

HERITAGE STATEMENT

**SHARPCLIFFE HALL
BRADSHAW LANE, IPSTONES, STAFFORDSHIRE. ST10 2LJ**

**PROPOSAL:
DEMOLITION OF SQUASH COURT AND
ERECTION OF NEW 2 STOREY REPLACEMENT BUILDING
SINGLE STOREY ORANGERY AND TERRACE**



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REPLACEMENT BUILDING**

[With reference to associated existing and proposed drawings]

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is a Heritage and Impact Statement prepared by Anthony Short and Partners LLP on behalf of the owners of Sharpcliffe Hall, where the proposal is required.

Pre application advice has been sought from Staffordshire Moorlands District Council with a response requesting a heritage statement assessing the significance of the squash court and the impact the proposal would have upon the heritage asset.

This statement outlines the historic significance and development of the building since its construction following on-site measured building recording work and background historic information from desk based research carried out earlier this year.

It provides a comprehensive preservation by record prior to the proposed demolition of the building and follows historic building recording as outlined in the Historic England (HE) *Understanding Historic Buildings. A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (2016). This approach is supported by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which requires that sufficient information is provided to the local authority concerning the significance of the heritage asset.

In early 2018 an application for listed building consent (SMD/2018/0069) was submitted to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council by Robert McGuinness MRICS of RLM Associates on behalf of the present owner of Sharpcliffe Hall. This was for the restoration and conservation of the hall (which was then a building at risk) and included:-

'Flat roof repairs, replacement of some timber and solid floors, restoration of metal windows/ stone surrounds, replacement rainwater goods and miscellaneous like for like repairs to the fabric due to water penetration and rot including repointing, timbers and stone'

Desk based research was carried out for historic information to be included in the heritage statement for the listed building consent application searching the National Heritage List for England and the Heritage Gateway.

Measured surveys and a photographic record taken to show the building in its setting was included in the existing and proposed drawings submitted with the application.

Listed building consent was granted on 06/04/2018 and since then the proposed works commenced and are currently on going. The hall is now water tight and is being sympathetically conserved like for like by skilled craftsmen. The building has now been taken off the Buildings at Risk Register.

2.0 SHARPCLIFFE HALL LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The heritage asset as a whole is Sharpcliffe Hall, a large stone built Grade II* Listed Building which dates from the 17th Century. The Sharpcliffe estate is situated in a very isolated rural location north west of Ipstones village (Fig 1) and the hall is accessed via a long private driveway from Bradshaw Lane. The Staffordshire Moorlands Walk runs through and around the Sharpcliffe Estate.

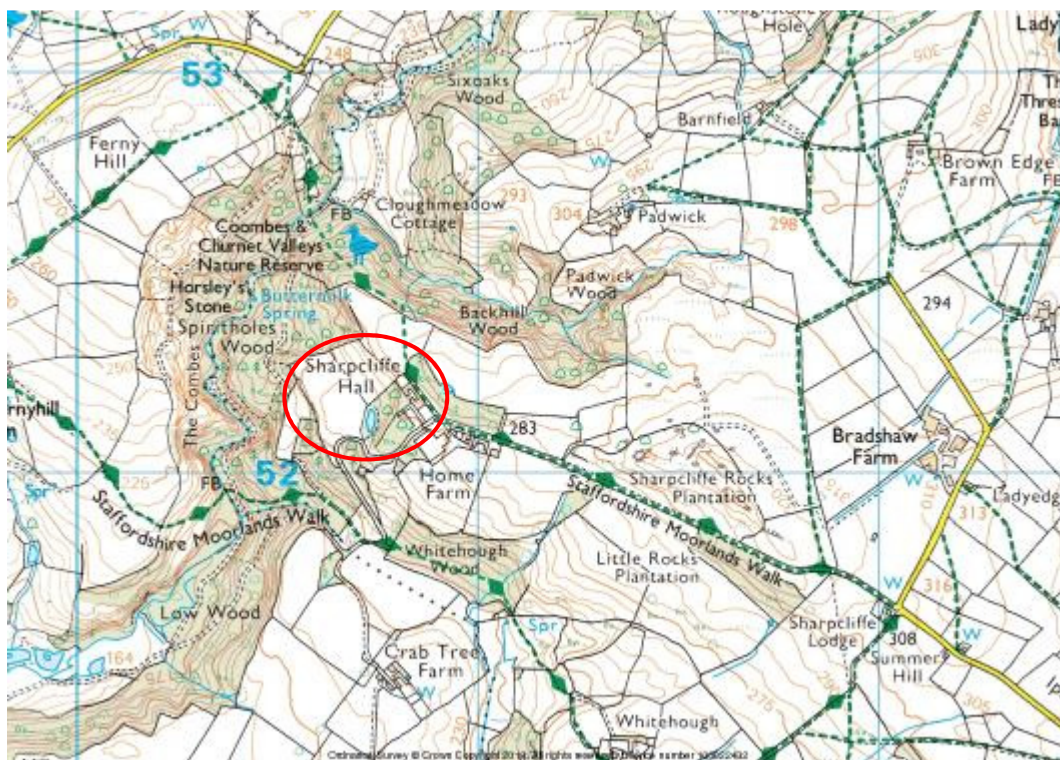


Fig 1 Ref: Ordnance Survey Explorer 1:25000 www.promap.com

The Historic England listings show that the main building is Grade II* whilst the garden walls and entrance gates are Grade II and are both listed separately for group value.

The squash court although is not included in the Sharpcliffe Hall listing is within its curtilage and is therefore a part of the heritage asset. The building is linked to the hall at the north elevation and runs in line with and parallel to the adjacent barns (P8). Built of brick with very little detailing and roofed with blue clay tiles (P6). The remaining roof lights have been re covered with clear plastic corrugated sheeting (P3 P6). There is only one external opening to the building which is an arched timber multi paned window at high level at the north elevation (P7). This is blocked internally (P13). Attached to the west elevation there is a semi derelict building, the remains of the start of a building @ late 20th century (P4). To the south elevation internally there is a large timber multi paned window (P9) and timber double entrance doors at ground level (P13) and two large circular windows with opening lights at viewing area level (P10 P11 P12). The building is used for storage and is in very poor condition both internally and externally.

With reference to Item 9 - Photographs

SHARPECLIFFE HALL LISTING SUMMARY [Historic England National Heritage List]

Listed Grade: II* List Entry Number: 1374611 Date first listed: 02-May-1953
Statutory Address: SHARPECLIFFE HALL
District: Staffordshire Moorlands (District Authority) Parish: Ipstones
National Grid Reference: SK 00859 52172

Details

Large house. Dated 1673, possibly to earlier fabric, restored and enlarged late C19. Coursed dressed and squared stone, large quoins, raised cavetto strings at floor levels stepped over windows; tiled roof with crested ridge; verge parapets with ball finials; twin- and triple-shafted (some circular) end and ridge stacks; original plan of 2 parallel ranges. 2-storey and gable-lit attic, 3-window entrance front of 3 flush gables; all windows chamfered and mullioned; labelled 2-light windows to attics, originally 3-, 4-, 3-light to first floor, now with C19 four-light to right; 5:2:2:5 to ground floor, the right-hand deeper with a transom, the 2-light windows flank late C19 single-storey gabled porch with Tudor arch over a boarded door and low-relief coat-of-arms above. The centre gable bears 2 labelled plaques at attic floor level, inscribed to the left: "THIS HOUSE BUILDED BY JOHN/WHITEHALL OF PARKHALL ESQ/SONNE TO JAMES GRANDCHILDE/TO ROBERT GREAT GRANDCHILDE/TO JAMES WHITEHALL WHICH JOHN BY FRANCES HEIRS TO W/LLIAM ASTON OF PARKHALL ES/Q HAD ELIZABETH & ANNE &/JAMES BY FRANCES CRESLEY". The right-hand plaque bears the date 1673. Set-back late C19 wing of 2 windows to right is of 2 storeys and with a dormer to upper floor. Well set-back late C19 wing to left. Further mullioned windows to paired gables on left, both with ranges of 2-, 3-, 4-light windows.
This copy shows the entry on 27-Sep-2018 at 14:43:46.

3.0 SIGNIFICANCE OF SHARPCLIFFE HALL

With reference to F15 Block Plan 200 A2

The history of the hall and its development have been described to provide background information in order to understand the development and significance of the squash court. Further descriptive information of the hall's particular features, materials and construction can be found in the Fabric Condition Survey Report.

Sharpcliffe Hall was first built as a timbered manor house following the inheritance of the estate by John Whitehall in 1642. The family owned and lived in the estate until it was sold to John Sneyd in 1845. Over a decade the house was altered considerably with the addition of the kitchen at the east elevation, the porch and the long barn. The estate was purchased by Hugh Sleigh in 1876. The historic map (Fig 2) shows the arrangement of the hall and associated buildings at that time.

The hall remained unchanged during this period and was sold to A S Boucher in 1904. Boucher made large scale additions to the hall and infilled the space between the nineteenth century kitchen and the barn with a generous residential wing with drawing room, dining room, hallway and service rooms and bedrooms above. It was at this time also that the squash court was built with a first floor viewing platform. (Fig 3)

In 1929 R M Argles purchased the property and for twenty years was part of the Haregate estate. During the second world war the property was used by the Red Cross as a Convalescence Home/Auxiliary Hospital. In 1946 the Youth Hostels Association purchased the Hall, the drive and five acres of land but was closed in 1954. The hall laid empty for six years before it was purchased by Mr and Mrs Cartwright.



Fig 2: OS 6inch England and Wales - Staffordshire XIII.NE 1900
Ref: National Library of Scotland ; Ordnance Survey Maps <https://maps.nls.uk>

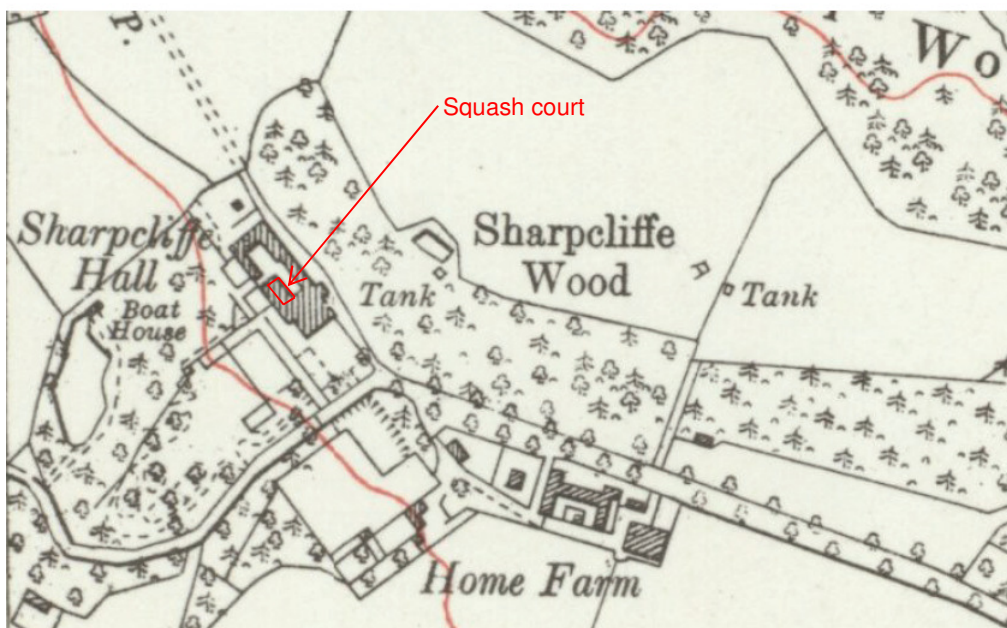


Fig 3: OS 6inch England and Wales - Staffordshire XIII.NE 1925
Ref: National Library of Scotland ; Ordnance Survey Maps <https://maps.nls.uk>

During the latter part of the 20th century the hall fell into a state of deterioration and decay and in November 2000 a fabric condition survey was carried out by Christopher Taylor Design (chartered architects) commissioned by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council to identify the condition of the building and any problems associated with these elements.

The survey found that during the years of modification, alteration and extension the process of adaption and development has resulted in 'some uncomfortable relationships' between parts of the original building and later extensions and additions and tragically in the

loss/destruction of many original details and features. The most damage appeared to have been carried out during the eight years it was in the hands of the Youth Hostel Association and the following six years when it lay empty.

Following the report and its recommendations in 2001 a considerable amount of work was undertaken to arrest the decay, particularly to the roof structure, chimney stacks and associated items. These works involved the complete renewal of the main roof timbers apart from the main trusses and associated purlins. Fourteen photograph albums reside with the new owner showing the state of the property and the work undertaken during a period from 2001 to 2007.

Since that time the hall was left to deteriorate further and remained on the building at risk register until the current owners purchased the estate in 2017. Extensive work began last year (2017) to conserve and restore the hall and much of the remaining detail. This work is still ongoing and the building has now been removed from the buildings at risk register.

With reference to:

Fabric Condition Survey Report – Christopher Taylor Design Ltd April 2001

4.0 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SQUASH COURT

In order to assess the significance of the squash court within its setting, this document adopts the methods outlined in Historic England's publication "*Conservation Principles, Policies & Guidance*." The guidance describes four heritage values that may contribute to the significance of a place: Evidential, Historical, Aesthetic and Communal.

Evidential Value is described as "the potential of a place to yield evidence of past activity." The squash court building contributes some value in that the size, form and materials of the structure have changed relatively little in its lifespan. However, evidential value is proportional to the amount of material evidence that has since been lost or altered, and in this respect the brick shell of the building remains yet contains less value due to lack of use that it was originally built for, deterioration and decay through poor maintenance and neglect and the replacement of the historic fabric such as an amount of roof tiles replaced with plastic corrugated sheeting.

The building to the north elevation – the link and squash court remain in very poor condition. Although this area was beyond the scope of the survey in 2000 there is a reference to its condition at that time in Section 2 Introduction Item 4: '*This building is structurally dangerous and in danger of collapse*'. Summarising: *A cursory inspection was carried out and its condition found to be similar to those affecting the main house – the effects of current and longstanding rain penetration/water ingress*. Also Item 113 of the 2001 survey report still is apparent – '*the brick elevation/skin to party wall with previous derelict building project in a very dangerous condition and liable to collapse.*' (P5)

Historical Value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.

The squash court was built (1905) when squash became fashionable and courts were being built at many country houses. The following summarises the history and the significance of the game and the courts built at that time:-

A variety of ball and raquet games had been enjoyed and developed for over a thousand years. In 1830 the game of squash was invented by pupils at Harrow School who discovered that a punctured racket ball, which 'squashed' on impact with the wall, produced a game with a greater variety of shots and required much more effort on the part of the players. In 1864 the first four squash courts were constructed at the school and squash was officially founded as a sport in its own right.

After graduation some ex pupils built their own courts; Somerville Gibney, Harrow class of 1867 and his brother Gerald, 1868, built a court in a stable loft at their home in Lincoln.

Gurney Buxton, Harrow 1882, put a wooden one at Catton Hall in Norwich. In 1883 Vernon Harcourt, Harrow 1855, erected one at his home along the Cherwell in Oxford. In the late 1880s the Holland-Hibbert family built one at their estate, Munden in Hertfordshire.

By 1901 the sport was enjoyed by thousands of players in various parts of the world and there were courts in schools and universities in England and some also in private houses.

Squash courts began to be incorporated into English country houses: an example from 1911 is to be found at the Grade I listed Ickworth House, Suffolk (National Trust) which has since been converted into a café. Rivercourt House, in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, has a fine Grade II listed example of the early 1930s incorporating a summerhouse.

The squash court building at Sharpcliffe Hall is built of brick, Staffordshire blue clay tiled roof with glazed rooflights which have been replaced with clear corrugated plastic sheeting.

With reference to:-

<https://www.englishsquash.com/about-us/history-of-squash>

130 Years of Squash by Ted Wallbutton of the WSF
http://www.squashplayer.co.uk/history_of_squash

The History of Squash in Ten and a Half Chapters by James Zug
<http://www.worldsquash.org/ws/wsf-information/squash-history>

Sports and Recreation Buildings - Historic England April 2011

Aesthetic Value derives from the way in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place. In the case of the squash court, the value sits more with the use that the building was originally built for. The simple brick building was purpose built for the game of squash. It is no longer played within the building and the condition of the building is such that the game could not be played and has little aesthetic value.

Architecturally, the squash court is not particularly finely detailed or representative of any local vernacular. This is reflected in its simple brick exterior. The only decoration is the circular timber lights on the internal south elevation. These lights are proposed to be refurbished and used in the proposed replacement building.

In Section 2, Introduction Item 4 – *‘The squash court to the east side has a part-glazed rooflight (now corrugated plastic sheet) running its full length on both pitches, would also have been created as part of Alfred Boucher’s alterations but is now used for storage. It has been partly modified with the introduction of heavy steelwork as part of an unfinished project involving an adjacent more recent unfinished extension. This building is structurally dangerous and in danger of collapse., having the effects of current and longstanding rain penetration/water ingress.’*

The condition of the west elevation as described in Item 113 of the 2001 Fabric Condition Survey report – *‘the brick elevation/skin to party wall with previous derelict building project in a very dangerous condition and liable to collapse’*. This condition is still apparent.

With reference to:

Sharpcliffe Hall – Fabric Condition Survey Report – Christopher Taylor Design Ltd April 2001

Communal Value is about the meaning of a place for the people who relate to it. The squash court, in its present state is of little value to the hall and to those who plan to reside there. The squash court and its part in the history of the hall is of value and a record of its existence has been recorded by a measured survey and photographs producing scaled drawings and photographic record which have been archived with the Heritage Gateway.

5.0 THE PROPOSAL

The second phase of the development at Sharpcliffe Hall is now proposed to be undertaken in which the owner wishes to demolish the existing brick built squash court and attached semi derelict building.

A replacement building of a similar size is proposed to be built upon the existing squash court footprint and link with the existing north elevation of the hall by a light glazed structure. This new building, built of brickwork to the two storey element with a staffs blue plain tile roof and natural stone to the orangery with a metal or asphalt roof, which would incorporate living accommodation consisting of a master bedroom with en suites to the first floor and kitchen/dining area to the ground floor. The ground floor kitchen/dining area would lead to a single storey orangery and raised terracing replacing the existing semi derelict building on the west elevation.

This new building would be the main accommodation for the owners and positioning the modern accommodation within the new extension will help to safeguard the fabric of the older parts of the house.

Details of the existing layout and condition of the rear are shown on drawing RLM874/19, whilst the proposed replacement extension details are shown on drawing RLM874/20. These and further details will be submitted as part of a formal application once the pre-application discussions are complete.

6.0 LOCAL AUTHORITY INVOLVEMENT

RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

SMD/2003/0633 Change of Use, extension and alterations (Refused 18/07/03)

SMD/2003/0634 and 0632 Listed Building Consent for part demolition and alterations (Approved 06/05/04).

Available drawings show the demolition of the squash court and adjacent part built structure existing, and replaced by a two storey extension of similar proportions

SMD/2007/0963 Replacement of metal casement windows (Approved 25/07/07)

SMD/2010/0466 Listed Building Consent for replacement windows (Returned)

SMD/2018/0069 Listed Building Consent for repair and restoration of the external and internal fabric (Approved 06/04/2018)

Pre Application advice application has been submitted and Gill Bayliss, Conservation Officer, Staffordshire Moorlands DC has been helpful in attending site to discuss the works proposed including the future upgrading and new extension. Her advice has been very useful and positive.

PLANNING POLICIES CONSIDERED

National Planning Policy Framework:-

Achieving Sustainable Development Paragraphs 1-17

Conserving and enhancing the historic environment Chapter 12

Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Adopted 2014):-

SS1 Development Principles

SS1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

DC2 The Historic Environment

Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that when considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, special regard should be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004 requires proposals to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan taking into consideration any material considerations relevant to the determination of the application.

The local development plan for this site comprises the Saved Policies of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (1998); Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy (adopted 26th March 2014) and any relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs).

7.0 JUSTIFICATION FOR DEMOLITION

The squash court building is in a very poor and dangerous condition and is liable to collapse.

The building is of poor brickwork that could not be made good to enable the restoration of the building. The west elevation especially is very much deteriorated.

There are limited remains of the roof covering, being mostly now covered in plastic corrugated sheeting.

8.0 IMPACT ON THE HERITAGE ASSET

The many changes to the building over the years have given rise to areas of neglect and the administration of poor repairs. The current works are arresting and rectifying the damage caused; bringing the building up to 'modern' habitable standards whilst respecting the historic fabric of the property.

As most works proposed are of a reparatory/replicate or like for like nature it is not felt that the works are of any major significance to the buildings historic fabric – most works proposed within this application relate to the rear extensions dated C1905.

The proposed replacement building will be built upon the footprint of the existing building to be demolished. It will be two storey with a pitched roof similar to the existing.

The proposal would have a positive impact upon the heritage asset, with the removal of a redundant building and to be replaced with a modern, functional, aesthetically pleasing and useful facility as an extension of the main hall.

9.0	PHOTOGRAPHS
	With reference to Block Plan dwg no RLN874/14B
9.1	EXTERNAL
	 <p>P1</p>
	 <p>P2</p>



P3



P4



P5



P6



P7



P8

9.2

INTERNAL



P9 ground level

P10 viewing area level

Shows inside the link between squash court and hall north elevation, west to east.



P11

Shows building north to south; circular lights to be used in the proposed build.



P12

The two timber circular lights on the south elevation at viewing area level



P13

Shows building south to north and north elevation window filled internally. Simple timber roof structure and heavy steelwork on concrete pillars thought to be part of an unfinished project

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