

Heritage Statement

in connection with

**Proposed Development works at Cuckoo Hall Farm, Higher
Road Longridge Lancashire PR3 2YX**

Prepared by

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1 INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Methodology

- 1.1 This heritage statement has been prepared to assess the heritage significance of buildings at Cuckoo Hall Farm, Higher Road near Longridge, in view of plans to remodel and enlarge the house and alter/remove buildings at the site. There are no designated heritage assets present at Cuckoo Hall Farm, however there exists some potential for possible non-designated heritage asset (NDHA) status attributed to the farmhouse and attached barn and a separate shippon/stable structure. The buildings are not formally identified as NDHAs by the local planning authority, Ribble Valley Borough Council (RVBC).
- 1.2 The statement has been prepared in accordance with the general guidelines set out in the Historic England publications 'Informed Conservation'ⁱ and 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance'ⁱⁱ and responds to heritage policies outlined in Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2023). Historic England guidance in preparing heritage statements, entitled 'Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets' (Historic England Advice Note 12, 2019) has also been used. The legal context is set by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act of 1990. Further guidance has been obtained from the suite of Historic England publications including:
 - GPA2 - Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (2015)
 - Historic England Advice Notes (HEAN) 1-13

The Author

- 1.3 Chris O'Flaherty, the author, is a Chartered Building Surveyor and professional member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (MRICS). With a background in the recording, analysis and conservation of historic buildings, the author holds a Master's Degree in Building Heritage and Conservation and specialises in heritage planning matters.

Methods of Research and Investigation

- 1.4 Inspections of the site were carried out in July and October 2021 to assess its physical nature. This included some invasive inspections involving localised plaster and render removal, lifting of floorboards and attic inspection. Background research has also been conducted to ascertain all relevant contextual matters appertaining to the proposals. In accordance with the NPPF, background research has been proportionate to the nature of the building/site, the proposed change(s) and the likely impact of the change(s).
- 1.5 In terms the site's potential for buried archaeology, this has not been explored beyond scrutiny of historic mapping.

2 GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Location

2.1 The farmstead of Cuckoo Hall Farm lies on the south side of Higher Road approximately 3 miles north east of Longridge. A location plan is given in figure 1.

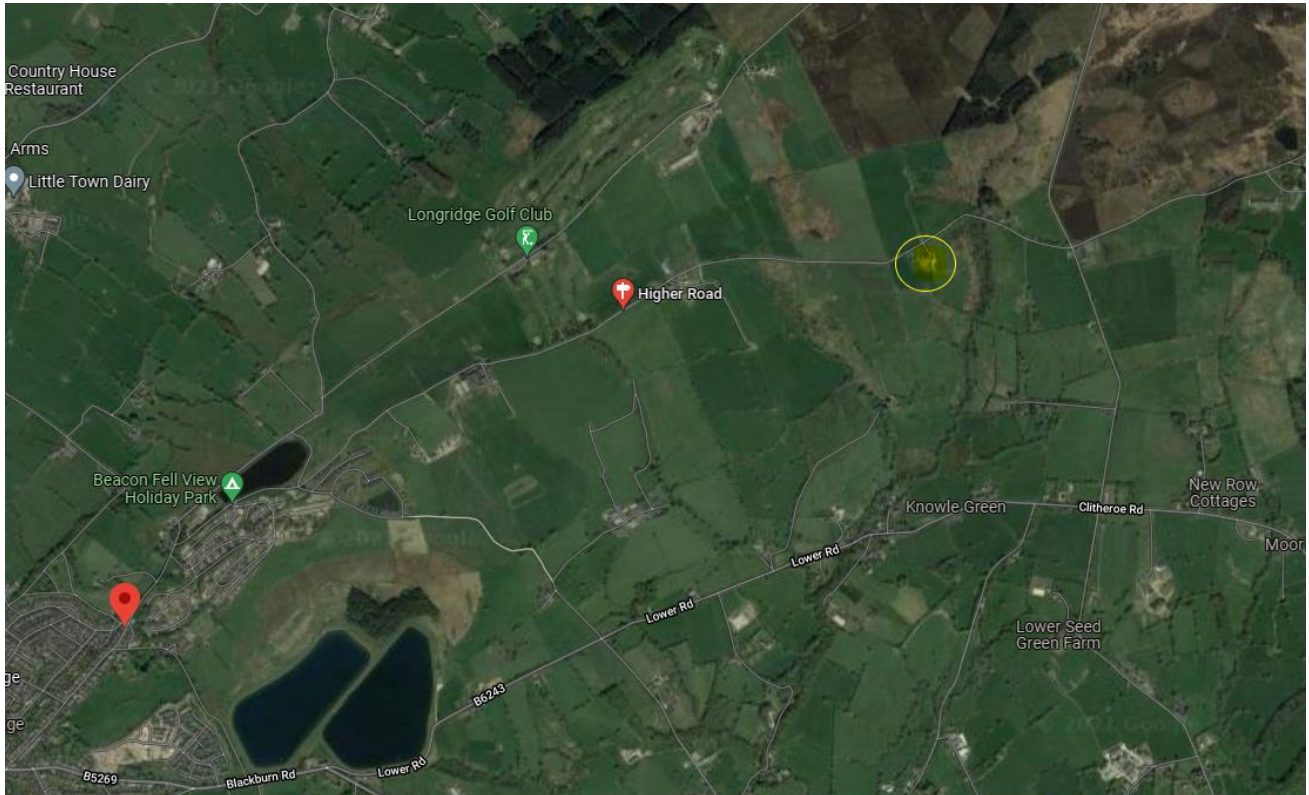


Figure 1) Site location (Cuckoo Hall Farm circled)

Outline Description & Historical Background

- 2.2 The farmstead at Cuckoo Hall Farm comprises a cluster of domestic and agricultural buildings of varying age and size, central to which is an adjoined house and barn range with elements that may date from the later C18th to early C19th. In addition, there is a later C19th former shippon/stable range with adjoined former pigsty (all much altered and extended) and a series of other larger C20th storage sheds and shippons.
- 2.3 On Greenwood's map of Lancashire from 1818 a Cuckoo Hall is shown (figure 2) however its position is some way east of what is now Cuckoo Hall Farm, being at the site of what was formerly the New Drop Inn (converted). It is therefore possible the name Cuckoo Hall was adopted at the farmstead rather than being derived from any traditional manorial connections, or possibly Cuckoo Hall Farm had connections to Cuckoo Hall (very little information has been found about the Hall).



Figure 2) Greenwood's Map of 1818 showing Cuckoo Hall lying to the east of the current farmstead (circled yellow) in the position of the New Drop Inn

- 2.4 The house/barn range comprises a two-storey two-bay house to the western end and three-bay barn of matching height to the east. The buildings are covered by a tiled gabled roof atop random rubble walls with various limewash and render finishes. The house is of double pile plan with rooms front and rear at ground floor and rooms to the front with landing to the rear at first floor level. There are three transverse beams at first floor and upper ceiling level, spanning between load bearing cross walls (including the western gable and party wall with the barn). The roof is of replacement rafter and purlin construction. The western bay of the house is a later addition to the original eastern bay, with more recently added porch to the front (south) and single storey kitchen extension at the rear. Quite recently a two-storey gabled extension (shown on mid C19th maps) which projected southwards from the eastern bay's façade was taken down due its unstable condition.
- 2.5 In summary, it would appear that the house was originally a small single unit double-pile cottage (two-up two-down) which was extended to the west. The double pile plan suggests the oldest part dates from the later C18th at the earliest, there being strong evidence that small rural houses in the region were typically of single-pile (one room deep) vernacular plan form up until the mid C18th. Localised exposure works reveal that, in addition to the three extensions and replacement roof structure and coverings, the windows have also been remodelled with some inserted concrete lintels, cills and modern plasterboard linings.

- 2.6 The barn adjoined to the house is a small three bay structure shown in mapping from the mid C19th. It has a replacement loft floor supported by steelwork with timber joists and boards beneath a replacement steel truss with rafter and purlin roof. There are C20th concrete cattle stall dividers at ground floor level in the eastern bay and inserted partitions in the western bay. The western loft accommodates a large C20th timber hopper for cattle feed and a large C20th addition sits against the north wall. A former cart entry door has been blocked to the front (south) next to which there is a former shippon outshut projection. It seems likely the barn was originally used for a combination of cattle housing and feed storage, but was subsequently altered, re-roofed and reconfigured.
- 2.7 A former detached shippon/stable range lies south of the barn. This is first shown in mapping from the latter C19th. The original part of the building is rectangular in plan with ground and loft levels and what mapping indicates might have been a former pigsty to the rear. The building has been much altered and extended



Figure 3) Historic mapping showing evolution of the farmstead before the arrival of larger C20th sheds

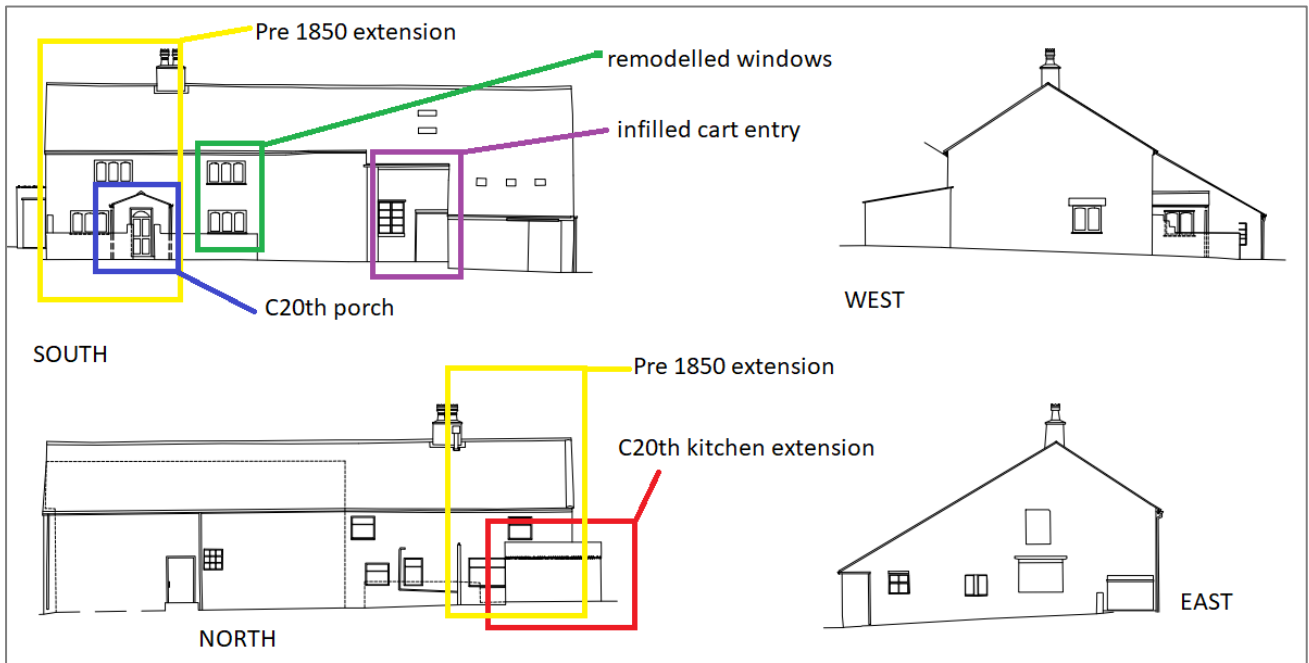


Figure 4) House-barn elevations

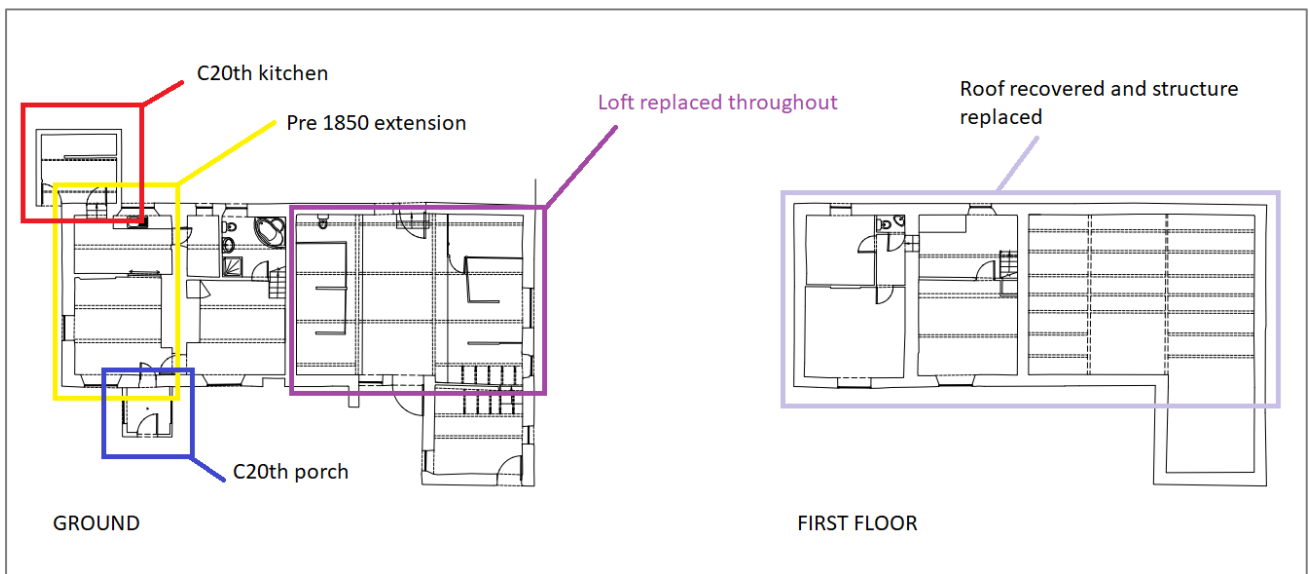


Figure 5) House plans

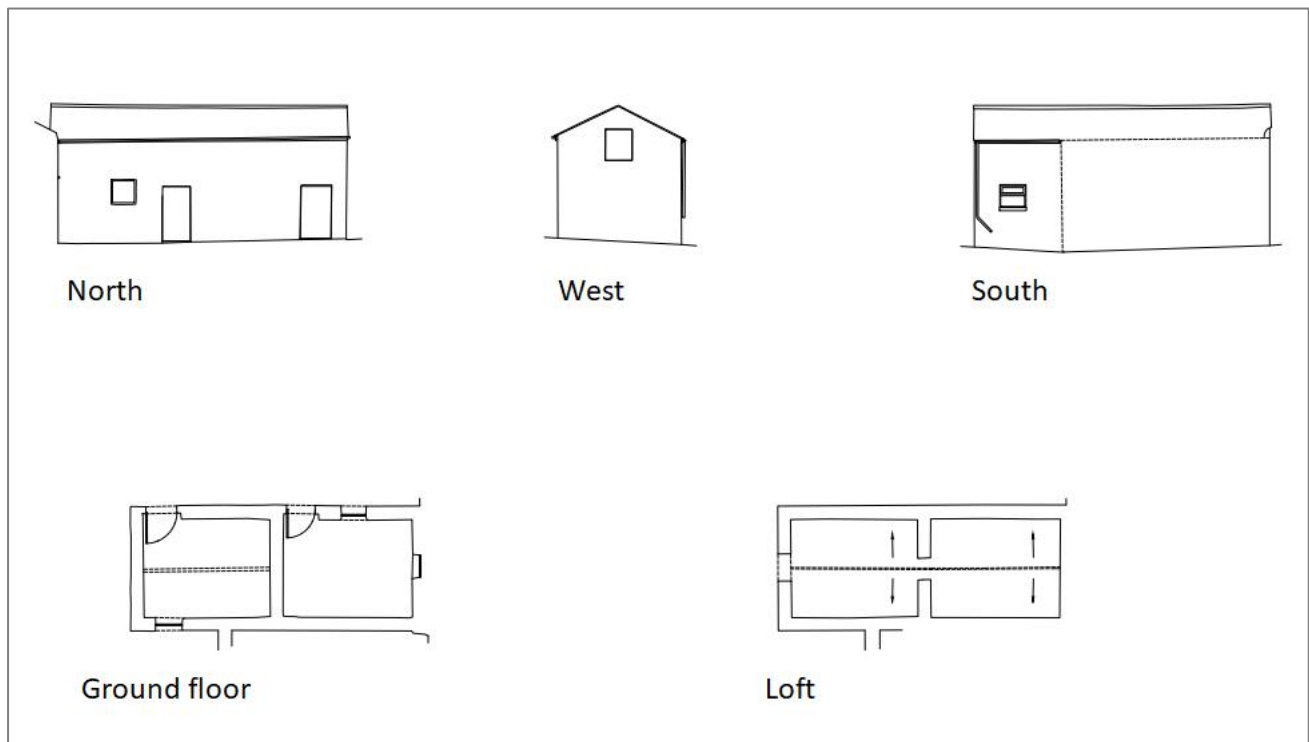


Figure 6) Shippon/stable

Heritage Asset Designations

2.8 There are no designated heritage assets at the site nor have any non-designated heritage assets been identified at the site by the local planning authority (Ribble Valley Borough Council - RVBC). For clarity, RVBC does not keep a register of non-designated heritage assets (or locally listed buildings etc).

2.9 A non-designated heritage asset (NDHA) is defined in the PPGⁱⁱⁱ as:

"Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets.

A substantial majority of buildings have little or no heritage significance and thus do not constitute heritage assets. Only a minority have enough heritage significance to merit identification as non-designated heritage assets."

2.10 Consideration of the buildings at Cuckoo Hall Farm relates to whether any of the buildings could be deemed NDHAs as defined by the PPG, mindful that this status depends on the potential heritage significance of the buildings.

3 HERITAGE APPRAISAL

Introduction

- 3.1 The following appraisal adheres to guidance published by Historic England (2008 and 2019)^{iv,v} and relates specifically to the requirement contained in paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023), given in extract below:
- 3.2 “In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary.”
- 3.3 The appraisal begins by identifying and assessing any heritage values/interests that might be affected by the proposals, before evaluating these and composing a ‘Statement of Significance’. The essential purpose of the statement is to set priorities for conservation of significance and enable an objective assessment on the likely impact of the proposals.

Heritage Interests

- 3.4 The heritage interests explored below are distilled under the following headings: archaeological interest; historic interest; architectural and artistic interest. The exploration focusses specifically on those interests deemed of possible relevance to the proposals site, and it is not an exhaustive assessment of the inherent heritage interests of the relevant heritage assets. The phrase ‘heritage interests’ is interchangeable with the phrase ‘heritage values’, which was used in Historic England guidance from 2008^{vi}.

Archaeological Interest

- 3.5 Historic England (2019) suggests that “There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.”
- 3.6 The adjoined house and barn range possess some limited archaeological interest owing to the evidence they retain of historic living and farming practises. This evidence is corrupted by the extent and nature of past changes, including extension and conversion/remodelling of the buildings. As a result, neither the house nor barn are good representatives of type, there being countless more complete and authentic examples of the adjoined house/barn typology – commonly known as the laithehouse – both locally and across the Pennine region.
- 3.7 The later C19th detached shippon/stable and former pigsty retains limited evidence of

former use. The building, which is a very common example of its type, lacks any distinct or appreciable archaeological interest associated with its history of use.

Historical Interest

- 3.8 Historic England (2019) suggests this to be - "An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity".
- 3.9 Cuckoo Hall Farm would appear to be a typical rural farmstead possibly dating from the later C18th or early C19th. It is not known to hold any notable historical associations (the original Cuckoo Hall appears to have to the east) and the extent to which it has been altered and converted means it no longer presents a clear illustration of historical lifestyles and/or farming practises. It therefore holds minimal historical interest, as defined by its illustrative or associative heritage values.

Architectural and Artistic Interest

- 3.10 Historic England (2019) suggests that: "These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skills, like sculpture."
- 3.11 The adjoined house and barn hold very limited authentic architectural interest relating to their built form and have negligible aesthetic value. Vernacular dwellings and farm buildings can be the source of notable architectural interest, however in this instance the buildings have been considerably altered and extended, with many elements renewed/replaced. Such changes including the following:
- Original roof structures and covering replaced to house and barn
 - Intermediate loft floor in the barn replaced
 - House window openings re-modelled and fittings replaced
 - Barn openings blocked/replaced
 - Interior of the barn entirely remodelled
 - House extended to the west, south and north
- 3.12 The cumulative impact of this history of change is the general erosion of architectural

interest to what is in essence a series of unremarkable domestic and agricultural buildings. Herein, the buildings may well originate from the late C18th to early C19th (the original single unit house and barn), but their inherent architectural interest is minimal.

Statement of Significance

- 3.13 Having assessed the heritage interests associated with the site, it is now possible to take a more informed approach to the assessment of site significance. This will consider prioritising conservation in light of the proposals for change. In this context, a statement of significance is given below.
- 3.14 An appraisal of heritage interests has been conducted to explore the inherent heritage interests and associated significances of buildings at Cuckoo Hall Farm, near Longridge. There are three pre-1900 buildings at the farm (with other C20th farm buildings) and none of these are statutorily listed or entered on any local lists of heritage assets.
- 3.15 The principal findings of the appraisal are that the farmstead includes a house and adjoined barn which in parts may date from the late C18th or early C19th, and a later C19th former shippon/stable with loft. These buildings have all been substantially altered and extended and do not present good examples of their age and type. It is for this reason that the buildings have never been statutorily listed and, whereas they do possess a degree of historical and architectural interest, the level of interest is very minimal in nature and not readily appreciable (i.e. by the general public).
- 3.16 The farmstead is positioned some distance from the adjacent road (Higher Road) and the primary frontage of the house and barn faces away from the road and towards the valley to the south. The building is not, therefore, prominent in views from the public highway nor is it a prominent feature of views from any public rights of way. Indeed, the farmstead is only truly experienced from within the private confines of the central farmyard area, and herein the visual experience is very much one of a generally unattractive and unremarkable collection of adjacent buildings.
- 3.17 In summary, whereas elements of the farmstead at Cuckoo Hall Farm might date from the later C18th, the buildings have only minimal heritage interest and low levels of heritage significance. They are therefore considered as unsuitable candidates for non-designated heritage asset status, lacking the kind of architectural and historic interest necessary to compliment and appreciably enhance the public enjoyment of the local historic environment.

4 ANALYSIS OF THE PROPOSALS

General Principles

- 4.1 General guidance on assessing proposed changes to heritage assets is given in chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2023). The NPPF establishes the premise that conserving significance should be a guiding principle when designing proposals for any development. In order to do this, it is first necessary to understand the heritage significance(s) of heritage assets before commencing with design.
- 4.2 Part 3 of this statement fulfils the need to understand significance and the findings of part 3 have informed the design of the proposals. There follows, here in section 4, an objective review of the finalised scheme, verifying to what extent conservation of significance has been achieved or whether any harm is likely to accrue.

Summary of the Proposals

- 4.3 The proposals involve partial demolition, alteration and new build elements all aimed at forming a single detached residence (with outbuildings) including conversion of the barn attached to the house.
- 4.4 Initial proposals (2021) to demolish the existing farmstead and build a new dwelling have been revised in line with pre-application comments and advice obtained by RVBC. It is noted within this pre-application process no specific need for a heritage statement was listed, nor was any comment on heritage matters included (e.g. non-designated heritage assets). Nevertheless, this heritage statement has been prepared as a prudent measure to ensure the issue of heritage is properly considered.
- 4.5 The principal elements of work relating to the house/barn are outlined as follows:
 - Renovation of the house, internally and externally, leaving repaired exposed stonework externally with replacement windows and some rear alterations .
 - Conversion of the barn to become part of the dwelling, with internal remodelling and some alteration of external openings and elevations in exposed stone to match the house.
 - Construction of a new semi-submerged level topped by a patio area fronting the house.
 - Some alteration and replacement outbuildings with associated hard and soft landscaping (retained barn to the south east).
- 4.6 There follows a series of representative images showing the plan of the proposed development and the appearance of the buildings. A full set of drawings accompany the planning application.



Figure 8) Proposed site plan

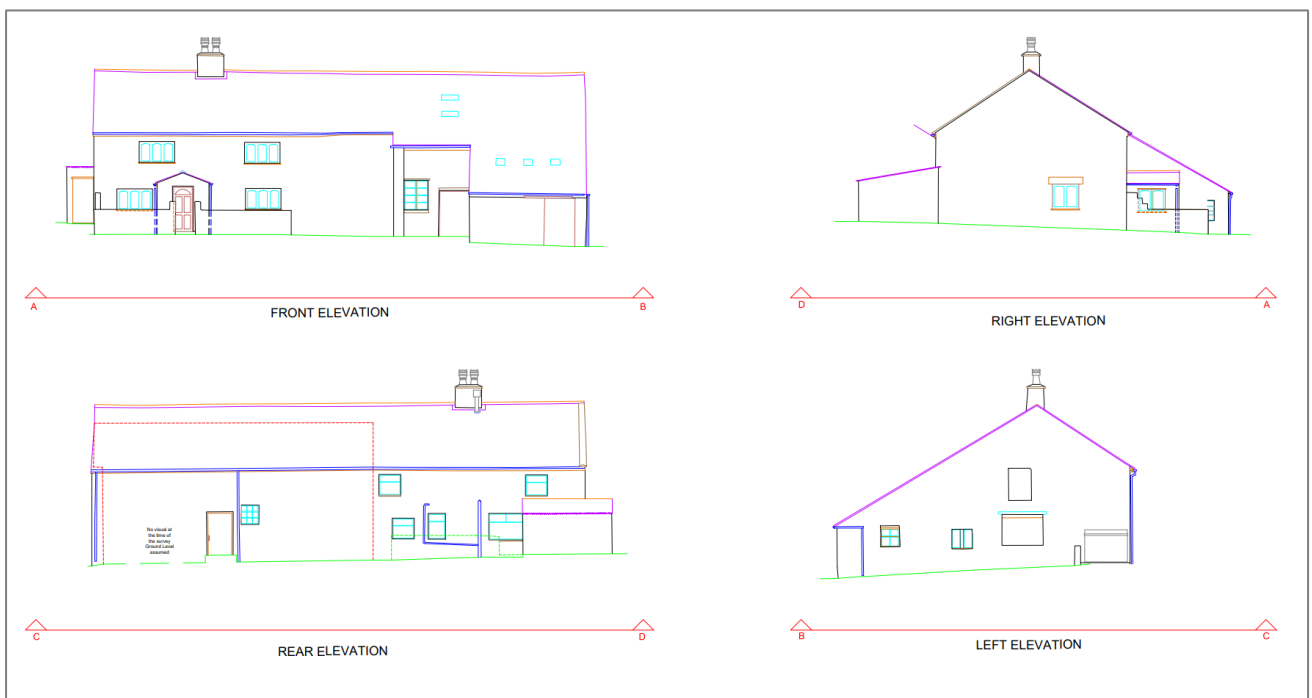


Figure 9) Existing elevations

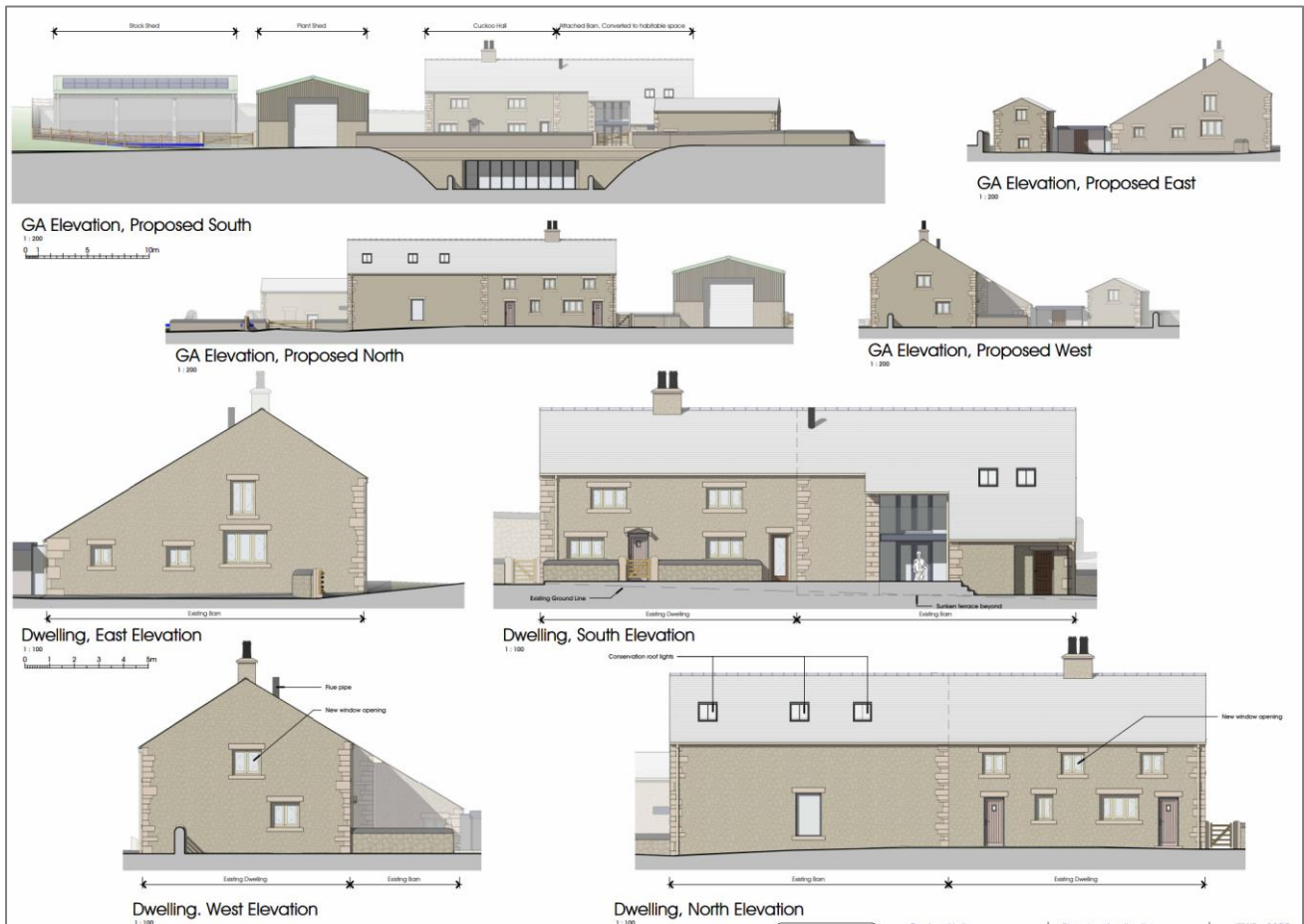


Figure 10) Proposed elevations

Analysis of the Proposals: National Planning Policy Framework

4.7 As discussed earlier, section 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment) of the NPPF (2023) considers heritage planning and identifies the following key drivers in the decision making process:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality;
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

4.8 The NPPF unifies the overall approach to planning, in order to ensure that deliberations over decisions relating to heritage assets are made in the full planning context. Securing sustainable development is the primary driver of the NPPF: in the heritage context this relies on maintaining active use (long term) in a manner that seeks to limit potential harm to

significance.

NPPF Paragraph 209

4.9 Paragraph 209 of the NPPF states:

“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.”

4.10 This paragraph is of potential relevance to the case in the specific circumstances where the buildings involved were considered to possess sufficient heritage significance to warrant non-designated heritage asset (NDHA) status as defined by the NPPF.

4.11 The heritage significance of the buildings has been assessed earlier in section 3. This assessment reveals that the heritage significance of the buildings is low and, furthermore, none of the buildings have been cited by RVBC as being non-designated heritage assets (NDHAs). The issue of concern now is whether on receipt of the application to redevelop the site RVBC will chose to confer NDHA status upon the buildings and therein make paragraph 209 of the NPPF a relevant factor in the case.

4.12 The NPPF and PPG make it clear that:

“A substantial majority of buildings have little or no heritage significance and thus do not constitute heritage assets. Only a minority have enough heritage significance to merit identification as non-designated heritage assets”.

4.13 The PPG also states:

“Plan-making bodies should make clear and up to date information on non-designated heritage assets accessible to the public to provide greater clarity and certainty for developers and decision-makers. This includes information on the criteria used to select non-designated heritage assets and information about the location of existing assets.”

4.14 In this instance it is evident that buildings have not been identified as NDHAs by the council and the assessment of significance herein carried out reveals the buildings possess insufficient architectural and historic interest to warrant NDHA status. For clarity, this is based upon the following facts:

- The house has been much altered – for example it has three extensions to its original part, with modified windows, altered interiors and replacement roof throughout
- The barn has been much modified, with replacement loft floor, replacement roof, altered interior spaces and blocked openings

- The shippon/stable range has been much altered and extended
- None of the buildings are well preserved examples of their age and type
- The buildings have no known important associations
- The buildings are old but unremarkable in appearance and history

4.15 In essence the buildings are unremarkable in terms of the form, appearance and history. However, it is considered appropriate for the buildings to be recorded prior to alteration in order preserve a permanent record of what existed on the site. It is also deemed appropriate to consider the general historic character of the local area when considering the design of the scheme.

4.16 Herein, the design of the scheme pays considerable respect to the history of farmsteads and successfully conserves and enhances the extant rural character of the adjoined farm/barn and detached barn, whilst retaining sufficient interpretable evidence of the adjoined barn's farming function (e.g. openings, scale, massing), enabling it to be read as a converted building. The same applies to the detached barn.

4.17 The proposed introduction of a glazed link to connect the barns represents a low impact change which ensures ongoing use of the detached barn and helps avoid the redundancy of this building. The change is also readily interpretable as a modern intervention and therein adheres to contemporary design principles wherein pastiche additions are avoided in favour of well designed modern interventions^{vii}.

4.18 With regard to the new basement level, this sits in front and beneath the house/barn range, therein avoiding direct physical intervention aside from a submerged connecting stair. The basement will be an overtly modern introduction, however it's visual impact will be limited due to its location and submerged nature. There will be some shared views of the house/barns and the glazed frontage to the new basement, however there will remain a very clear distinction between old and new and likewise a retained interpretability of the history of the former.

4.19 In summary, whereas the existing building are not believed to warrant NDHA status in planning terms owing to their lack of special interest and significance, the proposed changes to the site do respect the character and setting of the older buildings and therein avoid any potential concerns over harm to heritage significance. Furthermore, the proposals include the repair and renovation of the buildings and secure sustainable uses for redundant farm buildings. These aspects of the scheme present notable benefits.

5 SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This heritage statement has been prepared to assess the heritage significance of buildings at Cuckoo Hall Farm, Higher Road near Longridge, in view of plans to carry out repair, alteration, partial demolition and conversion works, including converting the barn adjoined to the farmhouse as part of the house, and excavating a new basement level. There are no designated heritage assets present at Cuckoo Hall Farm and the buildings are not formally identified as NDHAs by the local planning authority, Ribble Valley Borough Council (RVBC).
- 5.2 The main findings of the statement are that the house and adjoined barn range at the site might have parts dating from the later C18th to early C19th and a separate detached former shippon/stable range was added in the later C19th. These buildings have all been much altered and extended, with the house having been doubled in size and both the house and barn having been re-roofed and remodified in various locations. The net impact of these changes has been an erosion of the limited inherent heritage significance of an unremarkable collection of farmstead of buildings to the point where their architectural and historic interest is very low. As such, a reasonable and objective assessment of the buildings would conclude that they have insufficient interest to warrant non-designated heritage asset status, as defined by the NPPF and accompanying PPG.
- 5.3 Owing to the limited heritage significance of the site, the proposed works considered within this statement are considered to have generally benign impacts on heritage significance, albeit the repairs planned for the house and adjoined barn and the re-purposing of the redundant barns are both seen as notable positives in sustaining the lifespan of the buildings. That the design of the conversion of the barn retains interpretable evidence of the building's farming origins is also a notable plus point, particular in regard to conserving rural and agricultural character.

ⁱ Clarke, K, *Informed Conservation*, Historic England 2003

ⁱⁱ Historic England, *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance: Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*, 2008

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment#non-designated>

^{iv} Historic England, *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance: Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*, 2008

^v Historic England Advice Note 12 (2019) *Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets*

^{vi} Historic England, *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance: Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*, 2008

^{vii}E.g. - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide>
<https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/fileadmin/uploads/dc/Documents/building-in-context-new-development-in-historic-areas.pdf>