

Heritage Statement

Change of Use of ground floor property at Church House, Gorsty Hill Road, Upper Tean

1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement supports a planning application for the conversion of existing church community rooms into a single residential dwelling at Church House, located adjacent to Gorsty Hill United Church and beneath an existing residential unit on Gorsty Hill Road, Upper Tean, known as Flat 1.

The statement assesses the potential impact of the development on surrounding heritage assets, particularly Kiln Croft (PRN 54032), as identified in the Upper Tean and Waterhouses Historic Environment Assessment (HEA), and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and local policy guidance from Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.

2. Site Description and Historical Context

The building subject to this proposal is a two-storey structure, with community rooms at ground level and an existing residential unit above. The building is situated adjacent to a church (a local landmark), within a mixed-use area of historical and residential development on the fringe of Upper Tean.

The ground floor space has been historically used for community and ancillary purposes, though it is now underutilised and has been for many years. The proposed change seeks to provide a self-contained, sustainable residential unit within the existing building footprint.

3. Nearby Heritage Assets

- **Kiln Croft (PRN 54032)** – Located nearby, Kiln Croft is identified in the Upper Tean and Waterhouses HEA as a site of local historic interest. It may be associated with the region's ceramics or brickmaking heritage. While not statutorily listed, it is considered a non-designated heritage asset due to its local value and historical association.
- **Upper Tean Conservation Area** – The site is within the boundary of the conservation area (although close to the edge, whose character reflects 18th and 19th-century rural-industrial village development).

4. Assessment of Significance and Setting

Kiln Croft's significance lies in its historical association with local industry and its contribution to the character of the surrounding townscape. The church and community building, though modern in form, form part of this evolving historic context.

The existing structure has a neutral presence in the streetscape and is architecturally modest. Its conversion will have no adverse impact on the understanding or appreciation of Kiln Croft or the adjacent church.

5. Impact of the Proposed Development

- The conversion involves some minor internal reconfiguration with minimal external alteration, retaining the overall scale, massing, and appearance of the building.
- Any proposed external changes (e.g., door/window modifications) will be undertaken using materials in keeping with the existing structure and local context.
- The proposal will not impact the visual or spatial relationship with Kiln Croft or the church.
- Views toward heritage assets remain uninterrupted, and no harm is caused to their setting.

As the proposal is for a low-impact reuse of existing built fabric, it results in no harm to the character or setting of any heritage asset and contributes positively to the continued use and sustainability of the building.

6. Design and Mitigation Measures

- Careful attention will be paid to the selection of materials and finishes to ensure harmony with the existing built environment.
- Any necessary interventions will be reversible where feasible, in line with best practice for changes to buildings within a heritage context.

7. Conclusion

The proposed conversion represents a sympathetic and sustainable reuse of existing space, bringing underused community rooms into productive residential use. It will cause no harm to the significance or setting of Kiln Croft (PRN 54032) or other nearby heritage assets. The scheme complies with the aims of the NPPF, particularly paragraphs 203–206 concerning non-designated heritage assets, and aligns with Staffordshire Moorlands' local planning policy.