

# Heritage Statement – 18 Church Street

Ribchester, PR3 3XP



*Figure 1 The front elevation of No 18 Church Street. The windows are the subject of the proposed alterations to the heritage asset (source - Jamie Skuse)*

SD 65014 35206

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## Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>General Description.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Photographic Record.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Heritage Appraisal.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Analysis of the Proposals.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Summary and Conclusion.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>23</b>

# 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 planning permission to replace five modern PVC double glazed windows on the front elevation with four wooden framed sash windows and one casement window, and three modern UPVC double glazed windows on the rear elevation with wooden framed casement windows. The windows on both elevations will incorporate slimline double glazing.
- 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 30/01/2024
  - A photographic survey of the front and rear facing elevations of the asset
  - A previous heritage statement for 18 Church Street completed by the author dated 07/08/2023

## The Author

- 1.4 Jamie Skuse is an experienced 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 is the Church Buildings Support Officer for the Diocese of Blackburn.

## 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
  - Traditional Windows: Their Care, Repair and Upgrading

## 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.

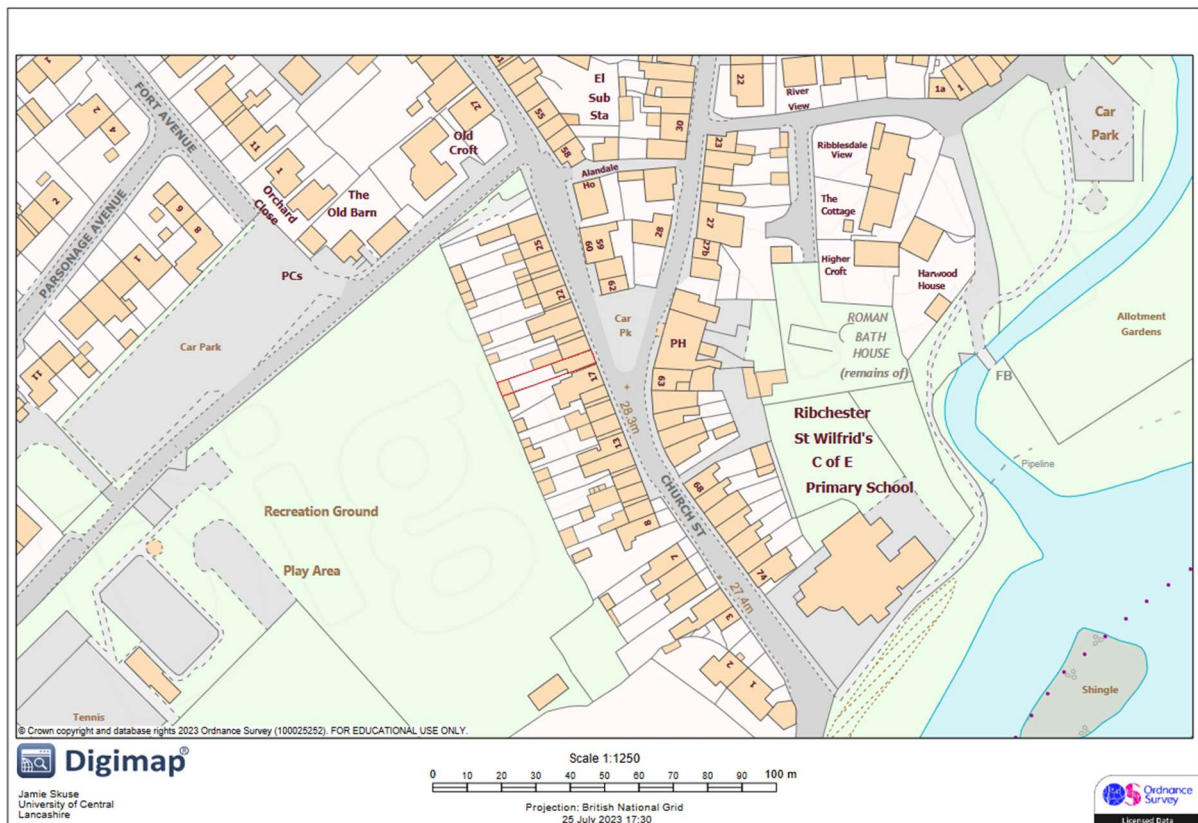


Figure 2 A 1:1250 map of Ribchester, with the heritage asset outlined in red.

- 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 The proposed changes to No 18 Church Street are limited to the windows on the front and rear elevations. As such, this description does not include the internal elements of the asset or the windows on the modern kitchen extension connected to the rear elevation.
- 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.
- 2.8 The building has stone slate roofing on the front elevation, and slate roofing on the rear elevation. The rear elevation roof has two small dark framed Velux skylights fitted in the centre.
- 2.9 The front elevation has five modern double glazed PVC framed windows with stone lintels. Stone mullions divide the two sets of two windows on the ground floor and first floor. The double glazing on the front elevation retains decorative square lead latticework. The rear elevation has three modern double glazed PVC framed windows. 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 rare, but could be explained by the proximity to the nearby river and the risk of flooding.

## Historic Background

- 2.10 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.
- 2.11 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).
- 2.12 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).
- 2.13 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

2.14 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.

2.15 CHURCH STREET Nos. 16 to 22 (consec) GVII

- i) 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 The front elevation of the asset in context with neighbouring cottages. The neighbouring cottage has replaced its modern PVC windows with wooden framed glazing (source - Jamie Skuse)



Figure 4 The rear elevation of the asset. The three windows on the original rear facing wall are subject to the proposed alterations (source - Jamie Skuse)



*Figure 5 The ground floor windows on the front elevation. The proposed alteration is to replace the two windows with a traditional hardwood framed sash window with centre bar and slimline double glazing (source – Jamie Skuse)*



*Figure 6 The first-floor windows on the front elevation. The proposed alteration is to replace the two windows with a traditional hardwood framed sash window with centre bar and slimline double glazing (source – Jamie Skuse)*



*Figure 7 The attic window on the front elevation is likely a remnant of the asset's heritage as a loomshop. The proposed alteration is to replace the attic window with a traditional hardwood framed fixed casement window with slimline double glazing (source – Jamie Skuse)*



*Figure 8 The internal aspect of the ground floor window on the front elevation looking outwards towards Church Street (source – Jamie Skuse)*



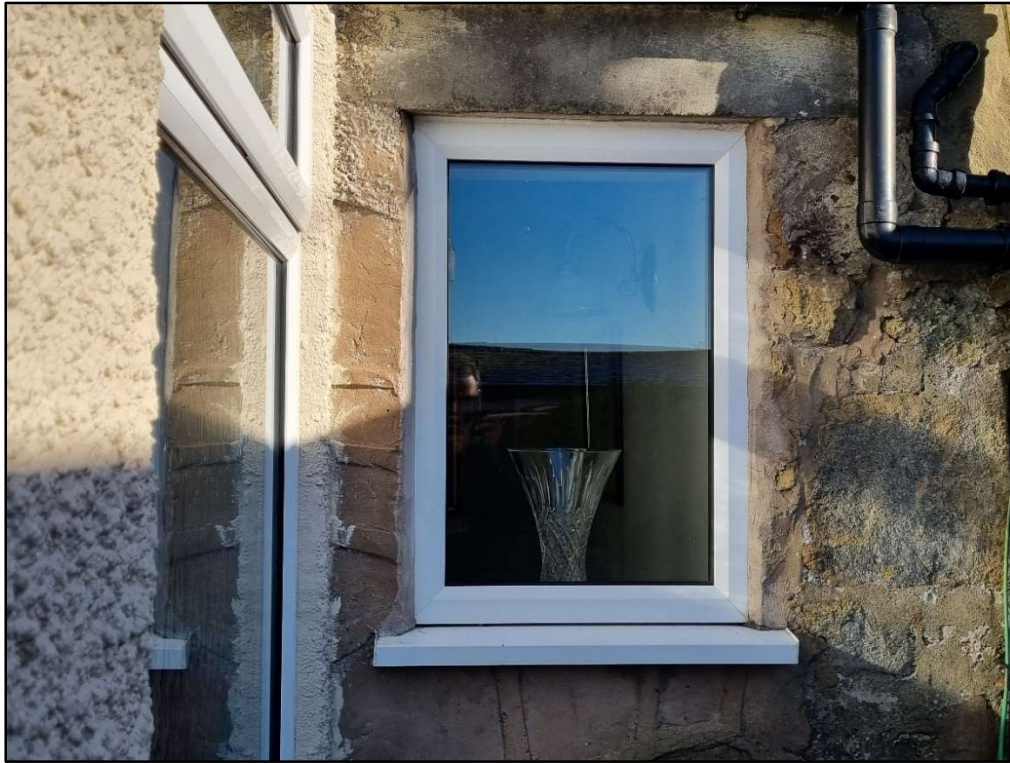
*Figure 9 The internal aspect of the first-floor window on the front elevation looking outwards towards Church Street (source – Jamie Skuse)*



*Figure 10 The internal aspect of the attic window on the front elevation looking outwards towards Church Street (source – Jamie Skuse)*



*Figure 11 A more detailed photograph of the rear elevation of the asset. The proposed alterations apply to the windows embedded in the original fabric of the build, and does not include the frames or glazing in the modern kitchen extension (source - Jamie Skuse)*



*Figure 12 The ground floor window on the rear elevation. The proposed alteration is to replace the window with a traditional hardwood framed fixed casement window with slimline double glazing (source – Jamie Skuse)*



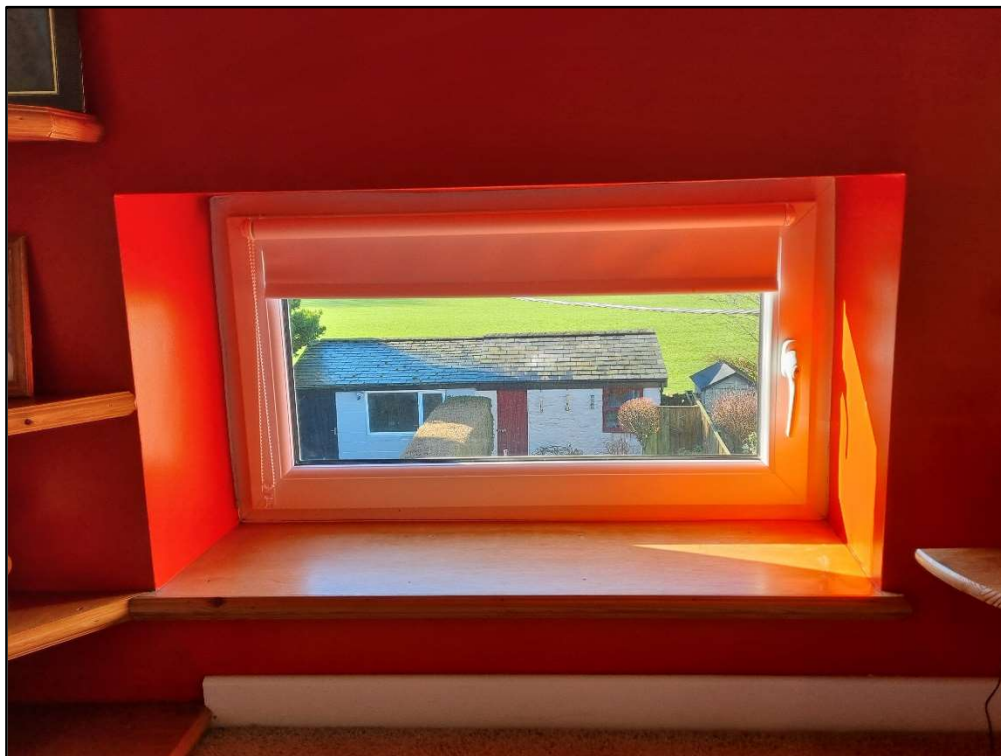
*Figure 13 The first floor and attic windows on the rear elevation. The proposed alteration is to replace the two windows with hardwood framed side hung casements and slimline double glazing (source – Jamie Skuse)*



*Figure 14 The internal aspect of the ground floor rear elevation window (source – Jamie Skuse)*



*Figure 15 The internal aspect of the first-floor window on the rear elevation (source - Jamie Skuse)*



*Figure 16 The internal aspect of the attic window on the rear elevation (source - Jamie Skuse)*



*Figure 17 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 PVC frames and modern glazing, and therefore hold no evidential value.

### **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. The PVC window frames on the front elevation of the asset are not sympathetic to the original architecture of the row of cottages, and detracts from the aesthetic value. A neighbouring cottage in the row of weaver's cottages has replaced its PVC window frames with more traditional wooden framed sash windows, further serving to highlight the unsympathetic modern PVC and UPVC windows of the asset.

### **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 conversation 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 PVC and UPVC frames incorporating double glazing. As such, the windows hold no heritage value.
- 4.12 The 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 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 modern window frames and double glazing on front and rear elevations. Sightlines of the windows on the rear elevation are restricted, however the windows on the front elevation are visible from Church Street. Neighbouring cottages in the row in which the asset is situated have changed their windows to more period appropriate and sympathetic wooden frames, further highlighting the PVC windows at No 18 Church Street.

## 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 planning permission to replace the existing PVC and UPVC framed windows on the front and rear elevations with sympathetic wooden framed windows with slimline double glazing. The front elevation will receive wooden vertical sliding sash frames with centre bars on the ground and first floors, and a casement frame for the attic window. The rear elevation will receive wooden fixed and side hung casement frames with slimline double glazing.

### 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 existing windows of the asset were installed prior to the current owners purchase of the property; therefore, the date of installation is unknown. The windows on the front and rear elevations are PVC and UPVC framed with double glazing, and hold no heritage value.
- 5.11 The windows on the front elevation face outwards onto Church Street, and are visible to the public. Given the aesthetic value of the asset and the surrounding conservation area, the current windows are likely to have a negative impact on the significance of the asset and the character of the conservation area. Sightlines of the rear elevation is partially obscured by a shed and foliage, with only the attic window below the roof visible from the playing area at the rear of the asset. This recreational space marks the south-west boundary of the conservation area,
- 5.12 The existing PVC and UPVC window frames are modern inserts. Removing the window frames is expected to pose minimal risk to the surrounding historic fabric.
- 5.13 The proposed replacement windows will use slimline double glazing and will be constructed with hardwood frames. The proposed slimline glazing will be between 12mm-14mm in thickness.
- 5.14 The two windows on the ground floor, and the two windows on the first floor of the front elevation will be vertical sliding hardwood sash windows with a centre bar. The front elevation attic window and the three windows on the rear elevation will be hardwood casement frames. The frames on both elevations will be painted white.

- 5.15 No 22 Church Street (see planning application 3/2022/1155) has replaced its modern PVC windows on the ground and first floor on the front elevation with wooden sash frames and glazing more in keeping with the heritage of the buildings and the aesthetic of the conservation area. This further serves to highlight the PVC frames of No 18 Church Street, which are unsympathetic to the period.
- 5.16 Historic England provides the following relevant guidance in the Traditional Windows Their Care, Repair and Upgrading document: *'Where historic windows have been replaced with ones whose design does not follow historic patterns, these are unlikely to contribute to the significance of listed buildings. Replacing such windows with new windows of a sympathetic historic pattern, whether single-glazed or incorporating slim-profile double-glazing, may cause no additional harm. It also provides an opportunity to enhance the significance of the building, which is the desired outcome under national policy'*
- 5.17 The guidance provided by Historic England suggests that replacing the unsympathetic PVC windows and double glazing with the proposed wooden sash and casement frames and slimline double glazing may cause no additional harm, and is an opportunity to enhance the significance of the building.

## 6 Summary and Conclusion

- 6.1 This heritage statement has assessed whether replacing the modern PVC and UPVC double glazed windows with period appropriate wooden sash and casement frames incorporating slimline double glazing will harm the heritage values of No 18 Church Street. The findings of the statement are as follows.
- 6.2 The windows on the front and rear elevations of the asset are modern additions to the building and as such hold no heritage value. Due to the materials used in the windows and the prominence of the front elevation on Church Street, the existing windows can be considered to have a negative impact upon the significance of No 18 and the character of the conservation area.
- 6.3 The proposed replacement windows on both elevations will be constructed with appropriate materials and glazing. The ground and first floor windows on the front elevation will have vertical sliding sash frames with a centre bar. The attic window, due to its smaller aperture will be a fixed casement window in three sections. The rear elevation will have casement frames. The ground floor window will be a fixed casement, and the first floor and attic windows will be a side hung casement. The frames will be painted white. These styles of frame are sympathetic to the period and are likely to enhance the significance of the asset and the character of the conservation area.
- 6.4 A neighbouring cottage in the row in which the asset is situated has replaced its modern PVC windows with period appropriate wooden frames. As such, the proposed changes to the windows of No 18 Church Street have precedence and may encourage the cottages in the row with PVC windows to seek more period appropriate replacements.
- 6.5 Relevant guidance from Historic England states that replacing modern windows with no historic significance with new windows that follow a historic sympathetic pattern, whether single glazed or slimline double glazed, may cause no additional harm and provides an opportunity to enhance the significance of the building. This is a desired outcome under national policy.
- 6.6 In conclusion, the proposal should be considered to have a positive impact on the heritage asset and the conservation area it is situated within, and satisfies 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

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