Heritage Impact Assessment
Harracles Mill Cottage, Dunwood Lane, Horton ST13 8RG

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prepared for Mr and Mrs Taylor



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Harracles Mill Cottage – Heritage Impact Assessment

Introduction

Mel Morris Conservation has been asked to prepare a Heritage Impact Assessment related to the planning application reference (SMD/2019/0504 and SMD/2019/0505 LBC), which was refused planning permission and listed building consent on 30th October 2019. The relevant plans for this HIA are amended drawing 2019-2422-02 submitted on 23rd October 2019.

Harracles Mill Cottage lies at grid reference: 395163, 357408, and is located approximately 30 metres to the south-west of Harracles Mill, a grade II listed building.

The reason for refusal of Listed Building Consent is:

> "The proposed development, by virtue of its siting, scale, height and massing will detract from, dominate and consume the special architectural qualities of the Listed Building. The proposal will result in less than substantial harm to the heritage asset in question. However there are no public benefits which outweigh this harm, and thus the proposal comprises unsustainable development, contrary to Core Strategy Policy DC2, Staffs Moorlands 'Design Principles' SPD, and restrictive policies within Chapter 16 of the NPPF"

This assessment considers designated heritage assets which are associated with Harracles Mill Cottage.

1. Designated Heritage Assets

1.1 Harracles Mill - grade II listed building

Harracles Mill was listed grade II on 11th November 1988.

According to the Victoria County History, Harracles Mill was built by John Wedgwood of Harracles Hall in Longdson parish and the water source was obtained from a diverted tributary of the Horton brook (SRO D. (W.) 1702/2/17A and 32). John Wedgwood inherited the estate in 1677 and died in 1757. The original mill, therefore, dated from the early 18th century and was roughly contemporary with the present Harracles Hall. The VCH states that it was rebuilt in the 19th century and late powered by steam turbines, Harracles Mill ceased working probably in the 1930s[1].

Map regression shows the mill on the 1775 Yates map and then a subsequent series of 19th century maps, all of which show the mill, attached house, and the detached barn (now Harracles Mill Cottage) to the west.

The list description is as follows:

> "Harracles Mill, Devil's Lane, Horton
> II
> Corn mill, water powered. Late C18, and C19. Coursed rubble with ashlar dressings. Plain tile roof, and quoins. West front has slightly off-centre doorway reached up a flight of 8 stone steps. To the right a glazing bar casement, and to the left a tiny casement with beyond a basement stable, plank

1 A History of the County of Stafford: Volume 7, Leek and the Moorlands, VCH, 1996

door. Above this door a 2 light glazing bar casement, and another similar window above again. South gable wall has a plank door to the left and a small glazing bar window to the right, above, in the gable another glazing bar window. East front has various blocked openings and a through eaves dormer with glazing bars. The C19 iron water wheel still remains in place though most of the wooden spokes have rotted away, it is a 16" by 4" breast shot wheel originally with wooden sole-boards and buckets. The interior retains all its original machinery, including a spur-wheel which is over-driven, and 4 pairs of stones three of which are driven direct off the spur-wheel and the fourth by 2 lines of counter shaft off the extended teeth of the spur-wheel. There are no corn-bins on the upper floor, but a slack-chain type of sock hoist driven by a 13 " wooden shaft off a continuation of the upright shaft. This building was formerly the mill to the Harracles Hall Estates owned by a branch of the Wedgewood family.
Listing NGR: SJ95 18257454"

It is clear from the list entry and this description that it is the mill which is listed. None of the attached buildings, including the miller's house, are included in the list entry or description.

The census returns clearly identify that part of Harracles Mill, the attached residential part, was occupied as a dwelling by the miller - the Bailey family were here from at least 1841: John Bailey in 1841 and 1851, and the miller Paul Bailey and his family were living at Harracles Mill in 1861, 1871 and 1881. Both were described as 'farmers' of 30 acres. Paul Bailey was described as a 'Miller and Farmer' in 1871 and 1881. In 1891 it was Theophilus Bailey, who was the "Corn Miller and Farmer".



1. William Yates map of Staffordshire of 1775 illustrates a mill on the site of Harracles Mill (The Staffordshire Record Society). 1775/1984 - A Map of the County of Stafford - by William Yates.



2. Extract from the Quarter Sessions 1795 book of reference showing clearly two detached buildings at Harracles Mill as well as a millpond (Q/Rum/16 - with permisssion of Staffordshire Record Office)

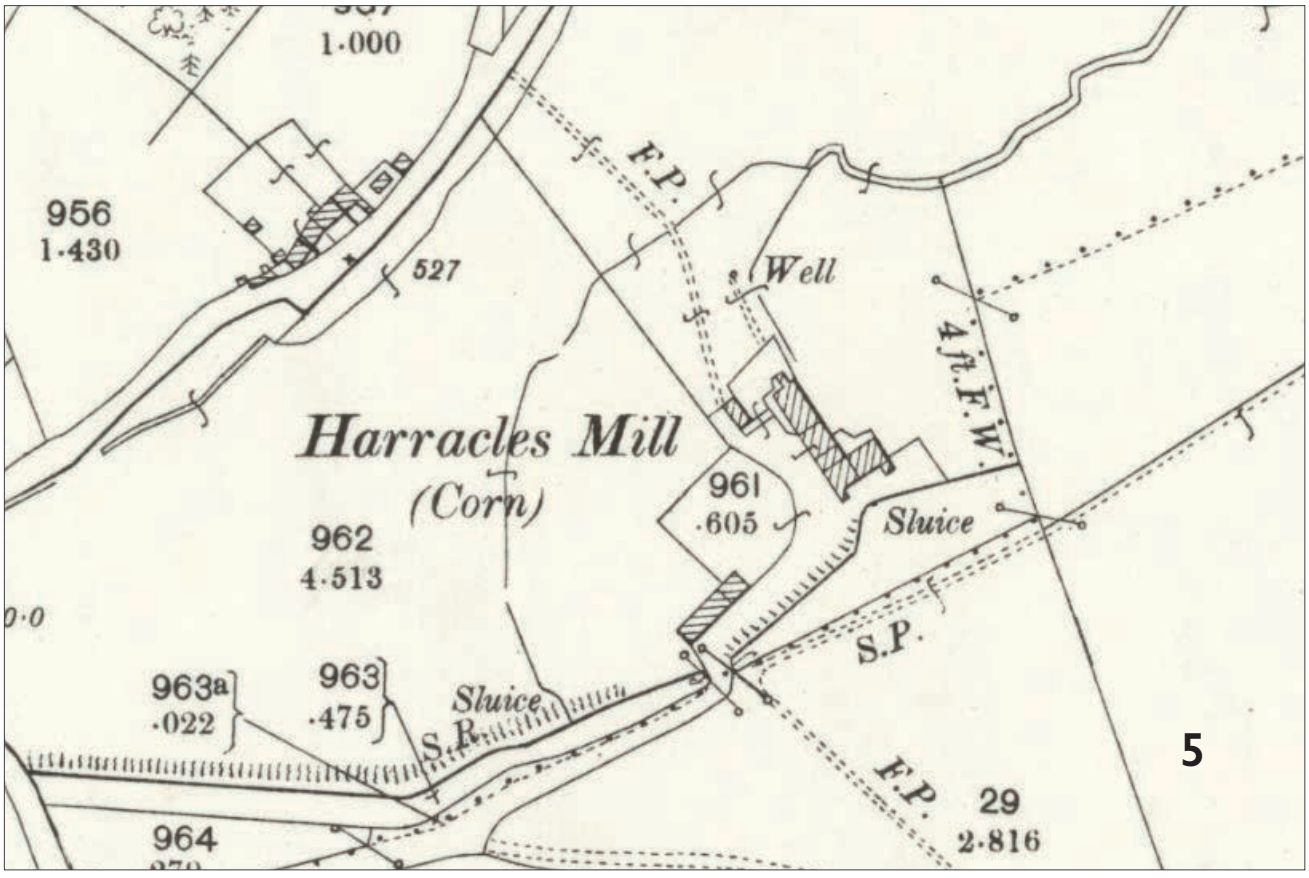
3. Extract from the map of 1811 surveyed by Brown, showing the route of a proposed connecting canal to link the Caldon Canal with the Macclesfield Canal. The red line which runs through the valley past the mill is the proposed alignment of a canal which was never built (with permission of Staffordshire Record Office).





4. Extract from the 1816 map of the Manor of Horton. This illustrates Harracles Mill and the detached barn quite clearly (D(W)1909/E/9/1 - with permisssion of Staffordshire Record Office).

5. Second edition Ordnance Survey map of 1898 (25-inch), which clearly shows the relationship of the Mill and the detached buildings, including the present Harracles Mill Cottage. This also, helpfully, identifies each separate function of the buildings within and around the mill by straight lines, which depicts dividing walls and separate uses.



The Setting of Harracles Mill

Several buildings fall within the setting of Harracles Mill, in that these are how the mill is experienced in its surroundings. This includes Harracles Mill Cottage.

There are certain aspects of the setting of Harracles Mill which contribute to its significance. These include:

- The mill leats (both the feeder - the head-race - and the tail race) and the detached site of the former mill pond, which once lay to the west of Dunwood Lane. These add to the understanding of the principal listed building;
- The miller's house, which is attached to the mill and lies to the north, which again adds to the understanding of the heritage asset;
- The wider landscape of the valley, in so far as it was shaped by the Wedgwood family to create this network of diverted water-courses, in association with the mill, and to maintain the relative isolation of the mill, as designed and laid out by the Wedgwood family in association with the high status Harracles Hall.

Development which intrudes into the views of Harracles Mill and impacts on its sense of isolation and its relationship with its watercourses and the associated topography would potentially harm its significance.



6. Harracles Mill and its attached buildings, including the miller's house to the far left.



7. Harracles Mill, as seen on the approach drive, with Harracles Mill Cottage to the left.

1.2 Rudyard Conservation Area

Rudyard Conservation Area was first designated in 2016. Harracles Mill and the associated buildings were deliberately included within the conservation area because of their relationship to the buildings along Dunwood Lane, their relationship to the valley, and the public views from the footpath network and watercourses along the canal network. The Conservation Area Appraisal describes in its key characteristics 'serendipitous natural beauty' which includes the site of Harracles Mill and this valley and "An intimate narrow network of rural lanes and scattered ribbon development line the approach routes, hidden from the wider area by the rolling agricultural setting." Again, the setting of Harracles Mill falls into this description. The "Landscape Setting" of Rudyard is identified as an important element of the Conservation Area and this is clearly expressed in the appraisal. The following extract can be applied to the landscape around Harracles Mill:

> "The immediate landscape around Rudyard has highly distinctive characteristics. It is a transitional landscape of rolling hills dissected by wooded valleys supporting pastoral farming with expansive views from the higher ground."

This is also expressed in the way that the footpath network contributes to our understanding of the character of the conservation area, including

> "• Footpath 1 (Longsdon) leads past Harracles Mill, connecting with footpath 26 (Longsdon)"

The views from Dunwood Lane are also identified as some of the key views and are expressed as follows:

> "The old road network along Dunwood Lane contains a series of intimate, framed and short-range views, interrupted by occasional buildings along the edge of the road. The land falls away to

the south and this provides a panoramic view for the cottages and small villas clustered and tiered above, within a wooded backdrop. The dramatic views of this landscape are at the most panoramic from the canal feeder, former railway line and public footpath network. Dramatic outward southerly views from Dunwood Lane look across to Harracles Mill and Harracles Hall (beyond the conservation area)."

And as follows:

"Standing at Dunwood Lane there is a strong visual relationship between the settlement along the southern slopes of Whorrocks Bank, looking south across the water meadow and the former millpond and leats to Harracles Mill and the land rising to Harracles Hall. Views are contained by the rolling landscape and the rushy water meadows. There are strong visual associations between the Hall, the corn mill, the settlement and the shared landscape setting of all of these elements."



8. Harracles Mill, as seen from Dunwood Lane, with the cluster of buildings at Harracles Mill Cottage to the right. This view is expressed in the appraisal as an important one. The identity of the barn as a simple agricultural building is lost in this view, as the domestic alterations, including the detached garage block and residential adaptation of the lower roofed building have swamped its distinct identity. The cluster, however, is sympathetic in the use of traditional materials and massing and it does not harm the view.

2. Harracles Mill Cottage - Description

Harracles Mill Cottage falls within the setting of Harracles Mill and lies within Rudyard Conservation Area.

Harracles Mill Cottage was built as a detached barn. There is so little dateable evidence that it is difficult to be precise about its origins, but the use of stone-coped gables is prevalent during the 18th century and early 19th century in North Staffordshire. Map evidence and physical evidence suggests that the barn was probably built ca. 1790. There are no surviving timbers from the roof, and the quoined gable to the west is not an early 18th century form, as the coped gable has very slight kneelers and gable stones and 18th century quoins are typically of much larger dimensions.

The barn was illustrated in an aerial photo in the owner's possession, which shows the building circa 1980 prior to its conversion (see plates 9 and 10). It was a simple building, with a relatively plain flank wall to the north-west and a large opening to the south-west, large enough for a tractor, a 20th century alteration. This has been altered and built up in coursed stone with domestic style mullioned windows to the ground and inserted first floor.





9 and 10. Aerial photograph of ca. 1980 (J & STaylor). Detail (right) showing the 'tractor' opening in the gable end.
11. Photograph of 1992 showing the converted building. The gable was built-up with domestic style mullioned windows.
12. The gable as it is now (2020) with its stone chimney stack.





To the south-east the building is illustrated in a photograph of ca. 1985, which shows one of the current owners, Sarah Taylor, as a young girl (plate 13). This illustrates a large quoined doorway with a small window to the left (enlarged in the conversion to a domestic size and style), with a garage door to a former large doorway, now infilled with a four-light window, and just two hayloft shuttered pitching openings, where there are now a row of four domestic scale and style windows. There is no evidence that the barn had a function for storing crops or corn, as there was clearly a hayloft. Whether it was historically used for stabling or built as a cow-house cannot be ascertained now as it is too altered.



13. Photo from ca. 1985 with the current owner (S.Taylor) on horseback. The 'barn' is clearly a two-storey building, with hayloft (two hayloft pitching doors are visible). The door to far left had been widened with a modern lintel by 1985.



14. Photo taken in 1992 showing the converted barn, with a large number of white domestic windows and the flat-roofed garage to the right.



15. The elevation to the access drive today (2020). There is very little sense of this having been a former barn.



16. The garage to the barn conversion, photographed in 1992. The ghosted impression of the former two-storey building on this site can be seen on the gable end of the barn. This formed the basis of the application for conversion of the 'garage' into two-storey domestic accommodation.



17. The two-storey extension of the former 'garage' as it appears today (2020). It now has a decidedly domestic character and with its small 'cottage' windows and mullioned windows to the gable end, and stone chimney stack, it could easily be misconstrued as a former dwelling.

The barn was converted to a building over a long period (roughly from 1989 to 1991). The planning officer's report (James Stannard, 30th October 2019) incorrectly states that this was in 1978 (SMD/1978/1153), but this refers to some of the buildings attached to the mill.

At the time that the barn was converted into a dwelling (ref. SM/13787 and SM/89/0223), between 1989 and 1990, there was an attached garage building to the north-east. This had a separate historic function distinct from the barn. This had a flat roof in 1989 but it originally had a pitched roof, which was visible as a ghosted outline on the gable of the main barn in photos of the 1980s. By the mid 1980s this part of the building had been converted into a large double garage, with a flat roof (see plates 14 and 16). At a later date, in 1995 (SM95/0708), after the conversion of the main barn, this lower north-eastern range was largely rebuilt with small windows, incorporated into the dwelling, and it now has an entirely domestic character. It is possible that this element has been misunderstood as a separate cottage because it has this domestic character now. It is not possible to say with any certainty what was the 19th century use of this part of the building, whether it was stabling or another use.

On 7th May 1985 planning permission for development was approved for conversion of the barn to form holiday accommodation into 2 units (SM/13787). This was not implemented because of a change in circumstances of the owner (Mr and Mrs J Hill) and an application for conversion to a single dwelling (for elderly parents) was approved on SM/89/0223 – 17th May 1989. This application withdrew permitted development rights (condition 4).

The 'barn' was converted (register of land charges – SMDC reference LR/130/91) and a variation for development (SM/90-479) was approved on 15th June 1990. On 26th October 1992 the occupancy condition (Condition 3 - SM/89 - 0223) was removed which stated "the proposed dwelling shall be first occupied by the applicants' parents") and at the same time permitted development rights were withdrawn again.

In 1995 the application for the alteration and upwards extension of the attached garage building was approved (SM95/0708) and on 20th August 2004 planning permission was approved for a single-storey rear (lean-to) extension (04/00554/DEX) (SMD/2003/1299). Listed Building Consent was also given. This was for the present kitchen, to which the proposed lean-to addition will be attached.

Character of the Building

The barn now has a striking domestic character. This is the result of:

a) domestic scale and style window openings, including mullioned windows to both the south-west and the north-east gable ends;
b) the loss of the agricultural character openings;
c) the use of stone chimney stacks to both ends of the ranges;
d) the detached quadruple garage to the north (a double over a double).

The building has low architectural interest and low evidential value now. It has moderate historic interest as part of the historic complex of buildings associated with the residential part of Harracles Mill.

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18. The north-west elevation of the former barn in 1992, after conversion. The inserted windows and doors are of domestic character. There is little to identify the building as an agricultural one.

19



19. The same north-west elevation today (2020). The lean-to extension has hidden some of the more domestic alterations as seen above. The lean-to does not harm the character of the building and overall the massing and materials could be seen as a positive enhancement to the character of the conservation area.

3. Legal Definition of a Curtilage Listed Building

At a certain point in time Harracles Mill Cottage has been considered by the Local Planning Authority as a curtilage building to the principal building, which is the mill. As one can read from the list description, it is the mill which is listed, not the attached dwelling. The mill remains unconverted, in its original industrial form, although redundant. It stopped operating in the 1930s (VCH). The confusion may have arisen over what is the planning unit, but they are not synonymous. In this instance, the dwelling is not the principal listed building. The word 'curtilage' is not defined in planning legislation but it is a legal status which has been addressed in the courts.

It is my professional opinion that the building is not curtilage listed. Historic England have provided some recent guidance ('Historic England Advice Note 10 – Listed Buildings and Curtilage'), but this guidance relates entirely to domestic listed buildings not to non-domestic listed buildings. Industrial buildings are not straightforward. They do not have a residential 'curtilage' under the listed building legislation, but there have been instances where the ancillary use of industrial buildings has been tested in the courts. The degree to which an attached structure fell within the curtilage of a mill at Calderdale was tested in Attorney General ex. rel. Sutcliffe and Others v. Calderdale BC (1982), which asserted that there should be some historical connection. In general, however, in most cases where there are industrial listed buildings, e.g. potbanks with bottle kilns, the kilns themselves do not have ancillary structures, and in the case of most mills, detached structures or residential buildings are not part of the listing unless there is a distinct functional connection, which is not the case here, and unless that connection is still associated at the time of listing.

The OED definition of curtilage is "a small court, yard, garth, or piece of ground attached to a dwelling-house, and forming one enclosure with it, or so regarded by the law; the area attached to and containing a dwelling-house and its out-buildings. Now mostly a legal or formal term, but in popular use in the south-west, where it is pronounced, and often written, *courtledge*." (Oxford English Dictionary – full entry OED Second edition 1989).
There is also generally accepted terminology that curtilage is "an area of land attached to a house and forming one enclosure with it".

Section 55(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 defines land or building within the curtilage as "incidental to the enjoyment of the dwelling house". Section 1(5) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) 1990 Act states:

> "(5)In this Act "listed building" means a building which is for the time being included in a list compiled or approved by the Secretary of State under this section; and for the purposes of this Act—
> (a)any object or structure fixed to the building;
> (b)any object or structure within the curtilage of the building which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before Ist July 1948."

Therefore, the degree to which a building is ancillary to a principal listed building, and part of its curtilage, is related to:

a) whether in the first instance the principal building is a dwelling. If not;
b) whether there is an ancillary use which can be historically connected with the principal listed building (a functional connection) at the time of listing;
c) its relationship and attachment to the principal building, its date of construction, the use of the land, and other matters such as the date of listing, its physical relationship to the principal building, use and ownership at the time of listing, etc.

The house which is attached to Harracles Mill (and which was the miller's house) could only be considered as part of the principal listed building (the mill) by virtue of both attachment and ownership. However, I consider that it is certainly arguable whether the miller's house is in fact part of the principal listed building and it may well be that it is not, in point of law.

It is my professional opinion that Harracles Mill Cottage (the detached former barn) is definitely not part of the curtilage of the Mill and it should never have been treated as such by the Local Planning Authority, because:

a) the principal listed building is not a dwelling. The formal list entry always identifies the principal building. This is plainly clear from the list description of the corn mill, which does not mention any of the miller's house; and

b) the former barn had a totally separate function from the corn mill; i.e. it was not ancillary to the working mill as it was a detached barn associated with the farming use of the land by the Bailey family. It was still in use as stabling and garaging for the occupiers of the dwelling at the time of listing in 1988 and it had no functional connection with the corn mill at the date of listing (see Watts v Secretary of State and R v Camden LBC, ex p Bellamy in 1991); and

c) the original applications for planning permission for conversion of the barn did not include the need for Listed Building Consent, so the planning authority at that time clearly did not consider the barn was part of the principal building.

Charles Mynors, barrister, explains that "occasionally only part of a building is listed…… where a deliberate decision is made to list only part of a much larger structure [as is the case at Harracles Mill], it is likely that the remainder will not be included – were it otherwise, the listed tail would be wagging the affixed dog." (Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Monuments, Charles Mynors, Sweet and Maxwell pub. 2006).

Charles Mynors also says: "If an object or structure is to be treated as part of a listed building, it must at the date of listing be associated with the building that is itself included in the list, and not merely associated with a building that is only treated as being part of that building by virtue of Section 1(5)." (Legal Briefing - The Extent of Listing - Context 96: September 2006).

We could seek clarification from Historic England about the full extent of listing by an Enhanced Listing application, which would provide certainty over what is listed with regards to the miller's house. At the present time, however, there is in my opinion no doubt under the legislation that Harracles Mill Cottage is not part of the principal listed building, not curtilage listed, and LBC is not required for the extension.

Even if Listed Building Consent was not required, it is my professional opinion that the proposed development will cause no harm whatsoever to the listed building or its setting. The reasoning is set out clearly under the later section 5.1, page 16.

4. Is Harracles Mill Cottage a Non-designated Heritage Asset?

It is arguable whether Harracles Mill Cottage is a 'non-designated heritage asset'. It could be argued that it has value, simply because of its historic associations with the buildings at Harracles Mill. Although the Local Planning Authority are entitled to take a view, it is worth considering the following factors. In judging whether it holds any intrinsic value now, it has been considerably altered, with domestic extensions and alterations, and is no longer identifiable as a barn or clearly evident as a former barn. It was not identified in the Rudyard Conservation Area Appraisal as a building warranting inclusion on the "Local Heritage List".

Guidance on "non-designated heritage assets" is set out in the Planning Practice Guidance. This states very clearly that "Irrespective of how they are identified, it is important that the decisions to identify them as non-designated heritage assets are based on sound evidence" and the following:

> "**What are non-designated heritage assets?**
> 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.
> Paragraph: 039 Reference ID: 18a-039-20190723
> Revision date: 23 07 2019"

I suggest that, given an objectively measured test of values, this building is too altered to be added to the Local List and no longer possesses the character or evidence of its form and use as a former barn. There are some fragments of evidence but a large proportion of the building has been rebuilt in the late 20th century.

5. Impacts

5.1 Setting of the Listed Building – Impact

Harracles Mill is approached from the narrow lane known as Devil's Lane, off Dunwood Lane. This approach drive follows the mill leat and runs past Harracles Mill Cottage (the former barn). Although the barn / house does not have a strict front and rear elevation, like a conventional purpose-built house, the 'front' of the building is that face which is first encountered from the approach drive, which is where the original doorways were located in the barn. The relationship between the building, its massing and its relationship in views of Harracles Mill from this approach drive, is unaffected by the proposed 'rear' extension in the application.

In long views of Harracles Mill Cottage from Dunwood Lane, across the valley, the cluster of development and overall form and massing is unaffected by this small scale extension. In these views the listed Harracles Mill is unaffected.

There is therefore no impact on the setting of Harracles Mill and no harm.

5.2 Rudyard Conservation Area - Impact

The detached relationship between Harracles Mill Cottage and the principal listed building, Harracles Mill, is an important one, which was highlighted in the Rudyard Conservation Area Appraisal. The important view across the valley and across the water courses associated with the grade II listed Mill from Dunwood Lane to the undulating landscape around Harracles Hall was also highlighted in the appraisal (see photo 8). It is this detachment which ensures that the loose-knit character is preserved and the identity of the mill is distinct. From Dunwood Lane, Harracles Mill Cottage appears as a cluster of buildings, with a large detached double garage to the west, a largely linear building with a stepped roofline and a tight-knit cluster with lean-to addition to the south-west. The identity of the building as a former barn is now largely lost as a result of the domestic additions and alterations that the building has undergone. The lower roofline appears at first impression as an attached cottage, with small windows and a chimney stack in these long views, and any sense of its original form as an agricultural building is now missing.

On approaching Harracles Mill from Devil's Lane, the roadway leads alongside the mill leat, which was the feeder for the mill. This is well-preserved. Harracles Mill Cottage lies to the north of this leat immediately adjoining the access track. This approach enables us to see the historic visual relationship between the mill and the former detached barn (see photo 7). Although much of the original detail and agricultural character of the building has been lost to considerable domestic changes, the massing of the building and the relationship still enables us to understand this visual connection. The identity of the building as a former barn is, however, almost indistinct now. The proposed small extension to the lean-to kitchen has no impact on the character of the Rudyard Conservation Area.

There is therefore no impact on the character of Rudyard Conservation Area and no harm.



20 View of Harracles Mill Cottage from the north-west garden. The domestic character of the stepped extension and the detached garage block dominate these views.



21. Location of the proposed small lean-to extension. The proposed extension will cover a small area of stonework and this will have a negligible impact on the building as a traditional building in the conservation area.

5.3 Design – Impact

As has been stated in section 3, the planning and listed building consent applications for the building have been judged, in my view incorrectly, as part of the principal listed building and as a 'curtilage' listed building. For the reasons set out in section 3, this in my professional opinion has been incorrectly applied in the past. The refusal of planning permission / listed building consent has judged the proposals in the same way as for a listed building and this, in my opinion, has been overly sensitive to the nature and character of the building, and did not warrant this level of concern.

Nevertheless, as set out in the NPPF and the National Design Guide 2019, there is a role for good design in considering applications where planning permission is needed for extensions to traditional buildings within conservation areas and within the setting of listed buildings. In this instance, the amended plans ensire that the extension now neatly fits and abuts the existing lean-to extension. It uses the same materials, coursed stonework, and is harmonious with the form and massing of the building, following its linear character. It will 'cover' a small proportion of the former barn stonework, but the former gable and the quoins are still clearly expressed, as is the eaves line and the return of the main all of the barn is still expressed as the first floor window is clearly visible. The actual masonry wall to the original building is retained inside the building. In views from the south-west the elevation will remain more-or-less as it is now; i.e. the lean-to form will still be clearly expressed as subordinate to the main building. In views from Dunwood Lane, the extension will simply appear as a continuation of the lean-to form and of simple character, which does not stand out in the views.

The proposal introduces an area of glazing which is slightly larger than the form of the original 'barn' doors, none of which are visible on this elevation. As this affects a modern extension, then I consider that this has no material affect on the nature of the barn or the existing lean-to extension, which also has a wide doorway, and there is no overriding reason why these should be reduced in size. In the context of the domestic alterations and extensions that the building has already undergone, this has negligible impact and the proposals are in my professional opinion entirely reasonable and sympathetic.

The planning authority's reasons for refusal state that the extension will "detract from, dominate and consume" the Listed Building. It is difficult to see how, in any circumstances, this broad and over-blown statement and reason for refusal can be justified. Furthermore, the planning officer's report states that this is the 'buildings frontage'. This is not the case, as I have set out in section 5.1, page 16.

6. Planning Legislation and Policy Considerations – The Historic Environment and Design

National legislation which is relevant to the application is:
Section 66(1) of the Listed buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990, which states:

> "66 General duty as respects listed buildings in exercise of planning functions.
> (1)In considering whether to grant planning permission [or permission in principle] for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 72(1) of the same act is also relevant and states:

> "72 General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions.

(1)In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any functions under or by virtue of any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

The main local policies covering conservation areas are found within the Staffordshire Moorlands Core Strategy (2014). The local planning policy context includes Policy DC2 on The Historic Environment, Policy DC3 on Landscape and Settlement, Policy DC1 Design Considerations and Policy C3 Green Infrastructure. Rudyard lies within the Green Belt.

In terms of DC2, the application is judged against bullet point 1, which resists:

"development which would harm or be detrimental to the special character and historic heritage of the District's towns and villages and those interests of acknowledged importance."

In terms of DC1, the application is considered against the overarching need for development to be:

"Well designed and reinforce local distinctiveness contributing to and complementing the special character and heritage of the area in line with the Council's Design SPD",

and bullet point 2:

"be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, density, layout, siting, landscaping, character and appearance".

Spatial Objective SO8 is also relevant as it seeks to:

"Promote local distinctiveness by means of good design and the conservation, protection and enhancement of historic, environmental and cultural assets throughout the District."

The National Planning Policy Framework (2019) sets out clear guidance on the Historic Environment. If the planning authority / the decision maker judge Harracles Mill Cottage to be a "non-designated heritage asset" then the application will need to be judged against paragraph 197 of the NPPF, which states:

"197 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."

7. Conclusions

The proposed extension causes no harm to the character of Rudyard Conservation Area, to Harracles Mill, or to its setting, and irrespective of whether it is curtilage listed or not (I consider it is not), it causes negligible impact to a traditional building in the conservation area.

The proposed development is an entirely reasonable extension. It has been designed in a sensitive manner to follow the form of the existing lean-to extension, to utilise matching materials, to retain the first floor window to the house, and to retain the original walls of the barn intact. The application is linear in form and preserves the massing of the building, and its relationship to the grade II listed Mill in all of the important views. The application is judged to comply with all of the local and national policy objectives. It preserves the character of the Rudyard Conservation Area, it preserves the setting of Harracles Mill (listed building) and it has been designed to be sympathetic to the character of the former barn.

For all of these reasons, in my opinion the application should be approved without delay.