



**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE  
IN CONNECTION WITH  
JOHN BRABIN'S HOUSE  
CHIPPING  
LANCASHIRE**

**ON BEHALF OF  
THE BRABINS TRUST**

**V1.0**

(LM/LM/1912/01)

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Dated: 28/08/20

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## **1.0 Introduction**

### **1.1 Purpose**

This statement of significance for the Post Office & John Brabins House, 20 & 22 Talbot St, Chipping has been prepared to identify and review the significance of the heritage asset in relation to the proposed works for which this is included in the planning application. This will aim to summarise how the heritage values of the property will be affected by the proposed works. The NPPF advises that local planning authorities should require a statement of significance or similar documentation to allow them to evaluate the impact of proposals and how they will affect the heritage asset itself.

The Post Office & John Brabins House is a Grade II\* listed building and is also included within Chipping Conservation Area. In accordance with the NPPF, care must be taken to ensure that any proposals would preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Grade II\* listed building and the Chipping Conservation Area.

### **1.2 Proposed Works**

To briefly confirm, the works are:-

Removal of cement based pointing and replacement with a lime based pointing mortar.

Removal of cement based plasters throughout and replacement with lime based plasters.

Removal of cement based renders throughout the external areas and replace with a lime based render.

Installation of extractor fan ventilation to shop extension.

Replacement of plasterboard ceiling to shop extension.

Replacement of asbestos cement roof sheets to extension with corrugated steel sheeting.

Various joinery repairs/replacements throughout.

Structural works to the main property including replacement of 2 no. structural beams in the living room.

Installation of an electrical boiler.

Replacement of fixtures/fittings and wash facilities in bathroom.

Re-fixing of ridge tiles to barn.

Splice repair to the double barn doors.

Further detail is available in the specification.

### **1.3 Author**

The author is a Building Surveyor at JYM Partnership and has recently completed an MSc in Building Conservation and Adaptation at the University of Central Lancashire with plans to progress onto RICS membership. The author is also an IHBC student member and working towards membership.

## **2.0 Assessment of Significance**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This section assesses the Heritage Values of the asset, whilst also assessing how the proposals will affect the asset itself and its contribution to the conservation area. Guidance is followed from the Historic England documents Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance and the Setting of Heritage Assets. Guidance is also followed from the NPPF, which states that local planning authorities should require a statement of significance or similar documentation to allow them to evaluate the impact of proposals and how they will affect the heritage asset itself.

### **2.2 Evidential Value**

Historic England state that “evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity”.

John Brabins Post Office & House offers physical evidence of vernacular construction in the Ribble Valley, specifically in Chipping due to the use of local sandstone. The plan form of the building has been altered with external walls being removed to form the extension to the rear elevation and the entrance to the additional kitchen extension. Many of the original features such as the stone flagged floor, stone mullioned windows, fireplace, bread oven and staircase still remain.

The building has undergone many significant alterations to suit the requirements of the occupants and its continued commercial use as a shop and post office. This has resulted in a loss of historic fabric and a reduction in evidential value. Such changes include the loss of historic internal walls and external walls for construction of the extensions to the rear elevation, replacement of stone mullions with timber framed sash and casement windows and other joinery works. Pointing and plastering with inappropriate cement based materials is also noted in many areas.

### **2.4 Historical Value**

Historic England state that “Historical Value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative”.

The main historical value of John Brabins Post Office & House is associated with its reputation as one of the oldest continually running shops in the UK and its association with John Brabin. Following John Brabins death, his will provided the people of Chipping with a school and Almshouses for the poor which are still existing today, however the school is now a private property. The historical value of this remains in the form of the Brabins Charitable Trust, which have maintained the properties contributing significantly to the continued existence and use of this heritage asset. The planning application relates to the Brabins Charitable Trust continued maintenance of the property in respect for John Brabins will with hopes of improving the condition of the property and remedying the significant structural issues, existing damp and other maintenance issues for the continued comfortable use of the property by tenants and for its continued use as a shop and post office.

Throughout their use as a Post Office & House, the property is typical of a C17th vernacular building in the area and is not a rare or unique example in its construction. Excluding the property retaining many of its original features such as the oven, flooring, staircase and presumably beams, the building does not possess any uniqueness in relation to design or technology.

## **2.5 Aesthetic Value**

Historic England state that “aesthetic value derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place”.

The main aesthetic value of John Brabins Shop & House lies within its architectural features such as the stone mullioned windows, chamfered door surrounds and it’s conformity with the other properties in the surrounding area. The materials the property is constructed with can also be classed as an aesthetic feature as they contribute to the heavy use of local sandstone in the Chipping conservation area. John Brabins Shop & House is a product of vernacular construction in the Ribble Valley through the use of local materials and the purpose being the continued use of the property as a shop for 350 years, significantly increasing its practical aesthetic value. The original building possesses little conscious design value apart from typical C17th features and is constructed with a focus on its practical use and function as opposed to architectural design.

However, with the internal alterations and change from the original combined floor plan some of this value has been lost throughout the years. Other alterations such as the shop extension and kitchen extension to the rear elevation also reduce the aesthetic value of the property. These alterations do however tell the

story of the property, with modern alterations reflecting changes that have been made for the properties continued use as a post office, café and shop.

The aesthetic value of the Chipping Conservation Area is attributed to its historic street layout, prevalent use of local stone as a building material, areas of historic stone floorscape and historic interest of the conservation areas 24 listed buildings. The proposed works will not have any negative effect on any of these aesthetic features, except the enhancement of the property through the reinstatement of a lime based pointing to the gable end and continued historical association with John Brabins will through the Brabins Charitable Trust.

## **2.6 Communal Value**

Historic England states that “communal value derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory”.

John Brabins Shop & House is significant in communal value to the Conservation area it is one of the first buildings visible on the entry route into Chipping from Green Lane, contributing to the townscape of the Conservation area and having a profound influence on visitors. The property is also a landmark as it is one of the first of the Listed Buildings constructed of local sandstone on the way into Chipping, also influencing other properties along Talbot St in the process. The continued use of the property as a shop for the past 350 years is very significant, as this is reportedly the longest continually trading shop in the UK. The property also has significant communal value for local people, as many would be able to associate the use of the shop with many previous generations of their families.

## **2.7 Statement of Significance**

Following the above assessment of heritage values, a more detailed and informed approach towards assessing the significance of John Brabins Post Office & House is available. This is prepared in the context of repairs and minor alterations in the planning application as to which this is attached.

The Post Office & John Brabins House is a Grade II\* Listed Designated Heritage Asset, built in 1668 and located in Chipping in Lancashire. Although simple in design, it is a solidly built vernacular structure and retains much of its original appearance and original internal features. The property is also located within the boundary of Chipping Conservation Area.

Externally the building has retained much of its original character to the front elevation and contributes positively to the conservation area. To the rear elevation, a significant amount of this has been lost through

a tea room extension in the 1950's and a presumably C19th extension to form a new kitchen unit for the main house. Internally, the property has been altered slightly, with most of the original floor plan remaining and other features such as the original floor, bread oven and staircase still remaining. The only alterations to the floor plan are generally linked to the extensions.

Regardless of the extensions to the rear elevation, the building still possesses a range of evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal values, with the historical, aesthetic and communal values being the major contributors to the significance of the building regardless of the building not having any unique architectural features.