

PROPOSED EXTENSION AT ASHLEY VILLA

JUBILEE LANE, MARTON MOSS, BLACKPOOL, LANCASHIRE



HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

GARRY MILLER
Heritage Consultancy

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MAY 2020

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1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report supports proposed development at Ashley Villa, Jubilee Lane, Marton Moss, in the borough of Blackpool, Lancashire. The property is an undesignated detached house of circa 1900 that stands within Marton Moss Conservation Area.

Proposals are being submitted to Blackpool Borough Council for an extension to the existing property, involving demolition of an existing detached outbuilding. The heritage issue arising is the impact upon the significance of the conservation area. The role of this report is to identify this significance and assess how the proposal will affect it.

Marton Moss is a flat semi-rural district on the eastern hinterland of Blackpool, historically a centre of market gardening and characterised by scattered dwellings along narrow lanes crossing the drained mosslands that give the area its name. The significance of the conservation area derives principally from its character and appearance as an agricultural area reclaimed from this mossland and which by the 20th century was in horticultural use and characterised by a large number of glasshouses. This significance is therefore embodied in its buildings, which include traditional cottages along with modern dwellings and surviving glasshouses, and the pattern of roads and fields within which forms their setting.

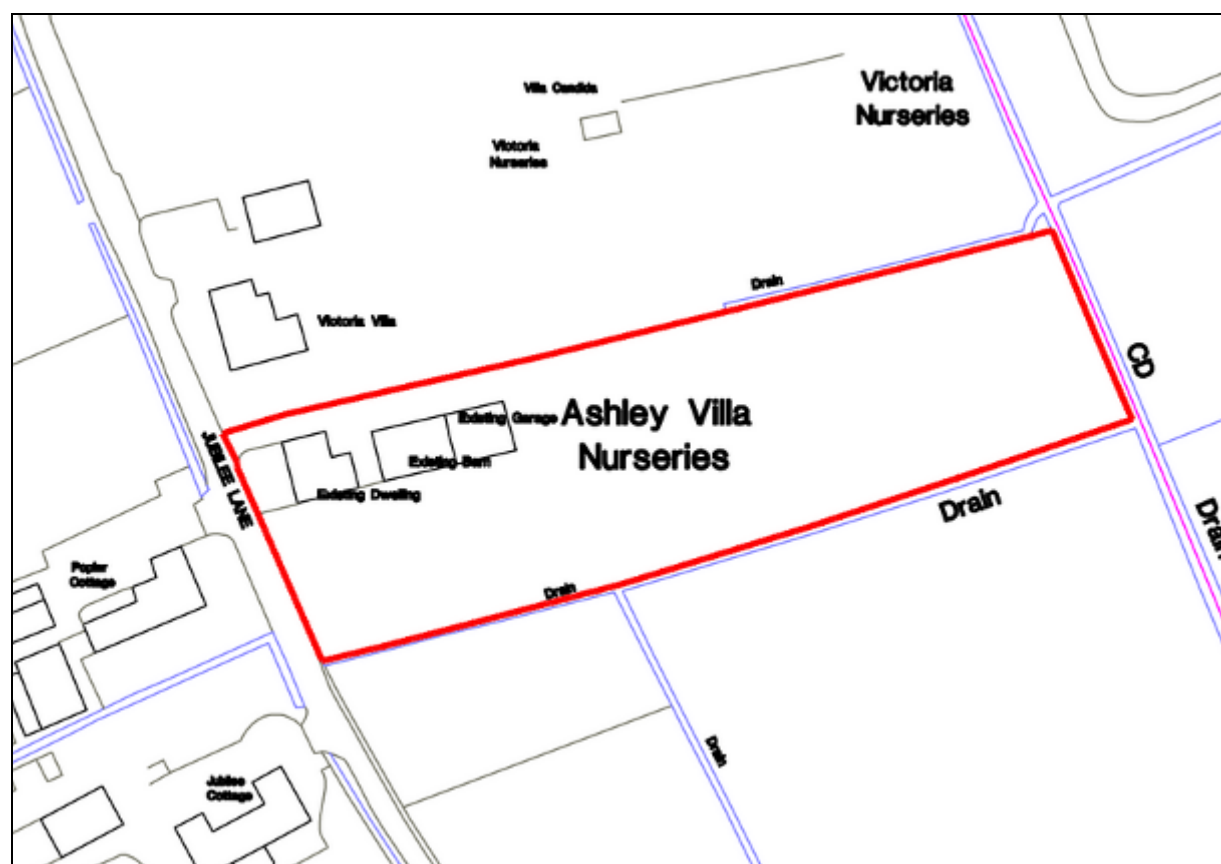
Ashley Villa was the principal property of what was originally a large nursery, no longer in operation and whose glasshouses have now all been demolished. Its significance derives from its local interest as one of the early nurseries established on Marton Moss. This interest resides both in the physical presence of the building, along with its historical role, thus making it a positive element of the character and appearance of the conservation area. The outbuilding was originally part of the nursery but has been rebuilt and extended and its former glasshouse demolished. Its significance therefore resides more in the historical context – i.e. what it was rather than what it is now – than in its physical interest and value.

The proposal seeks consent for a two-and single-storey extension at the rear of the main house, to be separated from it by a glazed single-storey link. The applicant has stated it is required to accommodate their family needs in the long term. As regards the demolition of the outbuilding, this will not adversely affect the significance of the conservation area owing to its altered state. The effect of this loss is considered to be neutral. The proposed extension is not out of character with the Jubilee Lane streetscene, as the latter is characterised by rebuilt/modern dwellings. The main house and its predominant role in the streetscene will not be affected by the proposal as the extension is located behind and clearly delineated from it by the glazed link. Its design reflects agricultural rather than domestic themes and thus preserves the memory of the outbuilding's role, while the materials conform to those of the site.

It is therefore concluded that the proposal will preserve the significance of the conservation area. The proposal thus satisfies the requirements of national planning guidance along with the relevant local development plan heritage policies, and it is therefore considered the proposal should be approved without delay.

2: THE SITE

The proposal site is located on Jubilee Lane, Marton Moss, in the borough of Blackpool, Lancashire. Marton Moss is flat semi-rural district on the eastern hinterland of Blackpool, historically a centre for market gardening and characterised by scattered dwellings along lanes that cross the reclaimed mosslands that give the area its name. Jubilee Lane is a narrow road extending north from School Road and the application site stands on its east side amid an area formerly dominated by nursery glasshouses. Ashley Villa is a detached house that was the principal property of what was originally one of the first nurseries established along the lane at the beginning of the 20th century. This role has now ceased and the house is a family residence. At the rear is a detached two-storey brick outbuilding, formerly connected to a range of now-vanished glasshouses but later rebuilt and extended to form a store and garage.



Map 1. The proposal site



1. Ashley Villa: principal view from Jubilee Lane



2. Ashley Villa, looking north with the outbuilding to the rear

3: THE PROPOSAL/SCOPE OF THIS REPORT

3.1 Proposed development

Proposals are being submitted to Blackpool Borough Council for an extension at the rear of Ashley Villa along with demolition of the existing outbuilding.

3.2 Designation

Ashley Villa is an undesignated building within Marton Moss Conservation Area.

3.3 Heritage impact

The heritage issue arising from the proposal is its impact upon the significance (i.e. heritage interest and value) of the conservation area.

3.4 Scope and purpose of this report

Paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the particular significance of the heritage assets affected, including the contribution made by their setting. The scope and purpose of this report is therefore to identify the significance of the conservation area along with the contribution made by the application site, and to assess how this will be affected by the proposal. The level of detail is considered proportionate to the importance of the heritage asset, in accordance with paragraph 189, and no more than necessary to understand the impact of the proposal. This report is to be read in conjunction with other documentation supporting the application.

3.5 Report structure

This is as follows:

1. A brief description of the conservation area (Section 4) and of the contribution made by the application site (Section 5)

2. A summary of the heritage significance of the conservation area and the site (Section 6)
3. A review of the planning policy context within which the application will be determined (Section 7)
4. Evaluation within this context of the proposal's impact upon the significance of the conservation area (Section 8).

4: THE CONSERVATION AREA

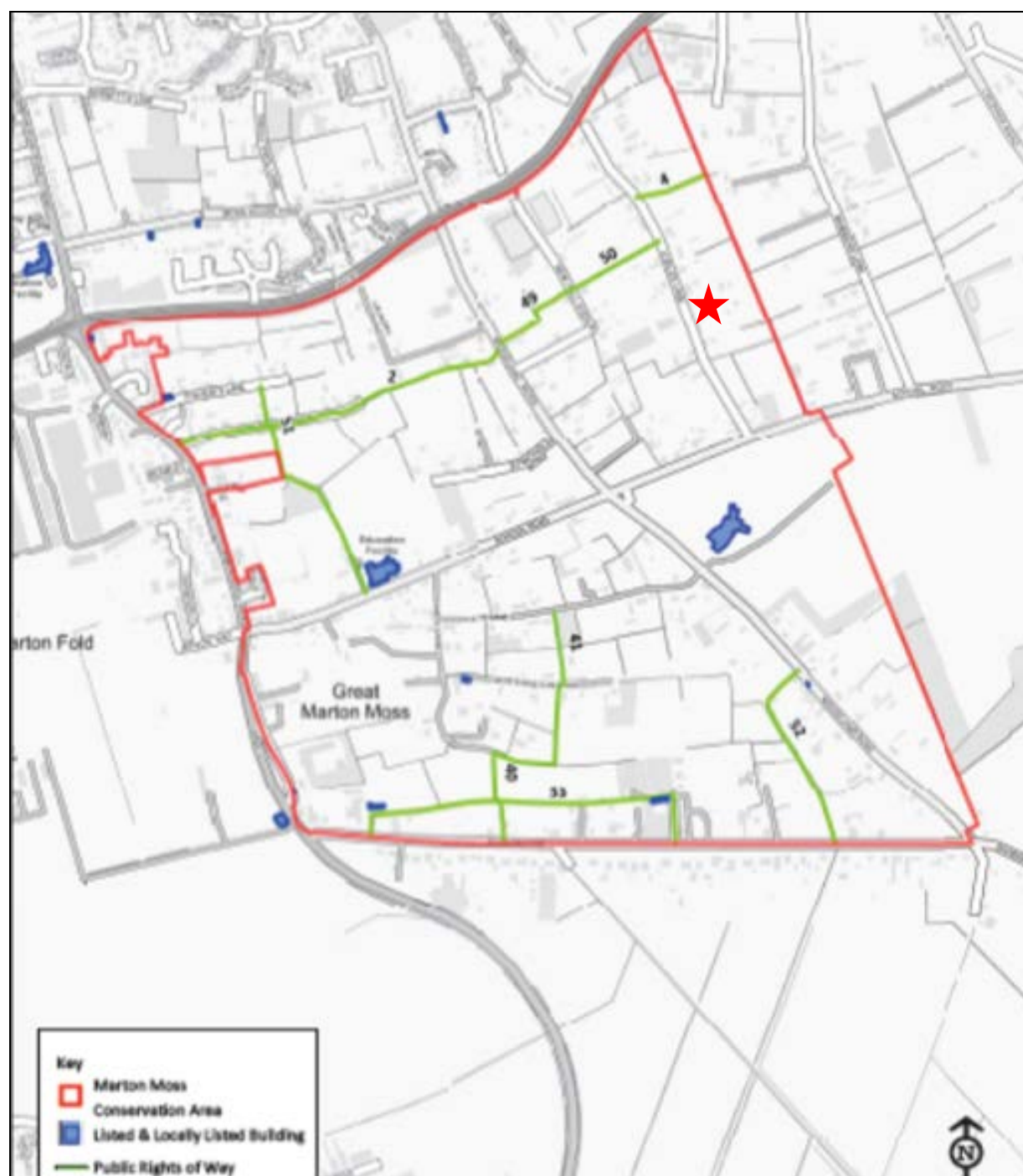
4.1 Overview

Marton Moss Conservation Area was designated by Blackpool Council in February 2019. It is a predominantly-agricultural area of drained mosslands that was formerly a centre of market gardening and contained a high number of glasshouses. It stands on the eastern fringe of the borough, where it adjoins extensive areas of open countryside in neighbouring Fylde. The conservation area is bounded by Progress Way to the north, Common Edge Road to the west, the middle of Division Lane to the south and the borough boundary with Fylde to the east. The application site stands close to the northeast boundary of the conservation area.

4.2 Special interest

The qualities of the conservation area that has warranted its designation are described in the character appraisal adopted by Blackpool Council in December 2018. From this, its character can be broadly summarised as follows:

- An area of drained mossland whose agricultural character was typified by horticulture during the 20th century
- It is characterised by small piecemeal enclosed fields surrounded by a network of rural lanes
- Development has tended to be low-density and concentrated along the main routes
- The former high concentration of horticultural glasshouses resulted in a distinctive form of development
- Horticultural use has declined in recent decades, with large areas now used for a mix of horse grazing land, glasshouses, and dwellings set in large gardens
- The decline in horticulture has meant that many glasshouses have been demolished and replaced by housing
- However, a sufficient number of glasshouses remain to illustrate its horticultural tradition, together with a mix of horse grazing land and dwellings set in large gardens
- Domestic buildings range from early cobble-built cottages to modern detached bungalows
- The area has an enclosed leafy landscape based around lanes, rectangular fields and drains
- Views are limited to gaps in hedgerows on the narrow lanes, and across open paddocks



Map 2. The conservation area, with the application site indicated

4.3 Jubilee Lane streetscene

Jubilee Lane is one of the secondary lanes within the conservation area, extending north from School Lane and eventually truncated by the A5230 Progress Way. Historically, it was lined with nurseries and their glasshouses (Map 5, Page 13). It is characterised today by scattered houses largely of mid-20th century and later date lining the roads with open fields stretching to the rear. The streetscene around the application site is dominated by new or rebuilt dwellings: immediately to the north, consent was granted in 2019 for the replacement of the existing house, Victoria Villa, which appears to have been of similar date to Ashley Villa (planning reference 2019/0113).



3. Rebuilt dwellings opposite the application site

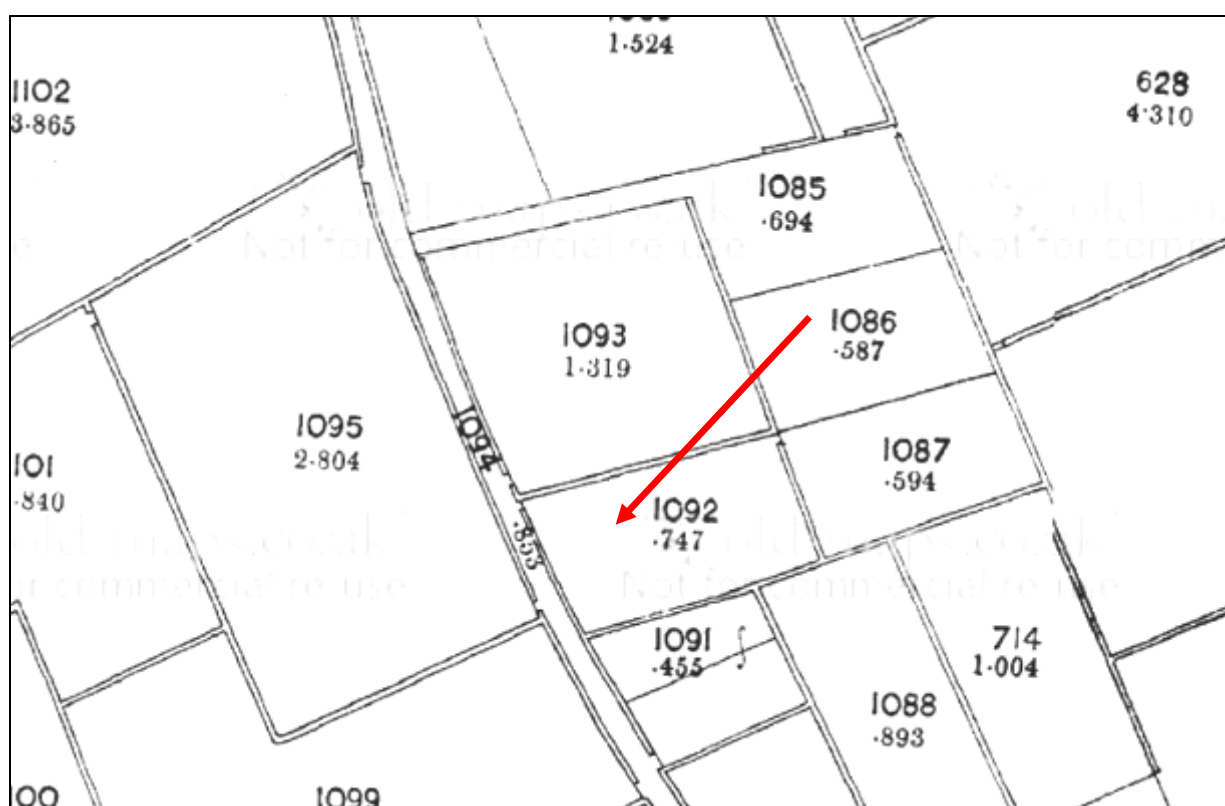


4. Mid-20th century and later properties further north along Jubilee Lane

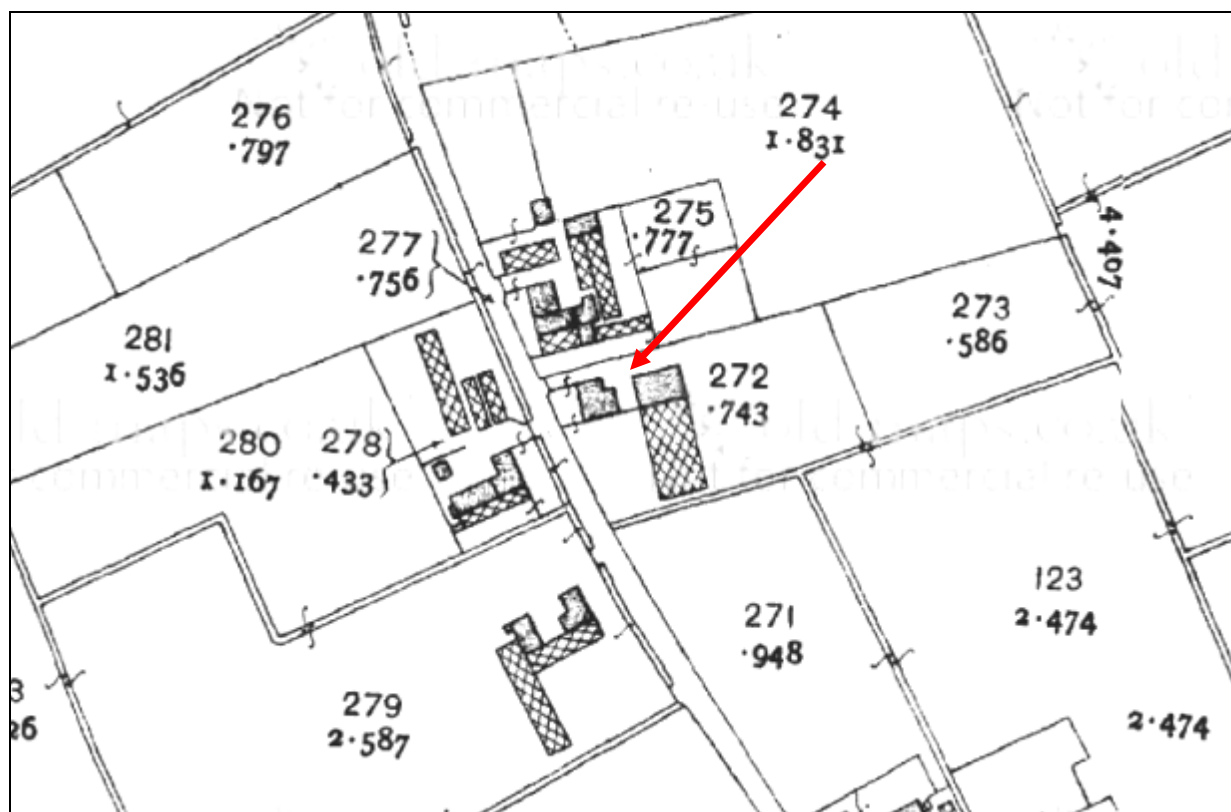
5: CONTRIBUTION OF THE APPLICATION SITE

5.1 Historical development

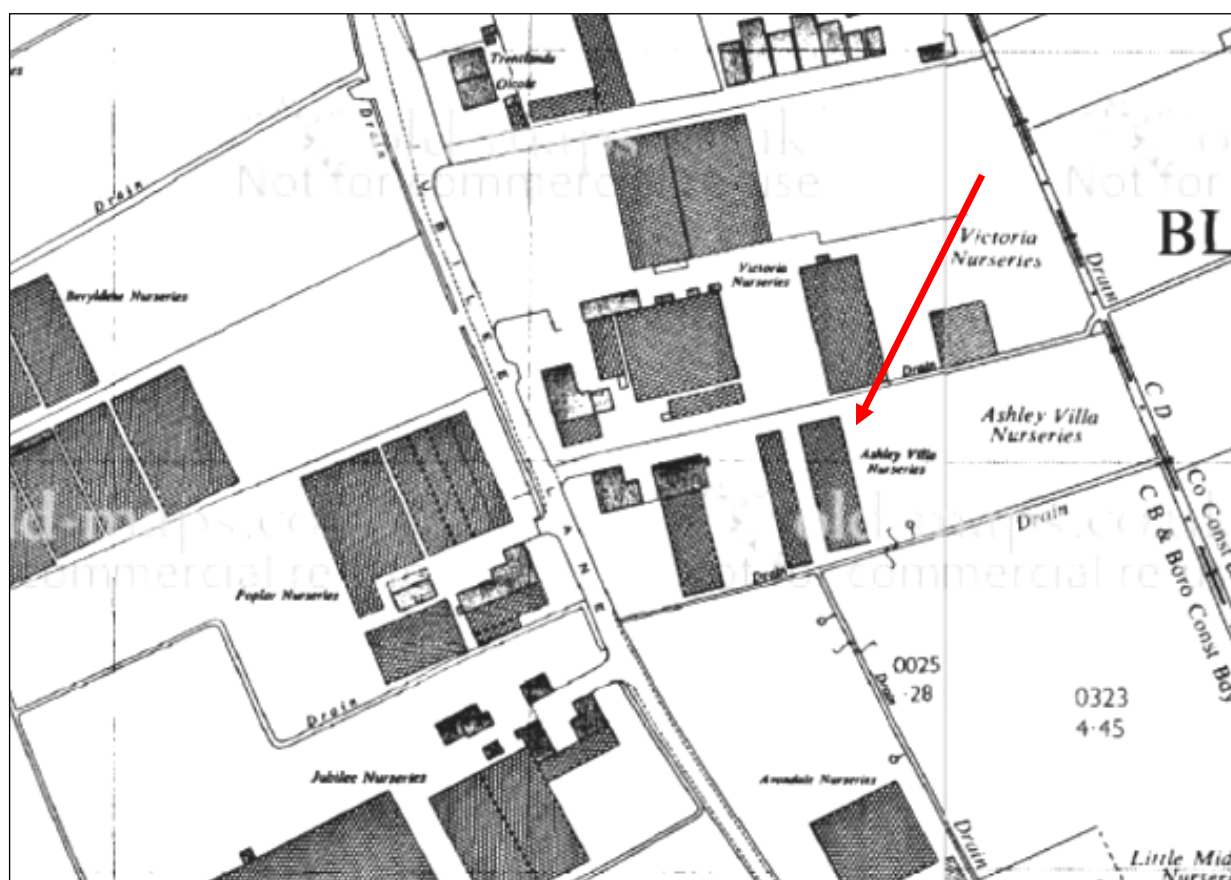
Ashley Villa dates from around 1900. The site was vacant at the time of the 1892 OS mapping (Map 3, below) and was then part of a series of small rectangular fields on the east side of Jubilee Lane. The 1912 edition (Map 4) shows the house was now present and accompanied by the outbuilding to the rear, which was adjoined by a large single glasshouse extending to the south. By the mid-1960s the site had been expanded, and was known as Ashley Villa nurseries, with further glasshouses to the east of the plot (Map 5).



Map 3. The site was vacant at the time of the 1892 25-inch OS mapping



Map 4. The 1912 edition shows Ashley Villa and its outbuilding to the rear



Map 5. The 1963 edition records more glasshouses had been built to the east, all now gone

5.2 The application buildings

Ashley Villa is a modest detached property typical of its date, consisting of a two-storey main block with two- and single-storey outriggers at the rear. It is slightly set back from the lane and thus forms a prominent sight by the roadside. Beyond the house stands the former outbuilding, which was once part of the nursery but is now largely disused. It appears to have been rebuilt in the late 20th century, and has stretcher-bond brickwork walls and modern windows. A single-storey garage extension has been added on the east side.



3. The outbuilding has rebuilt walling and modern windows



4. The modern garage extension on the east side of the outbuilding



5. View of the outbuilding from Jubilee Lane

6: SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

6.1 Rationale

Paragraph 190 of the Revised National Planning Policy Framework states local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of a heritage asset, including its setting, and take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal in order to avoid or minimize conflict between the asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal. Significance is defined in the NPPF Glossary as:

'The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.'

6.2 The conservation area

The significance of the conservation area derives principally from its character and appearance as an agricultural area established upon reclaimed mossland and which by the 20th century was in horticultural use and characterised by a large number of glasshouses. This significance is therefore embodied in its buildings, which include traditional cottages, modern bungalows and surviving glasshouses, and their relationship to each other within the pattern of roads and fields that forms their setting.

6.3 The application site

The significance of Ashley Villa derives essentially from its local interest to the conservation area as one of the early nurseries established along Jubilee Lane at the beginning of the 20th century. This interest resides both in the physical presence of the house, along with its historical role. Consequently it makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area. The outbuilding's interest, as a building originally associated with the nursery, has however been compromised by its rebuilding and extension along with the loss of its attached glasshouse. Its significance therefore resides more in the historical sense – i.e. what it was rather than what it is now – than in its physical interest.

7: PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

7.1 Statutory duty

Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character of a conservation area.

7.2 Relevant policies

Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework provides the guidance on how the statutory duty is to be put into practice. Paragraph 192 states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- *The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation*
- *The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality, and*
- *The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*

Regarding designated heritage assets, paragraph 193 states that ‘*great weight*’ should be given to their conservation and the more important the asset, the greater that weight should be; and that significance can be lost through development within its setting. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. Paragraph 194 states that as heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.

The relevant local heritage policies are those of the Blackpool Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy (2012 – 2027) and retained policies of the Saved Blackpool Local Plan 2001-2016. Core Strategy policy CS8 (Heritage) states:

1. Development proposals will be supported which respect and draw inspiration from Blackpool’s built, social and cultural heritage, complementing its rich history with new development to widen its appeal to residents and visitors.

2. Proposals will be supported that:

- a. Appraise and improve the condition and safeguard the heritage of key buildings, attractions and infrastructure*
- b. Retain, reuse or convert key heritage buildings*

- c. Enhance the setting and views of heritage buildings through appropriate layout of new development and design of public realm*
- d. Strengthen the existing character created by historic buildings*

3. Developers must demonstrate how the development will complement and enhance existing features of heritage significance including their wider setting, particularly for those developments affecting conservation areas, listed buildings and other identified heritage assets.

4. The Council will seek to safeguard heritage assets from inappropriate development.

In relation to conservation areas, saved policy LQ10A (Conservation Areas) of the Local Plan states:

Applications for development in Conservation Areas will be considered against the following criteria:

- (i) the development must preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area*
- (ii) the development will need to respect the scale, massing, proportions, materials and detailing of similar building forms within the Conservation Area*
- (iii) trees and other landscape features contributing to the character and appearance of the area must be retained.*

8: IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL

8.1 Summary of the scheme

The proposal seeks consent for a two- and single-storey extension at the rear of the property and separated from it by a glazed single-storey link, as shown upon the submitted drawings (see Figure 1 below). The applicant, who has owned the property for 33 years, has stated they require the extension to accommodate their family needs in the long term. They say the present house is overcrowded, as their son and daughter-in-law have lived there for ten years and there are two young grandchildren (male and female) sharing a room; additionally, there is no available space for visiting family to stay. The applicant is now looking towards their retirement years and believes the proposal will allow them to remain in the home, assisted by their family.



Figure 1. Proposed south-facing elevation (NTJ Design)

8.2 Impact upon the conservation area

- a. **Loss of the existing outbuilding.** It has been demonstrated in this report how the outbuilding has been rebuilt and extended, and hence its significance resides principally in its historical role rather than the interest and contribution of its fabric. The loss of this building will therefore not adversely affect the appearance and character of the conservation area, and the effect of this loss is quantified as neutral.
- b. **The extension.** This report has shown how the Jubilee Lane streetscene has a predominance of modern or rebuilt dwellings. The proposal is thus not out of keeping with this character, and in this context it has been noted elsewhere how consent has been given for the rebuilding of the adjoining Victoria Villa. Ashley Villa itself makes a positive contribution as the house is associated with one of the earliest nurseries established along the lane. This, and its predominant role in the streetscene will not be affected by the proposal as the extension will be sited to the rear and clearly delineated from it by the glazed link. The design of the extension reflects an agricultural rather than domestic theme and thus preserves the memory of the outbuilding, while the materials conform to those of the main house. It is

considered therefore that the proposed extension is in keeping with the character and appearance of the conservation area.

8.3 Conclusion

For the reasons stated above, it is concluded that the proposal will preserve the significance of the conservation area. The proposal thus satisfies the requirements of national planning guidance as contained in paragraphs 192 and 193 of the NPPF along with the relevant local development plan heritage policies. It is therefore concluded that planning consent should be awarded.

APPENDIX: GARRY MILLER HERITAGE CONSULTANCY

Garry Miller is an architectural historian who has spent more than 40 years studying buildings of town and countryside, in particular those of North West England. His career as a consultant began in the mid-1980s with the Preston-based Nigel Morgan Historic Building Consultancy, of which he became a partner in 1992 upon its rebranding as Datestone. In 1997 he was commissioned by the Heritage Trust for the North West, a buildings preservation trust based at Barrowford, Lancashire, to produce an in-depth regional study of vernacular houses in southwest Lancashire: the result, *Historic Houses in Lancashire: The Douglas Valley, 1300-1770* was published in 2002. The book was described as ‘*scholarship as its best*’ by *Country Life* (June 2003), and ‘*well analysed and presented*’ in *Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society* (Vol 48, 2004); and was extensively cited in the revised *Buildings of England* volume on Liverpool and Southwest Lancashire (2006). Research on the houses of Georgian and Regency Liverpool has also been undertaken, with a view to future publication. Following the success of his Douglas Valley book, Garry Miller established his own consultancy, producing analytical and interpretive reports on historic buildings and advising planning applications affecting the historic environment. His field of operation extends throughout the North West, Midlands, North Wales and parts of Cumbria and North and West Yorkshire, and projects range from the £40m Wolstenholme Square redevelopment in central Liverpool to the Grade I Barkisland Hall, Ripponden, West Yorkshire and to cottage extensions and barn conversions. Several local authorities have cited his assessments as examples of best practice, and reports on more than 130 buildings or sites are produced annually.