

**PROPOSED FORMATION OF HARD-SURFACED DRIVEWAY
THE OLD POST OFFICE, 3 THE CLOSE, WHITSBURY**

**HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT
(INCORPORATING THE DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT)**

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Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC)

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1. Proposed Development

1.1 It is proposed to form a hard-surfaced driveway to serve the Grade II listed property, viz:

- Form tarmac entrance apron butting up to a line of stone setts at the east end;
- Erects a 5-bar timber gate at the line of stone setts;
- Lay a permeable gravel driveway up to the house in a hexagonal cellular grid system; timber edging to driveway;
- Set a new hedge on the south boundary.

2. Statement of Significance

2.1 Two designated heritage assets are directly relevant to this Assessment, viz:

- the grade II listed *Post Office Cottage*, and
- Whitsbury Conservation Area.

Post Office Cottage (now know as The Old Post Office)

2.2 The listed building's special interest lies in its status as a good example of an 18th century cottage and the survival of many of its detailed architectural features, including scantling timber frame with brick infill, thatch roof and camber-headed windows.

2.3 The listed building's significance can, therefore, be expressed in terms of its individual architectural and historic interest as well as the legibility of its design vocabulary.

Whitsbury Conservation Area (CA)

2.4 The CA's special architectural and historic interest is identified in the council's published *Whitsbury Conservation Area Character Statement* of 7.3.19. This is summarized as deriving from the following factors:

- Whitsbury Castle Ditches. Hill fort, now overgrown with woodland, with interior used as pasture. Impressive views to north and west from adjacent public footpath.
- St Leonard's Church. 18th century tower rebuilt in 1878. South side of churchyard dominated by fine 200-300-year-old yew tree. Views down to the village from the churchyard.
- Village Street Scene. Narrow lane winds up hill past cottages parallel and at right-angles to it. Remnant agricultural buildings have corrugated iron roofs.

- Footpath System links the village street with the fields behind the dwellings. Narrow steep path winds up from carpenter's farm past the parkland grounds of Glebe House leading to the churchyard.
- Buildings. The church and old rectory form an important group; Carpenter's and Nippard's Farms in brick; Manor House with farm buildings in brick, timber framing and weatherboarding; small cottages in English bond brickwork fronting or replacing timber framing and weatherboarding; cottages north of Carpenter's Farm form an important tight-knit group; cottages to the west placed at right-angles and those to the east parallel to the street.

2.5 The significance of the CA, therefore, relates to the distinctive sense-of-place created by the configuration and inter-relationship of the various historic buildings, the consistently clear historic and architectural legibility of the built fabric, and the topographical interest of and in the village's landscape setting.

3. Justification for the Proposed Development and Impact upon the Significance of the Heritage Assets

3.1 The present access route up to the house is inadequate and unsatisfactory for vehicular usage. The lack of appropriate surfacing is problematic for the applicant due to the slope of the land and lack of traction particularly in the colder/wetter months.

3.2 As outlined above, the listed building's heritage significance relates to its individual architectural and historic interest and the legibility of its design vocabulary, and that of the CA the constituent historic buildings' historic and architectural legibility and the distinctive sense-of-place created by their configuration and inter-relationship, and the visual quality of the village's landscape setting.

3.3 It is considered that, as the materials specification for the proposed works is aesthetically benign, none of the above values or characteristics is detrimentally affected by the proposed development. The works have a neutral, and therefore unharmed, impact upon the assets' significance.

4. Impact upon Setting of Neighbouring Heritage Assets

4.1 Consideration, finally, needs to be given to the setting of other nearby listed buildings: *Minors Cottage* and *Carpenters*.

4.2 The compatibility of the proposed development with the heritage assets under consideration in this Assessment extends equally to its inter-relationship with the above

listed buildings. Their respective settings will, therefore, be unharmed by the proposed development.

5. Conclusion

5.1 It is considered that the proposed works remain conservation-neutral, thereby avoiding any harm in NPPF-terms to the significance of the heritage assets involved.

5.2 The scheme is, therefore, compliant with the provisions of the NPPF, particularly paragraphs 193-196 *Considering Potential Impacts* covering the issue of harm to heritage assets.

5.3 The statutory requirements concerning the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their settings and to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of conservation areas contained in sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 are also considered to be properly met.