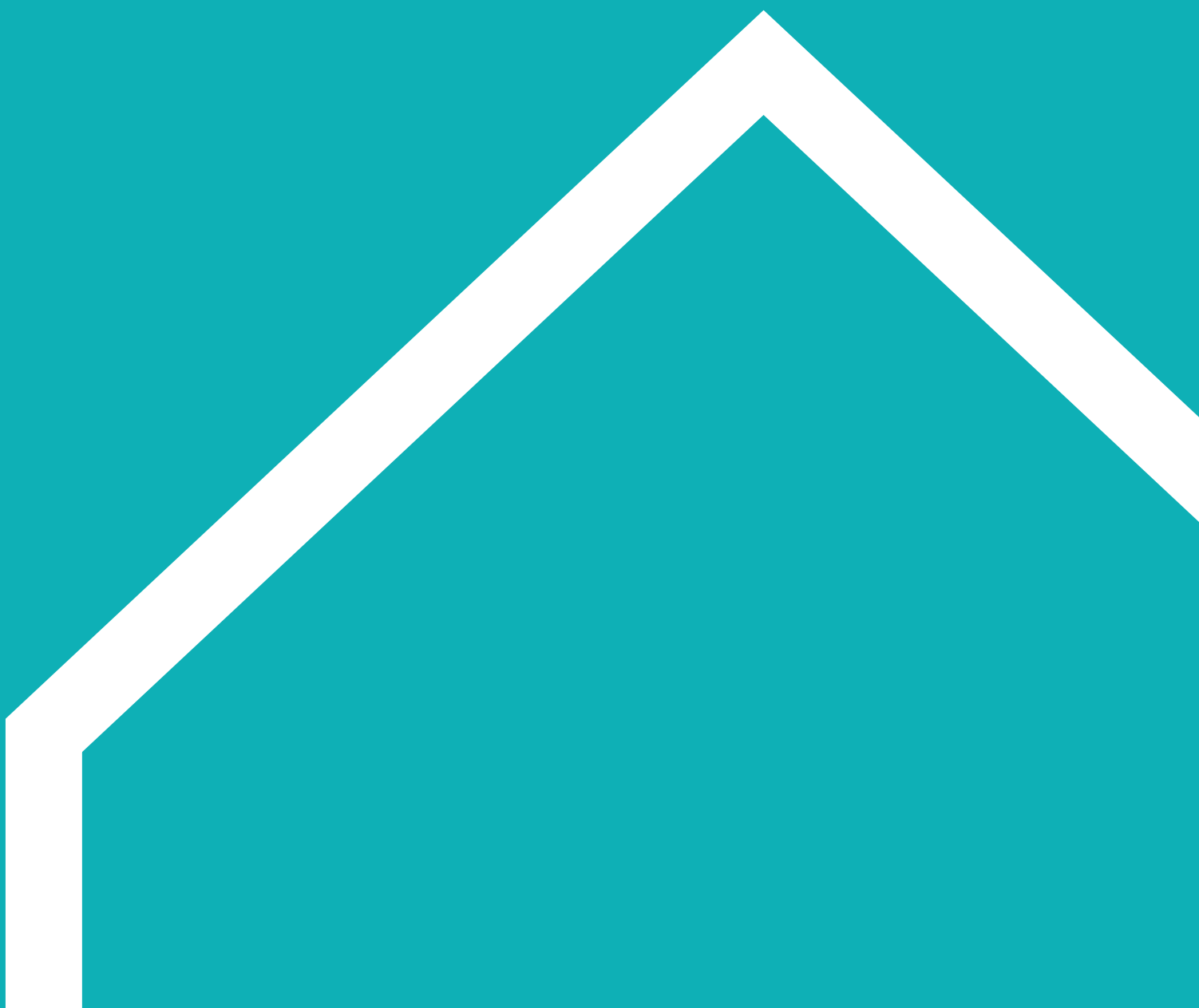
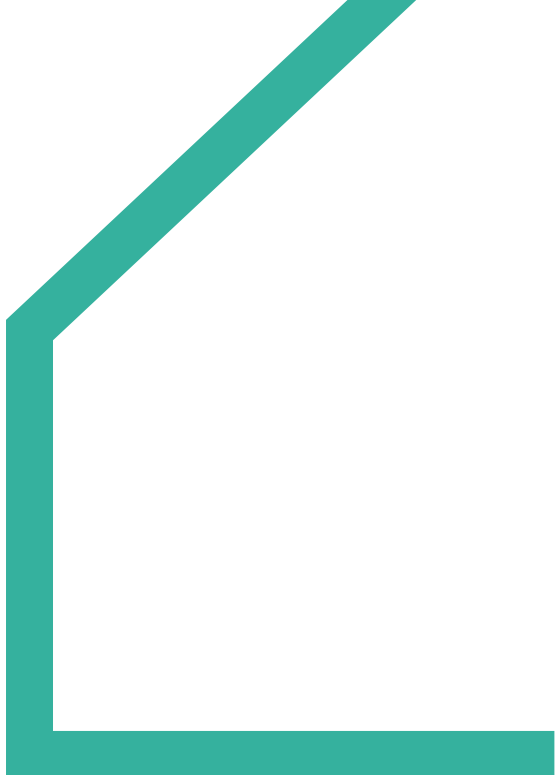


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Heritage Impact Assessment

Listed building consent for various refurbishment works

Moss Villa, Chapel Lane, Bronington, Whitchurch, SY13 3HR

April 2023



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PROJECT

Listed building consent for various refurbishment works including new works and unauthorised works.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been prepared to accompany an application for Listed Building Consent for a number of works required to refurbish the building. This application covers both new works to facilitate refurbishment and works which look to remedy a breach in conditions which accompanied the approval of a previous application for listed building consent, P/2019/0375.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to understand, assess the significance and to analyse the impact of the proposed work including in order to comply with paragraph 6.19 of Planning Policy Wales and Principle 2 of Cadw's Conservation Principles.
- 1.3 This Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) should be read in conjunction with the other supporting planning documents and drawings prepared by Berrys and other consultants.

Date	Ref No.	App Description	Decision
22/11/2017	P/2017/0970	Listed building consent to underpin corner of cottage and to repair slipped archway to gable end using heliflex system	Granted
11/02/2019	P/2019/0100	Listed building consent to refurbish property	Withdrawn
15/05/2019	P/2019/0375	Listed building consent for complete refurbishment works	Granted
11/12/2019	P/2019/0904	Application for approval of details reserved by conditions imposed under planning permission p/2019/0375 condition 6 - details of site meeting between the council's conservation officer and the contractor in order to determine the extent of repair	Granted

Table 1 - Planning history of Site

2. Methodology

- 2.1 The methodology in this report will be based upon Cadw's *Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales* and *Setting of Historic Assets in Wales* which sets out a staged approach on identifying historic assets, analysing the setting, evaluating the potential impact, and considering changes or mitigation strategies to the development to improve any potential impact.
- 2.2 The report has primarily been produced through desktop research, using relevant secondary sources including:
- National Library of Scotland (online resource)
 - National Historic Assets of Wales (Cof Cymru)
 - National Monuments Record of Wales
 - Historic Environment Service - Cadw
 - Wrexham County Record Office
- 2.3 A site visit was conducted on 1st March 2023 to assess the significance of the designated heritage asset and to take photos. Conditions were dry with intermittent sunshine.
- 2.4 The assessment is primarily a desk-based study which has utilised secondary sources derived from a variety of published sources. The assumption has been made that this data is reasonably accurate. The records held by the HER and historic maps are not an infinite record of all heritage assets, but a record of the discovery of historic features.

3. Identifying Heritage Assets

3.1 Planning Policy Wales defines the historic environment as *“being made up of individual historic features which are collectively known as historic assets, which can include:*

- *Listed buildings;*
- *Conservation areas;*
- *Historic assets of special local interest;*
- *Historic parks and gardens;*
- *Townscapes;*
- *Historic Landscapes;*
- *World Heritage Sites; and*
- *Archaeological remains (including scheduled monuments).”*

3.2 The application site (hereafter referred to as ‘the Site’) is the grade II listed Moss Villa, Cadw ref no. 85475.

3.3 Figure 1 and Table 2 show the Site within its local context and setting.

Table 2 - Listed Buildings

Name	Listing	Description
Moss Villa	II	A 1½-storey cottage of brick with slate roof on overhanging eaves, and brick ridge stack. Above the windows is a sawtooth band in each elevation. Openings have segmental heads, and windows are casements with wood mullions. The gable end entrance has a central boarded door and a 2-light window above. The L side wall has a 2-light window and small window beneath the eaves. The R side has two 3-light windows, of which the R-hand has been renewed. In the rear gable end is a boarded door on the L side and 2-light windows to the R and above.

4. Planning Policy

4.1 Planning decisions should be taken in accordance with local plan policy unless material considerations indicate otherwise, Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 refers. This statement is written in the context of the following legislative, planning policy and guidance:

- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservations Areas) Act 1990
- Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Planning Policy Wales 2021 (PPW)
- Technical Advice Note (TAN) 24: *the historic environment (2017)*
- Historic Environment Records in Wales: *Compilation and Use (2017)*
- Managing Lists of Historic Assets of Special Local Interest in Wales (2017)
- Setting of Historic Assets in Wales (2017)

4.2 Section 6 of PPW covers the Historic Environment under Distinctive and Natural Places, setting out objectives to realise a prosperous Wales by valuing the quality of its landscapes and historic environment.

4.3 In 6.1.6 of PPW specific objectives are set out, those which are most relevant to this development are:

- conserve archaeological remains, both for their own sake and for their role in education, leisure and the economy
- safeguard the character of historic buildings and manage change so that their special architectural and historic interest is preserved

4.4 Section 66(1) of the Act (1990) states that when:

“...considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the

desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.”

- 4.5 Decision-makers should give “*considerable importance and weight*” to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings when carrying out the balancing exercise.¹
- 4.6 Whilst the statutory duty requires that special regard should be paid to the desirability of not harming the setting of a Listed Building, that cannot mean that any harm, however minor, would necessarily require planning permission to be refused as clarified in the Court of Appeal.²
- 4.7 The following policies from the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan (1996 – 2011) are also relevant:
- EC9 – Listed Buildings of Special, Architectural or Historic Interest
 - EC11 – Archaeology
 - H3 – Conversion of Buildings Outside Settlement Limits
 - H5 – Housing in the Countryside

¹ Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Limited v East Northants DC, English Heritage, National Trust & SSCLG [2014] EWCA Civ.137.

² Palmer v Herefordshire Council & Anor [2016] EWCA Civ 1061 (04 November 2016)

5. Historic Development & Appraisal

- 5.1 The Site is located in the easternmost edge of Wrexham County, in Wales, roughly 1 mile south of the village of Bronington. Despite being in Wales, the close large settlement is Whitchurch, Shropshire, being 4 miles to the northeast.
- 5.2 Bronington is a small village located in Wrexham County Borough, Wales. The area appears to have been the subject of human activity for millennia, particularly on the nearby Fenn, Whixhall & Bettisfield Mosses. Archaeological finds include five “bog bodies” discovered in the late 1800s and date to the Iron Age or Romano-British Period.
- 5.3 The history of the village of Bronington dates back to the Roman period, as it is believed that the Roman road known as Watling Street ran through the village.
- 5.4 During the Middle Ages, Bronington was part of the Lordship of Bromfield and Yale, and it was owned by the Earls of Chester. In the 13th century, a motte and bailey castle was built in the village, but it was destroyed during the Welsh Wars of the 14th century.
- 5.5 In the 18th and 19th centuries, Bronington became a centre for the flax and linen industry, with several mills and factories operating in the village. The village also had a railway station, which opened in 1866 and closed in 1964.
- 5.6 During World War II, Bronington was the site of a Royal Air Force airfield, which was used for training purposes. The airfield closed in 1957 and is now a farm.
- 5.7 Today, Bronington is a quiet village with a population of around 500 people. It has a village hall, a primary school, a pub, and several small businesses.
- 5.8 The Site is located in a rural area south of Bronington, bordering onto the Fenn, Whixhall & Bettisfield Mosses nature reserve.

- 5.9 Tithe records (Figure 2) dating to 1839 confirm the presence of the existing building on the site, with the land described as “*Cottage Garden*”. The landowner is Sir John Hanmer Baronet, whilst the occupier is John Clay. Sir John Hanmer was a politician who served as Member of Parliament for Shrewsbury between 1832 and 1837. He was also High Sheriff of the historic county of Flintshire, where the current Site was located.
- 5.10 Map regression (Figures 2-6) confirms that the Site and its setting has seen little change in the intervening years. The proximity to the nearby Fenn, Whixhall & Bettisfield Mosses has prevented any large-scale development both in terms of availability of viable land and in terms of protection of the natural environment, beginning with the creation of the nature reserve in 1953.

6. Heritage Impact Assessment

6.1 The works included within this application can be summarised as follows:

Listed Building Consent:

- Removal of oil boiler
- Internal alterations to first floor layout, increasing size of bedroom 2
- Installing conservation rooflight to bathroom
- Reinstatement of upper floor wardrobe
- Replacement of all windows (with the exception of the small square window on the eastern elevation)
- New windows to be set back further to allow for new installation of new cills.
- Installation of new mechanical extract in bathroom

Retrospective Listed Building Consent:

- Installation of new skirting in living room

See Table 2 for an analysis of these works, their potential impact on significance and justification for them.

6.2 Cadw's "Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment" defines significance as:

"The sum of the cultural and natural heritage values of a place..."

6.3 The Site is of historic and architectural interest. The Site is comprised of red-brick with slate roof tiles and a single, central brick-built chimney stack. Windows are casement and timber framed, 4 in total, though it is noted that they do not appear to be original. There is one small window located beneath the eave on the eastern elevation which is unique amongst the windows on the Site. This western elevation features a decorative stone detailing, which appears to show the crest of the Hanmer baronet (who's estate included the Site, as per 5.9). The crest is described in Burke's 1844 Encyclopaedia of Heraldry as: "*On a chapeau azure, turned up ermine, a lion*

sejant, guardant, argent." The Hanmer motto; "*Gardez l'honneur*" (Keep the Honour) is detailed below (Figure 9). A further architectural detail on the external of the Site is the dog toothed corbelling detail which wraps around each elevation. Within the curtilage of the Site is a cast iron water pump. Internally the Site features two historically interesting fireplaces, one on either floor. The fireplace found on the ground floor is constructed from brick and features a large open hearth (Figures 11 & 12). On the second floor, the fireplace is much more minimal and narrower, with the brick construction being coated in black paint or bitumen. This fireplace features a decorative wrought iron grate with floral motif (Figures 13 & 14). The Site is therefore of historic and architectural interest.

6.4 The Site provides a good example of a well-preserved cottage within the Hanmer estate, a style which is characteristic of the area. The retention of the Hanmer crest on the external of the Site provides a tangible relationship with the past and adds further historic significance. The Site includes within its curtilage a number of outbuildings which are of varying levels of interest. Figure 17 shows the outbuilding located directly north of the main dwelling. Map regression (Figures 1 – 6) show a structure on this Site going back to at least 1900. There is some historic and architectural interest retained with this outbuilding, most notably some parts of the external brick and the timber stable door. There are two further structures, located to the east and south of the main dwelling. To the east lies a timber Dutch barn structure (Figure 19) and to the south a smaller outbuilding (Figure 18). These structures do not feature on historic maps and do not carry any historic or architectural interest, being of later construction and material. There is no evidence of any archaeological interest in the Site.

6.5 Architectural features combine with historic detail to give the Site its significance. The Site serves as a good example of a rural estate cottage and demonstrates local vernacular architecture within its original rural setting. The Site has a historical link to the Hanmer estate which is further strengthened by the retention of the Hanmer crest adorning the Site's western elevation. This adds to the Site's significance both historically and architecturally. Internally, the two fireplaces referenced in 6.3 add to the

Site's significance as historic and architectural features, alongside the small window located on the Site's east elevation. As mentioned in 5.11 there are 3 further structures/outbuildings within the curtilage of the Site. The largest of these appears on historic mapping dating back to the 1900 at least, therefore giving it some historic significance through association to the existing main dwelling and wider Hanmer estate. There is some historic brickwork to the external as well as retained timber doors, with the main door being in stable style. The two further structures are of no historic or architectural significance.

6.6 Whilst the Site is of historic and architectural significance, it should be noted that there are elements which have harmed this significance already. On the external of the main dwelling, there are several untidy/unsympathetic elements which detract from the Site's significance. On the north-east elevation of the Site a historic brick has been removed to accommodate a pair of pipes going into the building (Figure 22 & 23). This is both unsightly and has resulted in the removal of historic fabric, though the removed brick has still been retained on the Site. Further to this, there are exposed drainage pipes encircling the building at the ground level. These are divergent from the guttering and downpipes found on the property which are black and cast iron. In contrast, this ground level drainpipes appear to be modern and constructed from a mixture of plastic and copper. Whilst the windows within the Site are historic, they are not considered to be originals. Moreover, the right window on the Site's south-west elevation (Figure 10) has been replaced.

6.7 Table 3 below details the works included as part of the proposal, their potential impact on significance and the justification for these works to proceed.

Works	Significance	Impact	Justification
Removal of oil boiler	Negative	Positive	The boiler design is unsympathetic to the rural historic character of the Site. Removal will be a positive improvement for the Site.
Internal alterations to first floor layout, increasing size of bedroom 2	Negative	Positive	These works are returning the wall to its historic layout (Figure 16). Photographic survey discharged under P/2019/0904 shows the framing for this wall continuing in a straight line, rather than the L-shape suggested by the pre-existing floor plans. This will provide a greater level of space in bedroom 2 and will simplify the layout of the bathroom. This helps to secure the optimum viable use of the Site as a private dwelling.
Installing conservation rooflight to bathroom	Existing slate roof is of some architectural interest	Neutral	The bathroom as existing is dark, with no natural light from windows entering the room. Moreover, this rooflight will help provide natural ventilation for the bathroom, which is expected to experience higher than usual levels of moisture, in comparison to other rooms within the Site.
Reinstatement of upper floor wardrobe	Negative - wardrobe was a feature of historic interest within the Site. Its removal	Positive	Correspondence between Wrexham Council's Enforcement Officer and the applicant confirms this wardrobe was to be retained as part of the conditions for the acceptance of P/2019/0904.

	has harmed the Site's significance.		Therefore, these works will reinstate the wardrobe within bedroom 1 that was removed without consent. Reinstatement of historic features are considered a positive enhancement for the Site. Whilst this feature is being reinstated, the design will be slightly amended to facilitate easier use for clothes hanging. This will involve raising the position of the cupboard partition, to allow the hanging of clothes. The horizontal bar which divides the two sections will echo the previous detail as seen in historic photos. The door panels will be simple and recessed which reflects the modest rural nature of the villa. Finally, the door architrave will match the existing detailing found around the existing windows.
Replacement of all windows (with the exception of the small square window on the eastern elevation). New windows to be set back further to allow for new installation of new cills. Double glazing to be installed.	Negative	Positive	Whilst the majority of these windows are considered 'historic' due to their single glazing, they are not original to the Site and are later iterations. Most notably the right window on the south-west elevation (Figure 10). As such, it is considered that replacement of these do not give rise to harm. Currently the windows have a shallow reveal, also indicating a later replacement and sit straight onto the brick work with no cill. Long-term this is allowing water to collect, creating issues with water and

			weather ingress. Replacement timber windows will allow a deeper, traditional reveal and a new timber cill to remedy any further maintenance issues.
Installation of new skirting in living room	Negative	Neutral	Photographic survey discharged under P/2019/0904 shows the Site previously had brick tiled skirting within the main living room. This has subsequently been removed and replaced with timber skirting. This change is not considered to constitute harm to the Site's significance. The previous skirting was of little historic or architectural interest and their removal does not detract from the building. The newly installed skirting is simple and in-keeping with the Site's modest character. As such, the new skirting boards do not detract from the site's significance.
Installation of new radiators	Negative	Positive	The radiators currently on site are not contributing to the Site's character and are of no historic or architectural interest. Their replacement with a more sympathetic model is considered to be a positive enhancement for the Site. The existing pipework will be retained and reused to avoid further removal of existing fabric.

Table 3 - Summary of works

- 6.8 All new elements have been designed to match the existing character of the Site. It is thought that this continuity in design will sufficiently mitigate any potential harm caused by the installation of contemporary materials.
- 6.9 A further note to consider is that the conditions discharged under P/2019/0904 confirmed that the pantry shelves and kitchen flooring were to be retained. However, works then carried out have meant that these two features were lost, but, subsequent correspondence with the Local Planning Authority has confirmed that, on balance, this change is considered acceptable and the relevant conditions no longer necessary.
- 6.10 It is argued that the proposed works represent the best option in regard to securing the Site's optimum viable use. This is considered the best method of ensuring the long-term conservation of the Site, as it will likely lead to investment in maintenance necessary to facilitate its continued use. The Site has historically been in use as a private dwelling; therefore, continuation of this use is unlikely to result in works that would result in harm.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 Planning Policy Wales helps to clarify the importance of assessing the impact of a proposal on the significance of a historic asset. It explains that:

“Any decisions made through the planning system must fully consider the impact on the historic environment and on the significance and heritage values of individual historic assets and their contribution to the character of place.”

- 7.2 The Site is a grade II listed building and is therefore afforded a greater level of protection than non-designated heritage assets, but less than grade I and II* listed buildings. The NPPF advises that proposals that lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset should be weighed against the benefits of the proposal, including securing the Site's optimum viable use.

- 7.3 In respect to the Site's significance, it is considered the works **will not give rise to harm**. All proposed works are either positive enhancements for the Site, or are considered necessary for the continued, and future use, of the Site as a private dwelling.

- 7.4 Those works that will have a positive impact on the significance of the Site includes the reinstatement of lost features, such as the first-floor wardrobe, removal of the unsympathetic oil tank and replacement of windows, which are currently suffering damage and deteriorating due to their poor placement.

8. Appendix 1 – Maps/Plans



Figure 1 – The Site within its local context.



Figure 2 - Tithe map, 1839



Figure 3 - OS Map, 1878



Figure 4 - OS Map, 1900



Figure 5 - OS Map, 1929



Figure 6 - OS Map, 1954

9. Appendix 2 – Photos



Figure 7 - The Site - northwest/southwest elevations.



Figure 8 – The northeast elevation of the Site. This Site features the architecturally interesting small, square window, as well as a portion of the dog toothed corbelling detail. However, the presence of the oil boiler detracts from the Site's significance.



Figure 9 - The Hanmer crest and motto. The Site formed a part of the Hanmer estate and served as a dwelling to estate workers.



Figure 10 – Window on the southwest elevation has been replaced with a model that is divergent in design from the rest of the Site.



Figure 11 – Main living space within the Site. The significant fireplace is visible, as is the newly installed skirting boards.



Figure 12 - Closer view of the fireplace.



Figure 13 - Bedroom one. The significant fireplace surround is visible on the right. On the left of the image, is the area in which the historically significant wardrobe was removed. Reinstatement will be a positive enhancement of the room and Site.



Figure 14 - Closer view of the historic fireplace surround in bedroom one.



Figure 15 - Bedroom two. The central wall is currently in an L-shape. The proposal will see this replaced with a straight stud, reflecting the pre-existing wall located here.



Figure 16 – Pantry shelves which have been lost as part of works already carried out. Photo taken from photographic survey discharged under P/2019/0904.



Figure 17 – Further contextual view of pantry shelves which have been lost as part of works already carried out. Photo taken from photographic survey discharged under P/2019/0904.



Figure 18 - Photo showing the pre-existing form of the wall separating bedroom two from the bathroom. Photo taken from photographic survey discharged under P/2019/0904.



Figure 19 - The most historically significant of the outbuildings. Map regression shows a structure in this area.



Figure 20 - Further outbuilding of no significance.



Figure 21 - Timber Dutch-barn structure on the Site's edge.



Figure 22 - Greater contextual view of the Site taking in all outbuildings and the main dwelling.



Figure 23 - Unsympathetic oil boiler proposed for removal.



Figure 24 - Removal of brickwork and installation of piping. Purpose is unknown.



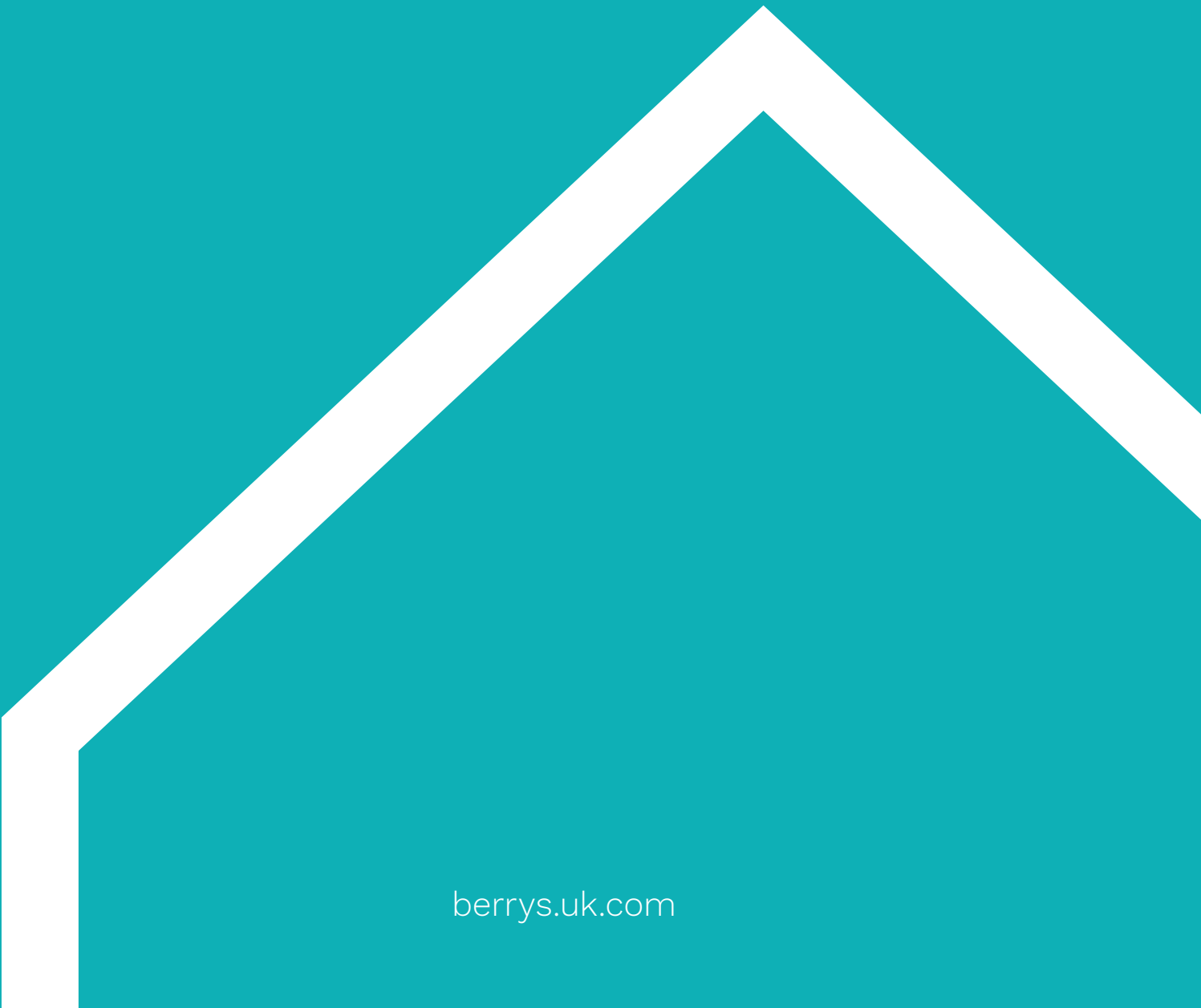
Figure 25 – Closer view of the removed brick and installed piping.



Figure 26 - Historically interesting water pump within the Site curtilage.



Figure 27 - The Site is located on the edge of the Fenn's, Whixall & Bettisfield Mosses nature reserve. This has prevented development within the setting of the Site and is likely to prevent future development.



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