

BASFORD HALL WOODCHIP STORAGE BUILDING | BASFORD LEEK | STAFFORDSHIRE

Proposed Erection of Agricultural and Woodchip Storage Building



HERITAGE STATEMENT

July 2025

architects | historic building advisors | project managers | landscape and urban designers

ctd
architects

Clerk Bank House
Clerk Bank
LEEK
Staffordshire
ST13 5HE

t: 01538 373 477
info@ctdarchitects.co.uk
www.ctdarchitects.co.uk

RIBA 
Chartered Practice

BASFORD HALL WOODCHIP STORAGE BUILDING | BASFORD, LEEK |
STAFFORDSHIRE
HERITAGE STATEMENT

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	03
• Outline	
• Aims and Objectives	
2. SITE DESCRIPTION AND SUMMARY	04
• Listing	
• Location	
• History	
3. CHARACTER	09
• Setting	
4. HISTORIC, CULTURAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE	10
5. PROPOSALS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT	12
• Proposals	
• Impact Assessment	
6. SUMMARY	14
7. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES	15

BASFORD HALL WOODCHIP STORAGE BUILDING | BASFORD, LEEK |
STAFFORDSHIRE
HERITAGE STATEMENT

BASFORD HALL WOODCHIP STORAGE BUILDING | BASFORD, LEEK | STAFFORDSHIRE HERITAGE STATEMENT

1.0

INTRODUCTION

OUTLINE

This Heritage Statement forms supporting information for the Planning application for the proposed erection of a new freestanding building at Basford Hall, Leek, Staffordshire. Basford Hall is Grade II listed and a *Heritage Asset*¹.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that Local Planning Authorities should require applicants to *describe the significance of any heritage assets affected including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential of the proposal on their significance.*²

This document has been prepared to assess the significance of the setting at Basford Hall and the wider area. It will discuss any potential impact from the proposed new building. The report will analyse historic context and the current setting of the estate and its buildings.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this report is to demonstrate how the proposals respond to the requirements set out in the NPPF, as outlined above, and to demonstrate that the application,

- contributes to the economic viability of the community by sustaining heritage assets and;
- makes a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness by responding to its setting in a manner which is respectful of conservation philosophy and setting³ as well as local policy.

This will be achieved by assessing:

- the significance of the heritage assets and their setting;
- to understand the contribution of setting to the significance of these heritage assets;
- the impact of the proposals on the character and significance of the heritage assets and their setting.
- whether the proposals constitute a positive approach to the conservation of the heritage assets which will secure their survival in the future and reduce the *risk of neglect, decay and other threats*⁴ and whether they demonstrate compliance with national and local planning policy;
- strategies which will allow the heritage assets and their setting to be conserved in a *manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations*⁵

In addition to the listed buildings, the assessment also considers the significance of the non-designated historic parkland identified on the Staffordshire HER (ref. MST6178).

¹ National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2024, pg.73

² NPPF, 2024, para 207

³ NPPF 2024 para 207

⁴ NPPF 2024 para 203

⁵ NPPF 2024 para 202

BASFORD HALL WOODCHIP STORAGE BUILDING | BASFORD, LEEK | STAFFORDSHIRE HERITAGE STATEMENT

2.0

SITE DESCRIPTION AND SUMMARY

LISTING

The proposed woodchip storage building is within the vicinity of Basford Hall, Lodge Farm and Lodge Cottage which were all listed as Grade II Listed Buildings on 15th December 1986. The buildings are therefore of national significance. The historic parkland of the Basford Hall Estate outside of the curtilage of the listed buildings is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset (HER ref. MST6178).

LOCATION AND GEOLOGY

The Basford Hall Estate lies approximately 3 miles south of the market town of Leek and just northwest of the Churnet Valley. The site is not in a Conservation Area. The Grid Reference for the site is SJ990511. The British Geological Survey (2021) shows that the underlying bedrock directly below the site is sandstone of the Chester Sandstone Formation with Alluvium deposits nearby the site and is located approximately 150m above sea level.

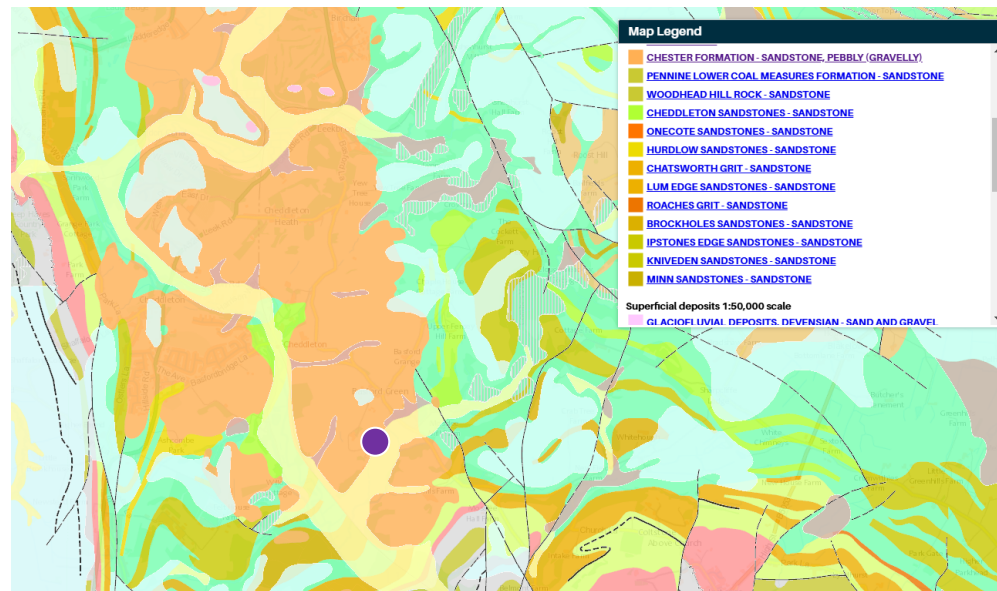


Fig 1. BGS map showing baserock. Purple circle identifies the approximate location of the proposed site; Source: British Geological Survey

The proposed location of the new woodchip storage building is approximately 260m north of Basford Hall within an agricultural field. The land is adjacent neighbouring agricultural land and a farm building. The existing field is accessed via a separate gate from the end of Basford Hall Road, adjacent to the entrance gates to the Basford Hall estate. Lodge Farm and Lodge Cottage are located approximately 50m from the access gate and approximately 140m from the proposed site.

The gently sloping topography and mature vegetation structure help to reinforce the estate's historic rural character and enhance the visual relationship between buildings and landscape.

BASFORD HALL WOODCHIP STORAGE BUILDING | BASFORD, LEEK | STAFFORDSHIRE

HERITAGE STATEMENT

HISTORY

The hamlet of Basford, which was one of the original 19 townships which made up the medieval parish of Leek, and later one of the townships of the parish of Cheddleton created in the 16th-century, is situated approximately four miles south of Leek and six miles north of Cheadle, in the county of Staffordshire.

The Basford Estate was bought by Thomas Hammersley from Francis Finney, in 1693 and was sold by his grandson Thomas Hammersley, to John Palfreyman in 1760. It afterwards became the property of Clement Kynnersley of Loxley-Park who sold it in 1804 to George Blount; who in 1810 transferred it to William Sneyd, of Ashcombe Park.

In the 1839 census Basford Hall was a property of 31 acres and nine perches of land, owned by the Revd. John Sneyd⁶, who had taken the house over in a dilapidated state in 1824, before partially demolishing and rebuilding between 1827 and 1830 under the direction of celebrated Staffordshire-born architect James Trubshaw Junior⁷.

Basford Hall also served as a Special School between 1953-1955 and closed in 1962 when it was returned to use as a family house.

Today the estate is owned by the Scott-Moncrieff family (descendants of the Sneyd family) and, in addition to being their family home, it is also home to a number of families renting Estate properties such as the converted former Stables, Consall View and Lodge Farmhouse and Cottage.

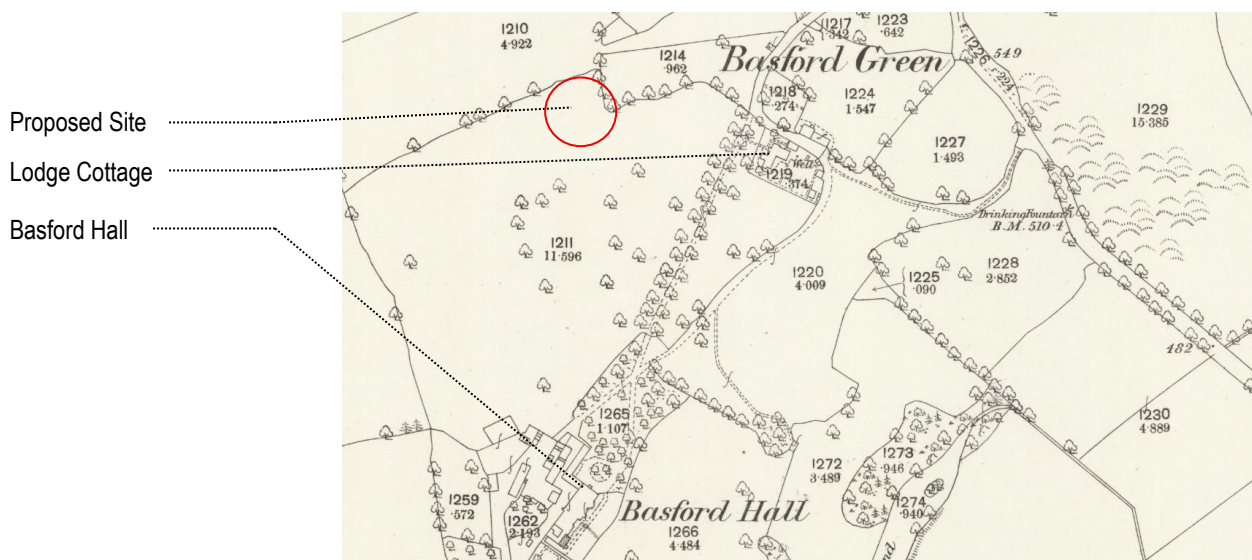


Fig.1 1880 Ordnance Survey Map. Showing the Basford Hall, Lodge Cottage and the proposed site for the woodchip storage building (circled);

⁶ Milner, p.125

⁷ Milner, p.135

BASFORD HALL WOODCHIP STORAGE BUILDING | BASFORD, LEEK | STAFFORDSHIRE

HERITAGE STATEMENT



Fig.2 1898 Ordnance Survey Map. Showing the proposed site for the woodchip storage building (circled)
Source: National Library of Scotland



Fig.3 1925 Ordnance Survey Map. Showing the proposed site for the woodchip storage building (circled);
Source: National Library of Scotland

BASFORD HALL WOODCHIP STORAGE BUILDING | BASFORD, LEEK | STAFFORDSHIRE HERITAGE STATEMENT



Fig.4 1966 Ordnance Survey Map. Showing proposed site for the woodchip storage building (circled);
Source: National Library of Scotland



Fig.5 2025 Site Location Plan, showing the proposed woodchip storage building (within red boundary); Source: ctd architects, 2025

BASFORD HALL WOODCHIP STORAGE BUILDING | BASFORD, LEEK | STAFFORDSHIRE HERITAGE STATEMENT

3.0

CHARACTER

SETTING

Basford Hall Farm, located to the northwest of Basford Hall, historically functioned as part of the working estate. Whilst the land is still farmed, the farm itself ceased operations several decades ago. The associated buildings have since been converted into standalone residential dwellings, a use they have maintained for over 30 years. Similarly, Lodge Farm, situated to the northeast of the Hall, is no longer an operational farm. Its traditional agricultural buildings have been sensitively repurposed as lettable residential accommodation.

Over time, various buildings across the Basford Hall Estate have been adapted to residential or other appropriate uses. This evolution has been key to securing their long-term conservation and ensuring the estate's continued viability. Despite these changes, the historic hierarchy of buildings on the estate remains legible, with Basford Hall continuing to act as the principal residence. This is reinforced by the retention of its formal, tree-lined approach. These features contribute to the understanding of the site's original use and the intended visual prominence of the principal house within a managed rural landscape.

A separate private track serves the former farmsteads and outlying estate buildings including Rock Cottage, the Bath House, and the Folly Tower, maintaining clear spatial and functional distinctions within the estate layout.

Access to the proposed woodchip storage building will utilise an existing agricultural gateway to the north of Basford Hall. This access point lies adjacent to the estate's main entrance gates and the historic tree-lined drive leading to the Hall (*fig. 6*), as well as to the surrounding non-designated historic parkland. The proposal therefore reuses an established route, avoiding the need for intrusive new access infrastructure and minimising impact on the historic setting.



Fig.6 View of the field access gates to the proposed woodchip storage building (right), entrance to Basford Hall (left) and Lodge Cottage in the background; Source: *ctd architects*, 2024

BASFORD HALL WOODCHIP STORAGE BUILDING | BASFORD, LEEK | STAFFORDSHIRE HERITAGE STATEMENT

SUMMARY

The Basford Hall Estate is set within a traditional rural landscape, characteristic of historic English country estates. The estate lies within a gently undulating agricultural setting, featuring a mix of arable fields, pastureland, mature hedgerows, and tree-lined boundaries. The immediate and wider setting is largely undeveloped, reinforcing a strong sense of tranquillity and visual continuity.

Basford Hall, a Grade II listed country house, lies at the heart of the estate. It is located within what was historically designed parkland, which, although no longer formally maintained, retains key features such as tree avenues, open grassland, and boundary planting. This historic parkland is considered a non-designated heritage asset due to its aesthetic, historical, and evidential value, contributing significantly to the estate's rural character and historical coherence.

To the north-west lies Basford Hall Farm, a Grade II listed farmhouse with ancillary buildings, forming part of the original estate's working farm complex. Basford Hall Farm exhibits traditional vernacular architecture, contributing to the local rural character and reinforcing the agricultural history of the estate.

To the north-east of Basford Hall lies Lodge Farm and Lodge Cottage. Lodge Farmhouse is a 'longhouse' with adjoining barn located on the east boundary of the estate dating back to the late 1700's and therefore historically part of the wider estate structure. Lodge Cottage is located within the boundary of the estate, adjacent the main entrance. It was constructed in the mid 19th century and listed as a Grade II listed building in December 1989 alongside the estate buildings.

The listed buildings are spatially and functionally linked by the historic agricultural estate context, but are not in direct visual proximity, due to distance, tree cover, and changes in topography. Views between the buildings are intermittent and filtered, contributing to a sense of separation and individual character within a shared landscape context.

Overall, the character of the setting is defined by:

- Predominantly agricultural land use, interspersed with woodland belts and historic features.
- Open, green, and undeveloped visual qualities with long rural views.
- A strong sense of historic continuity, with both designated and non-designated heritage assets reflecting a layered, evolving rural estate character.

BASFORD HALL WOODCHIP STORAGE BUILDING | BASFORD, LEEK | STAFFORDSHIRE HERITAGE STATEMENT

4.0

HISTORIC, CULTURAL AND SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

*"The limits imposed by the structure and features of the asset are an important consideration, as is an understanding of the significance of individual elements, derived both from the physical evidence and documentary sources"*⁸

The Basford Estate has been passed down through the Sneyd and now Scott-Moncrieff family since 1810, although the earliest records of the site date back to 1693. While the ownership of land has remained relatively intact, the estate has evolved to reflect broader social and economic changes, including different tenancies and shifts in land use.

Basford Hall has served primarily as a family home for centuries, with a notable interlude in the mid-20th century when it was adapted for use as a Special School (1953–1955). This historical continuity, coupled with limited institutional reuse, has helped preserve much of the estate's traditional layout, architectural integrity and *significance*⁹.

Designated Heritage Assets

Lodge Farmhouse and Barn are significant historic buildings, representative of the vernacular farmstead architecture within Staffordshire. Their plan form and materials provide insight into the historical function of estate farms and their role within rural estate economies. Their sensitive conversion into residential dwellings has retained their external character while securing long-term viability.

Lodge Cottage, likely functioning historically as a gate lodge or worker's dwelling, contributes to the historic social structure of the estate and reflects the modest architectural idiom of supporting estate buildings.

Collectively, these listed buildings provide important evidence of hierarchical estate planning, and their layout and character contribute to the understanding of rural land ownership, agricultural economy, and domestic service in the 18th and 19th centuries.

In addition to these designated buildings, the wider estate also contains elements of historic landscape significance that merit consideration as non-designated heritage assets.

Non-Designated Historic Parkland

The historic parkland surrounding Basford Hall, although not formally registered, is recorded on the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) (ref. MST6178) and is considered a non-designated heritage asset. It contributes to the significance of the estate through:

- **Aesthetic value:** The parkland retains historic visual qualities including open grassland, mature boundary planting, and tree-lined avenues. These features frame the approach to Basford Hall and define its setting.
- **Historic value:** The layout is consistent with late 18th and early 19th-century estate design principles. Although no formal landscape design by a named architect is recorded, the estate layout reflects the informal landscaping traditions of its era.

⁸ Making changes to Heritage Assets, Historic England Advice Note 2, p.2

⁹ NPPF 2024, p.78

BASFORD HALL WOODCHIP STORAGE BUILDING | BASFORD, LEEK |
STAFFORDSHIRE
HERITAGE STATEMENT

- Evidential value: Surviving physical features such as tree belts, field patterns, and entrance routes preserve information about the estate's past land management practices and visual hierarchy.

The parkland reinforces the historic coherence of the estate as a designed rural landscape and provides a visual and spatial context for understanding the historic relationship between the Hall, its agricultural dependencies, and its approaches. Despite some loss of formality in recent decades, the landscape continues to reflect the estate's historical layout and character.

In line with Historic England's Conservation Principles, this non-designated heritage asset contributes materially to the overall significance of the Basford Hall Estate and merits careful consideration in any development affecting its setting or features.

The significance of this historic parkland, though non-designated, must be considered in line with paragraph 211 of the NPPF¹⁰, which requires balanced judgment with regard to the scale of harm and the asset's value.

¹⁰ NPPF 2024, p.60

BASFORD HALL WOODCHIP STORAGE BUILDING | BASFORD, LEEK | STAFFORDSHIRE HERITAGE STATEMENT

5.0

PROPOSALS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT

PROPOSALS

In brief, the proposals comprise the construction of a new agricultural storage building on farmland forming part of the Basford Hall Estate. The structure will be used to store woodchip fuel for the estate's biomass heating system, supporting the estate's transition to sustainable energy use.

The key elements of the proposal include:

- Erection of a purpose-built storage building, agricultural in character, with a ridge height of 8.5 metres, reflecting the scale of traditional farm buildings.
- The building will be clad in robust and recessive materials, including concrete lower wall panels, dark green metal cladding to the upper elevations, and a dark green fibre cement roof. These materials are commonly found in rural settings and will help the building blend into the agricultural landscape.
- The building will be set back a minimum of 8 metres from the boundary, to preserve and protect the root zones and visual integrity of the existing mature tree line.
- A new section of hardcore track will be formed across the field to provide suitable access for vehicles transporting woodchip to and from the store.
- The scheme proposes to utilise an existing agricultural access gate from the adjacent field, located immediately north of Basford Hall. This avoids the need for any new openings and reduces disruption to the historic estate layout.
- A programme of native tree and hedgerow planting is proposed to provide visual screening of the building and further integrate it into the surrounding landscape.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Impact on Designated Heritage Assets

The proposed building lies within the wider setting of Basford Hall and its associated-listed buildings (Basford Hall, Lodge Farmhouse, and Lodge Cottage) but is physically and visually removed from them. The siting, form, and materials of the proposed woodchip storage building are designed to respect the rural context and to avoid visual competition with historic buildings.

- The proposal does not encroach on the curtilage of any listed buildings.
- No key historic views or designed sightlines between listed assets are interrupted.
- The proposed use supports the sustainable functioning of the estate, aligned with current conservation philosophy regarding adaptive reuse and renewable energy.

The impact on heritage assets has been assessed with reference to their significance, visibility, and the extent to which their setting contributes to that significance.

Impact on the Non-Designated Historic Parkland

The proposed development falls within the boundaries of the historic parkland recorded on the Staffordshire Historic Environment Record (HER), which, although not statutorily protected, holds historic, aesthetic, and evidential value. This parkland contributes to the estate's legibility and character,

BASFORD HALL WOODCHIP STORAGE BUILDING | BASFORD, LEEK | STAFFORDSHIRE HERITAGE STATEMENT

reflecting the hierarchical design of the country estate in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The development will introduce a new functional structure into this context. Although agricultural in character and modest in scale, the building represents a change in the historic landscape pattern, potentially diluting the visual and spatial integrity of the former parkland.

However:

- The building avoids disruption to designed features, historic boundaries, and tree belts.
- It uses materials and forms consistent with traditional rural buildings.
- Proposed native hedgerow and tree planting will soften visual impact, and the development is fully reversible.

In accordance with paragraph 211 of the NPPF (2024), a balanced judgement must be made having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. In this case, the limited visual and spatial impact on the parkland is considered minor and is outweighed by the contribution of the development to the long-term sustainability and viability of the historic estate.

Cumulative Impact

The proposal is a single intervention and does not represent incremental encroachment or urbanisation. The building remains functionally appropriate to the estate context and respects the spatial logic of the historic layout.

Impact of New Hardcore Track

As a new but low-profile landscape feature, the track introduces some change to the field's appearance but:

- Avoids crossing or severing any known historic landscape features.
- Follows the existing topography, with a permeable and natural-toned finish.
- Is screened by tree cover and mitigated through landscape design.

Mitigation Measures

To ensure the protection of the heritage setting:

- New native tree and hedgerow planting to provide year-round screening.
- Sensitive building design, with traditional materials and agricultural form, will minimise its visual intrusion.
- The building will be reversible in nature, with minimal groundworks, ensuring long-term flexibility.

**BASFORD HALL WOODCHIP STORAGE BUILDING | BASFORD, LEEK |
STAFFORDSHIRE
HERITAGE STATEMENT**

The proposed woodchip storage building represents a carefully considered and proportionate intervention within the Basford Hall Estate. Its purpose supports the estate's renewable energy strategy and continued viable use, which is central to long-term stewardship of both designated and non-designated heritage assets.

Although the building sits within a historic parkland landscape identified in the Staffordshire HER, the visual and spatial impact is low. Key features of the landscape, including views, boundaries, and vegetation structure, remain legible and largely unaltered. Through sensitive siting, recessive materials, and native planting, the development has been designed to preserve the significance and setting of both listed buildings and the historic parkland.

In line with paragraph 211 of the NPPF¹¹, the limited impact on a non-designated asset has been weighed against its significance. The scheme demonstrates a responsible and sustainable approach to the management of heritage, in keeping with Historic England's Conservation Principles and best practice.

¹¹ NPPF 2024, p.60

BASFORD HALL WOODCHIP STORAGE BUILDING | BASFORD, LEEK |
STAFFORDSHIRE
HERITAGE STATEMENT

7.0

BIBLIOGRAPHY & REFERENCES

British Standard BS 7913; Guide to **The Principles of the Conservation of Historic Buildings**; BSI 1998.

Clarke, Kate; **Informed Conservation**; London; English Heritage; 2003.

Collingwood, Neil; **Cheddleton and Around Through Time**; Stroud; Amberley Publishing; 2014.

Department for Communities and Local Government; **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**; December 2024.

Department for Communities and Local Government, Department for Culture, Media and Sport (dcms) & English Heritage; **PPS 5 Planning for the Historic Environment : Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide**; London; English Heritage; March 2010.

Historic England (formerly English Heritage); **Conservation Principles; Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment**; April 2008.

Historic England; **Making Changes to Heritage Assets; Advice Note 2**; February 2016

Milner, Robert; **Cheddleton 1841: The Census, the People and the Houses**; Leek; Churnet Valley Books; 2012.

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) Manifesto, 1877.

Staffordshire Heritage Environment Record, **Basford Hall Park (MonUID: MST6178)**; HER Number: 40069; Heritage Gateway.org.uk; accessed: 08.07.2025