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Dear Sirs,

Newdrop Inn, Green Moor Ln, Knowle Green, Preston PR3 2XE – Heritage Assessment

I am acting on your instructions to assess the heritage significance of the Newdrop Inn in connection with a planning application for alteration and change of use. The property has no known heritage asset designations - it is neither listed nor in a conservation area - however owing to the age of some of its parts and its history of use, the heritage interest of the site is considered potentially of relevance. This potential specifically relates to provisions made within Chapter 16 of the NPPF, most notably paragraph 197 where 'non-designated heritage assets' are referred to as follows:

"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 directly or indirectly affect 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."

Historical Background

The Newdrop Inn was known previously as the White Cross public house, as shown on historic mapping from the mid C19th (figure 1). Census returns from 1841ⁱ list the 'publican' at that time as John Holden who lived with his family and two lodgers. Whilst there is no mention of farming on the census return, a tenanted land holding of 52 acres is attributed to Holden on the 1838 Ribchester Tithe Apportionment, which included the field immediately east of the White Cross Inn. It therefore seems probable that the property was initially a small farmstead that diversified as an inn, with the 1851 census listing the occupant of White Cross as an 'innkeeper' (as opposed to a publican) called Richard Sharples.

In the 1840s there were two ranges of buildings on the site, namely the inn (a former farmhouse) with adjoined barn to the south, and a further agricultural building to the north. This latter building (figure 3) was converted to a dwelling some years ago, and the inn (figure 2) was subject to major extension and alteration throughout the C19th and C20th (see figure 1). Other new buildings were added to the site during this timeframe, and these were likely to have provided some form of ancillary space/function.

During the mid C20th the White Cross Inn was renamed the Newdrop Inn, probably after the property was sold in 1948 as part of the divided Dutton Manor Estateⁱⁱ. Sales particulars from 1948 include photographs of the property that illustrate the extent to which the inn was altered in the first half of the C20th (figures 4 and 5). Comparison of the building as it currently exists with that photographed in the mid C20th likewise shows how much the building, particularly the southern part, changed in the later C20th, when it was partly extended and converted as lodgings. These

various changes, which are also in part depicted by historical mapping, may be summarised briefly as follows:

- In late C19th the inn had a double fronted main western façade, which was tile-hung (a weather proofing measure) and possessed a central main entrance door. A stone barn adjoined the inn's southern end with cart entry door to the west.
- By 1932 a new detached block had been built south of the main inn and a further small building had been built to the east
- By 1948 the main façade of the inn had been rendered, the main entrance had been blocked and windows had been remodelled with wider projecting bow windows installed
- Also by 1948 the barn appears to have been demolished (or radically altered) and replaced by a longer stone building, which included a new/altered gable fronted addition to the southern end of the inn.
- During the later C20th the long addition to the south was further enlarged and converted with new bow windows inserted serving bedrooms at first floor level

In addition to the major exterior changes the interior of the inn was also radically altered to provide large open plan dining accommodation. These changes further eroded any interpretable evidence of the building's domestic origins, as indeed was the case for the bulk of the former agricultural and stabling buildings.

Assessment of site Significance

With specific regard to the heritage significance of the site, I have considered to what degree the Newdrop Inn might possess appreciable archaeological, historical or architectural heritage interest, mindful that it may be considered a non-designated heritage asset. My findings are as follows:

Archaeological Interest – The site has been altered and extended since the mid C19th, when map and photographic evidence suggests the inn comprised a single pile dwelling with rear outshut to the north and adjoined barn to the south. Owing to the extent and nature of subsequent interventions the building no longer holds readily interpretable evidence of its original use (i.e. as a house and barn), therefore any potential archaeological interest associated with the assumed farmhouse/barn arrangement (typically described as a 'laithe house' in Pennine regions) has been eroded. Otherwise, a detailed desk-based assessment of buried archaeological potential has not been conducted as part of this assessment, and the potential of the site in this regard could be of interest should excavations be proposed as part of any redevelopment work. On this matter it is useful to note that nearby land was subject to an archaeological assessment and watching brief as part of a new water main installation in 2012ⁱⁱⁱ, the findings of which indicate a north/south Roman Road situated some distance west of the Newdrop Inn.

Historic Interest – Aside from the Newdrop Inn's history of use and local fame as a dining pub, the site and more specifically the long inn range retains little by way of interpretable or appreciable illustrative historic interest relating to its original use and has only marginal illustrative historic interest relating to its converted use as an inn. Overall the primary historic interest of the building relates to its most recent history of use, that of a much loved dining pub, which is a readily recognisable feature of the local landscape. Herein the building has communal heritage value.

Architectural Interest – The buildings on the site are visible from distance and as previously mentioned the inn possesses some landmark qualities. These qualities do not though stem from any notable architectural value, either in a pure aesthetic sense or in a manner derived from historic interest. Whereas the origins of the site lie in the simple vernacular traditions of the locale, which older photos suggest had been influenced also by newer 'polite' forms of architectural style (as shown by the near symmetry of the main façade for example), clear and interpretable visual evidence of the inn's original composition are no longer readily appreciable, either in external

appearance or in plan form. In this regard it would be reasonable to suggest that changes throughout the late C19th and C20th have eroded the architectural heritage interest of the inn, leaving it largely devoid of any notable aesthetic heritage value. This assessment is reinforced by the impact of changes to the attached former barn part, the conversion of which has had a very notable negative impact on character.

Summary of Heritage Significance

The Newdrop Inn comprises a much altered, extended and converted former farmstead, the older parts of which – a former adjoined farmhouse and barn and separate detached former farm building - possibly date from the late C18th to early C19th. Owing to the extent of past changes the building/site now retains very little by way of appreciable heritage significance, beyond the illustrative historic interest associated with its history of use. The building/site is, however, a well known local landmark (and business) and feature of the landscape, and whereas its landmark qualities do not stem from any notable architectural heritage value, any planned development of the site should seek to conserve its landmark status and if possible seek to enhance its overall appearance which have been compromised by past alterations. On the issue of potential non-designated heritage asset status, it is reasonable to state that the history of the site gives the inn some heritage interest, therefore the impact of proposed change is worthy of consideration as outlined in paragraph 197 of the NPPF.

Assessment of the Impact of the Proposals upon Heritage Significance.

The proposals seek to convert the Newdrop Inn into a series of residential units. The proposed change of use is due to the economic unsustainability of the Newdrop Inn as business. The conversion will be done through alteration, localised demolition and some new build elements.

Given that the site possesses very limited heritage significance (particularly architectural interest) associated with its building fabric, the main issue for consideration is the overall impact upon the appearance of the inn/site and its landmark status. Herein the aim, as outlined earlier, is to enhance the architectural quality of the exterior (mainly the main facade) whilst retaining landmark status. This aim, however, is only partly relevant to heritage significance

The main impact of the proposals, particularly as they affect the principal west facing façade (see figures 6 and 7), is the provision of a clear material contrast across the various historical phases of development (e.g., the original house, the gable addition to the house, the barn etc). This change will leave the various phases more readily identifiable, in a visually interesting and appealing manner. The proposals will also re-establish the original composition of the house frontage, including inserting an off-centre doorway, thereby reflecting the traditional layout of the original domestic building. In addition the proposals re-design of some of the C20th interventions, particularly the inserted windows to the barn part, in a contemporary manner with modern projecting box-like oriels. These re-designed features add visual interest and help develop the theme of interpretable phased alterations in a high quality and complimentary manner.

In a visual sense, the overall impact of the scheme will be to convert what over time has become a visually unappealing and confusing building, into a visually coherent, harmonious and well designed range of buildings with high quality fixtures and surface finishes. The net impact will be a very notable enhancement of the architectural qualities of the building (including to the other less important elevations), which continues to celebrate the site's landmark status with a more memorable and characterful architectural composition. Herein the proposals will conserve and enhance the very limited heritage significances of the former Newdrop Inn in a manner that is readily supportable under the provisions of chapter 16 of the NPPF.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The planned closure of the Newdrop Inn represents the end of an era, brought about by unavoidable commercial pressures. The proposed conversion of the building will, however, sustain

and enhance the landmark status of the building/site, and therein conserve some of the Newdrop's historic interest in a manner that also greatly improves its architectural quality. Given that the building retains little by way of appreciable heritage significance, the proposals have only marginal relevance to the conservation of built heritage, but what relevance they do have has been acknowledged and respected by the planned conversion of the site. Therein the provisions of planning law and guidance as they relate to conservation of the historic built environment have been satisfied in a manner that avoids unnecessary harm and promises notable benefits, most specifically related to future sustainable use and visual appearance.

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Illustrations



Figure 1. Historic mapping 1847-1960



Figure 2 – the much altered and extended inn



Figure 3 – Converted barn to the north of the site



Figure 4 – The inn in 1885 with tile hung façade and main entrance door with staircase entry (right) and adjoined barn beyond with cart entry. Note also the detached building left – possibly stabling with hayloft.



Figure 5 – The inn c.1948 with remodelled façade with bow windows, main entrance removed and rendered elevations. A new tall gabled additions appears to the right of the inn with rebuilt barn beyond



Figure 6. Existing main façade

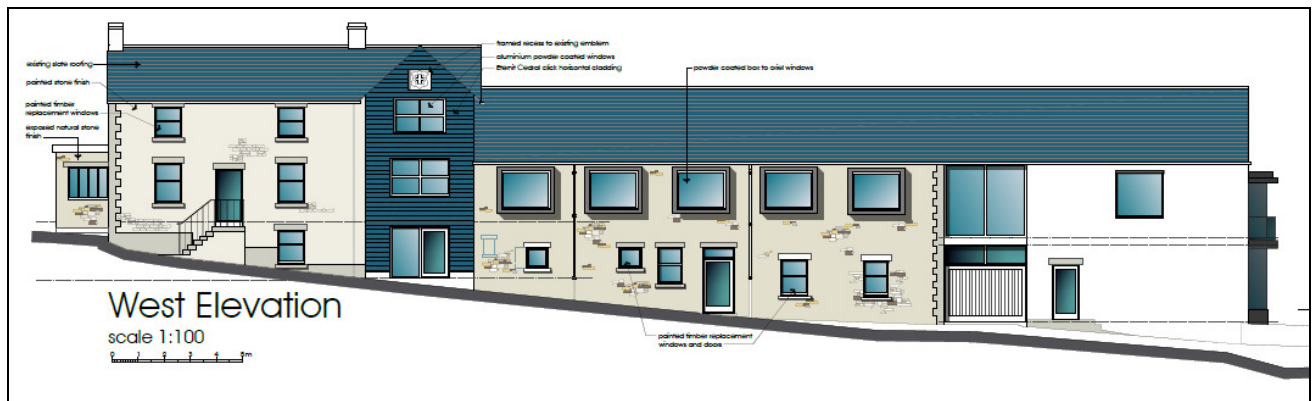


Figure 7. Proposed main facade

ⁱ Archive reference HO107/0505/12

ⁱⁱ National archives ref: SB00336

ⁱⁱⁱ https://library.thehumanjourney.net/1673/1/L10439_FullRepnew.pdf