

Greenfields Farm  
**Design and Heritage Statement**  
Repairs and Upgrades to Existing House plus Extension

June 2022



**James Boon Architects**

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| Document        | <b>Greenfields Farm<br/>Design and Heritage Statement<br/>Repairs and Upgrades to Existing House plus Extension</b> |
| Client          | Dr & Mrs Cupples                                                                                                    |
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| Previous Issues |                                                                                                                     |
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**Greenfields Farm**  
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## **1.0 Introduction**

This document has been prepared as part of a submission for an application for householder planning and listed building consent approval for works to and within the grounds of the clients' own grade II listed home. Greenfields Farm is a farmhouse and outbuildings on Jack Hayes Lane near Kerry Hill, in the Staffordshire countryside, that dates from the early 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The client has owned the building since 2014, and in that time, they have carried out a number of external repairs to the property. However with the exception of some minor work around the kitchen and its fireplace, they haven't carried out any work internally.

The internal proposals within this document have been developed following a condition survey and the repairs that this highlighted as necessary. Internal alterations have been developed in response to these repairs, but also some rationalisation and improvement internally to meet the clients' needs, where these do not impact upon historic fabric or character. External proposals focus on rebuilding a modern extension that is of poor craftsmanship and causes issues of damp and flooding.

### **1.1 Notes**

This report is to be read alongside the drawings produced to accompany the application. Details within the Heritage Statement have been provided by the current owner and in parts based upon the Heritage Statement from previous applications on the building.

## **2.0 Assessment**

### **2.1 Site Location**

Greenfields Farm is located between Eaves Lane / Jack Hayes Lane, known as Kerry Hill, 4 miles north east of Hanley and 9 miles south west of Leek on Wetley Moor. It is in the Parish of Bagnall.

### **2.2 Heritage Statement and Description**

#### **2.2.1 Ownership**

With its probable construction early in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the farmhouse was built at a time of changing land use and increasing spatial division within residential homes. Its proximity to Wetley Moor suggests that the farmland associated with the house was once part of a medieval common which was enclosed under a Tudor 'Tillage Act'.

Greenfields Farm was originally part of Wetley Moor and in the 17th-century was a typical example of a smallholding comprising of 70 acres, created by small scale enclosure from the waste or moorland. The buildings history is relatively well documented. The first occupier recorded at Greenfields was John Colclough, yeoman, who made a Will on the 2nd of March 1636 and died shortly afterwards.

In an entry in the Norton Parish registers shows that Rob Steele, a beneficiary in John Colclough's Will was in occupation at the property in 1641. The property remained in the Steele family for three generations. It was sold in 1707 to William Adams of Bagnall for £160.00. The agreement describes the property as "2 messuages, 2 cottages, 30 acres of land, 20 acres of meadow, 20 acres of pasture, 4 acres of wood, 10 acres of heath and furze, together with common pasture for all cattle in Bagnall, Horton" (i.e. on Wetley Moor).

The property stayed in the Adam's family until 1724. By 1775 the property was owned by Thomas Jackson. "Yate's Map of Staffordshire shows that in 1775 Greenfields stood on the edge of Wetley Moor. The land south of Greenfields was in the Manor of Bucknall and this too had been enclosed from the moor by 1790. A list of leases in Staffordshire Record Office includes a lease dated 25th March 1790 for a "Dwelling house or Tenement with land belonging to Greenfields in the Manor of Bucknall" comprising almost 4 acres." Wetley Moor east of Jack Hayes Farm and Greenfields lay in the manor of Horton. "This area of Wetley Moor was enclosed by an Act of Parliament in 1815. The enclosure map and award are in Staffordshire Record Office (Q/RDc69)." The result of parliamentary enclosure in the early nineteenth century is still clearly visible in the landscape today. The straight roads and rectangular fields between the village of Bagnall and Armshead are quite different from the landscape further west created by piecemeal enclosure of land from the moor at Jack Hayes and Greenfields in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

### 2.2.2 Greenfields Farm

Greenfields Farm dates back to the 17th-century but unlike the neighbouring Jack Hays Farm there is no date stone.

The earliest mapping references for the site show the farmhouse as the southern edge of a 3-sided farmyard with ranges stretching from the eastern corner of the house north and then west. These outbuildings have altered over the centuries to comply with changes in farming practice. The farmhouse itself has been extended at various points with lean-to additions appearing on the eastern and northern elevations. The earliest of these have been removed although legal documents make reference to a dairy, washhouse and small pantry suggesting what they may have been used for.



Image: OS map from 1881, showing courtyard layout of farm buildings.

Greenfields Farm is a single-pile, four bay, two-storey property constructed of sandstone under a Staffordshire blue plain clay tile roof. The property has two later single-storey additions to the south west and north west sides also constructed of stone and plain clay tiles.

The ground floor windows consist of recently installed painted timber frame casements with 12mm "conservation" double glazed units. The first floor windows are 2- and 3-light chamfered stone mullion window openings with metal casements, possibly dating from the 19th-century. The four cell plan was

heated by back to back hearths, evident from outside by the two chimney stacks located within the floor plan rather than at the gable ends.



Image: (Left) Greenfields Farm seen from the NW entrance driveway, with recent porch in the foreground and extension forming utility room to the far end of the north elevation. (Right) Looking back to the west with Greenfields on the left and the two modern garage and outbuildings on the right.

Little historic fabric remains internally due to ill-considered ‘modernisation’ by the previous owner(s).

There are several planning/listed building consent (LBC) applications listed for Greenfields Farm including the construction of the entrance porch on the western gable (planning reference: SMD/1999/0471) and the recent changes to the kitchen and windows (planning references: SMD/2016/0737 & SMD/2016/0666 respectively).

## 2.4 List Description

### Official list entry

Listed Building Grade: II  
 List Entry Number: 1294674  
 Date first listed: 15-Dec-1986  
 Statutory Address 1: GREENFIELDS FARMHOUSE, JACK HAYES LANE

### Details

Farmhouse. C17 restored and altered 1888. Large coursed and squared stone blocks; machine tile roof of steep pitch; verge parapets on corbelled kneelers; 2 large brick ridge stacks. 2 storeys and gable- lit attic, 4-window front; chamfered mullion windows of 2, 3, 4 and 2 lights to the first floor, all but one have diamond lights; the ground floor has 2-light C19 casements; the entrance is set to right of centre with a heavy lintel inscribed: RU 3-light mullioned windows to first floor A1888D of end gable.

## 2.5 Significance

The historic and architectural significance of Greenfields Farm is defined by both its aesthetics, and its social and cultural history. Greenfields Farm is a fine example of a traditional ‘vernacular’ Staffordshire Moorlands ‘four-bay lobby entrance plan house’, originating from the 17th-century. The building has undergone some change, extension, alteration and modernisation. Some of which that precedes the current owners has not been considerate to the building’s historic fabric.

Greenfields Farm is an important surviving C17 building and a moderate heritage asset. It is Listed Grade II rendering it of special interest.

## 2.6 Condition

The condition of Greenfields Farm can be considered as good although there are areas where the condition is poor or fair due to a build-up of damp, water ingress, and corrosion. There are no major structural defects present although the cracking to the Sitting Room chimneybreast is of concern and the building is generally watertight. Although the building is in good condition at present there is always a danger that the lack of a rigorous monitoring and maintenance regime could allow elements of the building to fall into disrepair – a process which can happen quickly in a historic building.

The defects identified in the survey form the basis for a programme of repairs and improvements which should be carried out to improve the condition of the building and the comfort of those inside. In addition to this, items were identified in the survey which should form part of an ongoing maintenance programme which will improve the general condition of the buildings and help to identify any potential defects early.

## 3.0 Proposals

### 3.1 Interior Repairs and Fabric Upgrades

The importance of the effective control of moisture is increasingly becoming a key aspect of historic building conservation. Our understanding of how modern materials and patterns of occupation can have detrimental effect on historic fabric has been greatly improved by scientific research into how moisture moves through building fabric and this has led to a reappraisal of the value of traditional construction methods for ensuring that internal spaces are dry.

At Greenfields Farm, there have been several interventions in the last fifty to seventy years which have led to the increase in internal moisture levels. The widespread use of gypsum/cement-based wall plaster has created an impermeable barrier which prevents any moisture dissipating through the exterior walls. Similarly, the installation of new concrete floors and damp-proof membranes (DPM) has trapped water under the house or, even more seriously, forced moisture up into the walls where it is cause plaster and paint to fail. These factors are causing the build-up of water vapour within the internal spaces which, when coupled with the problems of evenly heating a historic building with no insulation, lead to the optimum conditions for damp and mould growth.

It is accepted that to simply return a historic building such as Greenfields Farm to its original condition would not provide an appropriate level of thermal comfort or usability for the owners and as such, a solution must be found which addresses the protection of the building and the comfort of users. At Greenfields Farm there a number of actions that can be taken to improve the 'breathability' of the building and reduce the instances of damp/mould growth.

The most effective way to reduce moisture levels withing the farmhouse would be to remove all the cementitious plaster and replace with a lime/earth alternative. Lime and earth plasters have a greater ability to regulate moisture within a building and in many cases remove it via capillary action. The insertion of a hygroscopic insulation board such wood fibreboard or the inclusion of hemp into any wall plaster will improve the thermal performance of the building without trapping any moisture. This approach will be continued in the attic areas where the existing poor quality insulation will be replaced with new, vapour permeable alternatives.

Another key area to examine is the farmhouse's floors. Evidence supports the view that the original floors were removed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and replaced with concrete which provides no thermal improvement and, due to the inclusion of a DPM has prevented moisture from naturally dissipating. The extent of this can be seen in the lean-to extension where water is regularly pushed up into the interior from below. The removal of the concrete floors and their replacement with a lime slab on foam-glass aggregate sub-base will improve the thermal performance and improve moisture regulation which, if left, unchecked, could

cause irreparable damage to the historic fabric. This system can also be adapted to integrate an underfloor heating system which could be supplied by a ground or air source heat pump. However this is not a cheap installation and may not be economically viable, and also requires thermal upgrading of the inner walls.

As noted earlier, the ground floor windows were all recently changed to appropriate timber casements and slimline double glazing. During these works the north elevation first floor window was also done to match. Other first floor windows are currently stone surrounds and mullions with metal framed single glazing. The windows in the main bedroom to the west, are a more modern metal framed construction and not historic, and likewise the mullions are concrete recreations rather than stone. Proposals are to remove the concrete and reinstate suitable stone mullions, with new metal framed single glazed windows to match elsewhere. All the single framed metal framed first floor windows would then have bespoke secondary glazing installed internally to improve thermal performance.

Lastly, small improvements which will reduce the amount of warm, wet air can be made with little cost and minimal disruption. At present there is no ventilation/extraction to any of the bathrooms or the Boot Room. Extractor fans could be installed with a suitable concealed tile vent to run where required.

### 3.2 Interior Layout

Much of the internal fabric is from modern unsensitive alterations and additions. The proposals to change the internal layouts are taking advantage of the various fabric upgrades and repairs above, and rationalise and improve the layout for the owners.

The ground floor layout will remain largely as it is with the kitchen in its existing location, all be it with new fixtures and fittings. The western staircase which is largely redundant, will be removed and the two central rooms will be combined into one, as the existing dividing wall is of modern construction.

At first floor level the removal of the western staircase will enable some of the modern stud walls to be reordered to enlarge both the bathroom and ensuite, both of which will also be given new fixtures and fittings. The proposals also include for a new window to be installed in the north elevation, to give natural light to the en suite. The style and appearance of this will be to match the existing first floor window on this elevation.

### 3.3 Extension

The existing utility room extension is of poor-quality construction and needs to be reordered to give decent boot room, downstairs toilet, laundry and plant facilities commensurate with a farmhouse such as this. In order to provide accommodation for the above, and to improve the structural and aesthetics of the building, we propose to demolish the existing extension and reconstruct it in matching materials with an increased width of 0.75m.



Image: Northeast corner of lean-to extension showing poor quality construction.