

Heritage statement to support planning application
for conversion of former stables
at Hall Foot, Worston, Lancashire

1 Introduction

1.1 This heritage statement supports a planning application to Ribble Valley Borough Council for the conversion of the former stables at Hall Foot (also known as Hall Foot House), to form ancillary accommodation. It has been written by Stephen Haigh MA, on the instruction of the applicant Mr Leyden through his agent AW + A Architects, and a site visit was made by the writer on 26 March 2024.

1.2 The site lies within the Worston Conservation Area, a designated heritage asset, but none of the buildings there are listed, nor is the former stables believed to have been identified by the local planning authority as a non-designated heritage asset. However, the building is of historic character, so this statement provides an assessment of its significance and the contribution it makes to the conservation area.

2 Location and setting

2.1 Hall Foot is a country house which stands about 400m east of the hamlet of Worston, to the north of the lane leading to Angram. It is set within its own grounds and faces north-west, down across farmland.

2.2 The former stables comprise a detached building standing a few metres to the east of the house (NGR: SD 77216 42674), and occupy a site which falls away to the north-west. They face north-east onto a cobbled courtyard which has its own access to the highway at the south-east side of the property, while the rear of the building faces onto a newly flagged yard at the back of the house, enclosed by a stone wall from the garden beyond, and with stone steps leading up to the south-east. There is also a detached garage or coach house at the north corner of the stableyard which forms part of the group.

3 Historical background

3.1 The house at Hall Foot is attributed to the mid 19th century with earlier origins, and is shown and named on Yates's 1786 and Greenwood's 1818 maps of Lancashire.

- 3.2 The former stables are of an architectural form which suggests they date from around the late 18th or early 19th century. They are shown on the Ordnance Survey's 1:10,560 map of 1847¹ (figure 1), while the 1:2500 map of 1912² (figure 2) implies they were later extended at the rear (south-west).



Figure 1: OS 1:10,560 map, 1847



Figure 2: OS 1:2500 map, 1912

4 The application building

- 4.1 The building has three main components: the two-storey former stables, which have a simple rectangular plan, and two later rear wings, the larger one under a catslide roof, and the narrower one of a single storey with L-shaped plan. All are built from random rubble (primarily limestone) with sandstone dressings, and were coated with lime render or wash. The roofing slates and ridge are of stone, except where replaced with blue slate in the rear catslide.

¹ Lancashire, sheet 47, surveyed 1844

² Lancashire, sheet 47.11, surveyed 1890s, revised 1910

- 4.2 The main block (photos 1 & 2 below) has a hipped roof and appears originally to have had a symmetrical façade in a neoclassical manner, arranged around the focal central doorway with segmental arch. To either side of this were personnel or equestrian doorways with monolithic jambs: that to the right retains its surround, but has been reduced to a window fitted with cast iron multi-pane frame, while the left-hand one has been walled up and its dressings removed, perhaps for re-use within the nearby window, which has probably been inserted. The former doorway is still evident inside the building, where part of it forms a narrow recess next to a non-original internal cross-wall, probably introduced during the late 19th century.
- 4.3 There also appears formerly to have been a matching pair of elliptical forking eyes to the front at first floor level, in line with the original doorways, though again only one remains intact, and the right-hand one has been rather crudely cut down to form a full-height window.
- 4.4 The north-west side elevation is blind, but the south-east side has a first floor window, perhaps a 19th century insertion. To the rear, the large added outshut conceals much of the original building (photo 3), but within its former rear wall is a blocked window or similar.
- 4.5 The most recent arrangements within the ground floor of the two-storey block comprised a row of four stable stalls or narrow loose boxes, with the cross-wall enclosing a separate tack room in the south-east end (photo 4), but this is not believed to have been the original arrangement, rather a 19th century reconfiguration. Very few historic fixtures remain, but they include a fireplace (photo 5) and four-pane sash in the tack room. There was also a loft throughout the block with stairs in the east corner, but these would have been at least partly non-original. The roof structure is of imported softwood, with king-posts and tusk-tenon purlins, indicative of a date around 1800.
- 4.6 The large outshut is built from similar materials, albeit with more regularly cut dressings and a stone rainwater trough at the eaves, and was also formerly covered with lime. Its entrance is in the north-west side where there is also a 16-pane sash (photo 6); two windows openings of similar proportions are set within the south-west side (photo 7). It is of one and a half storeys, and although nothing remains of its internal floors, it clearly once held three fireplaces or stoves (their chimneys removed above roof level), so was evidently habitable, probably as accommodation for servants (photo 8).
- 4.7 The smaller rear wing has as its south-east side a continuation of the boundary wall, heightened and finished with half-round coping. It contains two coal stores

and a privy, the former with filling holes in the south-east side, and the main access from the kitchen yard (photo 9). The privy has been adapted to a WC.

5 Statement of significance

- 5.1 The former stables are significant as an historic outbuilding serving Hall Foot, with their origins around 1800. The building has an architectural form typical for its function and date, with hipped roof and formerly symmetrical façade, although there has been considerable change to the latter which detracts from its aesthetic value. Its setting to the rear and side of the house, where it forms a group with the adjoining cobbled courtyard and service access, also contributes significance. The 19th century rear additions are less important, but nonetheless visually in keeping, and also contribute a degree of architectural and historic interest by illustrating the development and function of the country house and its outbuildings. As a consequence, the building as a whole makes a positive contribution to the conservation area, whose special interest will need to be preserved or enhanced by any proposals.

Stephen Haigh, MA
Buildings Archaeologist
5 April 2024

photographs below



Photo 1: Front elevation



Photo 2: View from east



Photo 3: Rear of building



Photo 4: Ground floor of main block, looking south-east



Photo 5: Tack room, looking south-west



Photo 6: North-west side of rear outshut



Photo 7: South-west side of rear outshut



Photo 8: Interior of rear outshut



Photo 9: Privy and coal stores to rear of stables