



**The Old Toll House, Longsight Road, Oaks Bar, Clayton-le-Dale,
Blackburn, Lancashire BB1 9EX**

July 2019

Heritage Impact Statement with supporting statement

Revision A

HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT OCTOBER 2019**Historical notes**

The national listing provides this summary:

CLAYTON-LE-DALE LONGSIGHT ROAD SD 63 SE 5/19 Oaks Bar 24-11-1966 - II Toll house, early-to-mid C19. Squared sandstone with slate roof. Single storey. Windows have plain stone surrounds with round heads. North-east wall of 2 bays. North-west end 3-sided, the outer sides having windows and the central side a door with plain stone surround. Brick chimney on ridge.

Background research

Toll houses or Tollhouses are part of the fabric of our main road network that no longer serve the purpose for which they were designed, nor indeed stand out with the prominence they once had. Their origins probably date back to Roman times, when charges, or tolls, were levied on the movement of goods, livestock and people across provincial borders, bridges or along the main roads. The toll collectors needed somewhere to shelter, perhaps live, at the point of collection, and so houses were built. Although these early charges were almost certainly abandoned after the departure of Roman rule, the idea remained current abroad, and was subsequently re-imported in later centuries.

From 1663 to 1836 many British roads were improved by collecting tolls from travellers towards their maintenance. However, it was not until the creation of the first Turnpike Trusts in the 17th Century that toll houses became commonplace on our road network. They were provided at the majority of toll gates on the rapidly expanding road networks, and even the government joined in, with toll houses and toll gates on the Holyhead Road built by Thomas Telford in the 1820s. New bridges too were often tolled, with a toll house sited at one side of the other. Only with the coming of the railways did the road building frenzy fade, and as Turnpike trusts collapsed in the 1880's and 1890's, so roads reverted to the rough dirt tracks of previous generations, until the government stepped in and took over the road network, via the county authorities.

Toll houses were often well built cottages suitable for a family to live in, a necessity to ensure that a suitable, honest person was attracted to the role. Often the same design would be built at each tollgate along the roads within a Turnpike trusts area, which makes them more obvious to locals, but as fashions changed, so extensions to local networks might see a different design constructed.

Purpose-built tollhouses required an office with a good view of the road and separate rooms for domestic purposes. The toll-gatherer needed to have easy access to the roadside close to the turnpike gate so the lodge had to be fitted onto restricted plots of land at strategic points such as crossroads, forks or beside bridges.

Records show that tollhouses were provided with privies, a generous garden, a well and sometimes a pig-sty. Nonetheless, tollgates often had to be in isolated places away from towns. This made them attractive targets for robbers who knew significant amounts of cash might be kept in the tollhouse. Hence, bars on the windows and robust shutters were standard fittings on many tollhouses and a large lamp illuminated the porch and tollboard. The tollboard had to be visible from the road and so a blind window, often above the front porch, or on a clear area of wall gave a prominent display area for the list of toll charges.

The one feature common to the vast majority of the houses was a roadside bay window, or octagonal end to the property to give a good view of approaching traffic. This window would be openable and either open from a proper office or from the main family living room. Tolls were normally collected 24/7, so overnight attendance was also important.

Most toll houses appear to be single storey, but two-storey properties are also found. Almost all, however, were originally built as detached properties, and often surrounded by a patch of land suitable for growing fruit and veg, or housing a few animals to help supplement the toll keeper's income.



Toll House at Bigsweir Bridge over the River Wye

The presence of these bay windows has often caused problems to subsequent road improvers, as they project into the road itself in places, either forcing a very narrow pavement (when added), or encroaching onto the carriageway until a piece of land opposite could be purchased to allow widening. As a result some bay windows have been taken down, or indeed the whole cottage demolished to allow for improvements. In other places, the cottage sat back from the road, perhaps with just a sentry post on the roadside originally.

In 1840, according to the Turnpike Returns in Parliamentary Papers, there were over 5,000 tollhouses operating in England. These were sold off in the 1880s when the turnpikes were closed. Many were demolished but several hundred have survived as domestic houses, with distinctive features of the old tollhouses still visible.

Toll Houses today

Huge numbers, perhaps thousands, of toll houses remain along our roadsides today. Many have been bypassed by the roads they were built to serve, and consumed by subsequent development, often hiding them away on what we consider to be side roads. Others still stand prominently along the roadside in more rural areas. Many retain their original purpose in their names - Toll House, Turnpike House, Toll Gate House, being some of the more common ones, although Turnpike House may also refer to the headquarters, or another property associated with the trust rather than a toll house.

The current situation

It is understood the property was constructed in at least two if not three stages. The original build is known to have been where the current sitting room and lounge areas are formed and we understand built early to mid-1800's. The current owner has looked at deeds dated 1902 which identifies the land to the side and right of the property which was not part of the original demise and therefore it is considered the property was extended post 1902 where the current three bedrooms are located. There is evidence in the property to support the property was built at different times with the different chimney stacks and changes in finishes and ceiling heights between the two areas. It is also felt the "lean to" at the rear of the property (now a kitchen) was also extended post 1902.

We do not have any records of when the subject Toll House ceased to operate with the occupants collecting any tolls. However history tells us this may have been around 1890 and coincides with the property being extended after 1902 to form larger and possibly residential accommodation from that time.

We know with some certainty at some point in the 1960's the property was used a family home with the introduction of new internal finishes such as a shower room, kitchen wall/base units, a timber surround fireplace and timber "plant on" moulds to the current rear sitting room.

From the 1960s there has been little change to the property. The exterior has been maintained with the slate covered roofs, stone walls, hardwood windows and doors and the continuation of the lime mortar pointing.

The existing property incorporates three bedrooms, one kitchen, two sitting rooms and a shower room complete with a shower cubicle, WC and wash hand basin.

One bedroom however is located within the main bedroom and has no separate access from the main hallway.

The property includes one stone open feature fireplace. The majority of the building services (gas boiler and electrics) are well beyond the life expectancy and must be renewed.

Other finishes within the property were added later (circa 1980's) including timber panels and a high level shelf to the sitting rooms. A further timber fireplace was added to the rear sitting room.

The property has been left empty for some months and there are concerns with the security and deterioration of the fabric if left empty for a significantly longer period. It is located some distance away from the current owners own home.

At this point we refer you to the clients own account for the property on the separate document titled "The Old Toll House - client supporting information July 2019".

The proposals

The details below should be read in conjunction with the proposed floor plan.

Internal

It is intended to form a small demountable partition up to the ceiling in the main bedroom to enable a short corridor to be formed to enable access for the rear bedroom. We had originally intended to remove the chimney breast, but we have taken on board the comments made during the pre-application advice and this is to be retained. It is noted this is in part of the non-original part of the building.

The property comprises two sitting rooms and a rear kitchen. Our client wishes to renovate the current kitchen and make it into a utility room with a separate shower room with toilet and washbasin (please see proposed floor plan). The utility room would have fitted wooden panelled cupboards, an energy efficient washing machine, a tumble dryer and a chest freezer. The ceiling of the utility room would be replaced and would have improved energy efficient insulation. A cupboard would be built encasing the gas boiler. The damaged tiled floor would be replaced. A broom cupboard would be built by the kitchen door.

It is also proposed to convert the sitting room next to the kitchen into a kitchen. The current non-original fireplace would be removed. All internal doors and frames would be retained. The kitchen would have fitted wooden panelled doors, an integrated gas cooker and hob with extractor fan and a combined fridge-freezer. There would be a double sink unit. A window seat cupboard would sit below the window. The wooden panelled floor would be replaced.

It is proposed to replace the current bathroom with new fixtures and fittings.

The existing gas boiler is to be serviced and commissioned. Replacement radiators will be fitted to provide a heat source.

The property will require a rewire and new internal lights, power points and a safety cut out device (a Residual Current Device). We will review any lath and plaster ceilings that may be present and minimise any disturbance.

We propose to retain the door opening in the corner between the proposed kitchen and existing sitting room together with the architraves and frame.

It is intended to minimise any disruption of wall, floor and ceiling finishes within the property. It would of course require re-decoration of the interior of the property following the works but it will be in keeping with the heritage.

External

Windows:

The current windows comprise a hardwood frame and external beads and double glazed units. The principal elevations contain arched stone heads which will all be retained.

The current windows appear to be double glazed replacements installed circa mid 1980s. We propose to retain all the window frames in the current form/style and carry out minor joinery repairs where some localised wet rot has occurred, whilst replacing the beads with hardwood of the same style and profile and finished in keeping with the current situation.

The glazed units are slender and some seals have "blown". We wish to remove all the glazing and router a small section on the inside of the frames to allow new double glazed units to be installed in the current frames.

External doors:

We believe the current doors are not original and were installed in the mid 1980s. We propose to retain the front aspect doors and redecorate.

The rear doors to the garden area were installed in the mid 1980s and not in keeping or have sufficient robustness for a remote property. We propose to replace the three rear doors with solid hardwood doors.

Guttering and downpipes:

Our client proposes to replace the rainwater goods and soil stacks with cast aluminium to match the same profile.

Stone walls:

The property is built in sandstone and the finish to the principal elevations is heavily soiled/polluted from traffic fumes. Our client wishes to undertake a light non-abrasive stone clean to the principal elevations and will undertake a sample clean for the local authority approval where required.

To the rear aspect of the building and kitchen area the stone walls have been painted white and believe this was from around the mid 1980s. The paint is flaking and there are some areas of defective pointing. Following all essential repairs/patch pointing we propose to redecorate the walls to match existing.

The pointing in the main elsewhere is generally satisfactory. However, as part of the works our client will carry out any essential patch pointing in a form/style to match existing with a lime based mortar to the approval of the local authority. Care will be taken to minimise any disruption to the fabric.

External security lights:

We propose to install 3 nr security lights to the rear of the property in keeping with the age and style from that era. The fittings are to replace current lights. An example fitting is illustrated below. The lights will incorporate movement sensors.



Our client may need to consider security cameras given the remote location. The position of the cameras would be to the rear and discrete fitted to the underside of the soffits.

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the criteria for justification of works to a heritage asset and places emphasis on "sustainable" development and goes on to consider sustainable in terms of economic, social and environmental.

In the most fundamental terms, the proposal is driven by sustainability of the existing property as a house. The building has laid empty for a period and the current owner wishes to upgrade the property sympathetically whilst being able to use it in manner as a family home.

The restoration of the property would be welcome for such a remote character house ensuring that the environment will be enhanced rather than detrimentally affected.

Alterations to the building

Within the NPPF, there is reference to levels of harm to the building and the client team considers it imperative that minimum, if any, harm is caused to the historical asset. Above is a description of the work along with those measures to be implemented to reduce the harm to the fabric.

It is hoped that by implementing the above, it has been demonstrated that the proposal can be carried out sympathetically with no detriment to the asset.

For and on behalf of Greenwood & Co

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