

# Heritage Statement – 18 Church Street

Ribchester, PR3 3XP



*Figure 1 The rear elevation of No 18 Church Street. The two rooflights are located between the two chimneys and are above the attic window at the top of the elevation (source - Jamie Skuse)*

SD 65014 35206

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# 1 Introduction

## Purpose and Methodology

- 1.1 No 18 Church Street is a grade II listed late 18<sup>th</sup> century weavers' cottage with period features, situated in the heart of Ribchester. The owner of the property is seeking retroactive planning permission to replace a modern dormer window on the roof of the rear elevation with two Velux roof windows. The dormer window was replaced with the rooflights in 2002.
- 1.2 The purpose of this heritage statement is to assess the significance of No 18 Church Street and any impact that the proposed development has had upon the building. As the building is grade II listed, this document will help ensure that care was taken to avoid damage to any identified significance.
- 1.3 The information conveyed in this document has been obtained from a variety of sources:
  - Desk based research on the setting of No 18 Church Street and its historical development, including consultation with the relevant HERs and reports
  - A site visit to the heritage asset on 06/08/2023, including a walk around the local area to ascertain potential sightlines of the roof.
  - A photographic survey of the rear facing elevation and roof of the asset

## The Author

- 1.4 Jamie Skuse is an experienced archaeologist and heritage sector worker with twelve years of experience, which includes archaeological fieldwork, desk-based assessments, and post-excavation work. Jamie holds a BA (Hons) degree in Archaeology gained from the University of Manchester and is currently working towards obtaining an MSc in Building Conservation and Adaptation from UCLan. The author specialises in classical architecture, architectural photography, and digital recording techniques.

## Methods of Research and Investigation

- 1.5 This heritage statement has been prepared with adherence to the National Planning Policy Framework and Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance documents, and references relevant Historic England guidance including:
  - The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition)
  - Making Changes to Heritage Assets: Historic England Advice Note 2

## 2 General Description

### Location

2.1 No 18 Church Street (grid reference: SD 65014 35206) is located within the village of Ribchester, and is situated 0.4 miles to the north of the village hall. The site can be accessed by road from the B6245. Ribchester is within the Ribble Valley district of Lancashire, and is located 8 miles north-east of the city of Preston.

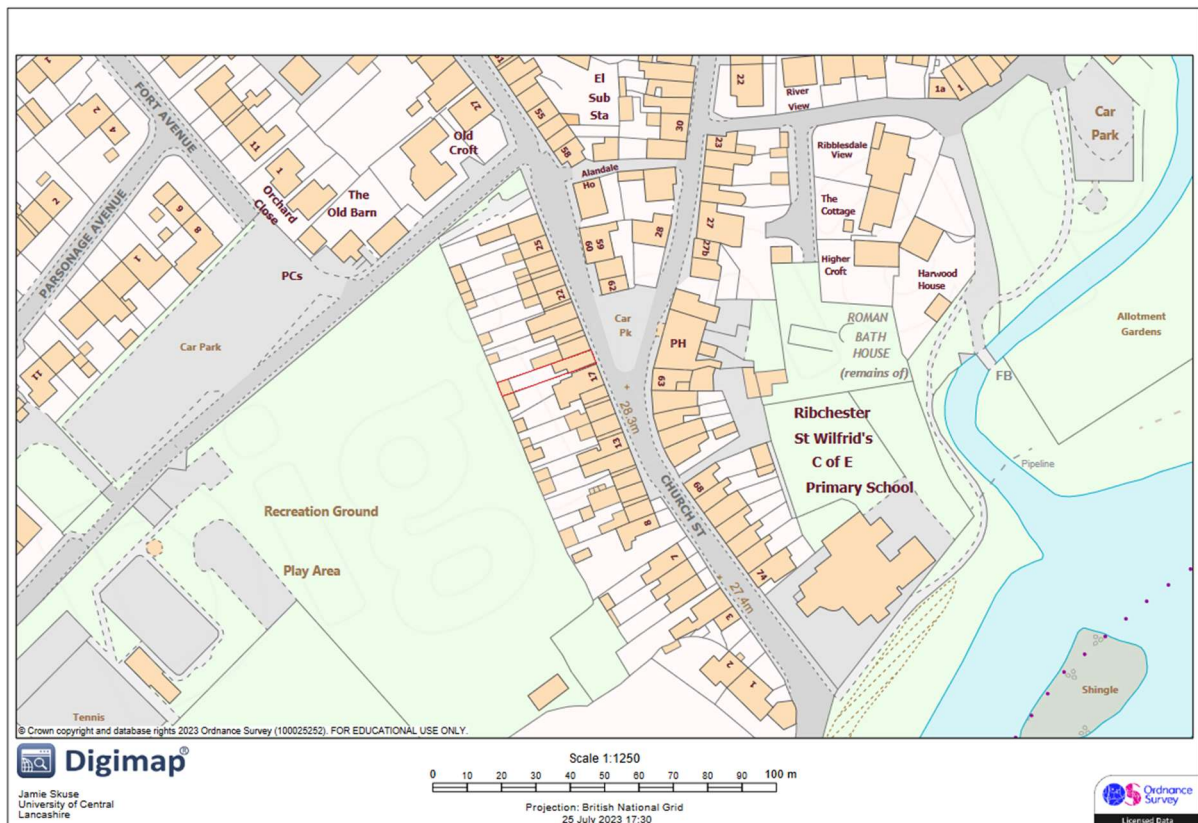


Figure 2 A 1:1250 map of Ribchester, with the heritage asset outlined in red.

- 2.2 No 18 Church Street is situated within the boundaries of the Ribchester conservation area. The recreational space to the rear of the heritage asset consists of a football pitch and a play park, and marks the south west boundary of the conservation area.
- 2.3 Ribchester was the site of an early Roman wooden fort built in 72AD to guard the main south to north route through the west of England (Lancashire Past, 2020). The fort was later rebuilt in stone in the early 2<sup>nd</sup> century due to its importance in supplying military campaigns to the north. Little is recorded of Ribchester's medieval history; however, the 13<sup>th</sup> century Church of St Wilfrid remains an important part of Ribchester (Farrer and J. Brownbill, 1907). The late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century saw Ribchester develop into a prosperous industrial village, with two mills and a significant population of handloom weavers before later declining in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

- 2.4 A range of heritage assets are situated within the immediate vicinity of No 18 Church Street. The building itself is situated within a row of seven grade II listed weavers cottages built in 1793. Further along Church Street are more surviving weavers cottages at No's 61 and 62. Opposite No 18 is the grade II listed White Bull Hotel, bearing a lintel with the year 1707 and possibly incorporating doric columns from the roman fort found in the nearby river (Farrer and J. Brownbill, 1907). The 13<sup>th</sup> century Church of St Wilfrid is a grade I listed heritage asset with original fabric still retained, along with later 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century additions (Farrer and J. Brownbill, 1907).

## **Outline Description**

- 2.5 As the proposed changes at No 18 Church Street are limited to the roof on the rear elevation, this description does not include the internal features of the building. Special consideration should be given to the roof. The proposed retrospective removal of the dormer window and the subsequent installation of two roof windows form the primary purpose of this document.
- 2.6 No 18 Church Street is a late 18<sup>th</sup> century single bay weavers' cottage, situated within a row of seven that were built at the same time. The cottages are similar in size and design, sharing a distinctive aesthetic and a roofline. A datestone above No 17 Church Street provides the year of construction as 1793 along with the initials RHM.
- 2.7 The heritage asset is built with buff squared sandstone and retains several period features on the front elevation, including stone gutter brackets and a plain frieze, as well as square mullion windows and lintels. No 18 shares a ginnel with No 17, which is entered through the arched doorway with keystone. Both front and rear elevations retain unusual attic windows which were likely intended to provide light for an attic loomshop. This placement of a loomshop is unusual, but could be explained by the proximity to the nearby river and the risk of flooding.
- 2.8 The building has stone slate roofing on the front elevation, and slate roofing on the rear elevation. The roof has two small dark framed Velux skylights fitted in the centre. These were installed in 2002, replacing a modern PVC framed dormer window. The windows throughout No 18 are modern PVC additions with glazing.

## **Historic Background**

- 2.9 The late 18<sup>th</sup> century saw Ribchester transform from a small settlement to a prosperous industrial village (Ribchester Conservation Area Appraisal, 2005). Like many of Lancashire's settlements, the growing need for cotton production ensured that handloom cotton weaving was becoming an increasingly important part of the local economy, at first supplementing the earnings of agricultural workers before becoming a common full-time occupation in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century (Hopwood, 1969). Handlooms could be fitted within the home, and were usually operated within the cellar or the ground floor.

- 2.10 Innovations such as the spinning jenny, the water frame and the warping mill saw production costs lowered and the demand for cotton products increased (Hopwood, 1969). This demand rapidly increased the wages of hand weavers, which in turn encouraged settlements of weavers to form. At the height of the handweaving industry in 1821, it is estimated that as many as 170000 workers in Lancashire were hand weavers (Hart, 2009).
- 2.11 Ribchester was geographically well situated for weaving. The nearby river Ribble provided the damp conditions required to keep cotton flexible and the village sat upon the pack horse line between Blackburn and Preston, allowing for easier transportation and shipping of goods to London and Liverpool (Ribchester History Society, n.d). By 1821, 921 hand weavers were recorded living in Ribchester (Timmins, 1993). Rows of small purpose-built cottages with two rooms upstairs, and two rooms on the ground floor were likely built on Church Street and Water Street by investors through terminating building societies (Hart, 2009), serving as adequate working loomshops and living spaces for hand weavers and their families. At the height of hand weaving in Lancashire, wages were recorded in some areas to be as high as 120 shillings per week (Hopwood, 1969).
- 2.12 Handweaving in Lancashire started to decline with the automation of the power loom in 1834. This provided factory owners with the capability of producing four times as much cotton as a handloom weaver (Cottontown.org, 2019), causing wages for the latter to plummet. Census records from 1851 indicate that in most Lancashire towns, the lowering demand and income saw the number of hand weavers decrease. However, in Ribchester the number of hand weavers increased from the 921 handweavers recorded in 1821, to 1101 handweavers in 1851 (Timmins, 1993) This increase indicates the importance of the trade to Ribchester's economy, but by 1861 census records depict a decline in handweavers mirroring other towns and villages in Lancashire.

### **Heritage Asset Designation**

- 2.13 No 18 Church Street is grade II listed and a designated heritage asset. The listing description is included below. The building is situated within the Ribchester conservation area, a link to the description of which is included in the bibliography. The listing description of the asset is included below.

#### 2.14 CHURCH STREET Nos. 16 to 22 (consec) GVII

Part of a row of weavers' houses, late C18th. Squared sandstone with brick stacks, Nos. 16-19 having a stone slate roof, 20-22 a slate roof. 2 storeys with attics, with plain frieze and continuous stone gutter brackets. Nos. 16, 17, 18 and 19 are all of one bay with a door to the right and with 2-light windows with square mullions on the ground and 1st floors (except No. 19 which lacks mullions). A tunnel entrance with semi-circular head and keystone shares the right-hand jamb of the doorway to Nos. 17-19. Nos. 20, 21 and 22 are similar but have only one light to each window. Nos. 21 and 22 are a pair with doorways in the centre separated by a flat-headed tunnel entrance which shares their jambs. Modern glazing throughout, except for the attic window of No. 19 which has fixed small panes. The attic windows of Nos. 20-22 are blocked and a window has been inserted above the last tunnel. Above the tunnel entrance to No. 17 is a plaque 'RHM 1793'

### 3 Photographic survey



*Figure 3 A photograph of the dormer window, taken pre-2002 (source - Jackie Baker)*



*Figure 4 Photograph of the rear elevation and the rooflights, taken from the rear of the garden (source - Jamie Skuse)*



*Figure 5 Photograph taken of the roof from the position of the rear extension (source - Jamie Skuse)*



Figure 6 Photograph taken with a DJI Mini 2 drone of the roof of the heritage asset. No 18 is central in the picture, with the door to the extension open (source - Jamie Skuse)



Figure 7 Photograph taken from within the attic looking at the internal view of the rooflights (source - Jamie Skuse)



*Figure 8 Photograph taken from the recreational space to the rear of the property. Sightlines are hindered by the foliage and the stone shed at the rear of the property (source - Jamie Skuse)*

## **4 Heritage Appraisal**

### **Introduction**

- 4.1 This heritage appraisal follows guidance set out in chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework and the heritage values as specified in Historic England's 2008 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance' document.
- 4.2 The aim of the appraisal is to assess the heritage values of No 18 Church Street and analyse how they may be impacted by the proposed changes.

### **Evidential Value**

- 4.3 The evidential value of No 18 Church Street lies in its retention of its original late 18<sup>th</sup> century fabric. The asset was constructed with buff square sandstone blocks and a stone slate roof, and retains period features. This is mostly evident on the front elevation, with a plain frieze and closely spaced stone gutter brackets, along with square mullions and lintels. The unusual attic windows indicate the loomshop in No 18 was likely situated within the attic, rather than closer to the ground which was the common practice. This is perhaps due to the asset's proximity to the river Ribble, which is prone to flooding.
- 4.4 The windows throughout the property have been replaced with modern glazing, and therefore holds no evidential value. This includes the dormer window that was removed in 2002 from the roof of the rear elevation, which was a modern installation with a PVC frame.

### **Historical Value**

- 4.5 No 18 Church Street holds significant illustrative value due to its ability to depict the home and working life for Ribchester's hand weaving population from the late 18<sup>th</sup> to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. This period saw Ribchester grow from a small settlement to a wealthy industrial village, with hand weaving loomshops such as the one situated at No 18 playing an integral role in its development.
- 4.6 Despite the prominent role of hand weavers in Lancashire's early industrial economy, only a small number of weavers cottages from this period are still standing. As such, surviving weaver's cottages such as the row on Church Street have a high historical value.

### **Aesthetic Value**

- 4.7 The aesthetic value of the heritage asset lies in its contribution to its setting. No 18 Church Street is situated within a row of seven distinctive weavers' cottages that were built in 1793 with buff coloured sandstone blocks. The cottages are similar in design and size, maintaining an unbroken roofline and retaining period features which provides an attractive appearance to Church Street and the wider conservation area.

- 4.8 The neighbouring weavers' cottages have rooflights installed on their rear elevations, creating a continuous line down the row that includes No 18.

### **Communal Value**

- 4.9 The communal value of No 18 Church Street can best be described as social. Ribchester's industrial past is an important aspect of local heritage. No 18 is often included both as an individual building and as the row of cottages within local literature (such as historical tours of Ribchester), and books concerning the 19<sup>th</sup> century cotton industry of Lancashire.

### **Statement of Significance**

- 4.10 No 18 Church Street is a grade II listed late 18<sup>th</sup> century weavers' cottage built within the centre of Ribchester. It sits within the Ribchester conservation area, and is close to the river Ribble. There are several heritage assets within the conservation area.
- 4.11 No 18 has notable evidential value as it retains much of its original external fabric and period features. The asset is built with sandstone blocks and has a stone slate roof. Some significance has been lost as the windows on both elevations have been replaced with modern glazing, although this has likely improved the energy performance of the building.
- 4.12 The heritage asset has illustrative historical value due to the period of Ribchester's industrial heritage that it represents. Church Street and the adjacent Water Street were the main hubs of the hand weaving industry within Ribchester in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, with weavers' cottages like No 18 built to house both a hand weaver's family and space for a handloom for cotton production.
- 4.13 The heritage asset's aesthetic value is significant due to its distinctive appearance and the contribution it makes to its setting. However, it is likely that the appearance of the asset was negatively impacted upon by the dormer window on the rear elevation's roof as it would have been visible when viewed from the recreational space to the south west. The rooflights that replaced it sit flush with the incline of the roof and have less visual impact due to their smaller size and dark colour.

## 5 Analysis of Proposals

### General Principles

- 5.1 Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework provides guidance on assessing any proposed changes to heritage assets, with the priority of conserving the significance of such assets in the development process.
- 5.2 Paragraph 199 of the NPPF states that *‘When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.’*
- 5.3 Section 4 of this heritage statement explores and identifies the areas of significance that No 18 Church Street retains. This section (section 5) will analyse the proposals made by the owner of the building, and assess to what degree, if any, they will potentially harm the significance identified in the previous section.

### Summary of the Proposal

- 5.4 The owners of the grade II listed No 18 Church Street are seeking retroactive planning permission to remove a dormer window from the roof on the rear elevation, replacing it with two rooflights. The dormer window was removed in 2002.

### Analysis of the Proposal: National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.5 The aim of the NPPF is to ensure that the development of heritage assets prioritises the conservation of any significance that asset has. Sustainable development is key to conservation, ensuring the long-term use of a building with minimal damage. The following paragraphs of the NPPF are relevant to the analysis of the proposal.
- 5.6 Paragraph 197 of the NPPF states: *‘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 ‘*
- 5.7 Paragraph 202 of the NPPF states: *“Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.”*

- 5.8 Paragraph 206 of the NPPF states: *‘Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.’*
- 5.9 The heritage asset is situated within the Ribchester conservation area. Along with the six adjacent weavers’ cottages, the asset’s evidential, historical, and aesthetic values make a positive contribution to its setting.
- 5.10 The dormer window was removed from the roof of the rear elevation in 2002. It was of a modern construction featuring a white PVC window frame attached to the wooden frame of the dormer and therefore unlikely to have held any heritage value. The date of the installation of the dormer is unknown.
- 5.11 The extra height and profile of the dormer window would have increased its visibility from the recreational space to the rear of the property and broken the roofline of the row of cottages when viewed from ground level. It is likely that the dormer window would have had a negative impact on the significance of both the heritage asset and the conservation area.
- 5.12 The two roof lights that the owners of No 18 Church Street installed in place of the dormer window are fabricated by Velux and are identified by the model number GGL C02 3000 VE. The dimensions of the rooflights are 780mm x 550mm, and the frames are wooden and coloured black to better match the slate roof on which they sit. The windows are double glazed. A manufacturers sheet is attached to the appendix which details the performance data of the roof lights.
- 5.13 The roof lights are smaller than the dormer window and match the colour of the surrounding slate roof, and as such have less visual impact upon the heritage asset and does not compromise the roofline of the cottages. The materials used in the construction of the roof lights are appropriate for a historic building.
- 5.14 The neighbouring cottages in the row have rooflights installed on their rear elevations. The rooflights are similar in design and appearance, forming a continuous line that includes those installed on the roof of the heritage asset and adding character.
- 5.15 The rear elevation of No 18 Church Street is the less prominent aspect, facing towards the connected recreational area to the south west. This recreational space marks the south-west boundary of the conservation area, and is the only space within it with sightlines of No 18’s rear elevation roof. Sightlines of the roof from the recreational space are limited due to intermittent foliage and a stone shed at the rear of the asset’s garden.

- 5.16 Historic England provide the following relevant guidance in the Making Changes to Heritage Assets (Historic England Advice Note 2) document: *'The insertion of new elements such as doors and windows, (including dormers and roof lights to bring roof spaces into more intensive use) is quite likely to adversely affect the building's significance. Harm might be avoided if roof lights are located on less prominent roof slopes. New elements may be more acceptable if account is taken of the character of the building, the roofline and significant fabric. Roof lights may be more appropriate in agricultural and industrial buildings than dormers. In some circumstances the unbroken line of a roof may be an important contributor to its significance'*
- 5.17 As the original use of the cottage was industrial, the guidance from Historic England suggests that roof lights would be more appropriate than the original dormer in this case.

## 6 Summary and Conclusion

- 6.1 This heritage statement has assessed whether the retrospective removal of the dormer window and its subsequent replacement with two rooflights will damage the significance of No 18 Church Street. The findings of the statement are as follows.
- 6.2 The dormer on the roof of the rear elevation of the grade II listed heritage asset was a modern addition to the building and as such held no heritage value. Due to the materials used in the window and its prominence on the roof, it is likely that the dormer would have had a negative impact upon the significance of No 18 and the character of the conservation area.
- 6.3 Despite being in a conservation area, the addition of the two roof lights to the roof of No 18 Church Street should not cause any appreciable harm to the beauty of the area or the significance of the building. The rooflights sit flush to the roof and are coloured to match the surrounding slates, and the wooden framing is a more appropriate material choice for the building.
- 6.4 The neighbouring cottages within the weavers' row have rooflights on their rear elevations in a similar style and appearance to the two installed on the roof of No 18. As such, the rooflights form a continuous line along the roofing of the row and add character to the heritage asset.
- 6.5 There are limited sightlines from the recreational area to the rear of the property that are within the conservation area, but due to the small profile and design of the roof lights they do not cause any discernible harm. As such, they should be considered as having no impact upon the significance of No 18 Church Street and the character of the conservation area.
- 6.6 In conclusion, the proposals satisfy the guidance provided by the National Planning Policy Framework and Historic England.

## 7 Bibliography

### Guidance Documents

The National Planning Policy Framework 2021 – Chapter 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Historic England - Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance 2008

The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition)

Making Changes to Heritage Assets: Historic England Advice Note 2

### Historic Environment Records

16-22 Church Street, Ribchester - <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1147455?section=official-list-entry>

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## 8 Appendix

 <b>EN 14351-1:2006</b>		 <b>www.velux.com</b>
<b>VELUX roof window GGL --- --00</b> intended to be used in domestic and commercial locations  Edition: 01 February 2010		
<b>Essential performance characteristics</b>		
1&2	Resistance to wind load	<b>class C3 <sup>(1)</sup></b>
3	Resistance to snow load	<b>3 mm float-18 mm-3 mm float <sup>(2)</sup></b> <b>4 mm float-16 mm-4 mm float <sup>(3)</sup></b> (outer glass pane-cavity-inner glass pane)
4	Reaction to fire	<b>npd</b>
4	External fire performance	<b>npd</b>
5	Watertightness	<b>class 9A</b>
8	Impact resistance	<b>npd</b>
9	Load-bearing capacity of safety devices	<b>passed</b>
10	Sound insulation	<b>29 (0; -3) dB</b>
11	Thermal transmittance	<b>2,5 W/(m<sup>2</sup>K)</b>
12	Total solar energy transmittance	<b>0,78 <sup>(2)</sup></b> <b>0,79 <sup>(3)</sup></b>
13	Light transmittance	<b>0,82 <sup>(2)</sup></b> <b>0,83 <sup>(3)</sup></b>
14	Air permeability	<b>class 2</b>
(1) For window width > 1140 mm or height > 1398 mm: npd (2) VELUX sizes: C01, C02, C04, F04, F06, M27, M04, M06, M08, P25, P04, P06, P08, S01, S06, U04 (3) VELUX sizes: B04, M10, M12, P10, S08, S10, U08, U10 npd = no performance determined		