

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Proposed Residential Development at
Land West of Meadow Cottage
The Street
Preston
Kent

April 2024

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CLAGUE ARCHITECTS

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THE ARCHITECT

Clague Architects are a multi-disciplinary practice of architect, master planners, conservation architects based in Canterbury, London & Harpenden.

The practice has extensive experience of delivering high quality and well-received residential developments, particularly in Kent, where the practice has secured many Kent Design Awards for its work and see its exemplar schemes featured in the Kent Design Guide and other design guidance.

The Conservation Team at Clague LLP have experience working with and securing successful planning approval for Listed Buildings, Ancient Scheduled Monuments, developments in Conservation Areas and other sensitive historic buildings.



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INTRODUCTION

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Clague LLP to accompany and support a detailed Planning Application for a residential development on the site next to and including Meadow Cottage, Preston.

This report will consider the relationship of the site to its historic setting and assess its significance in terms of historic and aesthetic values.

Refer to the Design and Access Statement for further information on the proposed design.



Meadow Cottage

HERITAGE STATEMENT

1.0 The Site and Setting

Preston or Preston-next-Wingham is a civil parish and village in valley of the Little Stour in the Dover District of Kent, England. The parish includes the hamlet of Elmstone. The main river through the area is a tributary of the River Stour. The suffix 'next-Wingham' distinguishes the area from Preston-next-Faversham.

Preston is located 10 miles east of Canterbury, and a mile south of the Stodmarsh National Nature Reserve. The village is fairly scattered, but it still retains a local pub, a farm shop, a butcher, and a nursery. It also holds an annual steam rally and ploughing matches at Preston Court, which attract people from all across the Kent area. The village has 2 neighbouring churches, St Mildred Church and Elmstone Church, which are both 0.7 miles away.

The site is adjacent to Preston Butchers and is land associated with Meadow Cottage. Meadow Cottage is in a poor state of repair with multiple cracks internally and externally. The building is within the Preston Conservation Area but is not listed and has been extended and altered considerably over a number of years with a rear conservatory and side lean-to extension.

To the rear of the property is a large area of neutral grassland with some clusters of mostly category U trees with part of the site being developed land. A wider area beyond the proposed site includes more tree planting and area of neutral grassland. Within this wider area are existing stables/sheds which sit roughly in the centre of the broader land ownership. To the south of the site and west of the existing houses sits a large shed which sits within a larger area of developed land to the rear of the properties which front onto The Street.

The Street, Preston, Conservation Area was designated in July 1970 and includes Meadow Cottage within its boundary.



Site Location



Existing empty land adjacent to Meadow Cottage



Existing shed structure on the land

2.0 Historic Significance

Preston-near-Wingham comes from the Old English 'prēost' meaning a 'priest' with 'tūn' as an 'enclosure, a farmstead, a village'; therefore, 'farm/settlement of the priest's'. The Domesday Book chronicled Preston as 'Prestetune';

Archaeological digs date the parish back to the Bronze Age and Iron Age. In the Domesday book, Preston is recorded as having about 60 households, which was quite a sizeable quantity in relation to the British Isles population at the time. This early settlement is unsurprising given its location immediately to the north of the now vanished Roman road from Richborough to Canterbury, the strategic gateway to Roman occupation of Britain.

St Mildred's Church, Preston, was founded in 700 AD, and it still has evidence of stonework from the Saxon age, similarly to the church at Elmstone.

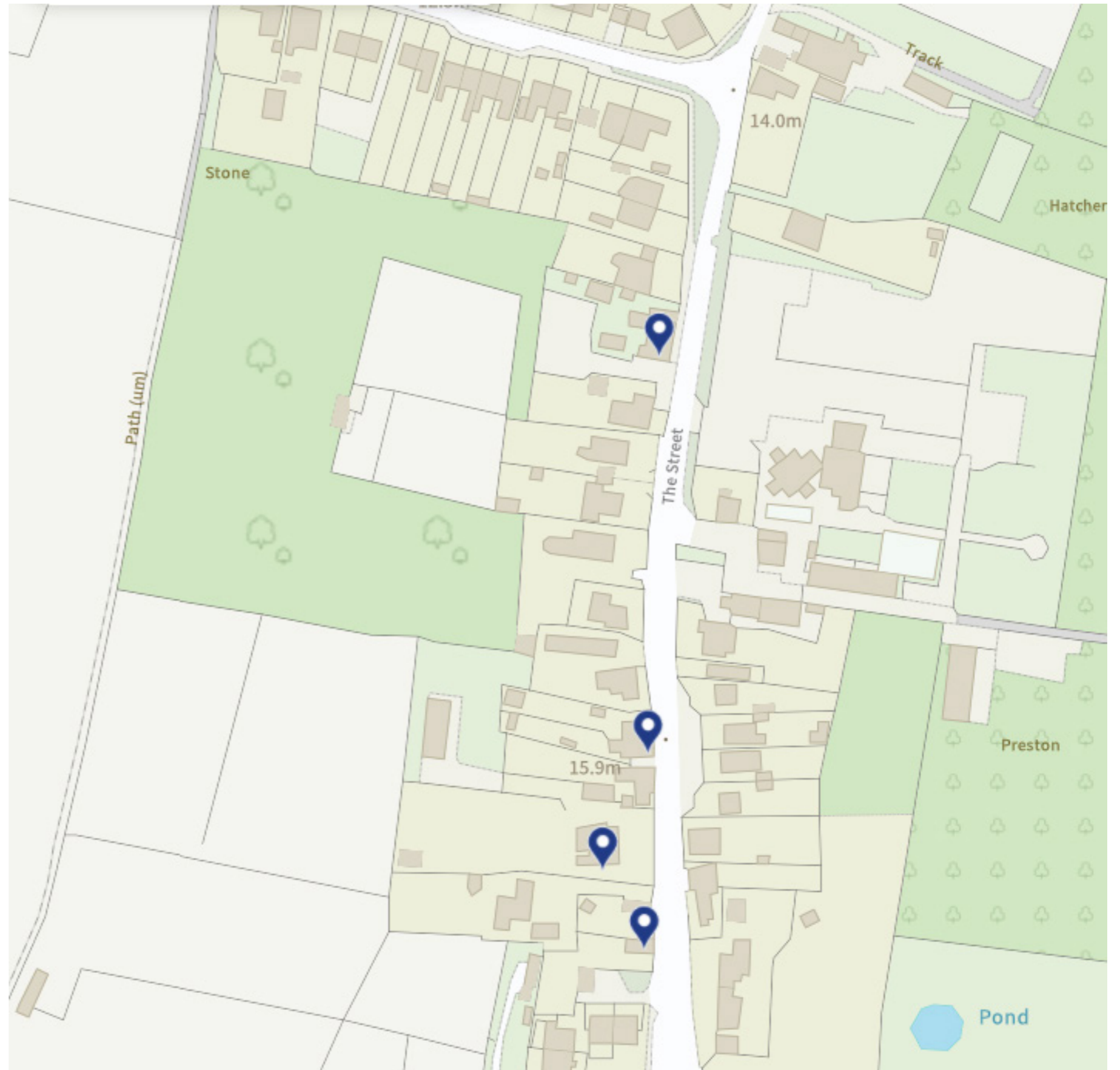
The area has numerous listed buildings, including a number of cottages, farmhouses and even some garden walls. The area of Preston grew between 1831 and 1961, from 1,670 acres to 2,028 acres over the respected period.

The map to the right, taken from Historic England, shows there is only one listed building near the development site. This is a Grade II listed Public House from the early 18th century. The Historic Maps on the adjacent page show the development of the area surrounding Meadow Cottage during the 19th and 20th centuries.



Calahel, Preston St. C. 1970 detached bungalow

Example of Post-War expansion in Preston

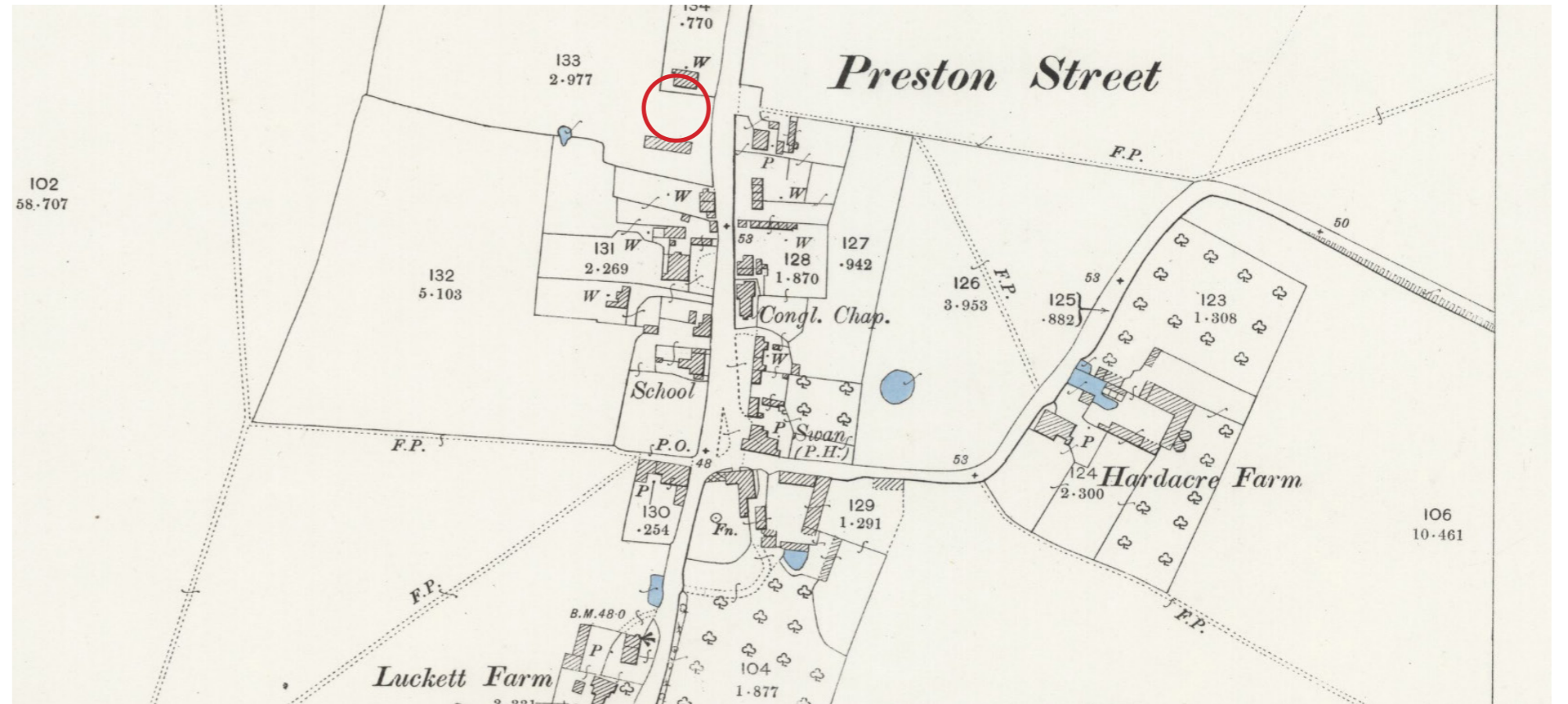


Historic England Listed Buildings Map

By 1901, Preston had become rather self-sufficient. The population was 495 and the village school had been enlarged. There were three inns, two windmills both wind powered later turned steam powered, bakery, grocer, saddler, blacksmiths, carpenters workshop and a bricklayer. Most people who lived in Preston at that time worked on the land, fruit farming, hops sheep and cattle rearing predominantly.

The area grew by a handful of buildings between the years 1896 and 1945 and slowly continued to do so. A great impact on this was the introduction of a bus service in the 1950s, along with wider car ownership and the arrival of electricity. Between the 1960s and 1980s smaller pairs of cottages in the area were frequently modernised and converted into single residences. The green orchard gaps in The Street and The Forstal were gradually replaced by modern houses and bungalows. The green orchard gaps in The Street and The Forstal were gradually replaced by modern houses and bungalows.

Farming and market gardening were historically, and remain, key economic activities within the surrounding district.



Historic Map 1896



The village centre: Street Farm, Swan House and triangular green



Historic Map 1950

3.0 Aesthetic Significance

Preston





The Street is now the most densely built-up part of the Parish but even so there are spaces between the houses, which are mainly detached or paired. Historically up until 1990, most of the properties fronting The Street were on the western side of the road.

The roofs of the earliest surviving dwellings in the Parish are either thatched or roofed with Kent peg tiles, and some of the older cottages feature a catslide roof.

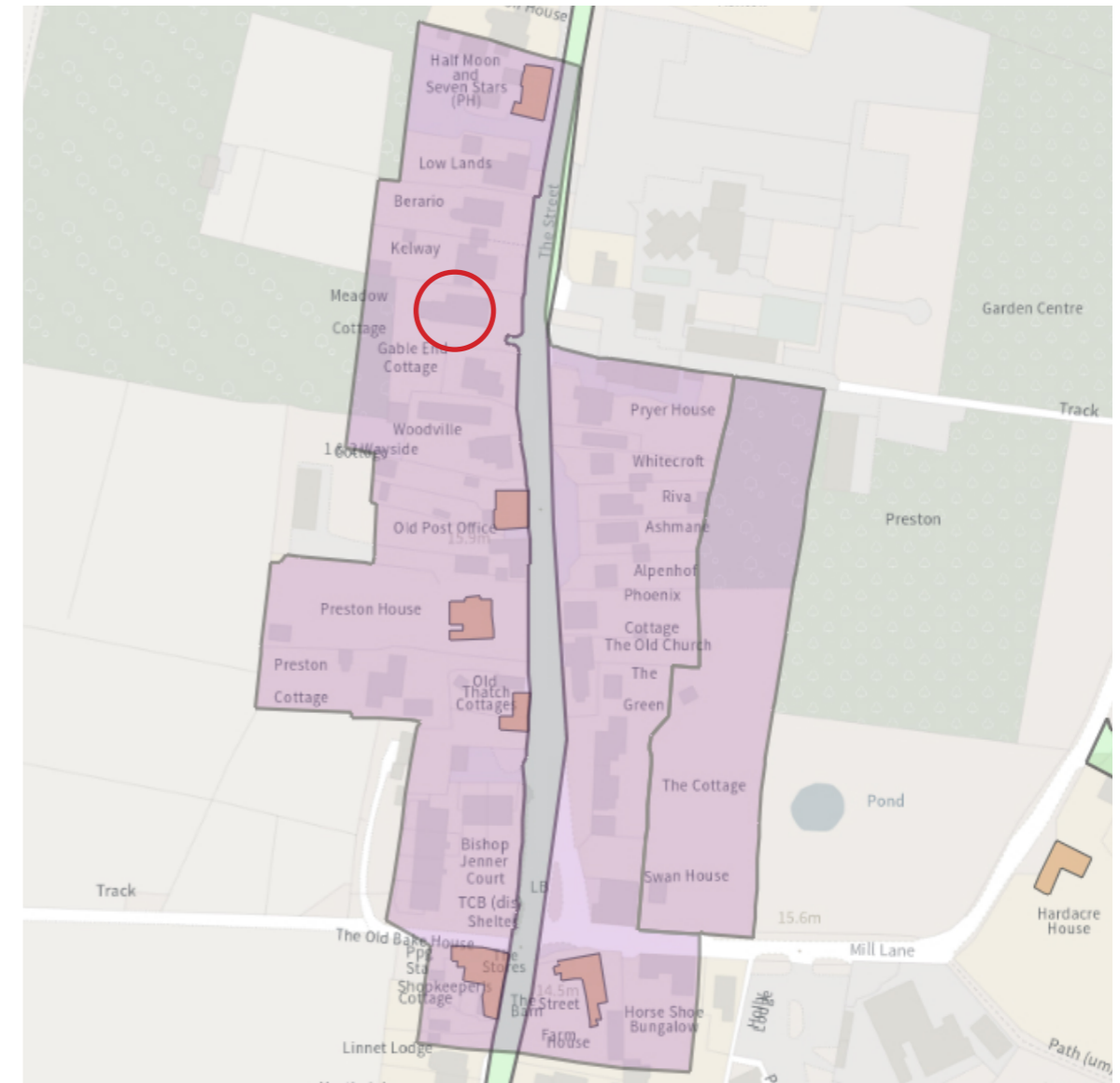
Many of Preston's oldest surviving buildings were of timber-frame construction with wattle and daub or brick-infilling. External walls are commonly rendered and painted white, with upper storeys clad with weatherboarding or tile-hanging. In the second half of the 20th century, weatherboarding painted black or white became a frequent choice at first floor level.

Many buildings in the area have dormer windows, usually small in relation to the overall roof area, and with either hipped, half-hipped or gable-end roofs.

Within the Parish, a large proportion of properties have been extended since they were first built. In some cases, it is possible to detect up to four phases of extension and enlargement.

Article 4's	
Conservation Areas	
Listed Buildings	
Section 106	

Key



Preston Conservation Area. Red circle indicates Meadow Cottage



Old Thatched Cottages, The Street



Preston House, The Street, circa 1815



The Village School

Meadow Cottage

The Cottage is a detached, two storey property with the original structure assumed to be timber frame, and estimated to have been built in the 18th century. Meadow Cottage is not listed. The Cottage has had a rear conservatory added and a side lean-to extension.

The Cottage in its original form, represents the typical house type along The Street, however, it has had a few modern alterations much like some of its neighbouring buildings which ultimately strip it of its original character. The Cottage has a hipped roof to both front and rear elevations, finished with clay tiles, an exposed brick finish externally and dormer windows. The windows are all now uPVC with glazing bars. The front elevation is rendered with decorative timber panelling to create a mock Tudor appearance. This would have been an alteration at a date much after its construction.

The side lean-to extension is also not particularly in-line with the surrounding architectural styles. This is finished with white painted bricks, slate roof covering and uPVC windows.



Internal Cracking



Meadow Cottage Side Lean-To Extension



External Cracking



Internal Cracking



External Cracking

The building is very dilapidated and has numerous internal and external cracks. The roof space internally has been surveyed and shows to be formed from irregularly sized rafters and the original structure has been supplemented with additional softwood rafters. There is evidence of general spreading and opening up of the timber framed structure, which has resulted in an outward movement of the walls and cracking to internal finishes.

The extensions and modifications carried out on the property are highly likely to have contributed to the defects; movement of timber frame walls, uneven floors and cracking at joints.

4.0 Conclusion

As The Cottage is not listed, the external alterations have failed to match the original building in many ways, they are also detrimental to the existing structure and proving to be shortening the life span of the building. The historic characteristics of the existing building have been lost within the modern alterations and therefore would need to undergo extensive and invasive repair works to bring the original structure up to satisfactory standards.



External Cracking



Internal Cracking



External Cracking

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