PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OFF GYNN LANE

HONLEY, METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF KIRKLEES



HERITAGE ASSESSMENT

GARRY MILLER
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GARRY MILLER HERITAGE CONSULTANCY

Garry Miller is a heritage consultant, architectural historian and published author who has spent more than 40 years studying and working with buildings of town and countryside, in particular those of North West England. His career as a consultant began in the mid-1980s with the Preston-based Nigel Morgan Historic Building Consultancy, of which he became a partner in 1992 upon its rebranding as Datestone. In 1997 he was commissioned by the Heritage Trust for the North West, a buildings preservation trust based at Barrowford, Lancashire, to produce an in-depth regional study of vernacular houses in southwest Lancashire: the result, *Historic Houses in Lancashire: The Douglas Valley, 1300-1770* was published in 2002. The book was described as *'scholarship as its best'* by *Country Life (*June 2003), and *'well analysed and presented'* in *Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society* (Vol 48, 2004); and was widely cited in the 2006 *Buildings of England* volume on Liverpool and Southwest Lancashire. Extensive research on the houses of Georgian and Regency Liverpool has also been undertaken, with a view to future publication. Following the success of his Douglas Valley book, Garry Miller established his own consultancy, producing analytical and interpretive reports on historic buildings, in particular the heritage assessments required to support planning applications affecting the historic environment. His area of operation encompasses the North West, Midlands, North Wales and parts of Cumbria and North and West Yorkshire. Several local authorities have cited his assessments as examples of best practice, and reports on more than 150 buildings or sites are produced annually.

THIS REPORT

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1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report supposed proposed development of a site off Gynn Lane, northeast of the village of Honley in the Holme Valley district of the Metropolitan Borough of Kirklees, West Yorkshire. Planning consent is sought from Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council for a new residential scheme of 50 homes upon the site, which is currently an agricultural field.

At its closest point, the site lies around 50 metres east of the Grade II listed 30-32 Gynn Lane, a pair of cottages. The heritage consideration arising from the proposal is its impact upon the setting and therefore the significance (i.e. heritage interest and value) of this listed building. Several other listed buildings stand at much greater distance, and owing to this separation and screening, their settings are considered unaffected.

The Grade II designation of the listed cottages denote they are of national importance for their special architectural and historic interest. Their significance essentially derives from this intrinsic special interest, which is that of a pair of three-storey moorland weavers' cottages of likely circa 1800 date. The contribution made by their setting to this significance has been devalued, as their original rural surroundings have been replaced by a 20th century suburbia along Gynn Lane in which the listed building is now experienced.

Historically, the application site formed part of the wider rural setting of the listed building, part of a system of irregular fields extending to the east of Gynn Lane and Marsh Platt Lane. Today it still performs that function, but visually is screened in the principal public views of the listed building, obtained only from Gynn Lane, by dense, tall mature woodland to the rear of the latter. Hence there is no immediate visual association between the site and the listed building. Public views of the site are restricted to glimpses from Marsh Platt Lane, from which the listed building is entirely out of view to the northwest. The site's relationship to the listed building is therefore essentially a marginal one, and of a historical rather than visual nature.

The proposal seeks consent for 50 homes to be built on the site, which is allocated an indicative capacity of 50 units(across 2.41 hectares of developable land) in the adopted Kirklees Local Plan. The scheme will have no adverse effect upon the setting of the listed building. The development will be screened by the woodland belt that separates it from the listed building, hence observers will not be aware of its presence. The development cannot therefore be deemed harmful owing both to this invisibility and the wider suburban surroundings in which the listed building is presently experienced. The setting of the listed cottages will essentially be preserved. In this context, the fact that the site has been allocated for housing by Kirklees MBC implies that development upon it would not be harmful to them. Additionally, the scheme will deliver the significant public benefit of delivering new houses in a desirable location, which surely weighs favourably in the planning balance.

To summarise, the significance of the listed building resides primarily in its intrinsic special interest. The contribution made by setting has been devalued owing to its shift from rural to suburban. The proposal will not alter this position: essentially there will be no change to how it is visually experienced. The proposal will therefore sustain the significance and setting of the listed building and is therefore in full accordance with national guidance and the local development plan. Accordingly, it merits approval without delay.

2: THE SITE

The application site is located on the northeastern fringe of the village of Honley in the Holme Valley district of the Metropolitan Borough of Kirklees, West Yorkshire. The site is an agricultural field off Gynn Lane and is bounded to the west and north by properties along the latter, to the south by Marsh Platt Lane and neighbouring fields and to the east by the railway line from Huddersfield. The site is for the most part screened by trees and buildings along Gynn Lane, with glimpsed views obtained from midway along Marsh Platt Lane.



Map 1. Location of the application site

3: THE PROPOSAL/SCOPE OF THIS REPORT

3.1 Proposed development

Proposals have been submitted to Kirklees Metropolitan Borough Council for a new residential development upon the site.

3.21 Designations

At its closest point, the site lies around 50 metres east of the Grade II listed *30-32 Gynn Lane*, a pair of cottages. The next nearest listed building is around 150 metres to the northeast, numbers *36, 38 and 40 along with a barn to 36 Hall Ing Lane,* while several other listed buildings stand at a much greater distance.



Map 2. The site (approximate centre starred) and the listed buildings in closest proximity

3.3 Heritage impact

The heritage consideration arising from the proposal is its impact upon the setting and therefore the significance (i.e. heritage interest and value) of numbers 30 and 32 Gynn Lane. Owing to screening, topography and separation distance, it is considered that the setting of the Hall Ing Lane listed properties is unaffected.

3.4 Scope and purpose of this report

Paragraph 200 of Chapter 16 (*Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment*) of the National Planning Policy Framework (as revised December 2023) states local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected, including the contribution made by their setting. The scope and purpose of this report is therefore to identify the significance of the listed building and its setting, along with the contribution made by the application site, and to evaluate the impact of the proposal upon it. The level of detail, in accordance with paragraph 200, is proportionate to the importance of the listed building and no more than is necessary to understand the proposal's impact. This report is to be read in conjunction with other documentation submitted in support of the application.

3.5 Report structure

This is as follows:

1. A concise, proportionate description of the listed building and its setting (Section 4)

2. A brief description of the application site (Section 5)

3. A summary of the significance of the listed building (Section 6)

4. A summary of the relevant heritage planning policy context (Section 7)

5. Evaluation within this context of the impact of the proposal upon the setting of the listed building (Section 8).

4: THE LISTED BUILDING

4.1 Overview

Pair of circa 1800 three-storey weavers' cottages in altered suburban setting.



1. Numbers 30-32, viewed from Gynn Lane

4.2 List description

The National Heritage List for England description of the listed building, compiled at the time of its designation in 1983, reads:

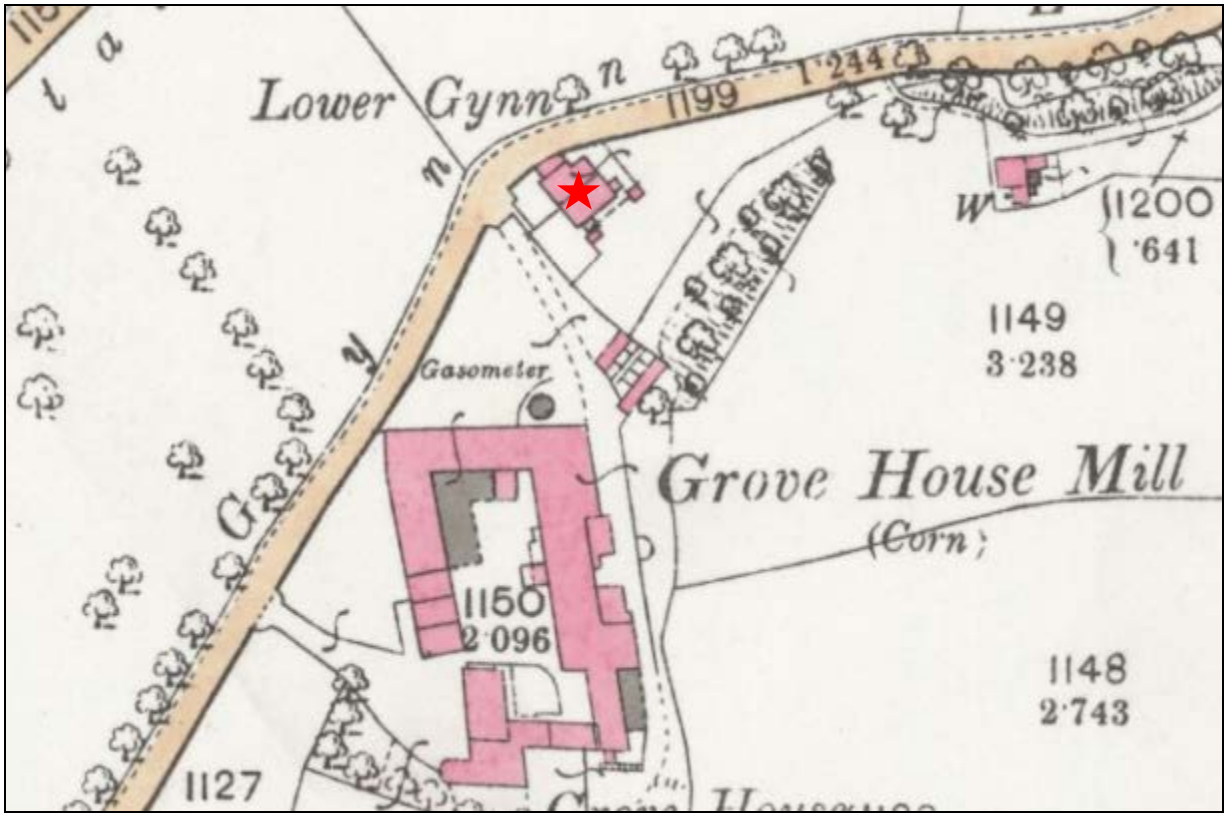
> *Terrace pair. Early C19. Hammer dressed stone. Stone slate roof (turned). Three storeys. South-west elevation: continuous first and second floor sill bands. Entrance to left and right and two 4-light stone mullioned windows, each with 2 mullions removed, to ground floor. To first and second floors each dwelling has one 6-light stone mullioned window. (No 30 has centre light blocked to first floor). North-east elevation: modern extensions to ground floor.*

One 2-light stone mullioned window to first and second floors, both dwellings. Single-storey extension to each gable of no interest.

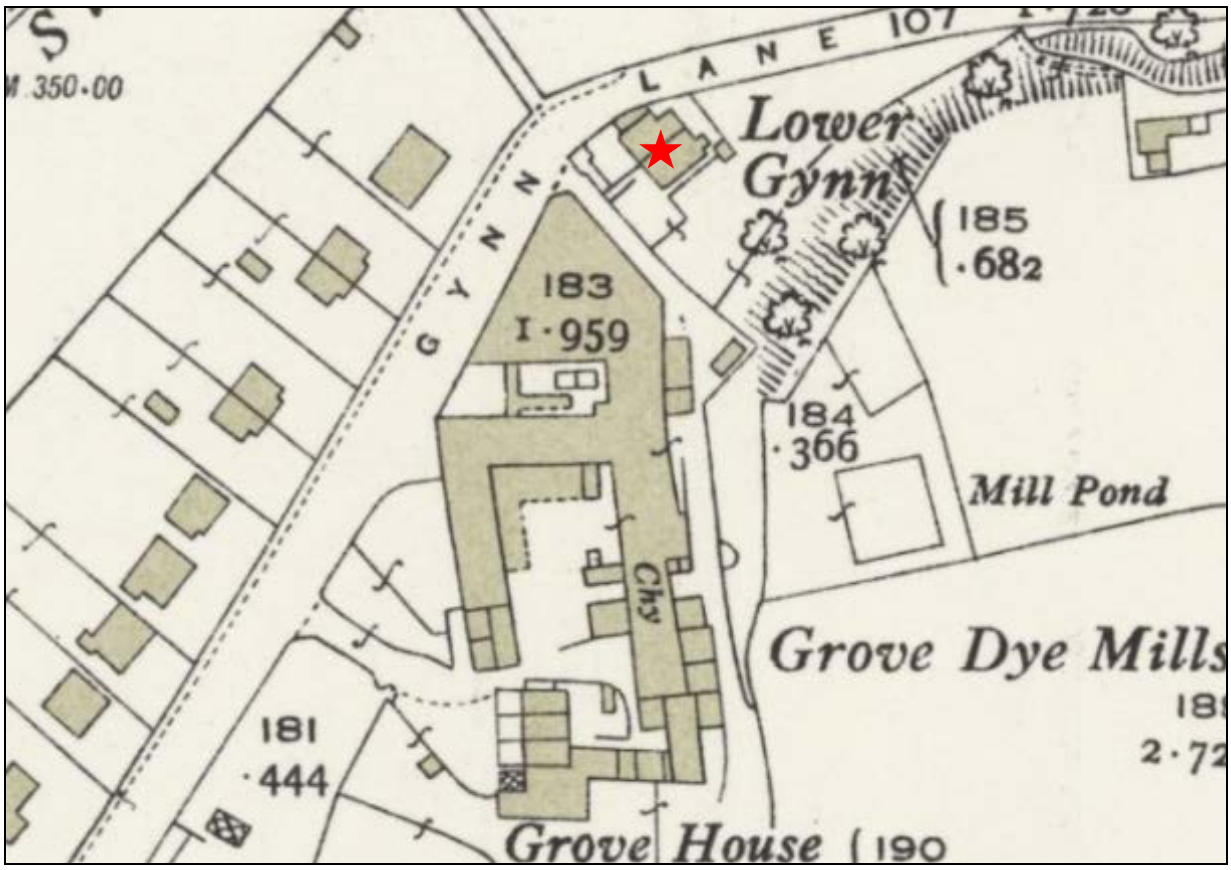
As the application affects only the setting and not the structure of the listed building, it is considered the above is an adequate description for the purposes of this report. Hence there is no need for it to be augmented, other than to note, purely out of historical interest, that the long mullioned windows indicate these were originally weavers' cottages and that they are named as *Lower Gynn* on historic mapping.

4.3 Setting

The listed building now stands within a greatly-altered immediate setting. When first built it stood in semi-isolation amid the rural hinterland of Honley village, north of the Grove House corn mill, as recorded by the OS edition of 1888 (Map 3, below). By the late 1920s this setting had changed, as a result of the northward extension of the mill along with suburban development on the opposite side of Gynn Lane. In subsequent decades this trend was consolidated, with housing replacing the mill buildings and further dwellings built along Gynn Lane and beyond. Hence the listed cottages are now experienced in public views within a residential streetscene embodied in dwellings from the 1920s onwards. However to the rear of the cottages and north along Gynn Lane, a backcloth of tall mature woodland screens views of the application site and represents the legacy of its original rural surroundings.



Map 3. The 25-inch OS map of 1888 records the now-vanished original rural surroundings of the cottages (starred)



Map 4. Suburban growth and the expansion of the mill had altered the setting of the listed building by 1929



2. View from the listed building, showing its residential surroundings on Gynn Lane



3. Modern housing directly to the south of the listed cottages has replaced the mill



4. Trees beyond the listed building that screen the site from view are the legacy of its original rural setting

5: THE APPLICATION SITE

Historically, the application site formed part of the wider rural setting of the listed building, part of a system of irregular fields extending to the east of Gynn Lane and Marsh Platt Lane, cut through by the Huddersfield and Penistone Line of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway. Today it still performs that function, but visually is screened in the principal public views of the listed building, which are obtained only from Gynn Lane, by the dense, tall mature woodland that has developed from small belts of trees shown on the 1888 OS map to extend northwards along Gynn Lane. Hence there is no immediate visual association between the site and the listed building. Public views of the site are restricted to glimpses from part way along Marsh Platt Lane, from which the listed building is entirely out of view to the northwest. The site's relationship to the listed building is therefore essentially a marginal one, and of a historical rather than visual nature.



Map 4. The application site (starred) formed part of the wider rural setting of the listed building (arrowed), as recorded by the 25-inch 1888 OS map



5. Aerial view showing how the site is separated and screened from the listed building (arrowed) by the woodland



6. Looking towards the site from Marsh Platt Lane, with the listed building hidden from view

6: SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

6.1 Rationale

Paragraph 201 of the National Planning Policy Framework states local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of a heritage asset, including its setting, and take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal in order to avoid or minimise conflict between the asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal. Significance is defined in the NPPF Glossary as:

> *The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.*

6.2 Significance of the listed building

The Grade II designation of the listed cottages denote they are of national importance for their special architectural and historic interest. Their significance essentially derives from this intrinsic special interest, which is that of a pair of three-storey moorland weavers' cottages of likely circa 1800 date. The contribution made by their setting to this significance has been devalued, as their original rural surroundings have been replaced by a 20th century suburbia in which the listed building is now experienced.

7: PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

7.1 Statutory duty

Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires local planning authorities to give special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest.

7.2 Relevant policies

Chapter 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework provides the guidance on how the statutory duty is to be put into practice. Paragraph 203 states that in determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- *The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation*
- *The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality, and*
- *The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*

Regarding designated heritage assets, paragraph 205 states that '*great weight'* should be given to their conservation and the more important the asset, the greater that weight should be, and that significance can be lost through development within its setting. This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

In the local context, Policy LP35 of the Kirklees Local Plan, adopted February 27, 2019, requires development proposals affecting a designated heritage asset to preserve or enhance its significance.

8: IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL

8.1 Summary of the scheme

The proposal seeks consent for 50 homes to be built on the site, as detailed in the submitted drawings. The site has been allocated an indicative capacity of 50 units(across 2.41 hectares of developable land) in the adopted Kirklees Local Plan.



7. The development layout as proposed

8.2 Its effect

The proposal will have no adverse effect upon the setting of the listed building.

As has been demonstrated in this report, the listed building stands within an altered, suburban setting as is evident in the public views that are obtained from Gynn Lane. The site has no presence within these views, as it is screened by the tall mature woodland belt that separates it from the listed building. Hence there is no immediate visual association between them. This visual barrier will remain, and essentially observers of the listed building will not know that it is there. The scheme cannot therefore be deemed harmful owing both to this invisibility and the wider suburban surroundings in which the listed building is presently experienced. The setting of the listed cottages will be essentially preserved. In this context, the fact that the site has been allocated for housing by Kirklees MBC implies that development upon it would not be harmful to them. Additionally, the scheme will deliver the significant public benefit of delivering new houses in a desirable location, which surely weighs favourably in the planning balance.

8.3 Concluding statement

The significance of the listed building resides primarily in its intrinsic special interest. The contribution made by setting has been devalued owing to its shift from rural to suburban.

The proposal will not alter this position: essentially there will be no change to how it is visually experienced. The proposal will therefore sustain the significance and setting of the listed building and is therefore in full accordance with national guidance and the local development plan. Consequently it merits approval without delay.