is entirely appropriate, and in its scale and appearance it causes no harm to the setting or significance of the listed buildings. Furthermore it occupies the site of a building of similar scale which is known to have existed in the 19th century from map and photographic evidence, and in effect preserves the memory of this building. Finally the garage will be entirely invisible in public views of the site, which offer only a glimpse of the front of the farmhouse and none at all of the pig sty.

8.3 Summary and conclusion

The proposal will preserve the intrinsic interest which defines the significance of the listed buildings and is in accordance with the character of their present-day setting. It is therefore compliant with national planning guidance in respect of paragraphs 192 and 193 of the NPPF, along with the requirements of local development plan Key Statement EN5. It is considered the proposal should therefore receive approval without delay..

APPENDIX: GARRY MILLER HISTORIC BUILDING CONSULTANCY

Garry Miller is an architectural historian who has spent more than 40 years studying buildings of town and countryside, in particular those of North West England. His career as a consultant began in the mid-1980s with the Preston-based Nigel Morgan Historic Building Consultancy, of which he became a partner in 1992 upon its rebranding as Datestone. In 1997 he was commissioned by the Heritage Trust for the North West, a buildings preservation trust based at Barrowford, Lancashire, to produce an in-depth regional study of vernacular houses in southwest Lancashire: the result, *Historic Houses in Lancashire: The Douglas Valley, 1300-1770* was published in 2002. The book was described as ‘*scholarship as its best*’ by *Country Life* (June 2003), and ‘*well analysed and presented*’ in *Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society* (Vol 48, 2004); and was extensively cited in the revised *Buildings of England* volume on Liverpool and Southwest Lancashire (2006). Research on the houses of Georgian and Regency Liverpool has also been undertaken, with a view to future publication. Following the success of his Douglas Valley book, Garry Miller established his own consultancy, producing analytical and interpretive reports on historic buildings and advising planning applications affecting the historic environment. His field of operation extends throughout the North West, Midlands, North Wales and parts of Cumbria and North and West Yorkshire, and projects range from the £40m Wolstenholme Square redevelopment in central Liverpool to the Grade I Barkisland Hall, Ripponden, West Yorkshire and to cottage extensions and barn conversions. Several local authorities have cited his assessments as examples of best practice, and reports on more than 100 buildings or sites are produced annually.