

HERITAGE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT

**THE ABBEY INN
ABBAY GREEN ROAD, LEEK, STAFFORDSHIRE ST13 8SA**

PROPOSAL:
CHANGE OF USE IN NAME ONLY OF THE GROUND FLOOR
AND PART OF THE CELLAR FROM PUBLIC HOUSE
TO PART OF THE DWELLING ON THE UPPER FLOORS

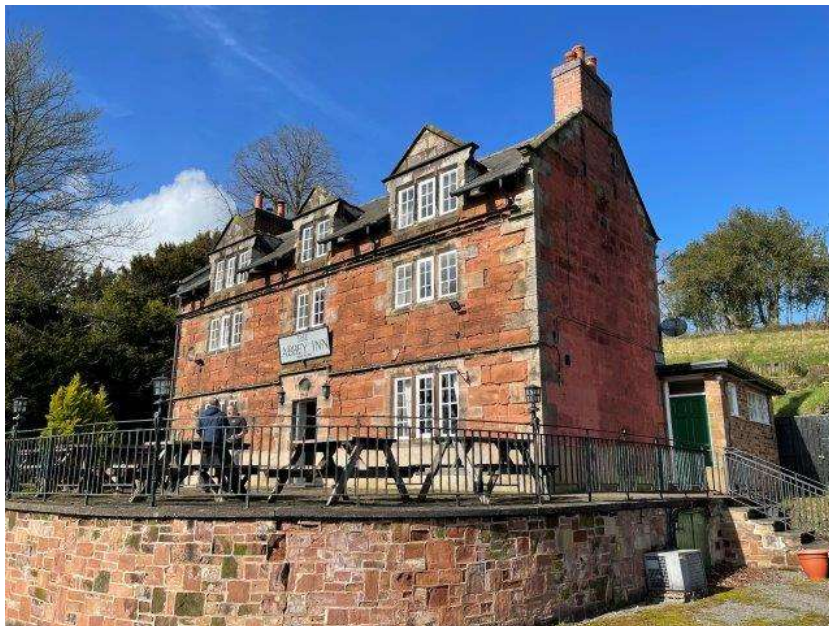


Fig 1 The Abbey Inn, Abbey Green, Leek

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[With reference to associated existing and proposed drawings]

1.0 Introduction

This Heritage Statement of Significance and Impact has been prepared by ASAP Architects on behalf of John and Julie Wilby, the current owners of the Abbey Inn. The Inn had been struggling as a viable concern for a number of years and in mid-2021 the food and drink side of the business closed. The financial cost breaks down into 20% vat, 40% food, 30% staff with 10% to cover electric, oil, other utilities etc. plus extra costs of a grade 2* listed building. The property is now for sale, the owners wishing to relocate to be nearer to their family and grandchildren in the south of England.

It is proposed that the use of the existing property be changed from a public house to a dwelling.

This statement accompanies the Design and Access Statement and outlines the historic significance of the heritage asset; its development since its construction and within its setting and the impact the proposal would have. 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 a heritage asset.

The methodology laid down in the Historic England document Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance has been followed for assessing the significance of the heritage asset and surrounding heritage assets. The cultural and natural heritage values, their history and the evolution, fabric and character of the heritage asset have been identified and have provided a good understanding of its significance.

The origins of the heritage asset and how and why it has changed over time has been found through desk based research, historic and archaeological archives, historic environment records and mapping. Visits have been made to the William Salt Library, Staffordshire Record Office in Stafford and Leek Library.

Desk based research has included searching the National Heritage List for England, the Heritage Gateway. and the National Library of Scotland (for historic ordnance survey maps).

A detailed historic map regression has been produced which enables a better understanding of the significance of the Grade II* Abbey Inn and its relationship with the surrounding site and the wider landscape.

2.0 Site Location and Description

The Abbey Inn is listed Grade II* and is located in a village called Abbey Green near to and west of Abbey Farm and the once Dieucacres Abbey Estate. Abbey Green is situated to the north of Leek in the civil parish of Leekfrith and in the county of Staffordshire (Fig 2).

The building was built in the early 18th century, constructed of ashlar stone with a Welsh slate roof. Since its construction as a dwelling, the building has been extended and altered over the years, to be run as a public house and in the later part of the 20th century to include a restaurant.

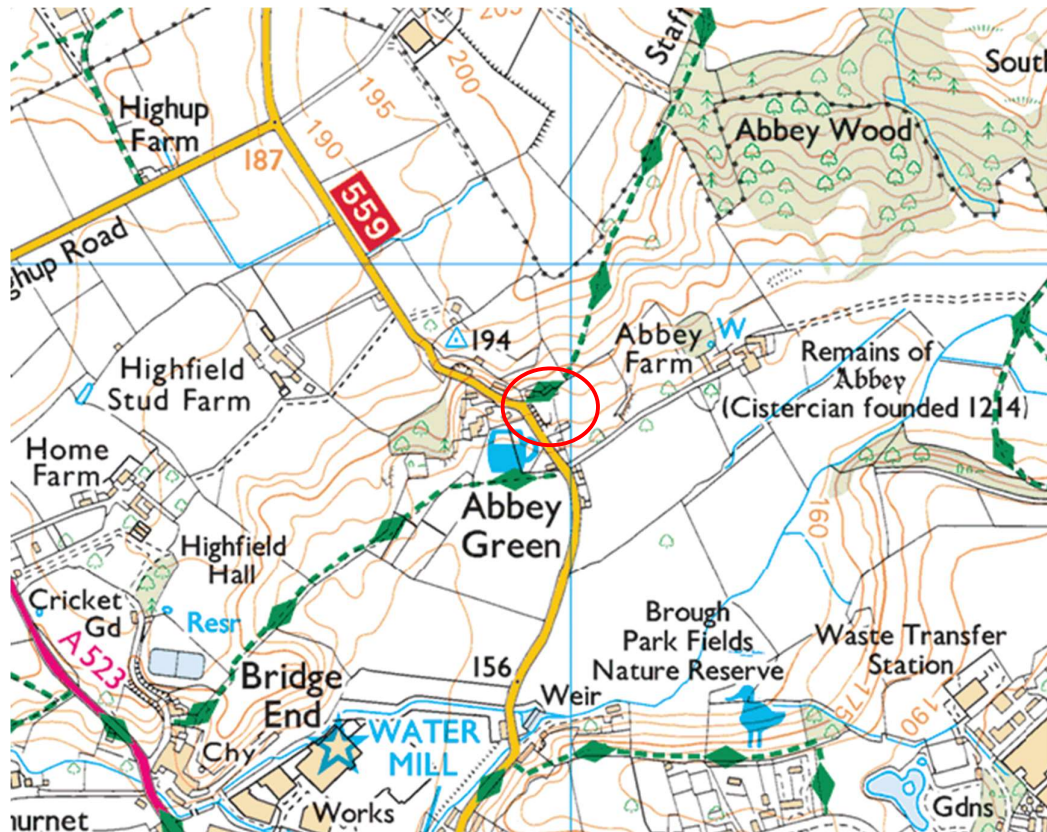


Fig 2 Abbey Inn location within Leek frith parish

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

3.0 Historic Development

Leek lies in the northern uplands of Staffordshire where roads from Macclesfield, Ashbourne, Buxton, Stone and the Potteries intersect. Leek is a market town and civil parish in the county on the River Churnet. It is an ancient borough and was granted its royal charter in 1214.

Medieval Leek was the principal settlement in a vast moorland parish of 53,000 acres. This contained 19 townships, Leek and Lowe, Bagnall, Basford, Bradnop, Cheddleton, Consall, Endon, part of Foxt, Heaton, Horton, Ipstones, Longsdon, Leekfrith, Onecote, Rownall, Rudyard, Rushton Spencer, Rushton James, Stanley and Tittesworth. The townships were the smallest unit of civil administration and were grouped to form a series of manors each with its own complex history.

In 1214 Earl Ranulph founded the Cistercian abbey of Dieulacres a mile north of the town. At his death in 1232, the abbey gained the manor of Leek, retaining it until the monastery was dissolved in 1538. Little survives in situ apart from a timber-framed gateway built into the present Abbey Farmhouse, and fragments of the tower crossing.

By the late 16th century the Rudyards of Rudyard Hall owned the site and were removing stone including carved fragments built into walls around Rudyard Hall, or buried behind the house.

In 1500 Leek was a small market town serving a large area of pastoral farming. By 1900 it had seen the hey-day of a prosperous silk industry whose legacy of mill buildings and workers housing still dominates the town. Between these dates the town and its surrounding parish saw huge changes, as new forms of employment attracted a large new workforce, all of which required housing.

The Abbey Inn is close to the site of Dieulacres Abbey which was founded in 1214 by Ranulph de Blondville, 6th Earl of Chester for Cistercian monks, who moved from Poulton, Cheshire because of attacks from the Welsh. The Earl gave the monks the manor of nearby Leek, where a Wednesday market had recently been established. The abbey remained in existence until the Dissolution of the Monasteries, when it was surrendered in 1538. There are some scanty remains of the abbey, which are Grade II listed. Much of the material was used for the building erected on the site of the abbey by 1614, for the home of Thomas Rudyard, lord of the manor of Leek, and later of his descendants. Once known as Abbey Dieulacres, and later as Dieulacres Abbey Farm, it is now known as Abbey Farm.

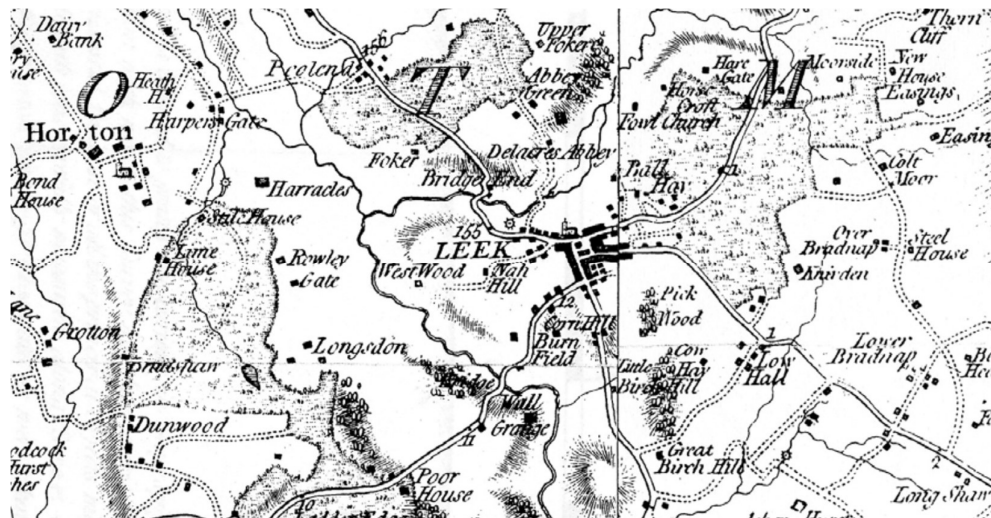


Fig 3 Yates map of Staffordshire 1775

Abbey Green can be seen on the Yates' map of Staffordshire of 1775 (Fig 4) which is the earliest map found to show the building's existence. The Enclosures Map of Leek 1805 (Fig 5) shows the inn building within the Dieulacres Abbey Estate. The land outside of the estate was enclosed, and the map shows enclosures 261 and 262 to the south of the inn which were allotments. The existing barn/outbuilding (now converted to self catering holiday accommodation) was not apparent at that time. The Abbey Inn building had an L shaped footprint; two storeys to the front elevation with a single storey projection at the north elevation. There are remains of timber framing within the building which causes consideration that the building was constructed at an earlier date than the 1702 date stone shows above the front door. It was known at that time as Abbey Green House

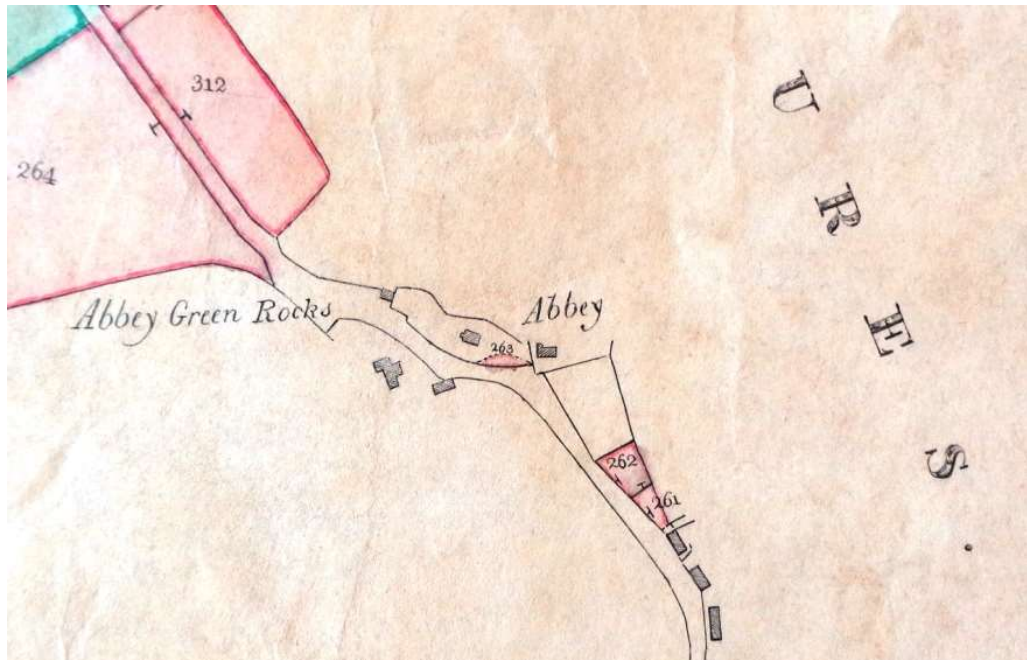


Fig 4 Showing the now Abbey Inn in Map VI of the Enclosures Map of Leek 1805
Item Alt Ref No: Q/RDc/65 Staffordshire Record Office

Although not marked on the 1805 map there was a general belief that the bowling green had been made by the monks from the nearby Dierclacres Abbey so since the 13th century. The yew trees that were in existence at that time were evidently centuries old and seemed to have been placed as a shelter to the green.

Ref: Leek News Christmas Shopping Edition 1928. Article 'The Bowling Green'. Leek Library

During the first half of the 19th century the site was developed considerably. This can be seen from the Leek Map (Fig 5) surveyed in 1855.

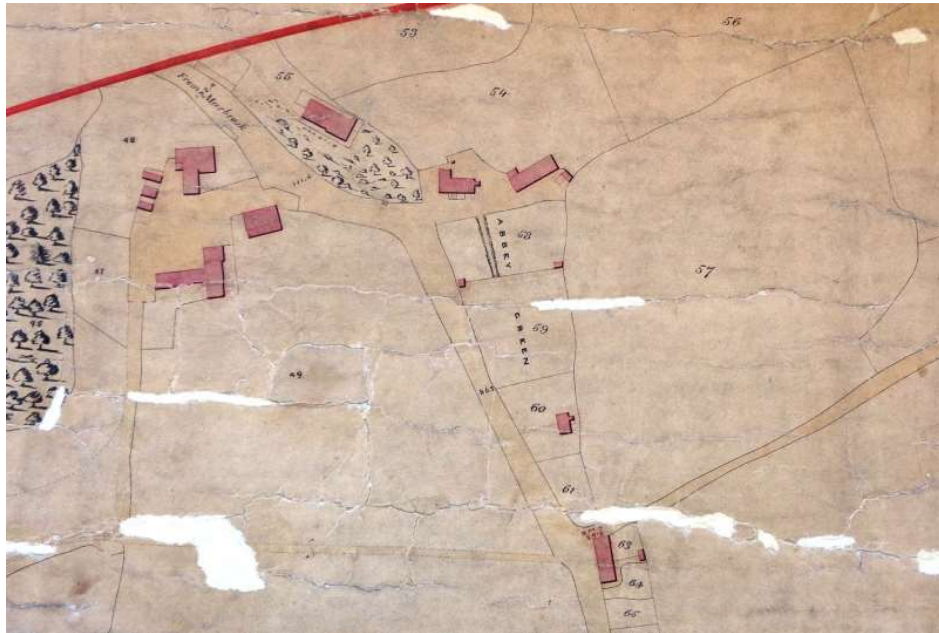


Fig 5 From a Large Plan of Leek 1855. Produced by Thomas Dale, Civil Engineer and Charles Slagg, Surveyor 1857-58 for the Leek Improvement Act.
Alt Ref No: D3283 Staffordshire Record Office

The bowling green became more established in front of the building which was renamed as the Bowling Green Inn where the small extension to the east and the steps to the front elevation are in evidence. The barn/outbuilding to the east had been constructed and on land previously an allotment (60), the Abbey Green Cottage built.

Unfortunately the map does not show the levels of the land, but it is known the the land dropped steeply down to the bowling green and so steps (the two vertical lines as shown on Fig 5) were provided for access.

The sales catalogue sourced from the William Salt Library shows that on 12th January 1871 the Dieulacresse Abbey Estate (which included over 691 acres and several farms) was sold at auction at the North Staffordshire Railway Hotel in Stoke on Trent.

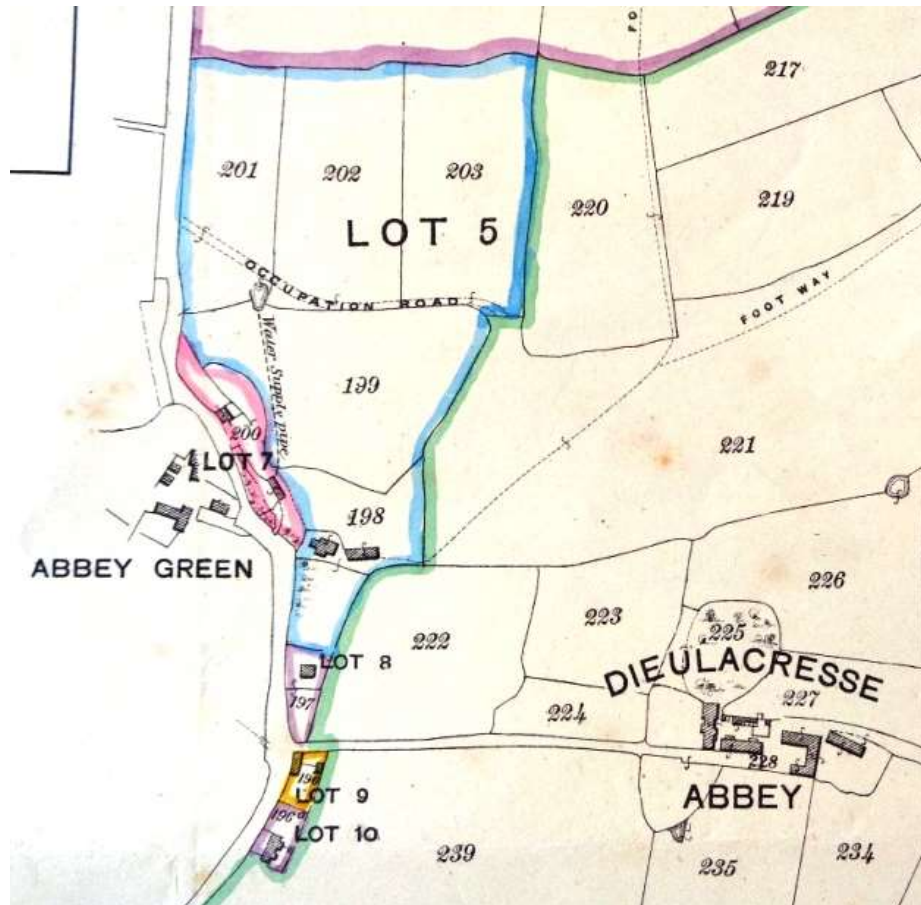


Fig 6 Ref: The Dieulacresse Abbey Estate, Leek, Staffordshire sale catalogue; Dated 12 Jan 1871. Item Alt Ref No: Sc F/2/20; William Salt Library, Stafford.

The Bowling Green Inn (which was owned by the estate), the bowling green and outbuilding was sold as a collection and was part of LOT 5, which included Big Hill, West Foker Moor, Near Rough Field and Far Rough Field. The tenant at that time was James Johnson. LOT 8 situated just below the Inn was Abbey Green Cottage and Garden (once an allotment). The tenant was Richard Critchley.

Strangely the form of the building shown in the 1871 sales catalogue had changed since the previous map evidence, but it can be seen from the 1888 and 1900 maps that the form was as it was originally built in an 'L' shape.

At the end of the 19th century the bowling green at the Bowling Green Inn was the only green in Leek (Fig 7). With the game's popularity increasing further greens were created. The opening of the Leek Bowling Club's green at Beggars Lane in 1912 saw the interest grow further being in ideal surroundings with increased facilities. A few years later saw the opening of the Foxlowe green and in 1923 the Brough Park public green was opened. Leek Town Championships saw a great number of teams involved and playing for challenge cups. Ref: Leek News Christmas Shopping Edition 1928. Article 'Bowls'. Leek Library

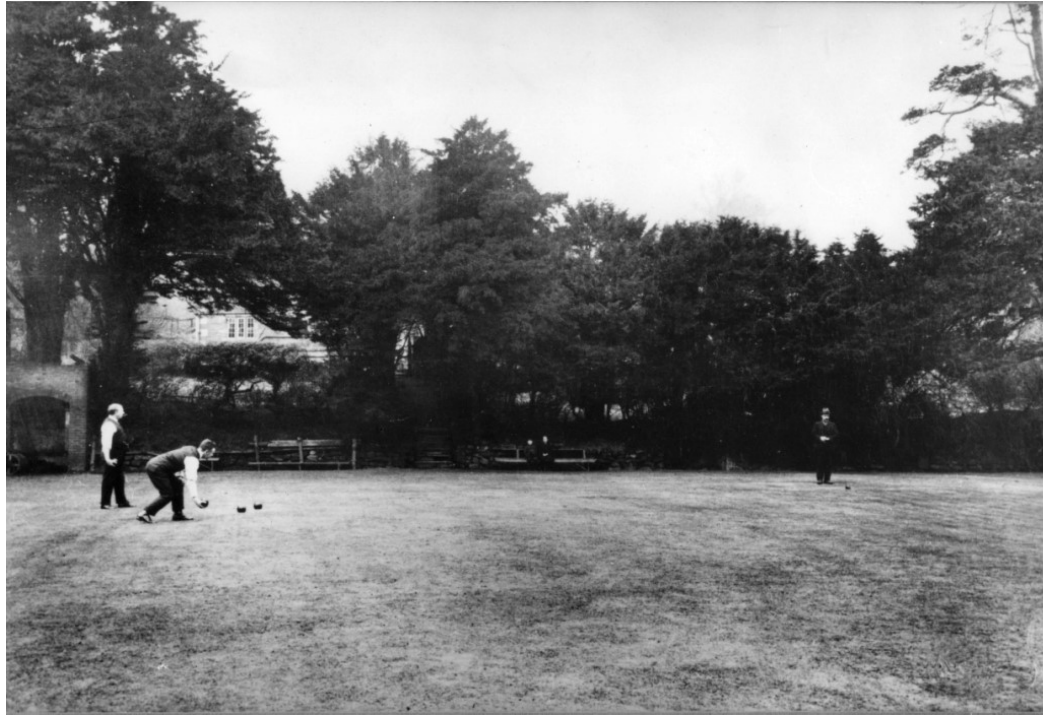


Fig 7 The bowling green at the Abbey Inn (seen in the background) showing how the level of the land was so different then and how it has changed from that time (early 20thC)



Fig 8 The Abbey Inn building in the early 20th century showing the area in front of the inn being walled with hedging.

The road used to be the main road to Macclesfield running up Gun Hill before heading for Clewlow Cross and Sutton. The landlord was John Salt at the time.

Ref: Bygone Staffordshire Moorlands. Lindsey Porter Gomer Press 2010. Leek Library

The desktop survey revealed the following 19th and 20th century maps found at the National Library of Scotland website. A visit to the Leek Library also found more recent maps showing the changes to the property during the 20th century.



Fig 9 Ordnance Survey Great Britain Series 1842-1960 Staffordshire VIII north west Revised: 1900 Ref: National Library of Scotland Ordnance Survey Maps <https://maps.nls.uk>

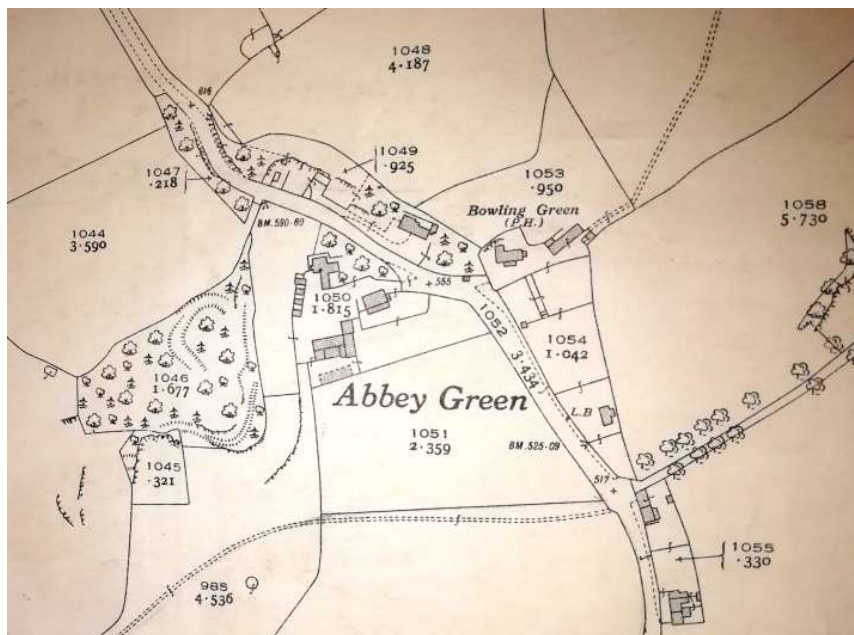


Fig 10 Staffordshire Sheet VIII 5 1:2500 Revised 1937
Ref: Leek Library Local Maps No 24

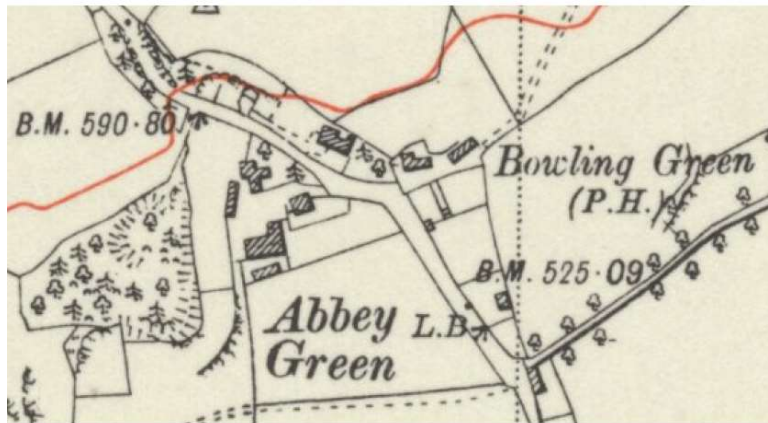


Fig 11 Ordnance Survey Great Britain Series 1842-1960 Staffordshire VIII north west
Revised: 1950 Ref: National Library of Scotland Ordnance Survey Maps <https://maps.nls.uk>

The Ordnance survey map of 1950 (Fig 11) shows little change to the building's form or the site, showing the steps down to the bowling green still in existence. The photo from 1964 (Fig 12) also shows the building with the small extension to the east side and the front steps before they were altered.



Fig 12 Exterior from the South East 1964
Ref: Alt Ref No: C/P/65/7/1/38/2 Leek: Bowling Green Inn 1964 Staffordshire Record Office

The Joules Brewery bought the inn at that time and proposals were drawn up and approved in June 1964 to make alterations to the building including the addition of the rear extensions to enlarge the bars and bring the toilets inside. The size of the extensions was limited due to the rock and land rising steeply behind the building. The steps leading up to the main entrance on the front elevation were replaced by a raised terrace and a random stone retaining wall surmounted by iron railings (Fig 13).



Fig 13 South Elevation 1975

Ref: Alt Ref No: C/P/65/7/1/26/1 Leek: Abbey Inn 9 April 1975 Staffordshire Record Office

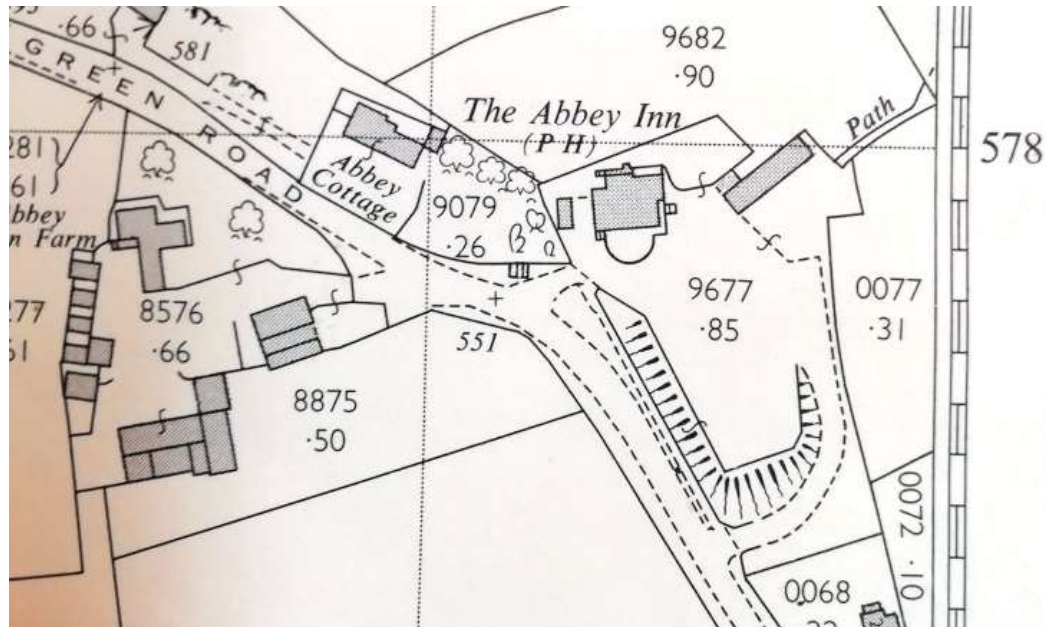


Fig 14 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 1970 surveyed 1968.

Ref: Leek Library Local Maps Abbey Green Map 9.

The land in front of the inn was regraded; the steps leading down to the bowling green removed and the void infilled to create the car parking area that now exists. The yew trees were removed and the steep bank created around the area to the west and south. A new vehicular access was created off Abbey Green Road and lead up to the newly formed car parking area. Recreation continued on the bowling green site and became a children's play area.

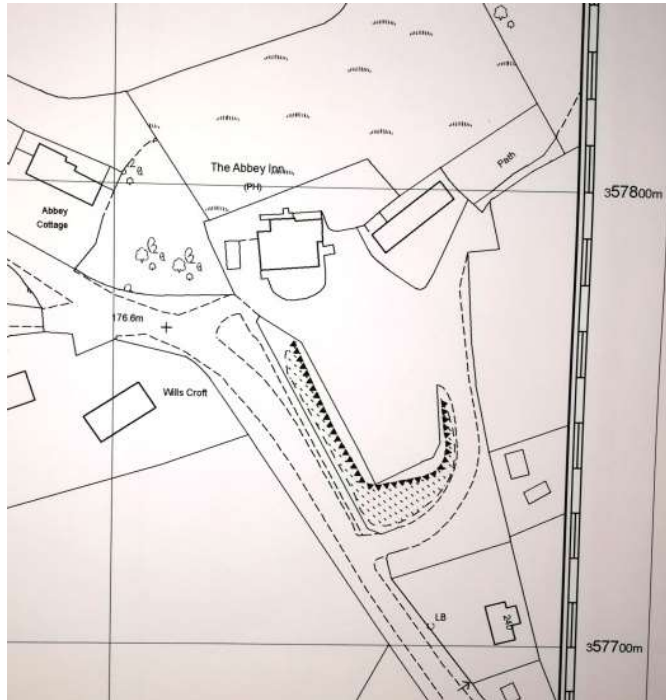


Fig 15 Ordnance Survey Map 1:1250 2009
Ref: Leek Library Local Maps Map 125i Abbey Green

Since the alterations in the late 1960s early 70s the ground floor of the inn has been changed internally to attempt to improve the kitchen and storage facilities. The external appearance of the building has not changed between that time and the early 21st century (Fig 15)

The detailed historic map regression has enabled a better understanding of the relationship of the inn to the surrounding and wider landscape. This has contributed to the assessment of the significance of the heritage asset.

The development of the building has been shown since its construction and has revealed its significance and prominence within the natural setting of Abbey Green. Its use throughout the centuries has little altered; the local community playing on the bowling green, visiting the inn for refreshment contributing to its character and cultural value.

4.0 Assessment and Significance of the Existing Building

The Abbey Inn is a grade II* listed building and a remarkable survivor of the 17-18th century. Its location shows it as a prominent building towards the top of Abbey Green Road surrounded by a countryside of undulating green fields, stone walls, farming homesteads and cottages.

4.1 Externally



Fig 16 South elevation

The two storey building is constructed of coursed squared sandstone with ashlar dressings, coped gables with moulded kneelers and end brick stacks (Fig 16). Little has changed to the south and principal elevation which still shows the historic characteristics from when it was first constructed being symmetrical in style with a massive lintol to the central doorway bearing the date 1702 and initials A I M. Flanking the main 20th century entrance door are 3 light chamfer mullioned windows with 8-pane casements. To the first floor there are 2 and 3 light windows and gabled attic dormers of 2 and 3 lights with coped gablets. Some replacements have been made in brick to the gables.



Fig 17 East elevation

At the east elevation can be seen the hatch to the cellar drop access for beer keg delivery and steps leading upto the raised terrace (Fig 17).

The 20th century brick, flat roofed extensions to make provision for kitchen, food preparation, storage areas and toilets are quite concealed having been built into the hillside to the rear/north of the building (Fig 18).



Fig 18 North elevation



Fig 19 West elevation

The west elevation, again with little change, to the existing original part of the building, showing the remaining stonework and the drip moulds continuing from the south elevation. The stone flat roofed extension can be seen with an iron security window and the brick extension adjacent (Fig 20). All windows are 20th century timber painted.



Fig 20

4.2 Internally

4.2.1 Ground Floor

The building is accessed at the south elevation into the main entrance showing exposed historic timbers and stone and white painted rough plastered walls throughout the ground floor; a 19th century timber staircase leads to the first floor (Fig 21).

From this point also, stairs lead down to the cellar, the area covering the whole footprint of the building with white painted walls and concrete floor.

The 20th century timber servery is positioned in the centre of this floor area and serves the snug on the east side and the dining area on the west side.



Fig 21

Within the snug the stone and historic timbers are exposed to the walls; the ceiling is rough plastered, painted with exposed beams; timber boarded floor is exposed (Fig 22 and 23). A half glazed timber boarded door leads off through the original rear wall to the lobby and toilets within the brick extension.



Fig 22



Fig 23

Within the large dining area (Fig 24 and 25) the walls are painted rough plaste with some exposed stone and beams. A large feature brick fireplace (20th century) with large historic timber lintol and stonework is on the west side. The 20th century kitchen and toilets lead off from this area accommodated in the brick extensions to the rear of the building.



Fig 24



Fig 25

4.2.2 First Floor

The first floor consists of the owner's living accommodation of living room, kitchen, bedroom and shower room. The walls and ceiling are painted rough plaster with some exposed beams.

4.2.3 Second Floor Attic

A timber staircase leads to the second floor attic where there is a 20th century timber galleried landing and two bedrooms (Fig 26, 27, 28).



Fig 26



Fig 27



Fig 28

The walls and ceilings are exposed showing the historic stone and timbers. The 18th century doors are vertically boarded and braced with iron latches and hinges.

5.0 The Proposal

The proposal is for change of use in name only of the ground floor and part of the cellar from public house to part of the dwelling on the upper floors. The public house is no longer a viable concern. The owners have the property for sale and the only interest that has been received is for residential use.

Therefore, the only changes that are being requested are to the cellar and ground floor. It is proposed to change the name of some rooms, the removal of the servery, installation of a new door at the foot of the stairs (to assist in fire safety) and the removal of the public toilets to create utility and storage areas. These changes can all be seen in drawing 2024-2881-03 Planning Proposal Floor Plans.

6.0 Impact upon the Heritage Asset

The proposals would have little impact upon the building externally or internally or within its setting. The main impact would be upon the use of the building as no longer being run as a public house. However, it has been proved that the business is no longer viable and its use as such is now redundant.

The only alteration to the building externally is the removal of the commercial kitchen vent stack, which would have a positive impact on the building visually.

The renaming of the rooms and areas from that of a public house to a dwelling would not alter any of the existing characteristics of those rooms.

The removal of the central servery, being a stand alone addition, would not have an adverse impact on the fabric of the building. The area is very open plan where walls had already been removed.

The configuration of the public toilets within the north brick extension would remain the same. The sanitaryware, two wcs and washbasin from the ladies toilet and the urinals from the gents toilet to be removed. This use of this area would change to become utility and store.

The addition of a new fire door at the foot of the stairs on the ground floor is to assist in fire safety and in the escape route of the occupants and would have a positive impact on the building.

2024-2881-HS v1 / The Abbey Inn / Heritage Statement / ASAP / SC / April 2024

APPENDIX 1

LISTING SUMMARY

This copy shows the entry on 23rd April 2024.

ABBEY INN

Overview

Heritage Category: Listed Building
Grading: Grade:II*
List Entry Number: 1268652
Date first listed: 13th April 1951
Date of most recent amendment: 14th October 1996
Statutory Address: ABBEY INN, ABBEY GREEN ROAD, LEEK

Location

Statutory Address: ABBEY INN, ABBEY GREEN ROAD, LEEK
County: Staffordshire
District: Staffordshire Moorlands (District Authority)
Parish: Leek
National Grid Ref: SJ 97940 57787

Details

LEEK SJ9 5NE ABBEY GREEN ROAD 611-1/1/3 (East side) 13/04/51 Abbey Inn
(Formerly Listed as: ABBEY GREEN Abbey Inn)

GV II*

Formerly known as: Bowling Green Inn ABBEY GREEN. House, now inn. Dated 1702, altered and extended C20. Coursed squared sandstone with ashlar dressings, some replacement in brick to gables. Welsh slated roof. Coped gables with moulded kneelers and end brick stacks.

EXTERIOR: 2 storeys with attics. Symmetrical principal elevation with massive lintel to central doorway, pierced by small circular light, and bearing date and initials. Flanking the door are 3-light chamfer mullioned windows with 8-pane casements and C20 shutters. Continuous drip mould stepped over doorway. 2- and 3-light windows to first floor and gabled attic dormers of 2 and 3 lights with copied gablets.

INTERIOR: not inspected.

SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: steps at right angles; enclosing wall now replaced by raised terrace and random stone retaining wall surmounted by C20 iron railings.

Listing NGR: SJ9794057787

Legal

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.