



WINTERBURN
HERITAGE & PLANNING

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

**Application
For
Reroofing of single storey conservatory to rear
elevation
at
No.5 Church Street, Bridgnorth
Shropshire
WV16 4EQ**

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1.0 Context

- 1.1 This Heritage Impact Statement has been produced in support of an application for planning permission for the re-roofing of a timber conservatory to rear of the terrace dwelling, and the erection of single storey flat-roof conservatory extension to rear elevation.
- 1.2 As these proposals have the potential to impact on a group of designated and non-designated heritage assets, an assessment of the potential degree of that impact is required. Taking Historic England's guidance into account, the methodology for this assessment is summarised as follows:
- Identify the baseline heritage assets;
 - Assess the significance/value of the baseline built heritage assets and their settings;
 - Identify and define the magnitude of impact of the proposed development on each heritage asset, including its setting, and the severity of the impact;
 - Identify mitigation required where required; and
 - Assess the proposed development impact and its effect on the significance of the asset taking into consideration any mitigation proposed.

Definitions

- 1.3 A 'heritage asset' is widely defined in the NPPF Glossary as:
A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
- 1.4 A 'designated heritage asset' is more specifically defined as a World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area, as designated under the relevant legislation. The Shropshire Historic Environment Record (HER) contains information relating to all known archaeological and historical sites in the area. Examination of data in the Shropshire HER, and information held by the Shropshire Record Office indicates that there are several listed buildings in the immediate locality, no Registered Battlefields or Parks, but several HER entries. The extensive conservation area was designated 01/05/1971, extended: 05/01/1981, 23/07/1984 and 16/06/1999.



The Proposals

- 1.5 The site forms the rear garden of the unlisted No.5 Church Street and is currently occupied by a timber framed conservatory that is leaking and near of a series of repairs. Consent had been issued for its replacement in 2022 (Ref 22/00584/FUL), but due to costs it has been decided to clad the roof.
- 1.6 Contact was made with the Conservation Officer, Mr Ben Williscroft, to outline the proposals, elicited the following response on 18th September 2023:

I don't have any principle objection – does you builder/contractor, have an idea as to what they want to use specification wise? I would be happy to have a matt dark grey colour finish to match that of a typical plain clay tile/slate, so that it would blend in and be visually inconspicuous.



Existing conservatory



Sample Ridge Tile



Sample Tile for main pitched slope

It is proposed that the majority of the glass will be covered, including the side triangular cheek panels, leaving only four ridge panes nearest the house as glass as existing to let the sunlight into the house.

The pictures below show the proposed roof coverings in blue and the side triangular cheek panels to be covered in lead flashing coloured black:



1.7 The design is much simpler than the proposed as approved. The proposal has a cleaner silhouette and has less of a visual impact from the several viewpoints. This entails:

- *All of the glass will be removed carefully from the roof and side panels leaving only four panes of glass for light and the front glass on apex.*
- *The roof and all areas will then be boarded using a grade 3 OSB board. This will be fitted on top of the timber structure throughout.*
- *The two sloping roofs to each side will be felted using a 3 layer torch on membrane to a completed finish.*
- *The main pitch to the roof will then be lathed and felted using breathable membrane and 25x50mm*
- *batten.*
- *New fibre cement slates will be fitted to cover the roof using lead strips to seal onto the glass areas.*
- *All ridge tiles will be used to complete the apex.*
- *The side cheek triangle areas will be leaded using code 4 lead and have a detailed overlap on each section of lead.*
- *All copper fixings will be used when applying the leadwork.*



Existing conservatory is visually discreet, screened by adjacent extensions and boundary walling from wider viewpoints



No.5, front (north) elevation

2.0 Heritage Assets & Policy Context

- 2.1 The **Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990** is the legislative basis for decision-making on planning and listed building consent applications that affect the historic environment. Sections 66(1) and 72(1) of the Act impose a statutory duty upon local planning authorities to have ‘*special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses*’ and, in respect of conservation areas, that ‘*special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area*’.
- 2.2 Scheduled Monuments and Areas of Archaeological Interest are afforded statutory protection under the **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979** (as amended) and the consent of the Secretary of State (Department of Culture, Media and Sport), as advised by Historic England, is required for any works affecting a scheduled monument.

Heritage Assets - National Planning Policy Considerations (NPPF)

- 2.3 The July 2021 Revised National Planning Policy Framework is the statement of Government planning policies covering all aspects of the planning process. The policies in the NPPF are a material consideration which must be taken into account in development management decisions. The main paragraphs of direct relevance include **Paragraph 194**, which demands that local 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.
- 2.4 **Paragraph 195** outlines that local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset). Following on from this exercise of identification, **Paragraph 197** requires, in the determination of applications local planning authorities should take account of:
- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
 - c) the **desirability of new development making a positive contribution** [our emphasis] to local character and distinctiveness.
- 2.5 **Paragraphs 199-202** need to be read together and applied in cases where development would cause harm to the special interest of a designated heritage asset, distinguishing degrees of harm and providing related threshold tests for the planning decision maker.

- 2.6 On the other hand, **Paragraph 206** encourages LPAs to look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, outlining that proposals preserving those elements of the setting making a positive contribution to the heritage asset, or better reveal its significance, should be treated favourably.

Policy Considerations

- 2.7 Chief local policy consideration is contained in the Shropshire Core Strategy. This proposal site is demonstrably suitable for ancillary building to a residential use given the nature of the adjacent developments, thus approval of the scheme would not compromise the wider objectives of the Shropshire Core Strategy and makes an effective use of such a sustainable site. As such it is considered that the principle of residential development is also acceptable and that the proposals are located appropriately in accordance with **Policies MD1 – 3**.

- 2.8 **Policies CS6 Sustainable Design and Development** and **CS17 Environmental Networks**, SAMDev Plan Policy **MD13 Historic Environment**, where the requirements are that heritage assets will be protected, conserved, sympathetically enhanced and restored through the following four processes:

1. Ensuring that wherever possible, proposals avoid harm or loss of significance to designated or non-designated heritage assets, including their settings.
2. Ensuring that proposals which are likely to affect the significance of a designated or non-designated heritage asset, including its setting, are accompanied by a Heritage Assessment.
3. Ensuring that proposals which are likely to have an adverse effect on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, or including its setting, will only be permitted if it can be clearly demonstrated that the public benefits of the proposal outweigh the adverse effect.
4. Encouraging development which delivers positive benefits to heritage assets. Support will be given in particular to proposals which appropriately conserve, manage or enhance the significance of a heritage asset including its setting, especially where these improve the condition of those assets which are recognised as being at risk or in poor condition.

- 2.9 The common thread running through these duties is that they “flag up” the special interest of the feature, and impose, or enable the imposition, of more stringent controls than would otherwise be imposed by the “normal” planning process over any activities which might harm it, thereby ensuring that full account will have been taken of that which is of special interest. From these four points then, these particular proposals provide the following specific responses:

- The layout of the proposed has considered the impact on the setting of the nearby non-designated heritage buildings and the wider conservation area;
- Producing this Statement to assess the proposals;
- The layout is in a form that creates little unacceptably adverse impact on the identified designated and non-designated heritage assets; and
- The design of the new works will continue to preserve the overall local ‘sense of place’, albeit in a contemporary idiom.

3.0 Significance of the Heritage Assets

- 3.1 The NPPF defines the significance of a heritage asset as:
“the value 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.”
- 3.2 As ‘significance’ is the means by which the cultural importance of a place and its component parts can be measured and compared, understanding that significance makes it possible to develop proposals that will protect or enhance the character and cultural values of a site.
- 3.3 The following brief assessment is therefore provided on the significance of the heritage assets that may potentially be affected by the application proposals and is proportionate to the importance of the asset and sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposals, given their limited nature and extent.
- 3.4 The four different types of value (with the assessment in italics) that can contribute to significance are identified as follows:

Definition of Heritage Significance	
Level of Value	Definition
Exceptional	<i>an asset important at the highest national or international level; includes scheduled ancient monuments, Grade I and II* listed buildings and World Heritage Sites. The NPPF advises that substantial harm to such assets should be wholly exceptional</i>
High	<i>a designated asset important at a national level, including Grade II listed building and conservation areas. The NPPF advises that substantial harm to such assets should be exceptional</i>
Medium	<i>a non-designated asset important at local to regional level, including buildings on a Local List (non-statutory). Can also include less significant parts of listed buildings and conservation areas. Heritage assets in this category should be retained where possible, although there is usually scope for adaptation</i>
Low	<i>structure or feature of very limited heritage value and not defined as a heritage asset. Includes later additions to listed buildings or settings that are of low value. The removal or adaptation of structure or features in this category is usually acceptable where proposals will enhance a related heritage asset</i>
Negative	<i>structure or feature that harms the value and significance of a heritage asset. Wherever practicable, removal of negative features should be considered, taking account of setting and opportunities for enhancement</i>

Evidential value: where a building, structure or place provides primary evidence about the past. This can be natural or man-made and applies particularly to archaeological deposits, but also to other situations where there is no written record.

In terms of evolution, there have been few significant changes to the character and appearance of this historic core of the settlement and because of the lack of any modern

housing redevelopment, there is a probability that the archaeology of the early settlement here maybe well-preserved. Therefore, the overall **evidential value potential is high**

Historical value: where it illustrates some aspect of the past, and this helps to interpret the past, or that it is associated with an important person, event or movement.

*The identified character and appearance of the historic buildings making up this part of Bridgnorth make a positive contribution to the special architectural and historic interest of the area. Architecturally, the original buildings are indicative of various residential structures erected and constantly remodelled over a period of time from at least the 16th century to conform with contemporary social expectations on architecture. They are prominent in the streetscape along this street. Therefore, the nearby properties' **historical value is high.***

Aesthetic value: where this may derive from conscious design, including the work of an artist or craftsman; or it may be the fortuitous outcome of the way a building or place has evolved.

*Aesthetically, the houses around the site preserve much of their historic architectural detailing: as such they makes a contribution to the character and appearance of this pleasant streetscene. The character forms part of the setting to the adjacent Church of St. Leonard's and its Close, with the surviving social, economic and historic associations. The integrity of the wider townscape is appreciably enhanced through the preservation of buildings such as this house. Therefore, from the perspective of this proposal site, the **aesthetic value is high.***

Communal value: where regardless of their historical or aesthetic value, many buildings or places are valued for their symbolic or social value or the local identity which they provide.

*The ability to interpret the contribution of the heritage assets for the community/public is well understood through the listing and conservation area process, which can give a reasonably deep appreciation of the historical development, considerably enhancing the understanding the contribution of the heritage assets make to the wider history of Shropshire and the impact on the site's social evolution upon the wider landscape and community. There are a number of surviving historic buildings in the area and these are representative of the urban structure of this part of Bridgnorth from at least the Saxon/Norman period, and certainly the 16th – 20th century period, and despite alterations and losses, the buildings have overall a **high communal value.***



Looking across the Close around St. Leonard's some of the most important buildings in Bridgnorth's social life are gathered here

4.0 Assessment of Setting

'The significance of a heritage asset derives not only from its physical presence and historic fabric but also from its setting - the surroundings in which it is experienced.'

(English Heritage, 2012).

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: *The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England) Second Edition 2017*

- 4.1 The purpose of this amended and republished Advice note¹ is to provide information on the concept and acknowledgement of the nature of 'setting'. The setting of a heritage asset may reflect the character of the wider townscape or landscape in which it is situated, or be quite distinct from it. The contribution of setting to the significance of heritage assets, and how it can enable that significance to be appreciated, will almost always include the consideration of views. (Advice Note **para 5**). Views can of course be valued for reasons other than their contribution to heritage significance, and may be related to the appreciation of the wider landscape, where there may be little or no association with heritage assets (**para 6**).
- 4.2 **Paragraph 17** of the Advice Note reconfirms that all heritage assets have significance, where the contribution made by their setting to their specific significance varies. Furthermore, although many settings may be enhanced by development, not all settings have the same capacity to accommodate change without harm to the significance of the heritage asset. However, as **Paragraph 18** states *'Conserving or enhancing heritage assets by taking their settings into account need not prevent change; indeed change may be positive, for instance where the setting has been compromised by poor development.'*
- 4.3 The indirect visual impacts of the proposed development on the setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets within the locality have been assessed as required under paragraph 195 of the NPPF. These are mainly related to views from, to and across the heritage assets.
- 4.4 The proposal affects a non-designated heritage asset that lies within the Bridgnorth Conservation Area where it is covered by the Bridgnorth Article 4. The rear of the property lies adjacent various other designated heritage assets including No.3 Church Street, No.2 St Leonard's Close, Palmers Hospital, St Leonard's Close, Nos.73 & 75-76 High Street, all grade II listed buildings.
- 4.5 A 'Zone of Visual Influence' defines the areas from which a development may potentially be totally or partially visible by reference to surrounding topography. The analysis does not take into account any landscape artefacts

¹ It replaces *The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 – 1st edition, (2015)* and *'Seeing the History in the View: A Method for Assessing Heritage Significance Within Views'* (English Heritage, 2011).

such as trees, woodland, or buildings, and for this reason is increasingly referred to as a 'Zone of Theoretical Visibility'. In this context, the proposed site is to be mainly viewed from the south as part of the rear of the buildings fronting Church Street; however the site is not readily visible from the south, where visibility is constrained across open gardens, outbuildings and boundary walling, even less so from the north, west or east due to the site being screened by buildings.



The design provides a low silhouette in the rear views of the site



The houses lining Church Street screen views from the north

Impact on Setting

- 4.6 The range of circumstances in which setting may be affected and the number of heritage assets that may be involved precludes a single approach for assessing effects. **Paragraph 33** of the Note states different approaches will be required for different circumstances. In general, however, this assessment can address the key attributes of the proposed development in terms of its:

Location and siting – putting forward a scheme in favour of re-cladding of an existing extension, where the scale, siting and design do not overwhelm or dominate the appearance of the original house or adjacent properties, and does not have any detrimental impact on the level of existing residential amenity or harm visual amenity.

This will limit options within the site for anything other than a single structure hidden behind boundary walling.

Form and appearance – *the design and materials of the proposed respects in a positive and considered way the general appearance of the site and so, with the existing boundaries, minimises its impact from the various viewpoints, hence preserving the significance of the character and appearance of this conservation area when viewed from the public arena. In this respect the recladding of a small extension will have a minimal effect on the setting of the heritage assets.*

Additional effects – *the provision of cladding will improve the insulation properties of the extension*

Permanence – *the proposals are a permanent insertion within the townscape setting, but can be easily reversed (ie. demolished) at some point in the future.*

Assessment of Views

4.7 In general terms, a significant view is an historical composite, like here; the cumulative result of a long history of development. Views can contain a wider cultural significance that may be derived from:

- the deliberate composition of its elements (not an element of this view of the back of the houses fronting Church Street);
- accidental ‘townscape’ character (a significant element of this view);
- non-historic landmarks and other features (minor elements individually of this view); and
- topography and/or planting (a minor element of this view).

4.8 In summary, the viewing locations highlight the impact of boundary treatment and buildings on the townscape. These different aspects are all apparent within the views as a mixture of varying building styles and forms. This heterogeneity within a town centre context is clearly recognisable, where the overall visual impact of the varied parts works to great effect.

Summary of Significance

4.9 The significance of Bridgnorth therefore lies in modest quality of its architecture, particularly that of the 16th - 19th centuries, and the distinctive form and layout of the neighbourhood around the Close. It contains a number of surviving buildings of historic interest, as well as those of lesser interest, but collectively they have an historic value. The main features of significance are therefore:

- Surviving 16th - 19th century buildings, mostly of brick or stone and variable in scale, dominated by the streetscape and its distinctive layout
- mix of building types and uses
- Most buildings association with the civic functions of the town

4.10 As such this development will not then devalue to any degree the significance of the adjacent buildings, both their tangible values, such as historic setting, or associational values, such as the placing within the streetscape, as the work is partly screened by boundary planting. Indeed, the proposals will effectively preserve the significance and setting of the heritage assets which are sufficiently distant from the new works not to be unacceptably compromised. In group form it already possesses an inter-visual relationship with the wider conservation area that these proposals will not meaningfully alter.

5.0 *Summary of Impact of Proposals*

- 5.1 In determining this application from a heritage aspect, the main issue would be the proposals' impact on the area itself and the setting of the identified group of designated and non-designated heritage assets, the consequences for the wider townscape and thus the character and appearance of the conservation area. The proposed development reflects an understanding of the historical evolution of the nearby buildings and settings.



No.5 lies within the historic core of Bridgnorth's conservation area

- 5.2 Careful consideration of the alignment and materiality of the proposed development supports the need for the integration of new development into the existing built and historic environment (Revised NPPF **Paragraph 130(c)**). The proposed has been carefully designed to be sympathetic, through contrast of architectural approach, to the heritage values of the settlement and its setting, so will not cause loss or damage of the surviving historic fabric.

Summary of Impact Assessment

- 5.3 Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act) requires the decision maker, in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest. Section 72(1) of the Act requires that, in the exercise of planning powers in conservation areas, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.
- 5.4 Therefore there are two relevant issues against which these proposals are measured:
- Whether the proposals, described in the application, conserve the special interest and architectural significance of the non-designated heritage assets; and
 - Whether the proposals harm the character and appearance of the setting of the building and designated assets when viewed from the wider area.

Definition of Level of Impact on Heritage Significance	
<i>Level of Impact</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Total Loss	Total loss of the Historic Asset and its elements of significance
Substantial Harm	Major alterations to the Heritage Asset removing most area of significance but leaving some areas of special interest
Moderate Harm – Less Than Substantial Harm	Loss of one or more high level areas of special interest of the Heritage Asset
Slight Adverse Impact	Slight alteration resulting in some small loss of special interest
Negligible	Very slight or negligible loss of significance of the Heritage Asset
None	The proposed development has no discernible impact on the significance of the Heritage Asset
Slight Beneficial	Slight enhancement of one aspect of special interest of the Heritage Asset
Moderately Beneficial	Moderate enhancement of one aspect of special interest of the Heritage Asset
Highly Beneficial	Major alterations resulting in wholesale enhancement of the significance of the Heritage Asset

- 5.5 Overall there would be no direct impact upon the fabric the heritage assets or the immediate area, which if the south boundary walling is generally retained, will be acceptable. The overall impact and significance of effects of the proposed development on the historic fabric of Bridgnorth Conservation Area and its heritage assets has been assessed as **none** (as defined above).
- 5.6 Its location in being in a relatively reflective style of the adjacent domestic outbuildings decreases to a degree the site's visual impact on the streetscape and the surrounding area. The proposed replacement in design and layout is intended to be sympathetic to its context, where the external visual impact on the setting of the other properties will be **none** (as defined above).

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 The principle of the proposed works is considered acceptable on the basis of:
- its appropriate form in relation to the existing layout of the historic context, preserving those identified elements of the assets of historic interest;
 - in recladding conservatory, the existing historic fabric is respected and existing varied architectural character of the rear elevations to Church Street is respected, where the proposed detailing has no directly adverse impact on the setting of the heritage assets or the wider area; and
 - the application is therefore generally in accordance with adopted policies and development guidance relating to the concept of setting.
- 6.2 These factors carry positive weight, which are in favour of the scheme in the planning balance. It is therefore considered that they are sympathetic to the significance of the identified designated heritage assets bearing in mind the statutory duties, in that the NPPF states that great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets and that considerable importance and weight should be given to the desirability of preserving the setting of heritage assets when carrying out a balancing exercise in Planning decisions.
- 6.3 The character of the area stems as a whole from the interplay of the heritage assets of various ages and the surrounding townscape. The scheme design and materials have been arranged to respect the general character and appearance of the surrounding area, mitigated to an acceptable degree the visual impact of the proposals.
- 6.4 This Heritage Assessment indicates that there will be some minor visual impacts through the proposed recladding. However, in the context of its site and surrounding boundaries, the effects on the historic fabric and significance of these assets and the setting of the non-designated assets nearby would be effectively neutral due to the retention of the conservatory and the lack of impact on the identified main features of interest.

APPENDIX I: HERITAGE ASSETS

No 2 ST LEONARD'S CLOSE

II GV

Late C18. Painted brick; 2 storeys; 3 sash windows; simple wood doorcase, formerly with moulded canopy; brick band; plain eaves; 3 simple dormers; tiles. The following buildings. Church of St Leonard. Old Grammar School, No 2 Palmer's Hospital, and Nos 4 to 7 (consec) form a group
Listing NGR: SO7166693285

No 3 BRIDGNORTH CHURCH STREET (South Side)

II GV

Early C18. Painted brick; 3 storeys; 3 sash windows in broad frames (single glazing bars only); moulded wood pilaster doorcase with pediment hood, radiating fanlight 6-panel door and steps up with early C19 wrought-iron railing at side stringcourses; 2 rectangular brick stacks flush with parapet. Northgate Café, Nos 1 to 3 (consec) form a group
Listing NGR: SO7164293280

Palmer's Hospital ST LEONARD'S CLOSE

II GV

Founded 1687. Completely rebuilt 1889. Timber frame and stuccoed brick on rusticated stone plinth. 2 storeys. Occupying 3 sides of a quadrangle. Attractive, but apparently nothing remains of original fabric. The following buildings, Church of St Leonard. Old Grammar School. No 2 Palmer's Hospital, and Nos 4 to 7 (consec) form a group
Listing NGR: SO7168393271

No 73 BRIDGNORTH HIGH STREET (East Side)

II GV

Early C18. Painted brick; 3 storeys; 2 sash windows in moulded architraves; quoins; stone band. Formerly with moulded stone cornice. Parapet; enriched rainwater head. Modern shop front. No 65 & Nos 71 to 73 (consec) form a group
Listing NGR: SO7163593243

No 75 BRIDGNORTH HIGH STREET (East Side)

II

Late C18 and later. Bed brick; 2 storeys plus attic; 4 sash windows (single glazing bars) with flat brick arches; moulded stone eaves; 2 modern or restored gabled dormers; tiles. Arched doorway on right-hand side; modern shop front.
Listing NGR: SO7161293256