

AN HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT CONCERNING PROPOSED WORKS AT 21 MAIN STREET, WOODNEWTON, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

A Report by Paul Stamper Heritage

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1 INTRODUCTION

This Heritage Impact Statement accompanies applications for planning permission and LBC for works to the rear of 21 Main Street, Woodnewton, a Grade II-listed cottage. Full details and specifications are included with the application, and only a summary is offered here of the relevant aspects.

21 Main Street was originally two cottages, which the List entry dates to c.1700 although there are hardly any diagnostic architectural features. The cottages were converted into a single dwelling in the 1970s, when the property was much modernised. It was then that dormer windows were inserted to front (possibly) and rear (definitely), and to the rear it was re fenestrated and a conservatory added. Internally the floor plan was reworked and one of the staircases removed.

An attached barn to the east, the date of which is unknown, formed part of an informal courtyard of agricultural buildings to the east of 21 Main Street. It originally had a thatched roof, seen on an air photograph perhaps taken in the early 1960s (Figure 2). Soon after this was taken, and long before 1974 when the property changed hands, the barn roof was removed because it was structurally unsound. After this the building was roughly adapted as a garage-come store. Its conversion as a domestic addition to number 21 was consented in 2021 (NE/21/01624/FUL and LBC).

A site visit was made on 26 April 2023 by Dr Paul Stamper, FSA. An Appendix setting out Dr Stamper's professional credentials is appended.

2 DESIGNATIONS, AND LOCATION

21 Main Street was listed at Grade II in 1988 as Bryony Cottage (List entry 1065864). The List entry reads:

House. Late C17/early C18. Squared coursed and banded limestone with Collyweston slate roof. Originally 3-unit plan. Single storey with attic. 4-window range of C19 style casements under wood lintels. 4 hipped eaves dormers also have C19 style casements. C20 door, to left of centre, is also under wood lintel. Rebuilt brick stacks at ends. Interior not inspected. Included for group value. (RCHM: An Inventory of Architectural Monuments in North Northamptonshire: p171).

It will be noted the List entry makes no mention of the barn abutting the house to the east, although it must presumably be deemed a curtilage structure.

The house stands at the east end of the Woodnewton conservation area.

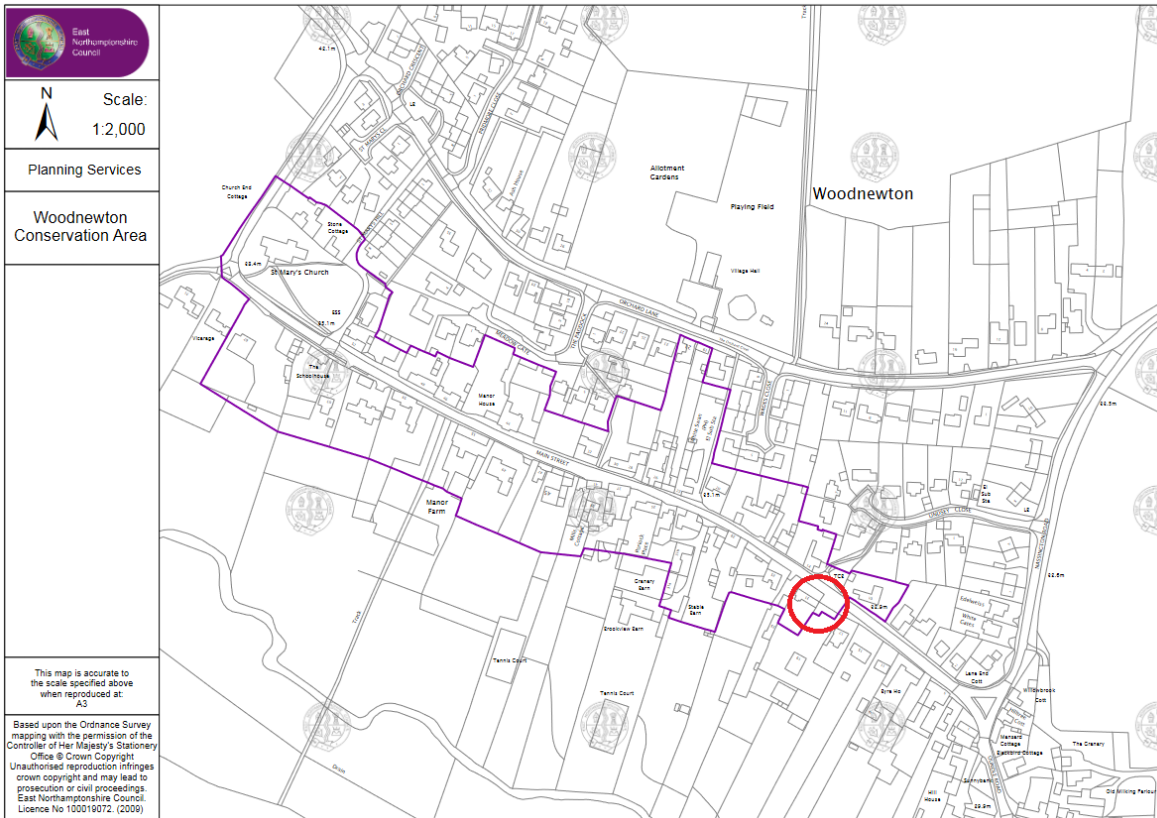


Figure 1. Woodnewton's conservation area, with number 21 ringed.

3 THE PROPOSALS

It is proposed replace the softwood windows to the rear elevation with three-light double-glazed units. At the same time the four current dormer windows, with felt cladding to the sides, will be rebuilt with lead surrounds and new casements. Full details and specifications are included with the application. Examination of the ground-floor windows shows that these were all replaced at the same time as the dormers were inserted, and almost certainly the openings were widened (see Figure 3). The rear door too is likely to be of that date, and is again to be replaced. No records are known of the original form of the windows, or the door. The design of the replacements is likely to be more akin to the original windows than the multi-paned ones installed in the 1970s.



Figure 2. 1970s air photo showing the house (ringed, on the left) with no rear dormers.



Figure 3. The rear of the house today. All the fenestration dates from the 1970s. The windows to either side of the door are very wide, and were probably extended.



Figure 4. A slightly angled view of the same. The lintels are very uniform, and presumably date from the 1970s refenestration.



Figure 5. Detail of the back door and window to its left.



Figure 6. The proposed rear elevation (Optimum Design Services).

4 ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

We suggest that the replacement of the existing 1970's windows and dormers to the rear of the property will bring environmental benefits – a more energy-efficient house – as well as introducing fenestration which is more sympathetic to the listed property.

While not visible from the public realm, for the above reasons we believe the proposed works will be beneficial to the character of the wider conservation area.

APPENDIX: REPORT AUTHORSHIP

Dr Paul Stamper is a specialist in the English landscape and its buildings. He is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, a Visiting Fellow at the Centre for English Local History at the University of Leicester, and has taught at the universities of Oxford, Bristol, and most recently Cambridge. He is a former Vice President of the Society for Medieval Archaeology and of the Royal Archaeological Institute, and a former President of the Medieval Settlement Research Group. He has published extensively through monographs, articles and book reviews.

Since 1981 he has been directly employed in researching and managing England's historic environment, firstly with the Victoria County History and for 20 years with English Heritage/Historic England. There he had various roles after joining in 1996, latterly as Senior Adviser in the Designation Department responsible for overseeing the writing and later revision of the 44 designation selection guides covering all aspects of the historic environment, including the 20 covering listing.

After leaving Historic England in 2016 he set up his own consultancy, Paul Stamper Heritage <https://paulstamperheritage.wordpress.com>. Most of its work involves assessing the significance of historic buildings and landscapes, and the likely impact of proposed changes. In 2021 he became a consultant to Montagu Evans LLP, specialising in change and development in historic landscapes.