

Heritage Statement

No. 20 Church Lane, Checkley
Mr C Davison

1.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

Introduction

- 1.1. This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of an application for the extension of No. 20 Church Lane, Checkley. This is in line with the requirements of paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF), which requires all applicants to provide an assessment of significance and potential impact of works that might affect heritage assets.
- 1.2. The heritage asset in question is Checkley Conservation Area, designated in April 1977, and subject of an Article 4 direction in February 1978. There is currently no Conservation Area appraisal in place for Checkley. Some consideration must also be given to the setting of the Grade I listed St Mary's church, which lies directly opposite the property.

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Description of the Asset

- 2.1. Checkley, situated 5 miles north west of Uttoxeter, likely has its origins in Anglo-Saxon times. It is recorded as 'Cedla' at the time of the Norman Conquest in 1066, and consisted of approximately 60 acres of land. The manor of Checkley was small in comparison to the other two manors of the parish, Tean and Madeley and, mainly constituted land belonging to the Rector. However, from the consecration of the Norman church in 1196, up to the government reforms of 1880, the Rectors of Checkley were the administrators of a large parish that included both Upper and Lower Tean, Hollington and Beamhurst.
- 2.2. Today, the small village of Checkley remains centred around the church. The latest census recorded a population of 4700, living in 1944 households.
- 2.3. No. 20 Church Lane sits centrally within Checkley Conservation Area, directly opposite the Grade I listed Church of St. Mary and All Saints, parts of which date from as early as the 12th century.
- 2.4. There are several other listed structures within the immediate vicinity. These include:
 - o The churchyard wall and gates to the west and south of Church Lane (Grade II listed - Aug 1986)
 - o A row of 5 memorials running south of the church of St Mary (Grade II listed – Aug 1986)
 - o The Rectory (Grade II listed – Aug 1986)
 - o Church View Cottage, Church Lane (Grade II listed – Aug 1986)

- 2.5. No. 20 Church Lane looks to possibly date from the late 18th century and was formerly known as White Horse Cottage, having operated as The White Horse Inn until the 1840s. It is believed the property sits on the site of a previous hostelry dating from medieval times.
- 2.6. The premises also contained a smithy and shoeing house, while the rear part was let as a separate dwelling. The 1841 tithe awards show the property listed as a house, croft and stable with the land use (approx. 0.9 Acres) described as 'pasture.' The blacksmiths had ceased operation by the time of the 1861 census.
- 2.7. The property is a detached double pile house consisting of four rooms to both ground and first floor, with a central staircase and two outriggers to the rear, one containing the kitchen. A large chimney stack sits within the centre of the plan. There is a notable joint in the brickwork along the side elevation, indicating that the older portion consisted only of the front two rooms and chimney stack, possibly built along the footprint of the previous medieval property.
- 2.8. It appears the façade may have been built at a later date, possibly early 19th century, owing to the deep window reveals, differing Flemish bond brickwork and moulded cornice sitting forward of the stone kneelers to the gable ends. It was quite common practice for the middle classes to update their historic homes in order to keep up with the changing fashions of the 19th century.
- 2.9. The property originally owned the surrounding field, presumably used as 'pasture' for livestock, to the north and west. The 1881 OS map shows a path across this field to a well situated along the northern boundary.
- 2.10. The separate outbuilding to the north of the property looks to have been built much later, around the late 19th century, as it only appears on the OS maps from 1901. The side elevation and lower portion of the rear are formed by older stone walls that continue to form a low-level enclosure at the rear. The tithe map of 1841 shows an adjoining structure here, potentially used for livestock or possibly as stables for use by the inn. Another possibility is that this originally formed the 'smithy' portion of the property.
- 2.11. A photograph from the early 20th century shows a metal shed in this location, with a gate in the wall accessing the adjacent field full of chickens. The field was subsequently sold off for housing in the mid-20th century.

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Assessment of its Significance

- 3.1. Under the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), any alterations should seek to “conserve and enhance” the historic environment. Section 12 of the NPPF states that LPAs should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposal, including any contribution made by their setting, with a level of detail proportionate to its importance (P128).
- 3.1. Even in the absence of any conservation area appraisal, it is clear that No. 20 Church Lane makes a very positive contribution to both the conservation area and the setting of St. Mary's church. The church, the rectory and the surrounding historic buildings (including No. 20., formerly an inn and subsequently a blacksmiths), form the historic core of the village. It is possible, or even likely, that a medieval property once occupied the same position, and some archaeological deposits may still be present within the site.
- 3.2. However, there is a lack of national or local listing. Significance is often proportionate to how much of the original building fabric, and its original use, remains extant. Clearly the building has undergone some alterations over the last two centuries and no longer retains its original use as a village inn. Therefore, both historic and communal value are somewhat limited.
- 3.3. Aesthetically, the property has high value within the conservation area. It is one of the older buildings within the village, and its symmetrical brick façade, with stone detailing and traditional timber windows and door, makes a positive contribution to the area.
- 3.4. The outbuilding to the side makes a very small but positive contribution to the character of the conservation area, being brick built and 19th century in origin. However, very little can be seen from the church side beyond the brick garden wall.
- 3.5. The two neighbouring mid-20th century bungalows, though well-maintained, do somewhat limit the value of this vista within the conservation area, having been built on what, historically, would have been open pasture belonging to No. 20.

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The Design Concept

- 4.1. Firstly, it is proposed to demolish the late 19th century outbuilding to the side in order to build a large, attached garage. This is to have a dual pitched tiled roof to the front portion, to mimic the roof on the main house, with a concealed flat roof covering the remaining area to the rear. This will incorporate two large flat rooflights allowing daylight to penetrate the internal space.
- 4.2. To the rear of the garage, a new kitchen and utility space will be formed, accessible via the kitchen.
- 4.3. The principal outrigger to the rear, which currently contains the kitchen, is to remain. However, the smaller outrigger (used for storage) is to be demolished and replaced with a large single-storey infill extension to the rear, forming an L-shaped open-plan kitchen, dining, and family living space. This will incorporate a glazed roof lantern and bi-fold doors to the rear.
- 4.4. Internally, the open plan space to the left of the floor plan is to be segregated to form a large hallway at the front of the property.
- 4.5. Finally, it is proposed to build a first-floor extension above the existing kitchen to provide a small fourth bedroom. This will be accessed via a new set of stairs from the half landing of the existing staircase.

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The Impact

- 5.1. The property lies within Checkley Conservation Area, which is a heritage asset that can be afforded a relatively high level of significance. The building is unlisted but sits at a key location within the village centre, opposite the Grade I listed church.
- 5.2. As such, No. 20 can be described as making an important contribution to the character of the conservation area and careful consideration must be given to the potential impact of any external alterations.
- 5.3. The loss of the outbuilding at the side should have a very limited impact upon the character of the village and the setting of the church. Whilst a late-19th century outbuilding is perhaps favourable over a more modern intervention, the building is in a poor state of repair and doesn't offer the current owners the amount of storage they require.
- 5.4. The potential impact of its replacement with a large garage is somewhat difficult to assess. On the one hand, an attached garage of this size is certainly not typical for a building of this age, and it will certainly be more visible within the conservation area. However, the proposed footprint of the garage is to be pushed back almost in line with the existing garden wall/outbuilding, therefore reducing any potential impact as much as possible. Furthermore, the neighbouring bungalows are of a more modern design, and sit at a slightly raised level, which should help the proposed garage to appear subservient within the street scene.
- 5.5. It is not currently clear from the drawings what materials the garage is to be built in. It might be reasonable to propose the bricks from the existing wall and outbuilding are utilised within the build, alongside reclaimed bricks to best match. Reclaimed Staffordshire blue plain clay roof tiles and a timber garage door of a traditional side-hung design would also be favourable. However, such details could be conditioned as part of an approval.
- 5.6. The alterations to the rear of the property, whilst significant, will have a negligible impact within the conservation area as they cannot be seen from the street.
- 5.7. Overall it is felt that the proposals represent less than significant harm to both Checkley Conservation Area and the setting of St Mary's church.

References

Staffordshire HER - <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>
Staffordshire Records Office - <http://www.archives.staffordshire.gov.uk>
Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance – Historic England (2008)
www.staffspasttrack.org.uk
www.old-maps.co.uk
www.historicengland.org.uk
Checkley Conservation Area - SMDC
The Checkley Trail – leaflet courtesy of Mr C Davison