

The Priory
Church Lane, Prestbury
Cheltenham
GL52 3AP

HERITAGE STATEMENT



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The Priory

HERITAGE STATEMENT

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PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared to accompany a planning application for the partial demolition of an existing lean-to addition and its replacement with a kitchen extension, new boot room and basement at The Priory, Church Lane, Prestbury, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL52 3AP.

The Priory is a substantial stone and timber-framed building dating from the 14th century. It is located within a large plot adjacent to the parish church at the centre of the village of Prestbury on the outskirts of Cheltenham Spa. The building was subdivided into two dwellings in the mid 20th century. This proposal concerns only The Priory which occupies the main south range and not its former ancillary wing to the north-east which is now known as The Little Priory. This subdivision compromised the service accommodation within The Priory, and this application aims to address this problem by enlarging and updating the existing kitchen to provide facilities more appropriate to a house of this size and quality that conform with modern requirements.

The Priory is a Grade II listed building and is situated adjacent to other designated heritage assets. It is also located on a site of archaeological potential at the centre of Prestbury Conservation Area. This report has been requested to determine the significance of the building and that of the other designated and non-designated assets within the immediate vicinity, assess the impact of the proposals upon this significance, and how any adverse effects might be justified or mitigated in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Planning Practice Guidance and local government policy.

1.2 Designation Records

A desk-based search was made of the Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record within the immediate vicinity of the building to identify all other designated and undesignated assets on or adjacent to the site. No scheduled monuments, registered parks or gardens, registered battlefields or locally listed buildings occur within this area.

The Conservation Area Appraisal (Cheltenham Borough Council 2009) identified 60 Listed Buildings and an unspecified number of locally listed buildings within the Conservation Area. There are 16 listed buildings or structures within an approximate 100m radius of The Priory, including The Priory itself. The other listed buildings or structures are the church, eleven churchyard monuments or groups of monuments, The Little Priory, the dovecote west of The Priory and now in separate ownership, and the Plough Inn in Mill Street.

Listed Buildings

The Priory

Grade II GV

Listing Date: 25 Feb 1987

List Entry Number 1091902

NGR: SO 39692240

Semi-detached house, formerly one house (q.v. The Little Priory, Mill Street). C14, C16-early C17, and C18. Close-studded timber framing with some bracing, pebble-dashed infill exposed at first-floor level of three left hand bays. Ground floor now mostly random squared and dressed limestone. Left gable end timber framed. Five bays to right coursed squared and dressed limestone. Stone slate roof. Ashlar stacks, one restored C20. Rectangular main body with C18 range at right-angles rear right now under separate ownership. Two storeys and attic lit by four hipped roof dormers with hung slate. Nine-windowed façade lit by single and 2-light steel casements with leaded panes. Central C20 plank door within a flat-chamfered stone surround. Single-storey lean-to at left gable end. Stepped coping at right gable end. Axial and gable-end stacks. Two hollow-chamfered stone-mullioned cross windows with cinquefoil-headed lights and carved spandrels to first floor at right gable end. Interior: two rooms with C17 panelling. Fluted frieze above panelling in downstairs room. Large open fireplace with bressumer beam. Tie beams with deep flat chamfers. According to David Verey, the house incorporates a C14 hall of four bays, formerly single-storeyed and open to the roof. The arch-braced collar beam trusses now mostly cut back. One brace with a bowtell moulding springing from a semi-octagonal wall post with a moulded capital was present in 1975.

Other listed buildings within the immediate vicinity include:

Church of St Mary

Grade II* NGR: SO969239

Listing Date: 4.7.60

List Entry Number: 1153687

11 monuments or groups of churchyard monuments

All were first listed in 25.2.87. One is listed Grade II*; the remainder are Grade II.

Grade II*

Francis Kennet monument

Grade II

Allen family monument

Group of 13 monuments

Group of 6 headstones

Kinard Baghot monument

Monument 17m SE of south aisle

Pair of monuments S of S aisle

Unidentified monument
Unidentified monument
Unidentified monument
Unidentified monument

The Little Priory (former ancillary wing now in separate ownership)

Grade II GV NGR: SO909240
Listing Date: 4.7.60
List Entry Number: 1091906

Dovecote 35m south of Prior's Piece (now in separate ownership)

Grade II NGR: SO969240
Listing Date: 4.7.60
List Entry Number: 1153659

Plough Inn

Grade II NGR: SO970240
Listing Date: 25.2.87
List Entry Number: 1091912

Non-designated Assets

No non-designated assets occur within the search area. The nearest assets included on the Cheltenham Local List are The Lower Mill and Church Farm House in Mill Street.

HER Archaeological Entries

HER records imply that the site on which The Priory is located has much archaeological potential. See Fig.10. HER entries on or adjacent to the site are as follows:

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| HER 5443 | Overall entry for The Priory |
| HER 36021 | The Priory |
| HER 36023 | The Little Priory |
| HER 8377 | Church |
| HER 36025-35 | Church monuments |
| HER 49563 | Two sites containing human bones |
| HER 7355 | Site of medieval village covering the churchyard and an area to the south |
| HER 4845 | Dovecote |
| HER 20825 | Part of the mill leat |
| HER 7357 | Site of Lower Mill (now Lower Mill House) Mill Street |
| HER 19160 | Late C18 column, Mill Street |
| HER 19163 | The Plough Inn |
| HER 21868 | Watching brief. Overbrook, Mill Street |
| HER 28346 | Watching brief. Church Court, Mill Street |
| HER 44520 & 52657 | Watching brief. Prior's Piece, Mill Street (identified a wall, & possibly a pit and posthole) |

Conservation Area

The building lies within Prestbury Conservation Area, which was designated by Gloucestershire County Council on 15 August 1971. The boundary was revised on 26 July 2001. Prestbury Character Appraisal and Management Plan (June 2009) has identified the key characteristics of the Area as follows:

- The area has retained its distinctive village character and qualities through the visual dominance of historically and architecturally important buildings, the retention of their attractive historic settings and the retention of many of the historic plot boundaries.
- The Conservation Area has a diverse mix of building type, style, age and function, with the retention of several agricultural structures. This adds to the special interest of the Conservation Area through the architectural variety of buildings, their details and materials, their relationships to each other, as well as the various uses of buildings and land.
- Prestbury has two distinct urban grains. A fine-grained format exists in the High Street and on the burgage plots in The Burgage itself. However, around St Mary's Church there is a marked contrast with a much looser urban grain in evidence.
- Mature tree growth, extensive open spaces and historic buildings positioned in large plots all contribute to a sense of space in parts of the Conservation Area.
- Cotswold stone walls form a distinctive feature within the Conservation Area and contribute to shaping its identity.

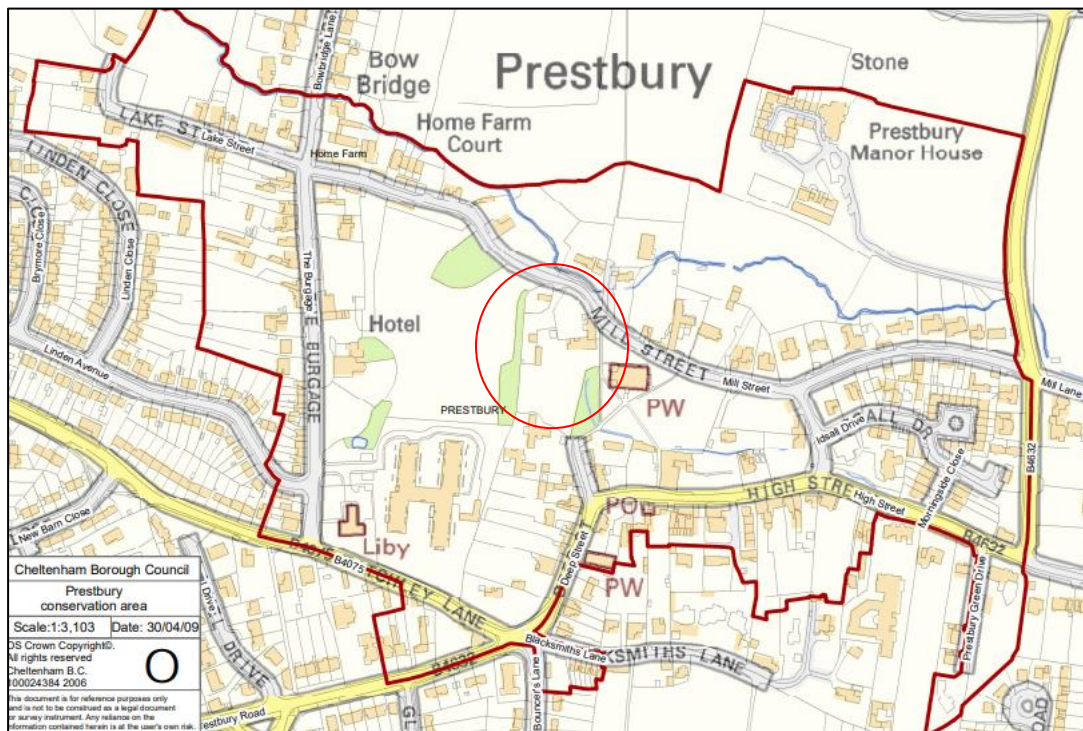


Figure 1 Prestbury Conservation Area

1.3 Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

This assessment has been prepared in accordance with the NPPF published 27 March 2012, revised July 2018, and updated 19 June 2019.

Paragraph 189 states that:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant 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 impact of the proposal on their significance.

Paragraph 197 states that:

The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account when determining the application. In weighing applications that directly and indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset

This statement has also been prepared in accordance with the guidelines recommended by Historic England for analysing the significance of heritage assets as follows: HE 2015: *Good Practice Advice Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment* and also HE 2019: *Statement of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets Historic England Advice Note 12*.

With specific regard to the setting of heritage assets, HE 2017: *Good Practice Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* recommends that impact assessments adopt a staged approach that identifies the assets affected, establishes the extent to which their settings contribute to their significance, assesses the impact of the proposed development on this significance and how any adverse effects might be justified and mitigated.

Local Planning Policy

This report also respects the specific requirements of the Cheltenham Borough Local Plan (June 2009 second review and The Cheltenham Plan (adopted 20 July 2020) relating to the historic environment. It is also in accordance with the requirements of *Prestbury Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan* (June 2009) and in particular to Action PB1 which states that any new development should:

...preserve or enhance the character of the Conservation Area, including new buildings, extensions, loss of green space, impact on views within the Area and demolition works.

1.4 The Priory: Planning History

The following planning applications were identified during a search of local authority online records and archival sources. (NB The outcome given for each application refers to the council's decision and not that of any other interested parties):

| | |
|---------------|--|
| 20/00916/CACN | Holm oak-fell Received 10/06/20 Validated 10/06/20 No objection raised |
| 16/01474/CACN | T1 holm oak- crown lift T2 Deodar Cedar-crown lift G1group of 4 beech and 2 silver birch-fell 1 beech and 1 birch G2 2 beech trees- reduce and crown thin T3 Large laurel-fell T4 Holly-fell T5 Ash-fell Received 16/08/16 Validated 16/08/16 No objection raised |
| 15/01981/LBC | Conversion of existing outbuilding within the curtilage of The Priory to a self-contained annexe ancillary to the main house. Repair and alteration of the garage to provide additional storage space at ground and loft level. Repairs to boundary wall. Received 11/11/15 Validated 15/07/16 Granted |
| 15/01981/FUL | As above Received 11/11/15 Validated 15/07/16 Application permitted |
| 15/00378/LBC | Repairs to stone-mullioned window & timber frame to north elevation Received 02/03/15 Validated 03/03/15 Granted |
| 12/01740/CACN | Mature cedar-selective branch reduction and crown thin. Yew trees alongside church footpath-crown lift and trim back Laburnum-fell Received 12/11/12 Validated 12/11/12 No objection raised |
| 11/01160/CACN | Holm oak-reduce crown and reshape Received 17/08/11 Validated 17/08/11 No objection raised |
| 05/01388/CACN | Fell 5 leylandii on southern boundary Received 01/09/05 Validated 02/09/05 No objection raised |

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| 02/01802/CACN | Holm oak-crown lift and crown thin Received 22/11/02 Validated 25/11/02 No objection raised |
| CBC T1228/F,G,G/1 | Scheme amended. Erection of two bungalows 1985 Granted |
| CBC T1228/E/2,3 | Erection of detached bungalow October 1983 Outline permission |
| CBC T1228e T1228/E/1 | Renewal of permission for one house and new vehicle and pedestrian access 1979 No objection raised |
| CBC T1228/E/1 | Drainage works and blocking kitchen south door to Create window 1976 No objection raised |
| CBC T1228d | One house and new vehicle and pedestrian access July 1974 No objection raised |
| CBC T1228 | Division of house into two separate dwellings 22 April 1952 Granted |
| GA DA21/710/11 | Lean-to WC on north side of house 1921 Granted |

1.5 Approach and Methodology

Report Brief

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Dr Catherine Gordon, an architectural historian and historic building consultant, on behalf of the current owners and applicants, Julian Rolfe and Suzanne A Rolfe, and also the agent, Nick Joyce Architects Ltd. It includes a detailed and objective analysis of the asset's significance, the significance of other heritage assets in the immediate vicinity, the impact of the proposals on this significance and how any adverse effects might be justified and mitigated.

Sources

The content relies on readily available documentary sources relating to the history and development of the site which were obtained online primarily. It has also been supported by

information supplied by Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record and a site survey undertaken on 30 April 2020.

Scope and Limitations

The Statement has been prepared to a level of detail deemed proportionate to the nature of the proposal. (See NPPF, Paragraph 189) It cannot attempt to provide an exhaustive account of the history and development of the relevant heritage asset and its site within the scope of the brief. Neither is it concerned with its structural or physical condition. It is focused chiefly upon the significance of the heritage asset in question and of its setting and how this may be affected physically or visually by the proposals.

Covid-19

It should also be noted that this report has been prepared under the extraordinary circumstances of the current COVID-19 pandemic. Only limited research facilities were available and an interior inspection was confined to the existing kitchen and cellar.

PART TWO: LOCATION, SETTING AND ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

2.1 Location

The village of Prestbury in Gloucestershire is located 2 miles north-east of Cheltenham town centre at the foot of Cleeve Hill. Since the 20th century, it has been linked physically by suburban development with the outskirts of Cheltenham and now forms part of the borough of Cheltenham, although it has retained its separate identity as a civil parish.



Figure 2 Location map

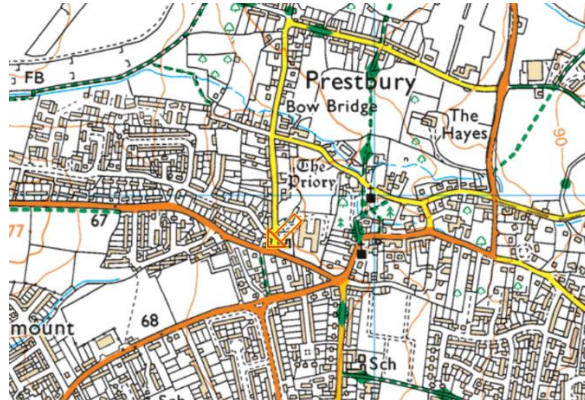


Figure 3 Location map detail

2.2. Setting



Figure 4 Site map

The historic core of Prestbury is centred around the Church of St Mary and The Priory, and is defined by Mill Lane and High Street to the north and south and by The Burgage to the west, which links these two principal streets. The High Street forms part of the B4632 road from Cheltenham to Winchcombe. East and north-east of the village, there is open countryside in mixed agricultural use, which runs beneath the Cotswold escarpment and forms part of the Cotswold AONB. The western and southern parts of the village now adjoin the suburban development that has spread north and east from Cheltenham in the past century.

The centre of Prestbury is notable for retaining important areas of open space, mature trees and many fine buildings of architectural and historic interest. Although incorporating a busy road, the narrow streets elsewhere are relatively quiet and secluded, and Church Lane and Mill Lane maintain much of their historic and rural character.

The Priory is situated to the north-west of the parish church at SO 969240 on a large plot within the historic core of the village. The site is accessed off Church Lane, which leads north from the High Street to the church. It is now subdivided into three separate plots, with The Little Priory,

the former ancillary wing to The Priory, and a new house, Prior's Piece, being located at the northern end of the site and now accessed off Mill Lane.

Despite these changes, the site still provides a large and valuable open space at the heart of the conservation area. It is notably well-screened from the road, from the adjacent houses and from the churchyard not only by many mature trees and shrubs but also, to the north-west, by a stone wall that now defines the boundary with the gardens of The Little Priory and Prior's Piece, and by timber fencing surrounding the site to the south-west. Along the eastern boundary with the churchyard runs a wall of handmade brick with a stone coping that varies in height.

The site is approached through large timber gates and is mainly level, rising gently along its eastern boundary with the churchyard. It is laid to grass interspersed with a few small trees and shrubs and is divided into two by a gravelled driveway that leads to a parking area at the western side of the building. Two stone outbuildings are located to the west and north of this gravelled area, as is the dovecote, which is now situated within the garden of Prior's Piece. A formal garden adjoins the main south entrance front, and this is separated from the driveway by a new shallow brick wall with stone coping that echoes the materials of the wall beside the churchyard.



Figure 5 View north from the entrance



Figure 6 View south from The Priory



Figure 7 View of church from The Priory



Figure 8 View of The Priory from the churchyard

2.3 Architectural Character



Figure 9 Main south elevation

The Priory is a substantial stone and timber-framed building that dates from the 14th century. The main building forms a long range aligned east/west. The original 14th century part of the building stands at its western end. This was extended eastwards in the early 18th century by the addition of a five-bay range which had an ancillary wing to the north-east. Another smaller wing was also added to the north-west of the building that was later demolished.

The earlier part of the building has some close-set studding with bracing and pebble-dashed infill at first-floor level on its north and south elevations and some timbers are also exposed at its west gable end. Otherwise, the external walls are constructed mainly from squared and dressed limestone. This is random in the earlier part of the building but coursed in the five easternmost bays. The gabled roof is covered with Cotswold stone slates and has ashlar ridge stacks and an ashlar coping at its east gable end.

The building is of two main storeys and there is also an attic storey with four hipped dormers hung with slate. The main south front has two-light steel casements with leaded lights and a central entrance with a 20th century plank door within a chamfered stone surround. At the east gable end are two mid-19th century, hollow-chamfered stone cross windows with cinquefoil-headed lights and carved spandrels. There is a lean-to addition at the west end which has a cellar.

The interior of the earlier part incorporates a 14th century hall of two bays that was originally open to the roof. The arch-braced collar trusses are now cut back to receive plaster but one brace survives with a bowtell moulding that springs from a semi-octagonal wall-post with a moulded capital. Around c1600, a floor was inserted, and two-storey bays were added at either end. A large chimney was constructed in the easternmost bay which has an inglenook fireplace, and two of the ground-floor rooms were also panelled at this time. During the mid-19th century, the interior was partly refitted in the Gothic Revival style and further changes to the layout and fittings occurred during the mid-20th century when the building was subdivided into two dwellings.

PART THREE: HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE BUILDING AND ITS SITE

Prestbury

Records of a settlement at Prestbury date from the 9th century when the manor was in the possession of the Bishops of Hereford. This settlement, together with the original manor house, was located to the north-west of the existing village. During the medieval period, the village grew and prospered and, by the 13th century, there was a market and fair held in The Burgage. Agriculture was key to this success, and Prestbury had two mills, a corn mill and a water mill. The 18th century brought significant change with the impact of the enclosure acts upon the landscape and with the discovery of a chalybeate spring north-west of the parish. By 1751, Lord Craven had provided baths and lodgings for visitors but very soon the medicinal and social appeal of this asset was overtaken by the development of Cheltenham Spa as a popular resort. Prestbury was able to benefit from this success, providing accommodation for visitors, and, by the mid-19th century, the village had three schools and had acquired a reputation for its horse-racing event on Cleeve Hill. During the 20th century, Prestbury enjoyed continuing popularity as a base for commuters working in Cheltenham and beyond. Many of its historic buildings were restored and converted and there was considerable infill and peripheral development so that, by the early years of the 21st century, the village had become physically linked with the north-eastern outskirts of Cheltenham.

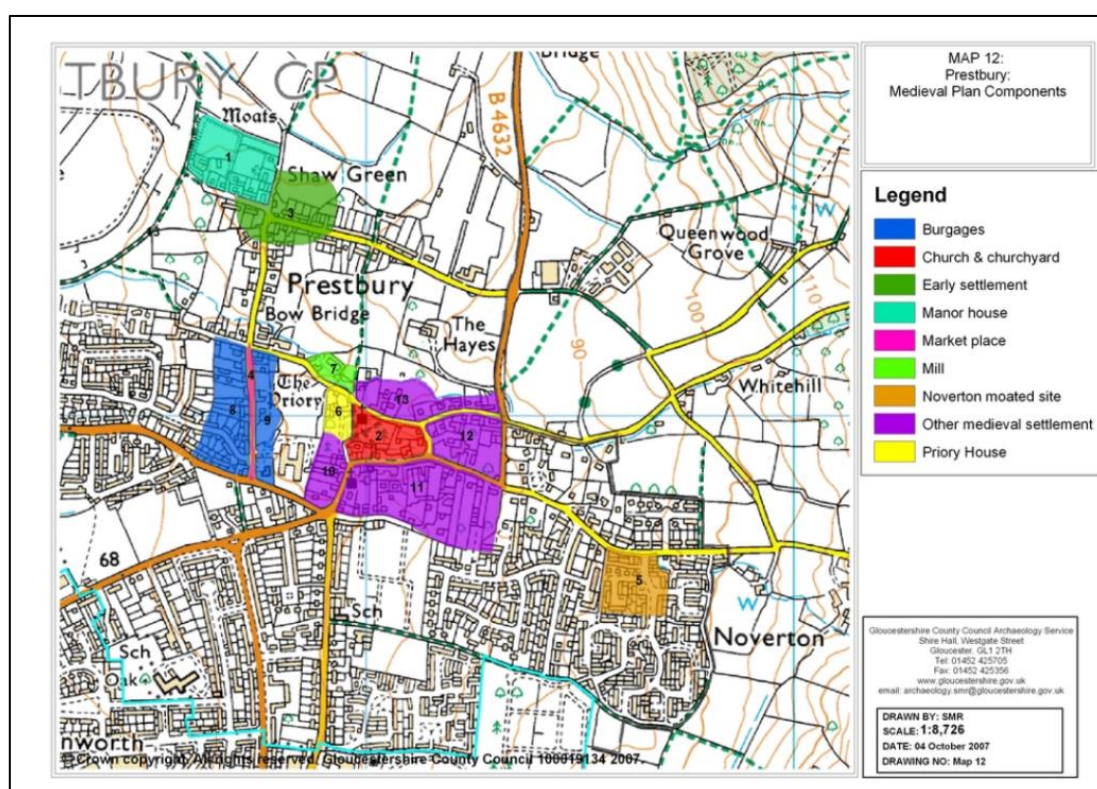


Figure 10 Prestbury medieval plan components (HER/Know Your Place)

The Priory and its site

The site of The Priory has been occupied at least since the medieval period. By the 14th century, it was in the possession of the Priors of Llanthony, and a hall-house stood at its northern end. According to the VCH, there was also a tithe grange located at its southern end, which was still extant in the early 19th century. Around 1600, the property was acquired by the Baghot family when it became known as Prestbury Farm. They enlarged and altered the existing house by the insertion of a floor and the addition of two-storey bays at either end with a large chimney in the easternmost bay. The earlier structure was encased in stone and mullioned windows were inserted on the ground floor. During the Civil War, the house is said to have been garrisoned by Gloucester Parliamentarians although any damage inflicted by this imposition is not recorded.

The Baghots continued to prosper, and the house was again enlarged and updated in the early 18th century to reflect their increasing wealth and aspirations. A five-bay stone extension was added at its eastern end with a new Georgian façade which had sash windows and hipped dormers. A small wing was added to the north-west and also a larger ancillary wing at the north-east end. This larger wing retains an oval window with a decorative surround of this date and a c.1840 print of the building suggests it may once have had a roof lantern.



Figure 11 The Priory c.1840 (print from Owners Collection)



Figure 12 Detail of above

indicated as an L-shaped building with the 18th century additions to the east, north-east and north-west all shown. The site was around three acres then, and included the outbuildings seen to the west, a pleasure ground and a kitchen garden. The central driveway also existed in its present location. Interestingly the former porch does not appear on the tithe map so may belong to the mid-19th century phase of alteration.

By the time of the 1st edition OS map of 1883-4, the north-east wing had been extended, as indicated by a datestone inscribed with the initials J E and the date 1865 or 1866, no doubt to augment the existing service accommodation, and the north-west wing had been demolished. The pair of Gothic windows were almost certainly inserted at the eastern end of the main range at this time and the interior was partly refitted in the Gothic Revival style. Finally, an entrance lodge was built at the southern end of the site, now known as Priory Lodge in Deep Street, and dated 1868.



Figure 15 Lean-to from the south-west



Figure 15 Detail. S elevation



Figure 16 Detail. S elevation & kitchen

The lean-to addition in its present form with its small cellar probably also dates from the mid 19th century. However, it is difficult to confirm this from either the tithe map or the c.1840

print. Possibly it was a reconstruction of an earlier structure in this location as it appears to incorporate earlier fabric which could have been salvaged from the north-west wing or from an earlier structure on the site. Subsequent minor alterations have further obscured its origins.



Figure 17 Late 19th century photograph of main elevation (Owner's Collection)

Not least of these was the construction of a large conservatory at the south-west corner of the building. This can be seen on the 1st edition map of 1883 and in a contemporary photograph of the building. It concealed the lean-to from the south, although there appears to have been a small opening from the lean-to into the conservatory which is now blocked. Access into the conservatory from the main part of the house necessitated the insertion of a new doorway in one of the south window openings from the double drawing room then located at the western end of the building. Possibly the small cellar provided useful storage for wine etc as the ancillary wing was some distance away.

John Edwards senior moved out of The Priory either during or not long after these works were completed, perhaps due to the increasing unpopularity of his son. During the early 1870s, The Priory was leased to the Skipwith family and in 1875 it was advertised to be let once more. This advertisement described it as a delightful country residence:

...with Lawns and Pleasure Grounds, Entrance Lodge and Paddock...The House, highly Decorated and Furnished in the Medieval style, comprises Double Drawing Room, opening to a small Conservatory, Dining Room, Library, Day and Night Nurseries, Five Bed Rooms, Servants' Rooms and usual Offices. There is a good Kitchen Garden, Stabling and Outbuildings. (Looker-On 18 September 1875, 605)

In 1878 John Edwards junior was suspended from his duties and, in 1884, his father, now living in Pittville, Cheltenham, was obliged to appoint a new vicar. Both father and son changed their name from Edwards to Baghot de la Bere in 1881, possibly in a bid to regain the family's reputation. The father died in 1886, and both John Baghot de la Bere junior and his son Cyril

died in 1909. Following the death of Cyril's eldest son in 1916, the estate passed to his younger son, Wilfred, but, due to the latter's mental incapacity, the estate was held in trust by his sister, Mrs Cumming.



Figure 18 2nd edition OS map 1894-03

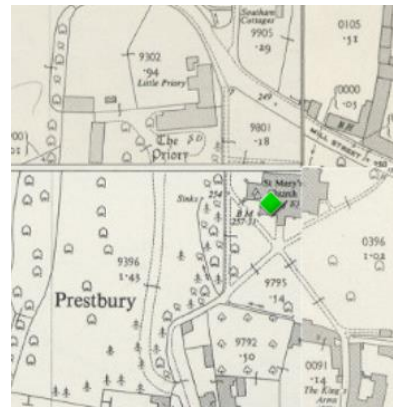


Figure 20 National Grid 1947-65

The directories record a series of tenants at The Priory during the early 20th century but no significant changes were made to the house and site apart from the addition of a lean-to W. C. in 1921 adjoining the staircase on the north elevation.

The Priory and other property were eventually sold on 25 March 1952 to Mr and Mrs D N Campbell, who obtained permission to divide it into two separate dwellings. The subdivision resulted in the loss of The Priory's offices, so the conservatory was demolished and a small kitchen area was created at the western end of the double drawing room. As the dining room remained at the eastern end of the house next to the former offices in the north-east wing, this was far from convenient. Other mid and late 20th century changes included the replacement of the sash windows, the demolition of the porch, the exposing of the timberwork and the insertion of a window into the blocked doorway that led into the former conservatory.

Shortly after this work was completed, on 26 July 1952, the Campbells sold The Priory to Sydney George Shaw. Several applications to redevelop part of the site were approved during the 1970s and 1980s but it has remained largely unchanged since then. (see Section 1.4 Planning History)

PART FOUR: THE PROPOSAL

It is proposed to partially demolish the existing lean-to addition at the western end of the building. The south end elevation and the cellar will remain and be incorporated within a new gabled kitchen extension. There will be a new boot room and west entrance porch on the north side of the extension and a new basement area adjoining the existing cellar. Planning permission to fell the holm oak was granted in 2020 (20/00916/CACN)

The new extension will be lower in height than the existing building to express its role as a subsidiary service wing externally. It will be built from a similar stone to the main building with a roof of plain clay tiles. On the south elevation, the southern end of the existing lean-to will be retained and given definition by the frameless windows. and there will be three small conservation rooflights inserted in the roof above. It is also intended to reinstate the blocked 19th century south doorway into the kitchen.

At the west gable end of the extension there will be a 5-light ground-floor window and a single-light attic window with leaded glass to match the existing fenestration. The existing exposed west gable end wall of the main building is to be weatherboarded to resolve the ongoing water ingress issue.

On the north elevation, the single-storey boot room addition will infill the awkward space running along the northern boundary. This will have a rendered masonry wall and a lean-to leaded roof incorporating rooflights. The new west porch is to be constructed of oak with sandstone staddle stones supporting the oak posts.

Internally there will be changes to the existing kitchen layout including a small dining area within the extension and a new stairway to provide access to the basement and cellar. The cellar itself will remain unaltered.



Figure 21 Elevations and sections as existing



Figure 22 Elevations and sections as proposed

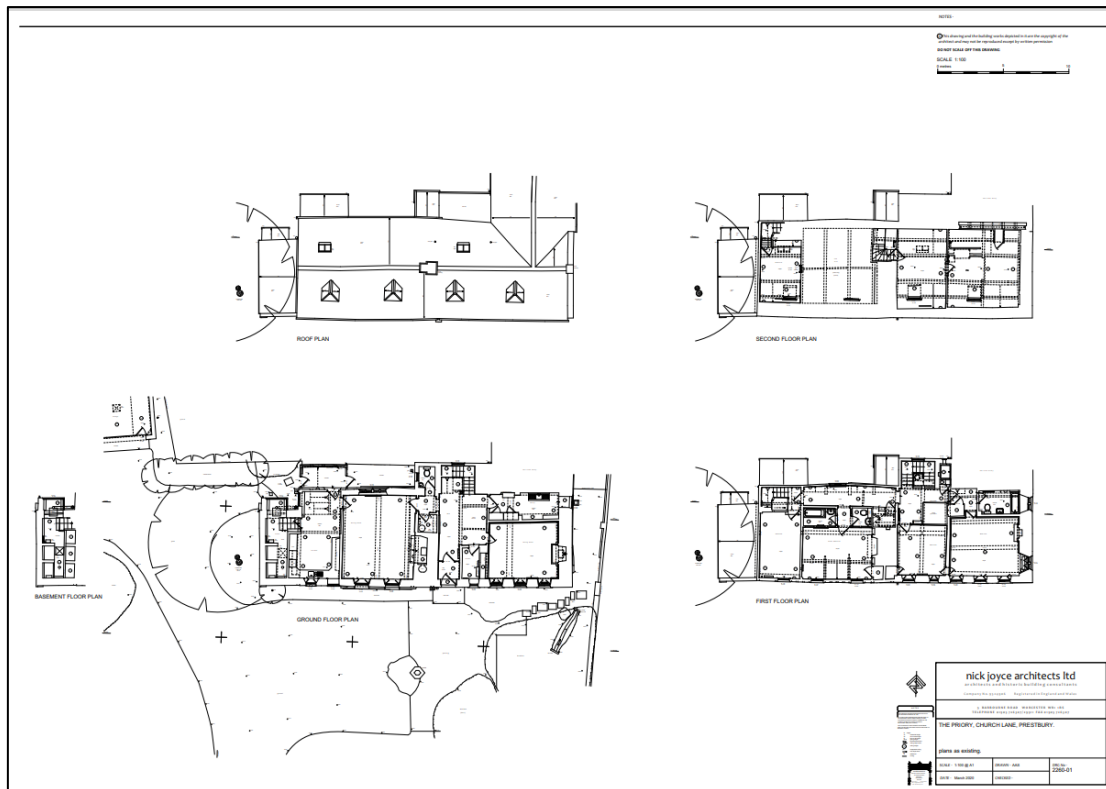


Figure 23 Plans as existing

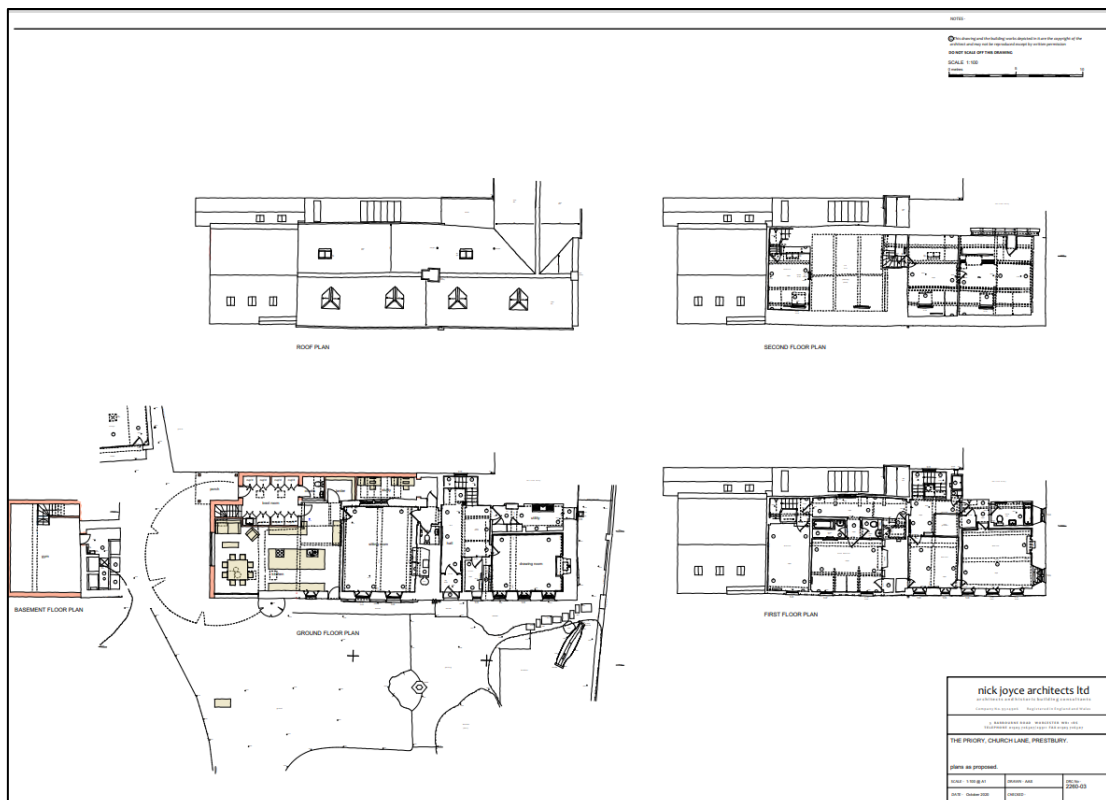


Figure 24 Plans as proposed

PART FIVE: ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE OF PRESTBURY PRIORY AND OF HERITAGE ASSETS IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY

In assessing the significance of designated or non-designated assets, PPG states that this significance may derive not only from an asset's physical presence but also from its setting, in terms of its archaeological, architectural and artistic, and historic interest. Historic interest may encompass a wide range of issues from the asset's role in the life of the local community to matters of cultural identity, religion etc. Therefore in assessing the significance of this particular designated asset, this report includes a brief analysis of the significance of other designated assets in the immediate vicinity that contribute to its setting and historical context.

Evidential: High

The scale, form and architectural quality of the building suggest it has always been of high status and has played a prominent role in the physical, social and economic development of Prestbury. The alteration and subdivision of the building and its site in the past century may have rendered this evidential value less accessible or apparent but it is in no way diminished.

Archaeological Interest: High

The building and its site have considerable archaeological potential due to their medieval origin. The close proximity of the parish church and churchyard is also pertinent, especially as the churchyard and land to the south of it are known to be the site of a deserted medieval village. The discovery of a wall, a possible pit and a posthole on the original site of the building, now part of Prior's Piece, and also of two sites containing human bones would further support this view. (See HER 5443 and 36021 and Section 1.2)

Architectural/ Artistic Interest: High

- Listed Grade II
- The structural evolution of the building and its details and internal fittings contribute to an understanding of the development of construction techniques and aesthetic aspirations from the late medieval period to Victorian times.
- Remains in residential use.
- Survives largely intact since its 18th century remodelling.
- Incorporates a 14th century hall house which is a relatively well-preserved example of its type.
- Retains much of its architectural integrity and historic character particularly on its main south elevation.

Historic Interest: Medium/High

- The building is one of the earliest and most important historic buildings that survives in Prestbury.
- The building and its site retain important surviving evidence of the medieval origins of the settlement.
- The history of the building and its site are closely linked to the general history and development of the local community and provides a valuable social commentary on

changing land ownership and aspirations. It is linked with Llanthony Priory and two prominent local families and landowners, the Baghots and the Delaberes, as well as the incumbent of the parish church.

Setting: High

- Standing on a generous historic plot bordered by mature trees and adjacent to an important group of listed buildings and structures, the building exemplifies the special visual qualities of the Area as defined by the Character Appraisal.
- This building's setting contributes much to its individual significance and also the collective significance of this group of listed buildings and structures, not least the parish church. Together, they form a landmark feature within the Conservation Area and the immediate neighbourhood.

Significance of Designated Assets adjacent to or associated with The Priory:

The Little Priory

Grade II GV

Archaeological : Medium

Architectural/Artistic: Medium

Historic : Medium

Setting: High

Dating from the mid-18th century and extended 1886, The Little Priory includes some interesting architectural features, but its main significance lies in its former historical role as a service wing to The Priory which is reflected in the above evaluation.

Dovecote

Grade II

Archaeological: Medium

Architectural/Artistic : Low/Medium

Historic : Medium

Setting: Medium

Formerly in the grounds of The Priory and dating from the 18th century or earlier, with some 19th century alterations. Square in plan with a pyramidal roof and lantern. Pigeonholes line the interior of the upper stage. The primary significance of the dovecote is due to its historic associations with The Priory and its contribution to its setting.

Church of St Mary

Grade II*

Archaeological : High

Architectural/Artistic : High

Historic : High

Setting: High

13th century in origin and given to Llanthony Priory by the Bishops of Hereford. Rebuilt in the 14th century and restored 1864-8 by G E Street. The church's archaeological, architectural and historic merit is reflected in its II* listing. Together with its churchyard and exceptional monuments (see below), the church also forms a key component of the Conservation Area. The church and churchyard contribute much to the setting of The Priory and to an understanding of its history. The open setting of both buildings combines to form a distinct visual entity at the heart of the Conservation Area.

Churchyard Monuments

10 listed Grade II 1 listed II*

Archaeological: High

Architectural /Artistic: Medium

Historic: Medium

Setting: High

The churchyard is located on part of the site of a deserted medieval village. It includes a notable number of listed monuments including one rated Grade II*. It is also of crucial importance to the setting of the parish church and of The Priory and is a key component of the Conservation Area.

The Plough

Grade II

Archaeological: Low/Medium

Architectural/Artistic: Medium

Historic: Low/Medium

Dating from the early 18th century, this modest thatched and timber-framed building with modern brick infill and coursed dressed limestone at each end is now a public house. Although of some architectural and historic interest in its own right, it also contributes much to the rural character of Mill Street and to this part of the Conservation Area. However, its impact and significance on the setting of The Priory is minimal.

PART FIVE: IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL ON THE SIGNIFICANCE

Proposal: Partial demolition of lean-to addition and replacement with a kitchen extension, boot room and new porch.

General observations

The proposed alterations will only affect the western end of the building. They have been designed to have minimal impact on the main south front and to complement its existing proportions, materials and details.

The scale of the addition will express its function as a subsidiary service wing. There is an interesting possibility that, prior to the 18th century remodelling, this was the c.1600 service bay added onto the original building as it would be situated away from the church and adjacent to the outbuildings.

The west gable end of the original building is to be weatherboarded, a traditional means of weather protection that will prevent the persistent water ingress which is causing ongoing damage to the structure. The western end of the addition will reflect the form and pitch of the existing roof and the ground-floor window and attic light will complement the design of the existing windows. Together with the new oak porch, these design features should enhance the appearance of this elevation.

On the north elevation, the single-storey wall of the new boot room addition is to be rendered to match the infill of the exposed timber framing. The shallow single-pitch roof will minimise its impact from the garden of The Little Priory and ensure it does not obscure the exposed timberwork.

Internally the proposal will only affect the existing kitchen. This room has been subject to much alteration in the past and has only been in use as a kitchen since the house was subdivided in the mid-20th century. This space is now disproportionately small for a house of this scale and quality and unfit for modern requirements. The proposed small cellar is to be retained within the new addition as it is part of the history of the house and of possible archaeological and historic interest and there will be a new access to it from the new basement room.

Permission was granted to fell the holm oak immediately west of the building in 2020. This tree has caused problems in the past due to its proximity to the house. The inevitable disturbance to the ground caused by its roots and the removal of the tree, will provide an opportunity to investigate the site prior to the construction of the new kitchen addition.

Justification and Mitigation

- The proposal will update and enlarge the current inadequate service accommodation within the building in keeping with a house of the size and status and to a standard that meets modern requirements.
- The design of the proposal respects the special architectural qualities of the existing building in terms of its date, scale, design, proportions and materials.
- The retained wall at the southern end of the existing lean-to will help screen the addition on the main elevation and it will remain as an historic feature within the south elevation.
- Arguably the proposal will improve the building's appearance on the west and south elevations and thereby add to its significance and enhance its setting.
- The proposal will resolve a current water ingress problem that is damaging old fabric.
- The proposal will enable the reinstatement of a blocked entrance in the main elevation.
- The kitchen extension and basement will be constructed on ground already disturbed by the roots of the holm oak tree. In view of the archaeological potential of the site, a watching brief is recommended, and this presents an opportunity to investigate this part of the plot.
- The proposal will have minimal impact upon designated buildings and structures nearby, in particular upon the church and churchyard, and it will arguably improve the setting of the listed dovecote.
- As the site is well screened by trees, walling and fencing, the visual impact of this proposal on the Conservation Area will be minimal.
- The improvement and updating of this building will help ensure its future care and maintenance in the long term which will have a beneficial impact on the Conservation Area and on the village of Prestbury as a whole.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Priory is an important building of medieval origin that is linked closely with the historic development of the local community. It is located within an historic setting adjacent to the parish church at the heart of Prestbury Conservation Area. Despite its complex structural history, it has retained much of its architectural integrity and it now makes a major contribution to the Area's special character and identity. Its subdivision in the mid-20th century resulted in the loss of its 18th and 19th century service accommodation and this proposal represents an opportunity to address this problem, improve its layout, resolve a water ingress problem, and ensure the building is better adapted to meet modern requirements.

The replacement of the 19th century lean-to addition at the western end of the building with a new gabled wing, an adjoining boot room and new porch represents a modest, sympathetic and effective solution to these issues that respects the house's special architectural qualities and important setting. As the site is well-screened, any impact of these alterations on the appearance of the Conservation Area will be minimal. Nor are they likely to have any adverse impact upon the significance of the designated heritage assets in the immediate vicinity. However, in view of the archaeological and historical sensitivity of the building and its site, it is strongly recommended that a watching brief be put in place.

In conclusion, this would appear to present a welcome opportunity to improve and update this important historic building that should protect and enhance its significance. The proposed works should thereby be of benefit to the setting of other designated assets in the immediate vicinity, to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and to the local community.

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For maps and plans see Know Your Place website. OS maps reproduced with the kind permission of the Ordnance Survey.

I would like to thank Jane Root for her unpublished research on the history of the site and its previous owners, and also the owner for photographs Figs.5-8.