



**23-30-b3-HE-XX-RP-A          Heritage Statement & Critical Analysis of the Proposals**

Planning Application for Ground Mounted PV (Solar) Panels within the domestic curtilage of:

Hamstall Hall, Blithbury Road,  
Hamstall Ridware, Lichfield,  
Staffordshire,  
WS15 3RS

**Householder Planning & Listed Building Consent (LBC)**

**(PP-12744907)**

Rev -      First Version prior to internal proof-reading / checking

23-01-24

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# 1. Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by 'b3heritage'; the author, Bruce Johnson, holds an M.Sc. in 'Building Conservation & Regeneration' from the University of Central Lancashire (2011-2013), which is accredited by the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) and the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). The author is an Architectural Technologist holding a B.Sc. (Hons) in Architectural Technology accredited by the Chartered Institute of Architectural Technologists.

The purpose of this statement is to assess the impacts of a proposal for free standing PV's (solar panels) within the garden curtilage of Hamstall Hall. Hamstall Hall is a Grade II\* listed building. Within the site there are also historic Garden Walls with an independent Grade II listing. In addition to this, there are several other listed buildings around the site and the local area has a relatively high number of heritage assets.

Given that the proposals are free-standing / ground mounted additions to the garden curtilage as opposed to being affixed to part of the listed building or listed structures the report's purpose is to consider the 'effect on setting' to any aspects of significance in addition to the history of the land and its potential to contain archaeological interest.

A listed building is one of special architectural or historic interest considered to be of national importance and therefore worth protecting. 91.7% of listed buildings are Grade II. Grade II\* is a step higher in significance; these are "buildings of more than special interest" and 5.8% of listed buildings are Grade II\*. Finally, the most significant is Grade I listed buildings which "are of exceptional interest"; these amount to 2.5% of all listed buildings.

This appraisal has been conducted in accordance with the general guidelines set out in British Standard 7913:2013 'Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings', the RICS Practice Standards for 'Historic Building Conservation – 1<sup>st</sup> Edition' and Historic England's publication 'Informed Conservation' and 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance'.

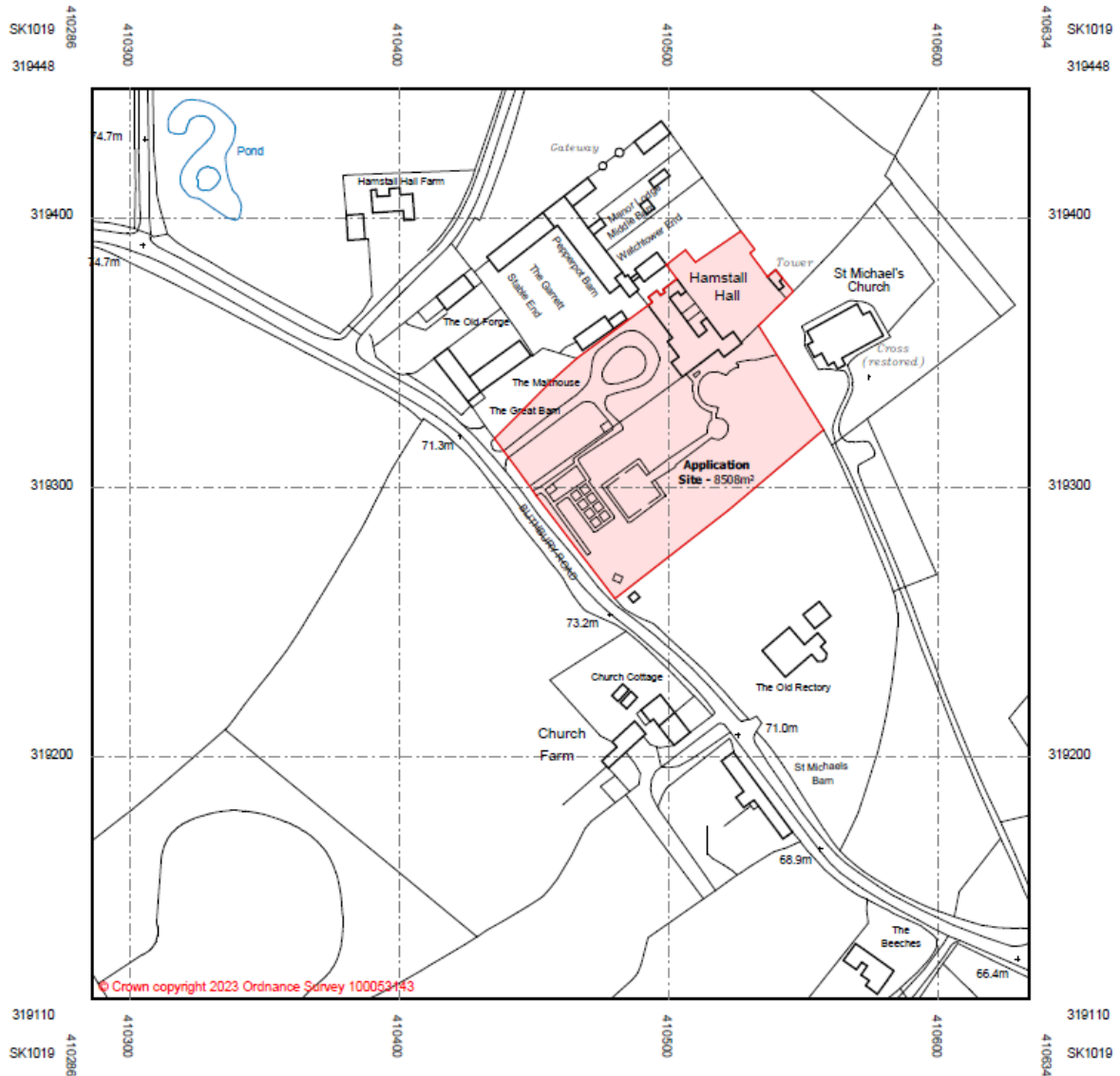
Planning Policy expectations in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Chapter 16 relate to 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' within this section 'Paragraph 200' requires that: *"In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation."*

This report has been completed with reference to the following drawings by 'b3architectural':

- 23-30-b3-XX-XX-DR-A-0101\_Rev-\_Location\_Plan
- 23-30-b3-XX-XX-DR-A-0102\_Rev-\_Proposed\_Block\_Plan
- 23-30-b3-XX-XX-DR-A-0103\_Rev-\_Proposed\_Context\_Plan
- 23-30-b3-XX-XX-DR-A-0201\_Rev-\_Proposed\_Layout\_Plan
- 23-30-b3-XX-XX-DR-A-0401\_Rev-\_Proposed\_Elevations
- 23-30-b3-XX-XX-VS-A-0402\_Rev-\_Proposed\_Visuals

## 2. Site Location & Information

National Grid Reference: **SK 10466 19303**  
Easting: 410466  
Northing: 319303



**Figure 1: The site location is edged red with a pale red hatch; this uses the Ordnance Survey as a base plan. The plan shows the extensive garden curtilage of Hamstall Hall at 8505m<sup>2</sup>.**

The application site (edged red in Figure 1) is located to the northwest of the small, linear settlement of 'Hamstall Ridware'. This is a historic village and parish within the wider conurbation of Lichfield District Council, hereafter abbreviated to 'LDC'.

The site is accessed by 'Blithbury Road'. This is a rural road which runs from Uttoxeter Road (B5014) to the north, through Hamstall Ridware to 'The Green', which is at the three-way intersection with 'Blithbury Road', 'Yoxall Road', and 'Lichfield Road' to the southeast of the application site.

## **Buildings on the site**

The Red Edged Line defines the entire legal ownership of the applicants. Within this area, the site contains several buildings.

The proposals are to be located alongside three modern origin buildings. These are two domestic Greenhouses 4.4 x 2.7m in footprint and a timber shed, 2.5 x 2.5m. These are within the 'front area' of the 'side garden' alongside Hamstall Hall. The garden is an enclosed, walled garden and these 'Garden Walls' are historic holding a Grade II listed status.

Further to the north there is of course the main dwelling, Hamstall Hall, which is a Grade II\* building. Additionally, there are the surviving remnants of the original Hamstall Hall. These comprise a Tower, Walls, and the rear garden at Hamstall Hall forms part of a wider area which is a 'Scheduled Ancient Monument'. This listing / Monument encompasses the garden curtilages of the adjacent buildings 'Watchtower End', 'Middle Barn', and 'Manor Lodge'. The monument comprises the earthwork and upstanding remains of a medieval manor house and courtyard to the northeast of Hamstall Hall and to the northwest a 'Gate House'.

Regarding the modern buildings, these can be seen on aerial imagery (by Mapserve) in the 2010 collection; the Millenium series might also show these three buildings, but the quality of these images is lower, and it is, therefore, uncertain if the structures shown are the same three detached structures. These buildings hold no Heritage Values and are known to have existed on the site for at least 13 years.

## **Conservation areas**

Lichfield District Council (LDC) has 22 designated conservation areas. The purpose behind these areas is to provide a development control measure to protect an area's special architectural and historic character from adverse development and encourage its enhancement. The application falls within the conservation area boundary of 'Hamstall Ridware'.

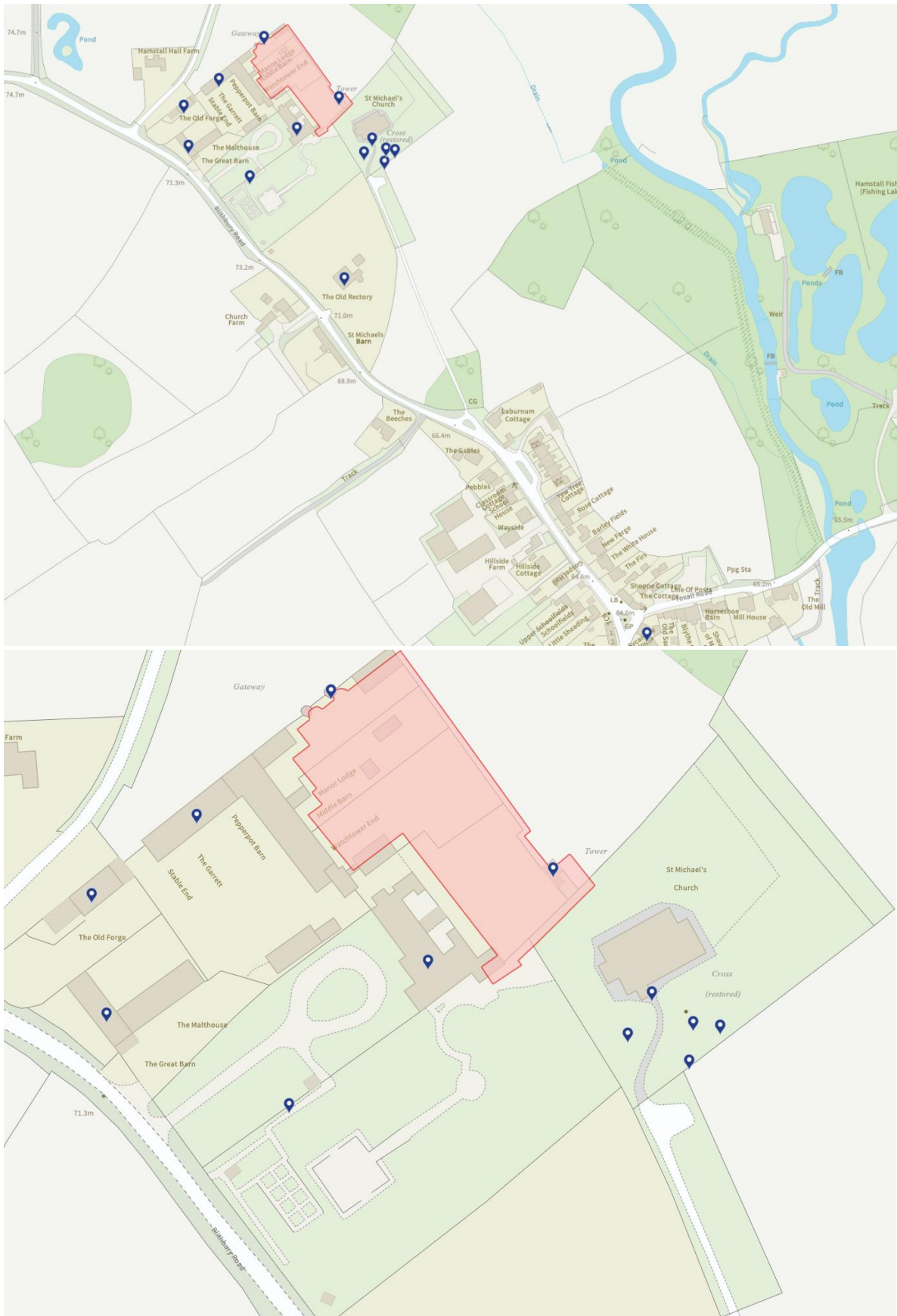
## **Statutory Listed Buildings & Scheduled Ancient Monuments**

Within the Hamstall Ridware conservation area there is one Grade I listed building, two Grade II\* listings and ten Grade II listings. Additionally, there is a 'Scheduled Ancient Monument'. The Listing Descriptions for all nearby Listed Buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments will be provided in the following pages of Section 2. These will be provided in order of distance from the proposals.

From a Legal perspective, buildings are listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest. From an informative perspective, Historic England state that the: "List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest."

Unless the List entry states otherwise, it includes both the structure itself and any object or structure fixed to it (whether inside or outside) as well as any object or structure within the curtilage of the building.

For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure must have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.



**Figure 2: The above map by Historic England shows listed buildings with a blue marker. This shows several listed buildings near to the application site. As result, a thorough assessment on the 'effect on setting' from the proposals is necessary.**

### **GARDEN WALLS IMMEDIATELY SOUTH EAST OF HAMSTALL HALL**

- List Entry Number: 1293737
- Heritage Category: Listed building
- Grade: II
- Date Listed: 27-Feb-1964

12/32 Garden walls immediately south-east of Hamstall Hall 27.2.64 (formerly listed as Walls at Hamstall Hall)

Walls. C17. Red brick (Flemish bond) with toothed band below a brick coping. The walls enclose a large rectangular garden. In the north-west corner a Tudor-arch doorway with stone surround gives access to the main courtyard of Hamstall Hall (q.v.). Another leads into the adjacent grounds of St. Michael's Church (q.v.).

### **BARN AND ATTACHED WALL APPROXIMATELY 100 YARDS WEST OF HAMSTALL HALL**

- List Entry Number: 1038778
- Heritage Category: Listed building
- Grade: II
- Date Listed: 27-Feb-1964

12/33 Barn and attached wall approx. 100 yards west of Hamstall Hall (formerly 27.2.64 listed as Barn on W. of Court at Hamstall Hall)

Barn and wall. C17. Red brick; plain tile roof; one storey and loft. 5 bays marked by narrow off-set buttresses with stone copings. Full height barn doors to left of centre. Single-storey, lean-to wing to the right. Brick wall attached to the left with toothed band and brick coping; the wall encloses the west corner of the outer courtyard. Interior. Exposed timber framed transverse trusses.

### **HAMSTALL HALL**

- List Entry Number: 1038777
- Heritage Category: Listed building
- Grade: II\*
- Date Listed: 09-Mar-1953

12/29 HAMSTALL RIDWARE CP BLITHBURY ROAD (north-east side) Hamstall Hall

Mansion remains. C15 core with extensive alterations of the late C16 and later. Red brick of at least three periods suggesting gradual replacement of the earlier timber framing; plain tile roof, massive brick ridge stack.

By the end of the C18 Hamstall Hall comprised an essentially late C16 complex of buildings concentrated in the south corner of a large rectangular courtyard aligned north-west/south-east. The main approach was by way of a gatehouse (q.v.) in the centre of the north-west wall. A C15 tower (q.v.) stood at the south-east corner and was formerly linked to the main house. The existing remains consist of an L-shaped range which occupies the south-west side of the courtyard, a short wing at its east corner links it with an elaborate porch.

South-west front: two storeys and attic with C16 brickwork to ground storey and C18 brickwork to second storey. Eight roof bays. Irregular fenestration of C18/C19 casements. Blocked C16 doorway to the left with Tudor arch and sunken spandrels. Boarded door to left of centre. Large gabled wing to the right with stone quoins as high as the off-set second storey, and C19 brick gable. Set-back to the left of the wing is a smaller C18 gabled projection with door to the right-hand side and a small lean-to extension to the left. To the rear of the building are four blocked C16 doorways with Tudor arches, one has panelled spandrels.

South-east front: south-west wing to the left with C19 glazed door and porch, flanked on the right hand side by a brick and stone buttress; two jambs of a blocked first floor window directly above. The wing has two phases of early brickwork in English bond with a toothed eaves band. Attached to the right is the gable end of the main range with ground storey in English bond of the same build as the wing, and C18 brickwork above; two single-light windows with chamfered stone surrounds, to the ground storey, two casements at first floor level and one at attic level. A shaft, single-storey wing, formerly the brewhouse continues the ground storey phase of brickwork to the right and is terminated by The Porch. This is a late C16 brick building with ashlar quoins and dressings and coped gable on shaped kneelers. Two storeys and attic with attic cornice. Central portico with Tuscan columns, supporting a balcony with strapwork balustrade. First floor doorway and flanking windows all with keyed semi-circular arches springing from imposts. In the gable a strapwork embellished oval oculus. Two storey lean-to bay to the left of the same build with four-light chamfer mullioned windows in rebated surrounds, the first floor window is blocked. Ground and first floor cross windows to the right hand return with semi-circular heads and roll and fillet moulded keystones, possibly re-used.

Interior: the porch has a stone fireplace with four-centred head, corbelled lintel and moulded surround. The kitchen is at the north-west end of the main range. In the south-west wall is a massive C16 stone fireplace with shouldered arch and chamfered surround. Network of massive chamfered and stopped ceiling beams with chamfered joists laid flat. Opposed entrances (now blocked) at the north-west end of the room and some evidence that the passage was screened off from the kitchen. Also a blocked doorway in the south-east corner of the room. The bay next to the kitchen is occupied by a chimney stack, a small pantry and a rear entrance lobby. Beyond this is a room with C17 oak panelling. Between this room and the south-west wing is a former through-passage with exposed timber framing. The passage gives access to a late C17 staircase with turned balusters and panelled dado and to two rooms within the south-west wing.

The front room is completely oak panelled and contains a wall cupboard with semi-circular arch and raised key; ovolo-moulded ceiling beam. The rear room retains a C16 stone fireplace with chamfered Tudor arch on corbels.

At First floor level: Exposed close-studded wall framing in the north-west end wall probably C15 incorporating a later window with ogee-moulded mullions. C17 oak wall panelling. The adjoining room to the south-east has C17 oak wall panelling, a Tudor arch fireplace and a smaller chamber ensuite, also completely oak panelled with a carved frieze of dragons. More panelling in the next room to the south-east including a cupboard door with part of a late medieval painting on the back.

Hamstall Hall was the home of the Fitzherbert's from the early C16 and much of the C16 building work was probably carried out for Thomas Fitzherbert. The Porch is scheduled as an Ancient Monument.

## MANOR HOUSE

- List Entry Number: 1006119
- Heritage Category: Scheduled Monument
- Date Listed: 09-Mar-1953

Remains of a medieval manor house within the grounds of Hamstall Hall.

### Reasons for Designation

Fortified houses were residences belonging to some of the richest and most powerful members of society. Their design reflects a combination of domestic and military elements. In some instances, the fortifications may be cosmetic additions to an otherwise conventional high status dwelling, giving a military aspect while remaining practically indefensible. They are associated with individuals or families of high status and their ostentatious architecture often reflects a high level of expenditure. The nature of the fortification varies, but can include moats, curtain walls, a gatehouse and towers, gunports and crenellated parapets. Their buildings normally included a hall used as communal space for domestic and administrative purposes, kitchens, service and storage areas. Some fortified houses had outer courts beyond the main defences in which stables, brew houses, granaries and barns were located. Fortified houses were constructed in the medieval period, primarily between the 15th and 16th centuries. They are found primarily in several areas of lowland England: in upland areas they are outnumbered by structures such as bastles and tower houses which fulfilled many of the same functions. As a rare monument type, all examples exhibiting significant surviving archaeological remains are considered of national importance.

The remains of the medieval manor house at Hamstall Hall will retain significant buried remains, archaeological and environmental evidence relating to the construction, design, layout and development of the medieval high status residence.

### Details

This record was the subject of a minor enhancement on 11 June 2015. The record has been generated from an "old county number" (OCN) scheduling record. These are monuments that were not reviewed under the Monuments Protection Programme and are some of our oldest designation records.

The monument includes the earthwork and upstanding remains of a medieval manor house and courtyard to the north east of Hamstall Hall, north of the village of Hamstall Ridware. It is situated on a slight slope running down to the River Blithe. The standing remains include a rectangular courtyard wall aligned north west to south east with a 16th century gatehouse at the centre of its north west side and a 15th century tower with 16th century additions at its south east corner. The gatehouse is of red brick construction with ashlar quoins and dressings. It consists of a pair of octagonal turrets each with ogee-moulded cornice and stone dome which flank a rusticated semicircular arched gateway with raised key and strapwork parapet. Each turret has a two-light chamfer-mullioned window facing the gateway approach and a Tudor-arch doorway to the rear. Nesting boxes were cut into its walls of the turrets for their later conversion into dovecotes. The tower is roughly square in plan and of similar construction to the gatehouse, red brick construction with some ashlar dressings. The three-storey structure stands over 15m tall and has a flat lead roof. A later timber staircase now occupies the interior of the tower. It includes 15th and 16th century windows and a large chimney stack in its south facing wall. Above the upper storey of the western elevation a steeply arched roof line is visible of a building range once attached to the tower. Other indications of former buildings are ranged along the inside of the courtyard walls with 16th century windows.



The residence of Hamstall Hall has its origins as a 15th century timber framed house and by the late 16th century it comprised of a complex of buildings concentrated in the south corner of the large rectangular courtyard with the main approach via the gatehouse. The tower stood at the south east corner and was formally linked to a large hall until the 18th century when the new hall was built, leaving the tower as a derelict folly. The precinct of the medieval Church of St. Michael and All Angels (LB 272882 Grade I) lies adjacent to the south east corner of the monument. Within the scheduling, the gatehouse and attached courtyard walls, the tower and attached walls and the porch of Hamstall Hall are also Grade II\* Listed Buildings (272876, 272877, and 272875). Further archaeological remains associated with the medieval residence survive in the vicinity of the monument, but are not included because they have not been formally assessed.

### **TOWER AND ATTACHED WALLS AT HAMSTALL**

- List Entry Number: 1374300
- Heritage Category: Listed building
- Grade: II\*
- Date Listed: 27-Feb-1964

12/31 Tower and attached walls at Hamstall Hall (formerly listed as Tower at Hamstall Hall)

Tower and walls. Late C15 with C16 alterations and additions. Red brick (English bond in places) with some ashlar dressings; flat lead covered roof; brick lateral stack. The roughly square tower stands at the south-east corner of the principal courtyard at Hamstall Hall (q.v.); there is a massive chimney stack to the western half of the south face. Walls attached to the south-west and south-east angles enclose the south-east side of the courtyard and the north-west side of the adjacent grounds of the Church of S. Michael (q.v.) respectively. 3-storey tower approximately 40 feet high.

East elevation: 2 off- sets; the lower one has a stone coping and stone parapet band. Each storey has a small C15 window with 4-centred head, ground and first floor each have a C16 three-light chamfer mullioned window with rebated frame. C16 two-storey buttress to the right hand (north-east) corner. At second floor level are some designs in dark brickwork.

West elevation: C16 Tudor arch door to the left with sunken spandrels and stone surround; directly above at both first and second floor level is a blocked C15 doorway with 4-centred arch. Blocked C16 fireplace to ground floor right with Tudor arch and sunken spandrels. Above the upper storey is the steeply arched roof line of a now demolished range that was formerly attached to the tower.

North elevation: Small C15 window at second floor level and a small C16 window lower down.

South elevation: The left-hand half of the elevation is occupied by the chimney stack, the upper part of this is C16 and has a corbel table of trefoil headed arches with sunken spandrels. The lower part of the stack probably served as an annexe to the tower until being converted in the C16 for it has a blocked window at first floor level of similar type to the C15 windows on the east face. To the right-hand side of the elevation are three windows, at different levels each with sunken spandrels and brick dripstones. The lowest served the first floor, the upper two can only have served as clerestory lighting for the first and second floors. There is a smaller C15 window at second floor level to the far right. Interior: Now occupied by a late C16/early C17 staircase with closed string, turned balusters and newel finials making use of much reclaimed timber, possibly from a demolished part of Hamstall Hall (q.v.). The original function of the tower is obscure; it may have been residential, or it may have served as a look-out tower. Circa 1600 it was converted into a staircase tower. By the end of the C18 it has become isolated from the main house by the demolition of its attached wing. Scheduled as an Ancient Monument.

## **THE OLD RECTORY**

- List Entry Number: 1248654
- Heritage Category: Listed building
- Grade: II
- Date Listed: 27-Feb-1964

Parsonage now house. Early C18 with later additions. Red brick; hipped plain tile roof; brick ridge stacks. Roughly U-shaped plan; principal alignment north-west/south-east facing south-west. Two storeys and attic; five window front, glazing bar sashes with horns and raised keystones. Central panelled door and rectangular overlight with patterned glazing bars. Three attic dormers with glazing bar casements and hipped roofs. The right hand (south-east) return has a first floor band and two bays of casements with segmental heads. C19 rear extension wing to the right. Interior not inspected.

## **CHURCH OF ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS (ST. MICHAEL'S)**

- List Entry Number: 1190715
- Heritage Category: Listed building
- Grade: I
- Date Listed: 27-Feb-1964

Parish church. Mainly C14 and C15 incorporating some C12 fragments. Sandstone ashlar; low pitch, leaded covered roofs. West Tower, 3-bay nave with side aisles, 2-bay chancel with north chapel; and a south chapel and vestry.

West tower: Early C14. Three stages with diagonal buttresses, plain parapet and recessed spire with three tiers of lucarnes. Pointed west door with ogee-moulded surround and hood mould. Belfry openings of two trefoil-headed lights with sunken spandrels, beneath a flat arch. Nave. C12 west wall. Late C15 clerestory: 4-centred arch windows with Y-tracery and concave quarter round-moulded jambs and mullions; continuous hood mould. C15 north aisle: square-headed windows of three trefoil-headed lights with ogee and concave quarter round-moulded surrounds, and sunken spandrels. Continued to the east as the north chapel: C18 windows to north and east with semi-circular arches, raised keystones, moulded architraves and leaded glass. North doorway with similar details. On the east wall is an aedicule with bracketed open pediment, commemorating Joseph Riley, died 1759. C14 south aisle: square headed windows of three trefoil-headed lights with sunken spandrels. Similar window of two lights in the south wall of the south chapel, and plain rectangular loops in the south and east walls. Mid-C19 gabled south porch of rock-faced ashlar with yellow dressings and plain tile roof with fishscale tile bend. Early C14 chancel with pointed east window of four trefoil-headed lights and cusped intersecting tracery.

INTERIOR. Nave arcade has pointed arches of two chamfered orders on octagonal columns with moulded capitals. At the west end of the north aisle are the remains of an earlier, blocked arch, probably a window. Tall pointed and chamfered tower arch, and above it a C12 window, blocked by the west tower. There is no chancel arch. C15 roof over the nave with moulded ridge piece, purlins and tie beams; the latter are cambered and supported on brackets. Aisle roofs with moulded ridge pieces and tie beams. The north aisle roof is inscribed 16 RO: IR 69. 2-bay chancel arcade of pointed arches on octagonal columns with moulded capitals. On the south side a C16 tomb recess has been inserted. C14 piscina with trefoiled head and sunken spandrels in the south wall, partly destroyed by the tomb recess. In the south wall of the south chapel are the remains of a staircase which led to a former rood loft. At loft level is a doorway between south chapel and chancel. Fittings. C19 stone font; octagonal with concave diagonals. C19 wooden pulpit; panels carved with grapes and vine

leaves. early to mid-C16 north chapel screen; Perpendicular, incorporating two medallions containing putti. Late C15 south chapel screen with central Tudor arch and open traceried panels. At the east end of the south chapel is a plank and muntin partition separating it from the vestry. The muntins have roll-moulded edges. C15/C16. Monument. Richard and John Cotton, 1502. Chest tomb with cusped panels containing heraldic shields. The tomb is beneath a four-centred arch recess between chancel and south chapel. Stained Glass. C14 fragments incorporated in one of the south chapel windows. Three early C16 north aisle windows. Several windows of the late C19/C20. At the time of the resurvey (September 1986) two late C15 painted panels which had been incorporated into the reredos, had been removed for restoration work. B.o.E. pp. 139-40.

### **Description from 'The Buildings of England: Staffordshire' by N. Pevsner**

Both 'Hamstall Hall' and the 'Church of St. Michael and All Angels' are described in Pevsner's guide of Staffordshire:

**St Michael:** *The small, low tower with recessed spire was placed in the C14 in front of a Norman nave of whose W wall the upper window partly remains. The chancel and the N chapel are C14 too. Perp N aisle and clerestory. C18 N chapel walls. – Font (outside). Norman, with angle colonettes. – Screens. The N chapel screen looks c. 1520-30, the two openwork medallions with putti being probably even later. – The S chapel screen is simpler. – Bench Ends with simple tracery. – Also Stall Arms. – Stained Glass. The Apostles in the N aisle are nearly all Victorian. – Some original pieces in the S chapel. – Plate by T.U.K., 1681; Chalice, London-made, 1681-2. Monument. Richard and John Cotton, 1502. The brass on the lid is missing, but against the tomb-chest are shields halved between armorial bearings and figures of the children. Above each a scroll with an inscription about their status in life. The Monument stands under a panelled, four-centred arch between chancel and S chapel.*

**Hamstall Hall:** *The confusing remains of a major hall of the Fitzherbert's dating from the C16 to early C17. The buildings were of brick with stone dressings. There was a large court and a second one to the W of it with outbuildings. What remains complete is a GATEHOUSE with two polygonal turrets with two-lighty windows and stone caps. Above the arch freestanding strapwork. Then there is a tower, imposing but not telling, and a very strange LOGGIA with strapwork under gable also embellished with strapwork. It was a porch. Walls are extensive, and the present house may contain more. (Inside, some re-set linefold panelling. Also some medallions. The date is probably c. 1530-40. NMR)*

### 3. Historic Development

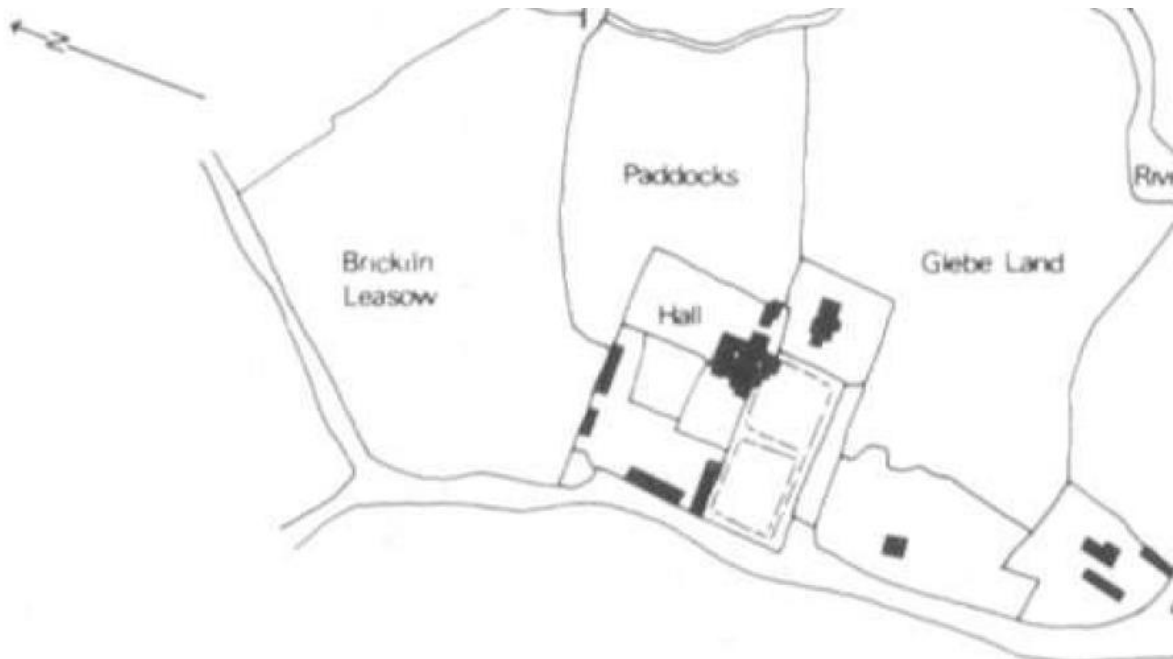


Figure 3: The South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society published a Survey of Hamstall Hall in 1986. This document provided the above map extract showing Hamstall Hall and Hall Farm in 1769 (based on archived materials). The Map shows St Michael's Church, the surviving Tower, and the Hall which has a much smaller footprint than what we expect the Great Hall of the C16 to have had.

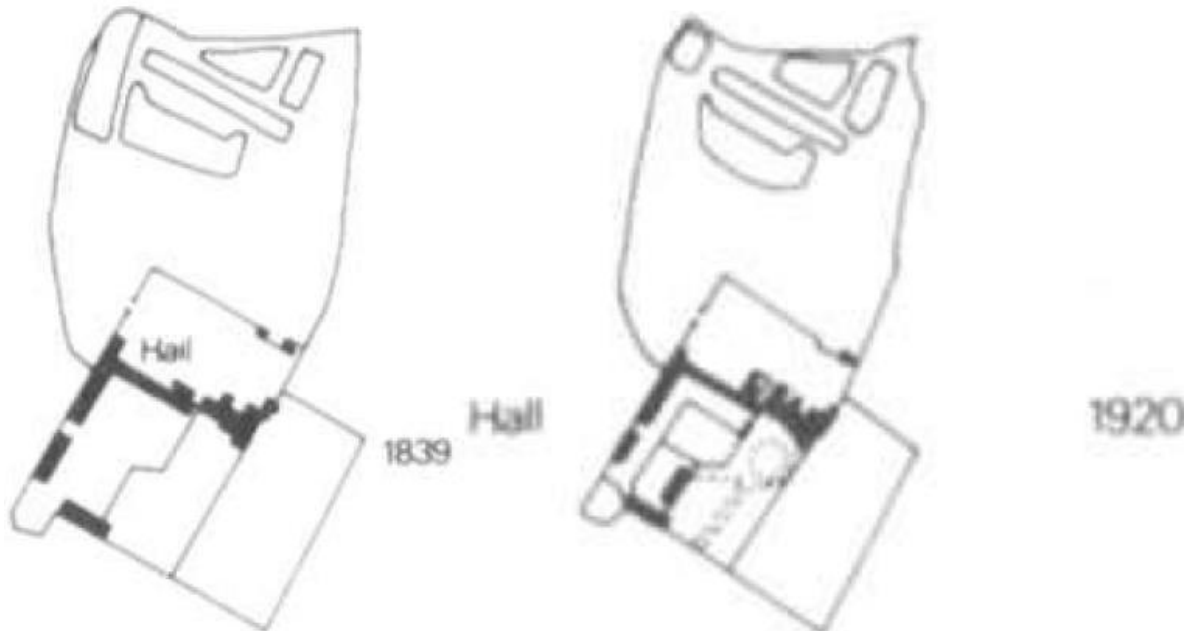


Figure 4: By 1839 Hamstall Hall had expanded in size, and this continued over the next century to the 1920 Map. Extract by The South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society (1986). It appears that the access from Blithbury Road occurred in the mid- late C19 or early C20.



Figure 5: The Above Plan is based on documents from the 1820's, this was in preparation to carry out a phase of Demolition (see areas marked D, above) and rebuilding which would occur in 1821. This Plan was reproduced from archived material, made by The South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society (1986).

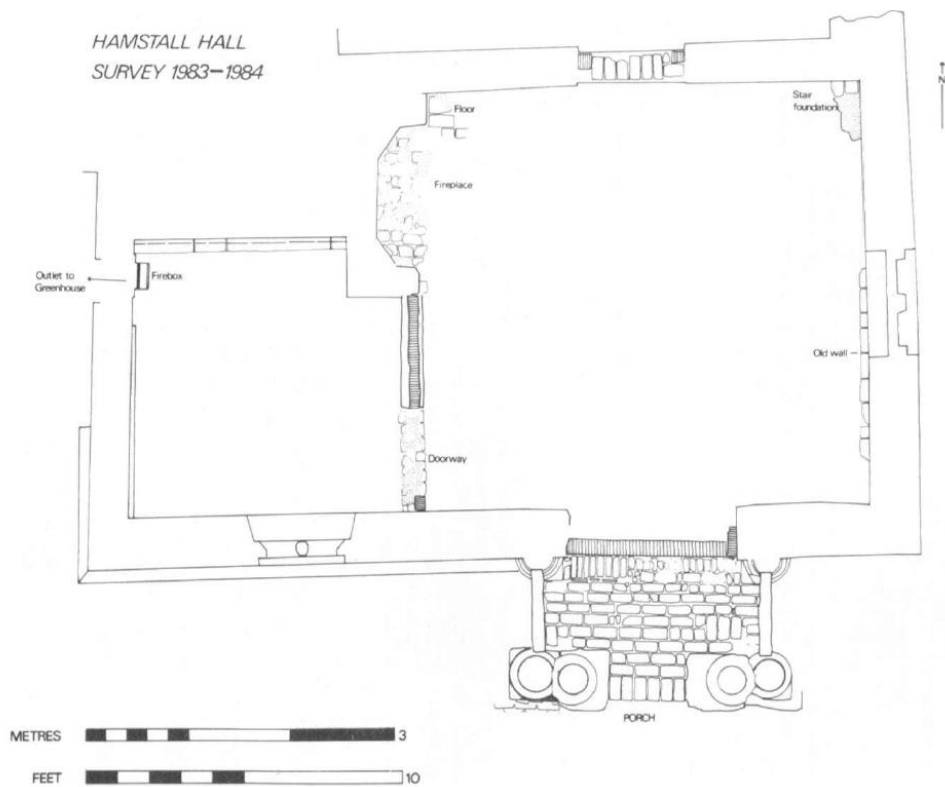
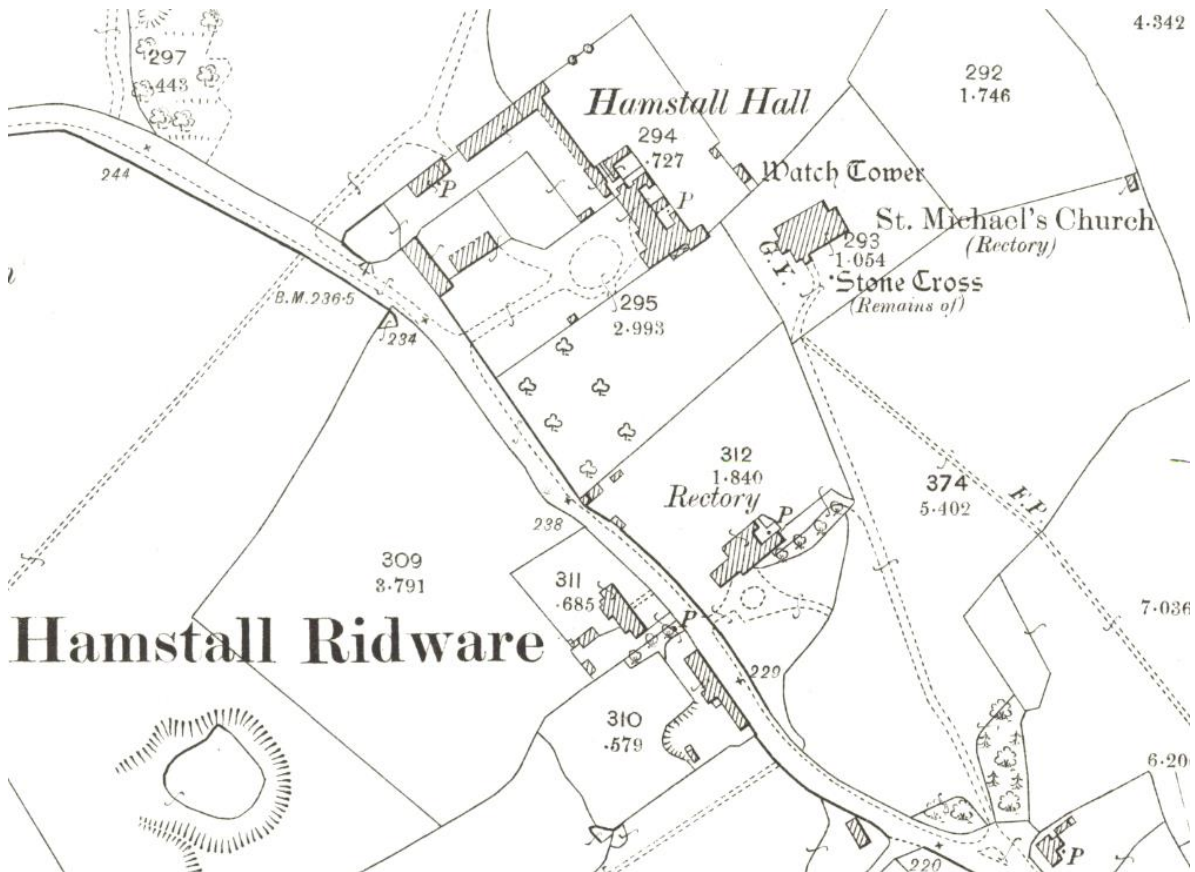


Figure 6: A Floor Plan of the C16 Gable / Porch on the South, Side Elevation of Hamstall Hall. Drawing by The South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society (1986).



**Figure 7: Extract from the 1900-1902 OS Series map shows the application site in the Staffordshire XLVI.6. 6-inch series. Photo edited by b3architectural using base by the Staffordshire Archives.**

### **Map Analysis**

The most historic aspects of Hamstall Hall pre-date the Historic OS series by several centuries. On typical UK building stock we can use these maps to date buildings. However, this is not the case here.

Fortunately, some high-quality research was published by The South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society in 1986 and alongside the Historic England Listing Descriptions and Pevsner's Guide this provides better understanding on how the site developed.

### **Relevance to the Application**

The 1900 Historic OS is quite relevant to the Critical Analysis of the proposals. The Map helps us to understand the historic uses on the site in the area where development is proposed. This shows that the area where PV's are proposed does not contain any buildings in the late C19 / early C20.

This area was probably a walled garden comprising a lawn with some trees, perhaps an Orchard. There is suggestion that it may have had arable uses historically, although the land has the same Title (295) in the 1900 Map which again indicates association with the dwellinghouse in the opinion of the Author: Bruce Johnson.

This Map allows us to confidently say that all paths, planting beds, low level walls and structures are of modern origin. It also allows us to confidently predict that it is unlikely that there will be any archaeological remains or remnants of historic structures.

# 4. Present Day Photographic Record

The Proposed Block Plan submitted in planning reference: PP-12744907 provides 10 Images of the application site (Numbered 1-10). Twenty additional photos have also been provided in this report to provide further context (A-T):



Figure 8: Drawing Reference '23-30-b3-XX-XX-DR-A-0102' by B3architectural provides 10 further images of the historic buildings, the access to Hamstall Hall and the location of the proposed PV Panels.

These Photos are taken in the morning in early Autumn (by Met Office definitions).

Exact Times: 10:11 AM – 11:45 AM

Date: 21-09-2023



**Figure 9: Entering the site / Hamstall Hall from Blithbury Road. This Driveway location is seen in the 1900's OS Mapping making it historic but probably not an entry to the original.**



**Figure 10: The present-day Principal Elevation of Hamstall Hall has the appearance of a Farmhouse or typical historic dwelling. This contrasts the oldest parts of the original Hall. Historic OS Map records the driveway shape (drive around central island).**





**Figure 11: Given that the historic OS Mapping provides evidence of driveways and landscaping features around the site it is fair to assume that this is a modern pathway; the applicant has also confirmed this. Garden walls are Grade II listed and are historic.**



**Figure 12: Greenhouses, Shed, and Planting Beds are modern additions. This is confirmed by the historic mapping for the site.**



**Figure 13: From this part of the enclosed Garden Hamstall Hall cannot be seen. The Spire of St. Michael's is visible in the backdrop a significant distance away.**



**Figure 14: View to the West within the front garden area of the application site, parallel with Blithbury Road. This gives evidence to the lack of historic features in this area of the site with exception to the Grade II listed Garden Walls.**



**Figure 15: Additional view of the existing raised planters looking West towards the area where Ground Mounted PV Panels are proposed.**



**Figure 16: More modern landscaping features in the 'front area' of the 'side garden'.**

**(I)**



**Figure 17: Mature existing plants break up the 'side garden' area. This photo is taken looking Southwest back towards the 'front area' where development is proposed, from the 'rear area'. Note the raised beds cannot be seen; likewise, the proposed PV panels would not be seen.**

**(J)**



**Figure 18: From the same position as the above Photo. Looking Northeast with the original Loggia (Porch) of Hamstall Hall in the view and again the upper Spire of St. Michael's Church. In the very backdrop we see the 'Tower' from Hamstall Hall which is likely to have been a stairwell historically.**



Figure 19: The Side Elevation of Hamstall Hall; as a Grade II\* listed building this is of "more than special interest". Across the Elevation greater significance can be attributed to the right-hand Gable and Porch which are heavily embellished and provide an insight into what the C16 Hamstall Hall would have been like architecturally. Aspects to the left-hand side are thought to date from a substantial rebuilding around 1821.



Figure 20: From 'Side Garden' looking North. St. Michael's Church to the right-hand boundary. Looking at the Side Elevation of the Gable / Loggia from C16. This has exterior windows suggesting that the original Hall would have begun beyond the rear of this surviving structure and the Garden Wall in the foreground was not a former wall.



**Figure 21: Rear Elevation of the present day Hamstall Hall. This is different to the Plans of the Hall in 1820; demolitions and rebuilding began in 1821 as shown in a reproduced Plan Drawing by the South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society.**



**Figure 22: The Side Elevation of the Gable / Loggia. Garden Walls with Tudor Arched Doorway.**



**Figure 23:** In the 'rear garden' / 'courtyard' area of Hamstall Hall. To the left-hand side we see surviving walls and the Tower. In the backdrop the Spire of St. Michael's.



**Figure 24:** Tower in the foreground is part of the oldest areas of Hamstall Hall dating from the early C16 according to conclusions made by the South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society published in 1986.



**Figure 25: Well outside the application site, the frontage (Southeast Elevation) of the Nearby Grade I listed St. Michael's Church. Some aspects of the Church are as old as C12 late Norman period (1066-1154); however, the Church is C14 in the main, with some C15 aspects. The Spire, which is the only feature seen from the application site, is a C14 recessed spire.**



**Figure 26: Porch in the foreground is a mid C19 addition of lesser significance. In the backdrop a significant distance away we can see the early surviving Gable of Hamstall Hall.**





**Figure 27: Alongside the low-level tower walls below the Spire of St. Michael's (West Elevation). From here we can see the Gable and the Tower at Hamstall Hall. We cannot see the location of the proposed PV's which is a significant distance away.**



**Figure 28: The East facing Elevation at St. Michael's. Here we see the early C14 chancel with pointed east window of four trefoil-headed lights and cusped intersecting tracery.**

## 5. Assessment of Heritage Values

Paragraph 200 of the NPPF requires that the applicant describes any heritage asset and the impact it has on its setting; the more significant the heritage asset the greater weight should be given.

Historic England provide guidance on understanding the significance of a building in the Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance Document (2008). This document breaks down 'Heritage Values' into four categories. By describing each category, the overall significance can be measured. Clearly some places may exhibit a combination of these values to varying degrees.

These values are distilled under the following headings: evidential value, historic value, communal value, and aesthetic value. The purpose of assessing these values is to enable an assessment of the site's significance - whether physically manifest (e.g., architectural features) or in some other less tangible form (e.g., historical associations) - to enhance the objective appraisal of proposals for the change to the building.

In essence, this approach is generally advocated by Historic England, whereby: "Significant places should be managed to sustain their values"; this is not to say that a 'preservative' approach must be taken but rather that "Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent and consistent" and when done appropriately this is known as the 'intelligent management of change'.

Evidential value is described by Historic England as "physical remains" and "evidence of human past activity"; this is derived from one's ability to interpret the history and historic evolution of a building through visible and tangible features.

Historical value "derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present". This is generally regarded as either Illustrative whereby the site can be perceived to represent a period in history, or Associative where a connection with an event or person can contribute to the historic significance of a site.

Aesthetic value according to Historic England "derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place." This value can be attributed to conscious design whether it be predetermined by an architect or the work of a craftsman and can also encompass historic and evolutionary changes to a building or area.

Communal value "derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory." This can be divided into Commemorative and Symbolic values where the place may invoke emotion or contribute to an individual's or community's sense of place or social values where a place can be a form of catalyst for memories associated with it.

	<b>Subject:</b> Hamstall Hall (Grade II*) house & remains
<b>Heritage Values</b>	
Evidential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research by third parties suggest that the early development at the site of Hamstall Hall occurred in two separate phases and that these were both between 1518 and 1610. As result, we refer to the earliest two phases as the C16 aspects in this report. From these two phases three aspects have survived.</li> <li>• Much of South Side Elevation and part of the Front West Elevation are evidenced to exist in the first Map of the site in 1759 although the Elevation appears to suggest phased development with the ground floor level clearly earlier than the upper two levels.</li> <li>• The Tower is probably the oldest surviving feature on the site believed to have experienced two major phases of building and development with four phases affecting The Tower in total, the final one being the demolition of the Great Hall which it was connected to. The Tower dates from the first part of the C16.</li> <li>• The Gable and Porch on the South Elevation of Hamstall Hall is the oldest part of the house which we see today. Research seems to suggest this is a late C16 addition to a multi-phase Mansion / Manor House; there is also a theory that it could be early C17.</li> <li>• Much of the house we see today came from a large-scale re-building that occurred after 1821.</li> <li>• <b>Overall, the building has Medium – High Evidential Value.</b></li> </ul>
Historic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parts of the site date from the earlier part of the 1500's / C16. A Deed transfer from 10<sup>th</sup> April 1518 might refer to Hamstall Hall. The deed is relating to the conveyance of a Manor to Sir Anthony Fitzherbert upon his marriage to Maud Cotton. The deed makes mention to: "the capital mansion of the manor ... the demesne lands and advowson of Hampstall Ridware and lands in Yoxall, worth altogether £26 8s. Id. annually." However, there are no plans, drawings, or description from this period.</li> <li>• In 1587 Hamstall Hall was occupied by Thomas Fitzherbert. Records from 'Quarter Sessions' of 1587 see an indictment was made against "Thomas Fitzherbert late of Hampstal Rydward esq, Thomas Harcoute late of Tamworth gent, Richard Cotton late of Hampstall Rydward gent ... for entering a capital messuage called the hall of Hampstall Rydward".</li> <li>• Thomas Fitzherbert, born 1513/14 was a well-respected Judge and member of Parliament. He had inherited Norbury as a last surviving son of his father (also Thomas Fitzherbert) in 1531.</li> </ul>

	<p>Norbury lies on the Staffordshire border, and it was with that county, where he inherited Hamstall Ridware from his mother.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although Thomas received a Knighthood in his earlier years, he was ostracised in later years due to his rejection of the Elizabethan settlement between 1559 and 1563 and “subversive activities by his younger kinsmen” (un-loyal behaviour from family / blood line). As result, Thomas faced long spells of imprisonment and persecution, leading to his eventual death in The Towers of London on 02-10-1591. He was succeeded by his nephew and namesake, a Member of Parliament in 1593, who with Archbishop Whitgift’s consent destroyed his uncle’s will disinheriting him.</li> <li>• Some 30 years of persecution and imprisonment is the reason why it is probable that Phase 2 development of The Tower at Hamstall Hall came in the early 1600’s after Fitzherbert’s death. Likewise, this is the reason the Gable and Porch are thought to date from the early C17.</li> <li>• The first historic evidence of the Great Hall’s scale was the will of Sir Thomas Leigh, dated 30 April 1662. This provided by an inventory of the Hall. The inventory lists furniture, personal goods, farm stock, etc., to the value of £710 16s.</li> <li>• The large size of the house is next indicated by the Hearth Tax return for 1666 which stated that there were thirty chargeable hearths at the house of Richard Gifford Esq., Gifford having married the widow of Sir Thomas Leigh and being temporarily in residence at Hamstall Hall.</li> <li>• A letter sent to ‘Lady Leigh at Hamstall’ around 1663/4 indicates the value of Hamstall Hall at £11,000. It is difficult to determine what that actual value would be today, but it would certainly be in the excess of £100million.</li> <li>• It is suggested in third party research that the Great Hall was part-demolished or fire damaged between 1708 – 1753. A map of 1769 confirms the existence of a much smaller house.</li> <li>• Drawings and Mapping appear to suggest that large scale demolition and renovation took place after 1821, not only at the hall itself but also in the yard to the west; rebuilding here is also noted in records from 1786 - 1787.</li> <li>• <b>Overall, the building has Medium – High Historic Value.</b></li> </ul>
Aesthetic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In present-day Hamstall Hall the greatest Aesthetic heritage values come from the South Gable and Porch although without historic knowledge this area appears at odds to most of the house.</li> <li>• The Octagonal Gateposts which provided a grand entrance into the original Hamstall Hall have survived and have High levels of Aesthetic, Evidential and Historic values; however, these no</li> </ul>

	<p>longer form part of the curtilage of the Grade II* listing for Hamstall Hall as they are within another Title.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other than the frontage the Southwest corner is also likely to hold some of the greatest heritage values and attractive Stone Cill, Lintel and Quoins are used on the Ground Floor windows which probably indicate a different phase to the upper windows which are wider and less decorated. This also provides some Evidential and Historic values.</li> <li>• The present-day Principal Elevation, which faces Blithbury Road is an attractive, traditional English Farmhouse style aesthetic. Red brick in Flemish Bond is used, timber multi-pane Casement Windows and an impressive central Chimneystack. The Windows are ad hoc which give a more Vernacular appearance than you would expect from a 'Hall'.</li> <li>• In comparison, what little remains exist to the South Side Elevation have an architectural style which is 'polite' and designed with an order and symmetry to the fenestration.</li> <li>• <b>Overall Aesthetic Value is thought to be Medium.</b></li> </ul>
Communal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communal value is limited relatively speaking by the fact that Hamstall Hall has always been a private dwelling.</li> <li>• The courtyard area from the original Gateway to the Great Hall up to the Tower provides Garden curtilages to 5 Dwellings in total; therefore, there is greater Communal value than the average listed dwelling. However, only Hamstall Hall, the Gateway and the Tower have listed status.</li> <li>• Given the remote rural nature of this part of Hamstall Ridware and the long access track from Blithbury Road the building does not have much opportunity to impact the public realm. The Road has no footpath and the view through the Gate Posts is obscured by large trees meaning only a portion of the Front (West) Elevation can be seen. This is historic, but predominantly dates from after 1759 and potentially after 1821 in parts.</li> <li>• Given the building is an attractive, historic listed building, clearly the conservation of this building is positive communally.</li> <li>• Views of Hamstall Hall are largely private although the Tower and Gable can be seen from the adjacent Church grounds.</li> <li>• <b>As result of the above Communal Value is thought to be Low to Medium at best.</b></li> </ul>

Overall Significance is **Medium**, Hamstall Hall deserves its Grade II\* listed status and provides more than special interest with strong levels of Evidential and Historic value being incredibly old in parts and with the potential to offer more in terms of archaeology. Regarding Aesthetic significance some surviving aspects have higher value but in the main the building aesthetics are more vernacular and

as such the value is capped at Medium. Likewise Communal value is Lower, and this is typical of a private residence.

<b>Subject:</b> Garden Walls SE of Hamstall Hall (Grade II)	
<b>Heritage Values</b>	
Evidential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tall Garden Walls circa 2.8m in height exist to create a 'Walled Garden' which historically would have been to the rear of the 'Great Hall'. Today the walls give the impression of a 'Side Garden' now that Hamstall Hall is entered from Blithbury Road.</li> <li>• Historic maps confirm the existence of these walls in 1769. The use of 'Tudor Arches' or a 'Four-centred arch' might tend to suggest development from late C15- early 17. In this case the Listing Description suggests that the walls are C17.</li> <li>• At low levels (alongside the C16 Gable) the wall uses English Bond consistently; as the height increases so does the inconsistency of the masonry bond. Despite this it does appear to have been constructed in a single phase. The Dentil Course and Stone Coping is attractive although this appears differently at the 'front' of the 'side garden' and the 'rear' to use present day terminology.</li> <li>• The wall alongside Blithbury Road appears to use Stretcher Bond with no dentil course or coping.</li> <li>• Condition of the wall becomes poorer the further we travel away from Hamstall Hall.</li> <li>• <b>The Overall, the walls have Low - Medium Evidential Value.</b></li> </ul>
Historic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Given that the walls are suggested to date from C17 there is obvious historic value and the fact that they have survived so completely is impressive.</li> <li>• Third Party research concluded that from the 1769 map it is known that the Garden was at one stage divided up into two small parcels. However, questions were raised whether these were ever gardens or were cultivated as arable. By the late C18 and early C19 various farm buildings existed at Hamstall Hall.</li> <li>• In the late 19th century part of the garden was grassed over and used as a croquet lawn. It seems most likely that the tall brick walls would have differentiated the 'garden curtilage' from the farmyard; however, this is subjective.</li> <li>• <b>Overall, Historic Value is Low.</b></li> </ul>
Aesthetic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The walls are without doubt attractive and their scale is impressive; however, only a small number of openings and simple decoration are evident.</li> <li>• The Tudor Arches are probably the most attractive feature.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In some areas the walls require urgent repair, in other areas low quality repairs are evident.</li> <li>• <b>Overall Aesthetic Value is thought to be Low.</b></li> </ul>
Communal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The entire Communal value of the Walls come from their association with Hamstall Hall.</li> <li>• <b>Overall Communal Value is thought to be Low.</b></li> </ul>

Overall Significance is **Low**. The walls are tall with some embellishment, and they are greater in height than necessary to subdivide the garden area. With that in mind, this suggests that the phase in which they were built was part of the earlier, more architectural phase, as opposed to the later more vernacular styled work. This would correlate with the suggested C17 origin.

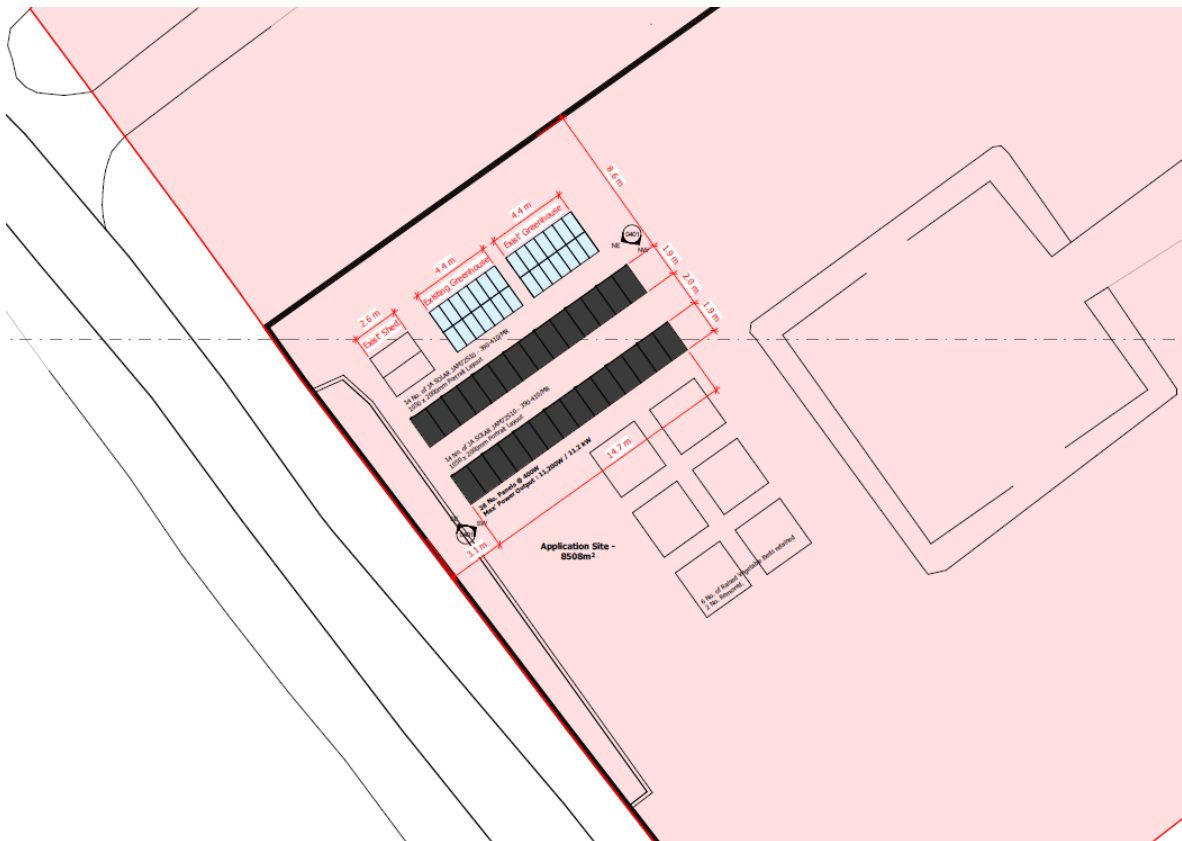
However, other than being significantly old there is little other 'special interest'. This is a tall red brick wall in a historic bond, with two attractive arches, and an attractive capping but it is not something of uniquely special interest.

## 6. Proposals Overview with Critical Analysis

### The Proposals

The proposals are described in Section 1.0 of the Covering Letter / Planning Policy Statement and the architectural drawings by 'b3architectural'. In summary the proposals are for:

- 28 No. of free-standing PV's installed in two rows within an area of garden at Hamstall Hall alongside the modern Greenhouses, Shed, and raised planting beds.
- Installed in two rows of 14 PV's to prevent the proposals encroaching beyond the existing modern buildings to minimise the influence on the listed building / listed walls / the garden curtilage.
- The PV's will use a muted design using all Black **JA SOLAR JAM72S10 390-410/MR** with a peak output of circa 400 watts per panel. The total proposal is for 28 PV's generating 11.2kW.
- The size of each panel is 1050 x 2000mm. The PV array will be installed in a 'Portrait' orientation at a 20-degree pitch, the overall height will be approximately 1400mm from the ground surface.
- A **PARK TEGRA SINGLE STRUCTURE** frame will carry the PV's at a minimum height of 300mm above ground level, this will be constructed from lightweight metal, free-standing and fixed into the ground using auger driven 'Ground Screws'. The process of installation requires hand tools only and it is not detrimental to ecology, tree roots or below ground conditions.

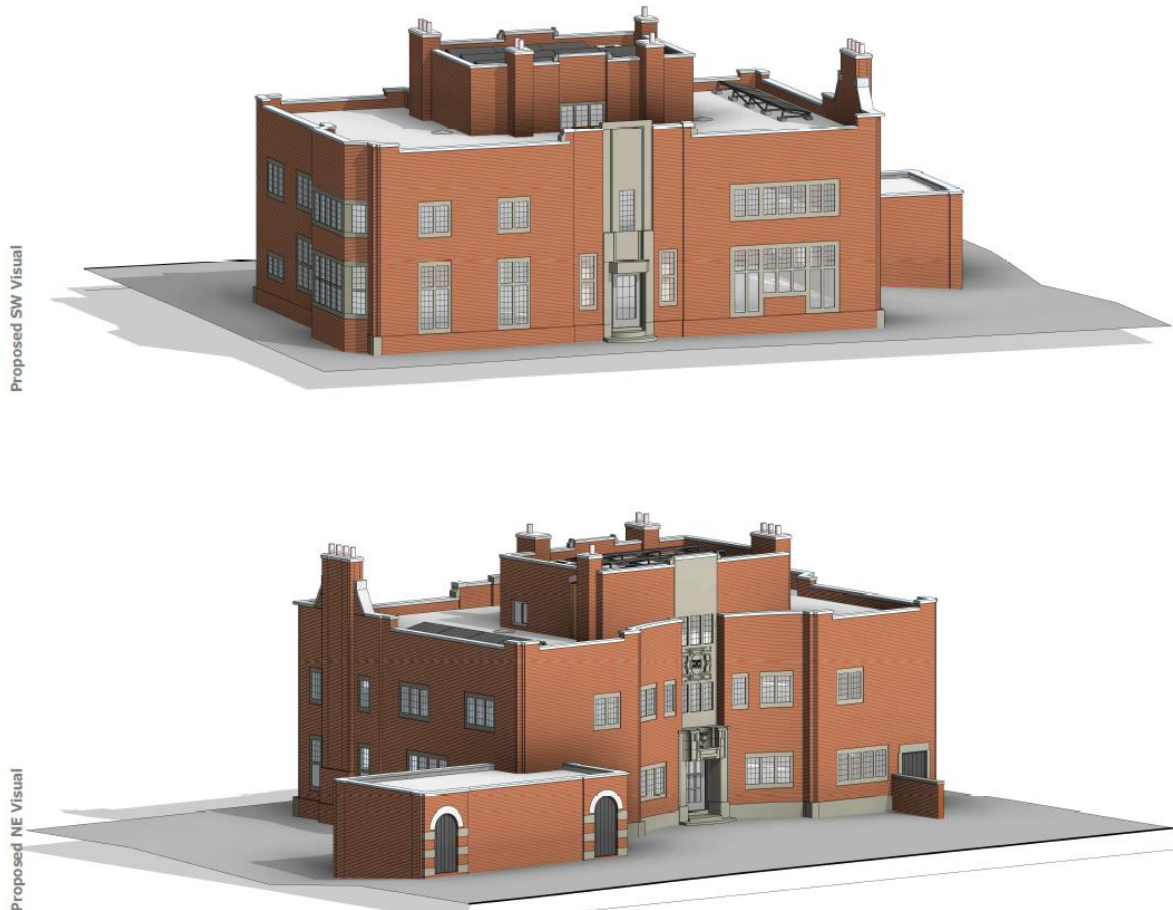


**Figure 29: Extract from b3architectural Drawing Ref: 23-30-b3-XX-XX-DR-A-0201 which shows the proposals relative to the modern structures described above. What the plan does not demonstrate is that dense existing landscaping shields views of the proposed PV's despite their proximity to Hamstall Hall. Other areas of the site were considered in addition to this location.**



## The Principle of the Proposals in the Historic Environment

When considering PV's alongside a listed building it is the impact or effect that the PV's will have on the setting of the heritage asset that must be considered. Ground mounted PV's, as opposed to roof or wall mounted PV's, are often preferable as they do not connect to the historic building and are likely to have a lesser impact on aesthetics. In some special circumstances roof mounted PV's on flat roof areas below parapet lines can be preferable over ground mounts but as a rule of principle Ground Mounted PV systems are typically preferred.



**Figure 30: B3architectural secured Listed Building Consent and Householder Planning Permission on the Grade II\* listed property; Upmeads, in Stafford. This was approved on 14-03-23 under planning reference 22/36684/LBC and 22/36685/HOU. Historic England were consulted given the building's significance and the application was praised for its 'minimum intervention' approach to raising the sustainability and energy efficiency of a large significant building without aesthetic harm. The PV's were ballast weighted in-situ.**

PV's alongside a listed building can be beneficial providing that the energy generated will serve the listed building. Listed buildings can often be draughty, inefficient, and are often larger properties with higher levels of energy consumption. PV's can provide a low-cost, clean energy source which can help the building's use to continue (assist viability) and in other cases this additional low-cost energy can help to offset against the need to make internal or external adaptations to raise energy efficiency (insulation / new windows etc).

As result, PV's alongside a listed building can be positive so long as they serve the host building, and providing the number of panels are proportionate to the building's energy consumption. If possible existing or proposed screening can limit any reduction in the aesthetic values of the listed building.

## How the Applicant / Agent has considered all Options.

The applicant owns approximately 8,508m<sup>2</sup> land in total, this makes up the part of the Hamstall Hall site including the House and C16 Gable, the Tower, and the Gardens / Garden Walls with the access now from Blithbury Road. They do not own the 'Gatehouse' which is within a different Title.

As mentioned on the previous page the principle of PV's alongside historic / listed buildings can be acceptable; however, careful consideration must be given to ensure that the proposals are sited in the best location, the location which has least impact on heritage value / the significance of the listed building. The following people met on site to strategically agree the best location for PV's:

- Christopher Shore, the Applicant (Hamstall Hall's custodian)
- Bruce Johnson, Heritage Consultant & Architectural Technologist (b3heritage / b3architectural)
- Mark Withington, Solar Panel Expert (Solar Star Ltd)

The assessment of the above four PV locations took place in early Autumn, on the morning of 21-09-2023 circa 10am. Weather conditions were fine and sunny.



**Figure 31: Strategic Options Plan - The following potential locations for 28 No. of Ground Mounted PV's were identified and assessed.**

## Option (1)



**Figure 32: Strategic Option 1 – North corner of ‘rear garden’ area. Behind Hamstall Hall to the North.**

Option (1) has the benefits of being in full direct sun with no nearby trees shading the proposed PV’s; this area is flat and there is ample space for 28 PV Panels. A dense hedge separates the garden curtilage of Hamstall Hall from the adjacent property, Watchtower End.

Option (1) is immediately alongside the highly significant ‘Tower’ and what was possibly the original exterior walls at Hamstall Hall, although this is uncertain. This Grass area was originally thought to be an internal space in the Great Hall prior to partial demolition, or partial fire damage, this was thought to occur between 1708 – 1753. In the 1769 maps Hamstall Hall is a much smaller building, and this area would have become external.

**Conclusion: This is a poor option.** In this location it is plausible that the installation of PV’s would be over some archaeological remains / remnants of the Great Hall. In this location the modern intervention of Ground Mounted PV’s would have a small negative impact on the aesthetics of the present-day Grade II\* listed Hamstall Hall and the Tower. This location is too close in proximity to both buildings (circa 21m and 13m respectively).

## Option (2)



**Figure 33: Strategic Option 2 – Central in the 'rear area' of the 'side garden' alongside Hamstall Hall to the South.**

Option (2) in the centre of the lawn this would also receive full direct sun to the proposed PV's, this area is flat and there is ample space for 28 PV Panels. Dense landscaping and trees mean that in this location the PV's would not detract from the aesthetics of the nearby Grade I listed St. Michael's Church to the East or The Old Rectory which is Grade II listed to the South.

Option (2) this location will negatively affect the aesthetics of the Grade II\* listed Hamstall Hall. No landscaping can reduce the effect to this building, and it would ruin the immediate curtilage from the most historic aspect of Hamstall Hall.

**Conclusion: This is the worst option.** To avoid a reduction in solar gain from the trees to the South the PV's would have to be central in the 'rear area' of the 'side garden'. This would not be acceptable.

### Option (3)



**Figure 34: Strategic Option 3 – immediately alongside the Garden Walls in the 'front area' of the 'side garden' at Hamstall Hall to the Southwest.**

Option (3) has the benefits of decent interface distance from Hamstall Hall. Views of PV's here would not be possible from Hamstall Hall due to dense existing landscaping and an interface distance of approximately 45m Southwest. The Paths are known to be modern and as result a single, neat row of 28 PV panels could be proposed on the grass verge between the Path and the historic walls.

Option (3) has the disbenefits of a slight negative effect on a Grade II listed structure. The Garden Walls at Hamstall Hall are extensive being over 120m in length. The Walls date from the C17 and as result they have both evidential and historic heritage value. The placement of PV's alongside the walls would not reduce the existence (evidential) or the authenticity or ability to interpret the age (historic) values of the walls. However, there would be a reduction in aesthetic values. Aesthetically the walls do create a grand enclosed garden.

The walls use red brick in Flemish bond with toothed band below a brick coping however given that they are over 300 years in age the condition of the walls is poor, the bond is inconsistent, there is cracking, low quality repairs with modern materials, spalling damage from both frost and vegetation. PV's alongside the walls would reduce the aesthetic heritage value of the walls to a slight degree (low level adverse effects); however, this harm would be isolated to a 28m section of wall.

**Conclusion: This location is fair – good.** Although there is some low-level effect to the aesthetic heritage values of the Grade II listed walls this is offset by the benefits the proposals will provide to the Grade II\* listed Hamstall Hall. PV's will provide a clean, low-cost method of heating, and energy to help maintain conditions in the large historic building. This results in several benefits:

- Good internal temperature achieved without the need for additional measures such as modern levels of insulation, new efficient windows, or additional secondary glazing etc.
- The building can remain well-ventilated and can be allowed to 'breathe' when a low-cost source of energy is secured.
- Reduced running costs of the building which in turn will allow the occupants to allocate funds to preventative maintenance where necessary.
- Larger buildings may suffer from sub-division where running costs are high. By ensuring the building is affordable to run the original plan layout is more likely to be retained into the future.
- Good internal temperatures and ventilation will ensure that the building fabric remains in good condition. When buildings become cold / unheated this can exacerbate mould growth, decay and degradation. A good example of this is:

The White Lion Inn, Barthomley (Grade II\*) List Entry Number: 1138700.

This small historic public house has been closed (unheated) for around 6 months. In that period significant decay, mould growth and irreversible harm has occurred internally. This is sad to hear, however, the truth is that as such a small building the viability of the Public House is low when the weather is poor outside (internal occupancy circa 50).

See Planning Application: 23/4760N, Cheshire East Council (Listed building consent for general repairs comprising but not limited to: - timber frame repairs; joinery repairs; external decoration; masonry repairs; retaining wall repairs and re-roof.)

## Option (4)



**Figure 35: Strategic Option 4 – concealed by modern structures and landscaping in the 'front area' of the 'side garden' at Hamstall Hall to the Southwest.**

Option (4) is a significant distance from Hamstall Hall at circa 69m and is over 95m from St Michael's Church although the Spire is visible in the backdrop. Dense landscaping between these structures and the proposed PV's means that the effect on these buildings is imperceptible.

In this location the Garden has received a modern Shed and two Greenhouses in addition to Raised Bed Planters, although we are in the curtilage of a Listed Building / Structure these buildings are entirely necessary and have existed for several years. The Proposed PV's will be arranged in two rows of 14 panels immediately in front of these modern structures. This means the Panels will be seen from fewer angles.

Option (4) has no major disbenefits. Any modern addition in the curtilage of a Listed Building has the potential to cause harm. In the case of the proposals the effect is very slight, if at all perceptible.

**Conclusion: Option (4) is the best possible location for PV's.** It is well concealed but is near enough to Hamstall Hall from an installation perspective. It receives full sun from the South for maximum efficiency. There is no adverse effect on the setting of Hamstall Hall or even the Grade II Garden Walls for that matter.

## Critical Analysis of the Proposals

Strategic Option (4) was chosen for the siting of 28 No. of Ground Mounted PV's. This location was preferable over Option (3) due to the greater separation from the Grade II listed Garden Walls and the fact that existing modern structures partially shield views of the proposals, in addition to the dense existing landscaping that both options benefitted from.

- The PV's by JA SOLAR have a Black aesthetic with no glare, more subtle than the older style of Blue panels with silver edges. The proposed PV's will be no greater than 1.4m in height. From outside the site (Blithbury Road) the PV's will not be seen due to the tall Garden Walls which are approximately double the height of the PV's (2.8m).
- Free-standing PV's are an obvious modern addition to the curtilage of a listed building. They are a complete contrast to the remains of the C16 / C18 Hamstall Hall. This does not mean that they are harmful to the building, rather that the PV's are modern additions to be inserted alongside the historic environment. In the case of the proposals there is 69m separation from Hamstall Hall.
- The proposals are close enough to serve Hamstall Hall from a practical perspective. The addition of a sustainable energy source reduces running costs for the building and will ensure that money can instead be directed to worthwhile conservation where it becomes necessary.
- From the site entrance to Hamstall Hall the PV's will not be visible. From the 'front area' of the 'side garden' they will be visible from some angles. However, because the PV's are dark in colour, in two compact rows and with the modern Greenhouses / Storage buildings partially concealing views, the proposals will be muted in appearance and prominence.
- If the applicant can heat Hamstall Hall to produce comfortable internal conditions and simply allow this heat to escape and the building to remain well ventilated, this is healthy in a solid walled structure. The alternative to create an air-tight insulated structure would be more likely to lead to damp issues / degradation of the building. Therefore, pragmatism is required to see that the proposed energy efficiency measures are favourable on balance.
- The installation of free-standing PV's can cause a slight reduction in the Aesthetic values of the curtilage; however, Option 4 location is a lower value part of land than Option 1 or Option 2.
- 'Conservation' is "managing change to a significant place in its setting, in ways that sustain, reveal or reinforce its cultural and natural heritage values (Principle 4.2)." Although the proposals affect the curtilage of Hamstall Hall to a slight degree they do not detract from the aesthetics of the listed building in question; the proposals will sustain the existing conditions and setting of the property whilst enhancing the performance.
- Going forwards rising energy costs, particularly for traditional building owners, warrant new approaches using renewable energy. Energy costs are increasing at an unprecedented rate; additionally, some would say there is a climate emergency. Historic England recognises this and has published Historic England Advice Note 14 'Energy Efficiency and Traditional Homes' and the guide 'Energy Efficiency and Historic Buildings: How to Improve Energy Efficiency'. Within this there is a recommendation of "Using lower-carbon energy supplies, switch to energy sources with lower emissions such as on- or off-site renewable energy (solar, wind or waterpower), or select lower-carbon supplies such as gas or wood instead of coal."
- Rather than insulating the building, the installation of PV's will enable the building to remain well-ventilated and 'breathe'. This is something that traditional buildings have always required.



## 7. Summary of the Effect of the Proposals

The ethos of 'Conservation' is "managing change to a significant place in its setting, in ways that sustain, reveal or reinforce its cultural and natural heritage values." Conservation may involve "maintaining the status quo, intervening only as necessary to counter the effects of growth and decay, but equally may be achieved through major interventions; it can be active as well as reactive."

"Change to a significant place is inevitable, if only because of the passage of time but can be neutral or beneficial in its effect on heritage values. It is only harmful if (and to the extent that) significance is eroded." (Historic England. 2008.)

The historic environment is a shared resource; people value this historic environment as part of their cultural and natural heritage. It gives distinctiveness, meaning and quality to the places in which we live, providing a sense of continuity and a source of identity. Each generation should therefore shape and sustain the historic environment in ways that allow people to use, enjoy and benefit from it, without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same. When doing so we should "consider the effects on authenticity and integrity".

### Effect of the Proposals

The addition of PV's within the curtilage of Hamstall Hall will be imperceptible, or at worst, would have a slight / low-level adverse effect on the garden curtilage / Grade II listed walls. The site context and density of existing landscaping combined with the low nature of the proposals means all effects are benign on the Grade II\* listed building.

The installation of PV's can only be classified as 'New Work'. Historic England document 'Conservation Principles Policy and Guidance' states:

New work or alteration to a significant place should normally be acceptable if:

- a. there is sufficient information comprehensively to understand the impacts of the proposal on the significance of the place;
- b. the proposal would not materially harm the values of the place, which, where appropriate, would be reinforced or further revealed;
- c. the proposals aspire to a quality of design and execution which may be valued now and in the future;
- d. the long-term consequences of the proposals can, from experience, be demonstrated to be benign, or the proposals are designed not to prejudice alternative solutions in the future.

The existing buildings heritage value has been well documented, and significance is understood (criteria A). It is considered that the installation of PV's would meet criteria "B" and "D". This is because it allows the significant building to remain with no thermal adaptations and the system that makes this possible would be, in the main, not seen and is also 'reversible'.

Although there is a minor reduction in the aesthetics of the garden, there is no real impact on heritage values other than perhaps, slight aesthetic harm to the setting of the Grade II listed Garden Walls.

On balance the overall impact is outweighed by the benefit of making a large significant Grade II\* listed building more environmentally friendly. Reduced running costs will enable funds to be spent elsewhere on maintenance of the building.

Micro-generation has also allowed the building fabric to remain unscathed (without need for internal adaptation or insulation) and a significant building has adapted to survive the modern day 'energy crisis'.

## 8. Conclusion

In the professional opinion of 'b3heritage' the proposals accord with conservation philosophy. This opinion is seconded by all architectural consultants at 'b3architectural'.

The proposals do not materially harm the values of the Garden Walls or setting to a significant degree. On balance, they will safeguard the significance of Hamstall Hall, as realistically properties of this size often require external or internal insulation to be applied or the buildings modified in other ways to reduce their 'running costs'.

As a proposal affecting a Grade II\* buildings site and Grade II listed structures it is expected that Historic England may be consulted. Historic England have produced various guidance documents on energy efficiency for historic buildings. The proposals will allow the existing character of Hamstall Hall to remain, by relying on a form of renewable energy production. This would meet the aims set out in these Historic England documents. The proposal will be located such that they will be out of sight in the main; this is also thought to reflect the aims of such guidance.

It should also be recognised that this alteration is also reversible; proposals that are truly reversible are known to be less common and it is unlikely that this addition would be reversed for more than 20 years given its initial cost. However, this is another principle of conservation that the proposals adhere to; conservation is of course **"the intelligent management of change"**, change being inevitable through the passage of time and changing of global circumstances.

With reference to the NPPF Chapter 16, the applicant has assessed "the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment" and considered the likely impact on a significant heritage asset and significant curtilage structures. This is in accordance with paragraph 200, 205 and paragraph 208.

Paragraph 208 states that: *"Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use."*

For the reasons rehearsed above, the proposals if approved will not cause any notable harm or adverse effect on the heritage values of the surrounding listed buildings and structures. It is therefore, respectfully suggested that the proposals should be approved.

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