

SMD/2023/0632 - development of up to 1 house on land on the North Side of Tomkin Lane
SMDC Heritage Conservation Officer comments

Objection

The heritage statement is weak and goes into no appraisal of the Conservation area, nor analysis of Setting. Stanley Conservation Area is particularly small, and with the grain of the historic core still evident. Consequently I do not feel that a thorough exploration of the values of the heritage asset have been fully understood. There also appears to be no assessment of harm, a conclusion, or how any potential harm is justified.

The core of Stanley is shown in Historic OS Maps dated circa 1888, with in particular; the dwellings to the frontage of the vicinity in this case. Poppy, Ivy and Fern cottages are shown in situ at this time. Formerly a township of only around 178 hectares, it formed part of the medieval parish of Leek. Its name in Anglo Saxon is stony clearing. Earliest maps available dated circa 1775 shows few houses, irregularly placed and beginning an organic nucleation at the forks in the lanes. It then began piecemeal development starting around the east of Tompink Road at the core, around Ivy House Farm (opposite the PDA) with datestone still extant of 1872.

A primitive history, Stanley was an extensive estate held by this family name until the 12th century. With a Manor, and agricultural hierarchy linked to Horton, many of the surrounding historic field networks held links to one another and often further historic association with other neighbouring large houses or Manors. This is due to how early agricultural industry functioned at this time, seeing the landworkers housed among the estates they worked.

Stanley is naturally isolated, with views or vistas through and out at extensive lengths, contributing to the sense of place. Most if not all dwellings at the core are sporadic in placement, some perpendicular, and some former barns are 'back to front' by modern standards due to non-domestic former use. As the sweep of the road continues west, the topography descends and weaves down to reveal further vernacular cottages and barns, with views now across rooftops and through mature greenery. The relationship of the original core to its backdrop remains, and the grain of the dwellings and character of the vernacular contributes strongly to the setting of the village. Views are also exhibited in figure 2 of the planning statement.

Poppy, Ivy and Fern cottages affront the lane, and despite unsympathetic modern alterations, additions and obtrusive boundary treatments their vernacular character survives to a degree, and their simple orientation and relationship to the early core remains legible.

I am not sure that a dwelling in this location at the rear is appropriate. It feels it may risk being to an extent random, or dropped in. In looking at the survived grain of the village, the pattern of the built environment within its natural backdrop has a traditional and direct relationship to the historic lanes, and I feel perhaps that advancing or straying outward in the opposite fashion, into the surroundings, is without purpose. Consequently I would struggle to find a positive note or an enhancement to/for the setting to be able to give full support.

If it is just they remain adamant or otherwise, an appropriate heritage assessment would be required as unfortunately the current copy misses many of the criteria to comprehensively form clear and convincing justification.

Emily Holland