

COCKPIT HOUSE
DESIGN, ACCESS AND HERITAGE STATEMENT
ISSUE 02
JANUARY 2023

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COCKPIT HOUSE: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

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SECTION 1.0

INTRODUCTION

1.1 AUTHORSHIP

This document has been prepared by Purcell, a firm of conservation architects and heritage consultants, specialising in the conservation of the historic environment. Specifically, it has been prepared by Mark Clifford (Bsc. (Hons), MA, IHBC), Senior Heritage Consultant, Purcell on behalf of Knowsley Council.

1.2 AIM OF THIS REPORT

This report has been prepared to comply with the tests and requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), specifically paragraphs 189 and 190, under which a description of the significance of a site, including any contribution made by its setting, must be provided to support any planning applications. There is a requirement for applicants to make an informed assessment of heritage significance as part of a staged approach to decision-making. As part of determination of applications for planning and listed building consent, local authorities must also identify and assess the effect on significance of any proposed changes.

The assessment follows the staged approach to decision-making set out within *Historic England Advice Note 12 - Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets* (2019):

- 01 Understand the form, materials and history of the affected heritage asset(s), and/or the nature and extent of archaeological deposits
- 02 Understand the significance of the asset(s)
- 03 Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance
- 04 Avoid, minimise and mitigate negative impact, in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF
- 05 Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance

SECTION 2.0

IDENTIFYING THE HERITAGE ASSETS

Cockpit House is Grade II listed (see Appendix A) and located in Prescot, Merseyside on the corner of Church Street and High Street. The building is immediately opposite the Grade II listed Masonic Hall and Grade II listed No.2 Derby Street both on High Street / Derby Street. Beyond the immediate setting there are several other designated and non-designated heritage assets, the most notable is the Grade I Listed St. Mary's Church just south of the site area. The site is near the centre of the Prescot Conservation Area in the southern part of Character Zone One.

LOCATION PLAN

- Site Boundary
- 01 Cockpit House (Grade II)
- 02 Masonic Hall (Grade II)
- 03 No.2 Derby Street (Grade II)
- 04 Number 11, including wall and gate piers (Grade II)
- 05 St. Mary's Church (Grade I)
- 06 2 Vicarage Place (Grade II)

This plan is not to scale



The site location and nearby designated assets.

IDENTIFYING THE HERITAGE ASSETS

2.1 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1.1 Prescot Conservation Area

The town sits on a south-facing hill overlooking two streams and is dominated by St Mary's Church, listed Grade I.

In the eastern half of the Conservation Area is the remains of the medieval street layout, as defined by Eccleston Street and High Street and the narrow alleyways which run between them. To the west, a broad swath of woodland forms the backdrop to the church, with a group of mainly listed Victorian and Georgian buildings close by. Derby Street, which leads out of this part of the town, contains further important 19th century buildings including a complex of listed buildings close to the junction with Knowsley Park Lane. Apart from two churches, and one purpose-built 19th century commercial office, most of the other listed buildings (of which there are 21) are either late 18th or early 19th century cottages or higher status town houses.

2.1.2 Cockpit House

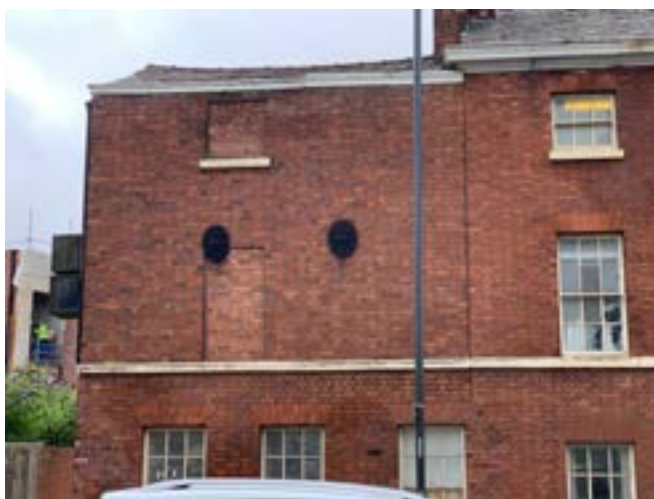
Cockpit House is roughly square in plan and is of three storeys with five bays to the main elevation with the central three projecting under a pediment. The materials are of red brick with stone dressings, a slate roof and a mixture of cast iron and plastic rainwater goods. There is a stone plinth visible along sections of the façade that falls below the pavement due to the changes in levels. The first floor has a plain stone string course painted white and a decorative cornice at the eaves. Windows have gauged-brick flat arches and vertical sliding sashes with 12-lights and six-lights to the top floor. Entrance has flat pilasters and pediment, with a six-panel door with a three-light square fan light above.

There is a separate block of the building along High Street of three bays of matching materials. This roof is slightly lower and has two windows on the upper floors, both of which have been infilled. Evidence of modern brickwork on the gable of the extension suggests the roof line has been heightened changing to a shallower pitch. Two large wall ties are visible on the first-floor level, one of which goes through the blocked window opening.

An extension along Church Street is of one storey at street level raising to one and half behind. Some windows are boarded but others are timber casements with six-lights of wired glazing. The roof is of Welsh slate with modern cappings. It was possibly a hipped roof and the lean-to behind was added or raised to create an unusual roof arrangement.

A second outbuilding is of 20th century red engineering brick with concrete cappings and a flat roof. There is a waist high boundary wall along the yard of red brick with stone pillars and modern gates. The interior was not inspected. Pointing throughout the site is cement.

IDENTIFYING THE HERITAGE ASSETS



SECTION 3.0

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

3.1 PRESCOT

Prescot is one of the oldest towns in Merseyside. It is believed that an early Christian church was established here in the 7th century, although documentary evidence for the settlement starts in the late 12th century. In medieval times, Prescot was a thriving market town and the ecclesiastical centre of a large parish covering much of southwest Lancashire. From the mid-1590s to 1609, Prescot was home to the Prescot Playhouse, a purpose-built Shakespearean theatre, probably located on Eccleston Street.

In the 18th and 19th century the area became renowned for the skill of its clock, watch and tool makers, a nationally important local industry. A few workshops associated with the industry still remain, although in the mid-19th century, they could be found throughout the town. Coal mining and pottery were also significant, the coal being dug from various sites in the immediate vicinity of the town. Pottery was made in Prescot from at least 1550 and at its height in the 1750s there were around five potteries working in the town. The kilns would have dominated the landscape and were centred around the Eccleston Street area.

The watch trade largely ended with the failure of the Lancashire Watch Company in 1910. In later years the British Insulated Callender's Cables (BICC) company was the primary industrial employer in the town. BICC ceased operations in Prescot in the early 1990s before the site was demolished and later cleared. The land remained desolate until the year 2000 when it was then regenerated into what is now known as Cables Retail Park.

The town retains a legacy of high-quality Georgian and Victorian buildings although slum clearance and road improvement schemes in the 1960s and 1970s resulted in the loss of a number of buildings, particularly around St Mary's Church, where the Georgian Town Hall was demolished.⁰¹



Eccleston Street, Prescot c. 1900

⁰¹ The Conservation Studio (2012) Prescot Town Centre Conservation Area: Character Appraisal.

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

3.2 COCKPIT HOUSE: MAP PROGRESSION

The earliest historic map for the site is Richard Edge's map of Prescott from 1743. This shows the street pattern well established with few gap sites by this point. The Cockpit House site is occupied by at least one building at this point. There are later maps from the early 19th century of the town not shown here as the buildings are not identified.

By the 1845-47 OS Map Cockpit House is clearly shown as a block, any outbuildings are difficult to establish due to the lack of detail of the survey. The OS Town Plan of 1852 clearly shows the extant building with either outbuildings / extensions or a small neighbouring plot to the south. By 1892 the building is shown in a similar planform but now identified as a bank. Continuing into the 20th century there appears little alteration to the planform of the site until 1938 where the neighbouring building has been demolished and the plot is left empty. By 1955 the building to the south is clearly shown as part of the property identified as number 34. By 1978 the OS map shows the outbuildings to have been extended incorporating the extant flat roof building.

The early 19th century maps show the outbuilding to the south sitting slightly forward of the main building rather than set back as it is now, suggesting the extant building is not original and probably dates from the early 20th century as the building line changes to the current arrangement by 1955.



Richard Edge map of Prescott from 1743

HISTORIC BACKGROUND



1845-47 OS Map



1852 OS Town Plan

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

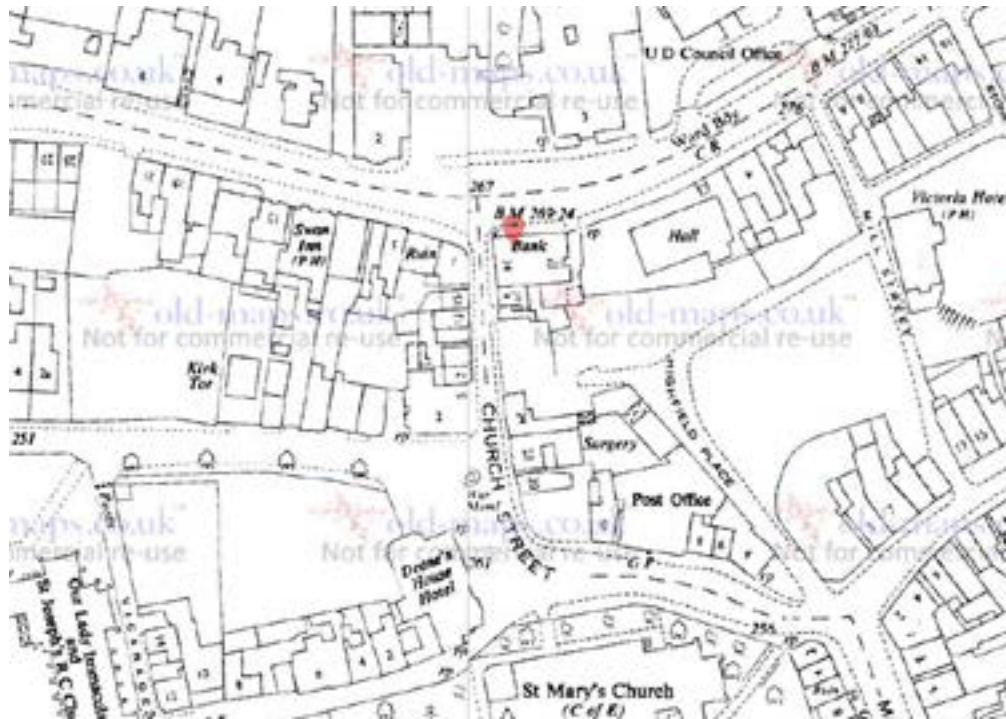


1892 OS Map



1938 OS Map

HISTORIC BACKGROUND



1955 OS Map



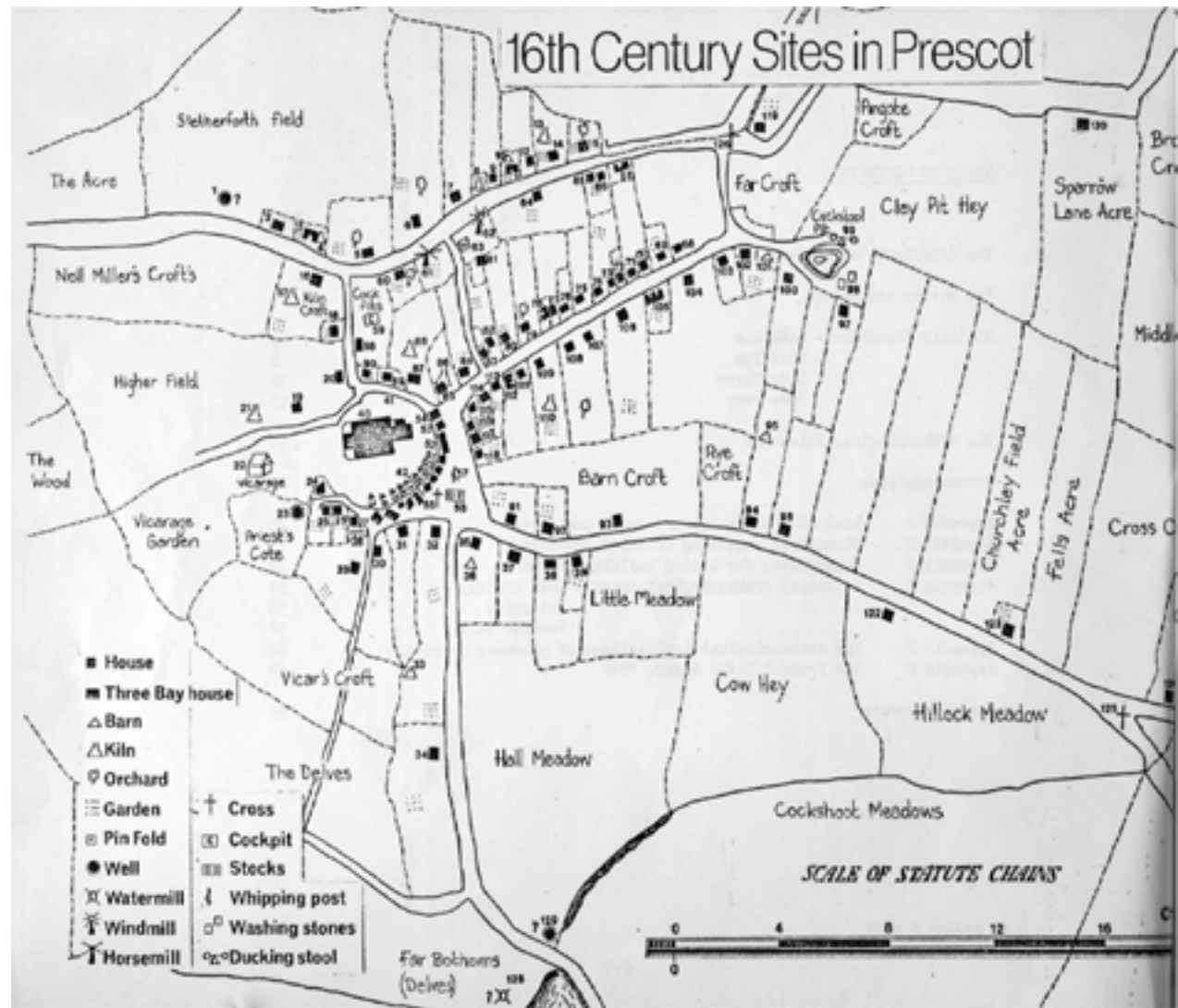
1978 OS Map

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

3.3 COCKPIT HOUSE

A desk-based archaeological assessment for the site By Dr. RA Philpot includes extensive research into the history of the site before the extant building was constructed and it is not replicated here in full.

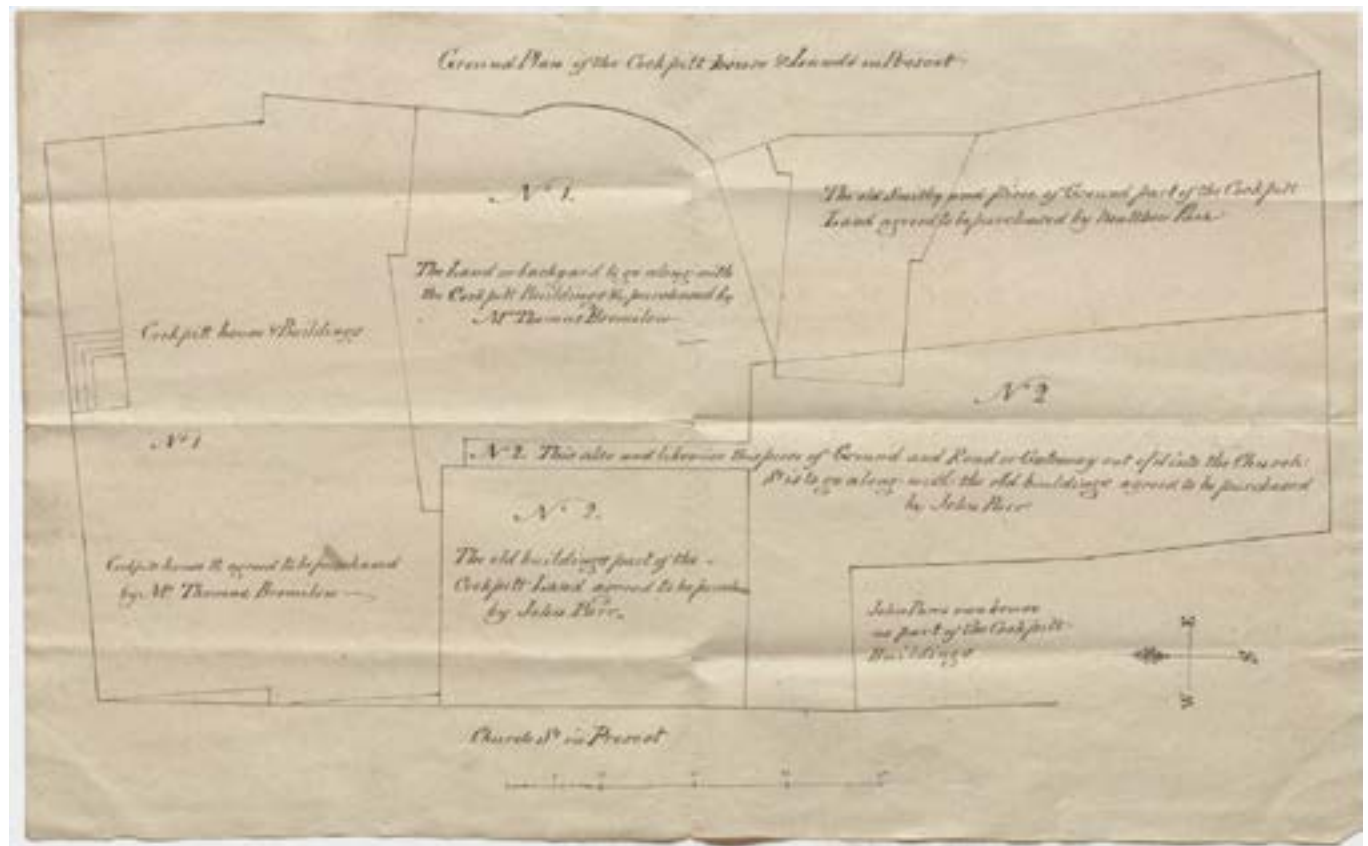
The map by F. A. Bailey (opposite) which reconstructs Prescott at the time of the 1592 survey shows Cockpit House which lies within one substantial plot, nos 58/59, which contains the cockpit to the rear. As reconstructed by F. A. Bailey, the plot occupied by Cockpit House measured about 50m north-south by 20m east-west, extending much of the way along Church Street. There is no direct information on the location of buildings as they existed in 1592 within this large plot of 1000m². It is known that there were earlier buildings on the site including a house and a cockpit.



The map by F. A. Bailey which reconstructs Prescott at 1592

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

A plan held in Lancashire Archives is entitled 'Ground Plan of the Cockpitt House & Lands in Prescott' believed to date from 1772 shows the configuration and ownership of the buildings on the corner plot. The old plot on which the original Cockpitt House stood was at that point divided into three separate units, and was in 1772 purchased by Matthew Parr, John Parr and Thomas Bromilow. The former owner was Thomas Hatton.



'Ground Plan of the Cockpitt House & Lands in Prescott' believed to date from 1772

HISTORIC BACKGROUND

The current building was recorded in the updated version of Pevsner's *The Buildings of England*,⁰² as follows:

'The Prescott Museum, is a conventionally handsome house of 1776. Five bays, the three middle breaking forward slightly under a pediment. Good brick. Pedimented doorcase. It contains a reconstructed watch-maker's workshop'.⁰³

The source for the date of 1776 is unclear although the polite, red brick façade is typical of the late 18th / early 19th century. The land was purchased by Thomas Bromilow in 1772⁰⁴ and it is likely the extant house was a building built as his home. The structure is large and impressive in comparison to contemporary buildings in Prescott suggesting the occupant was wealthy with at least local importance. The late 18th century is before accurate census records so identifying the occupants of Cockpit House is difficult. 'David Bromilow & Co.' was listed as owner of a local coal mine which would fit with the high status of the property and the family name that owned the plot in 1772.⁰⁵

The building was converted into a branch of Parr's Banking Co. in 1869. Parr's Bank gained important acquisitions of other banks in London and the Midlands before a further merger in the mid-20th century led to the formation of the modern-day National Westminster Bank. The NatWest bank moved to a purpose-building on Eccleston Street around 1980.

In 1982, the building was opened by Knowsley Borough Council as Prescott Museum. The museum remained there until it moved location into the Prescott Centre in 2012.

Photographs up to the 1970s show the front door stood in the corner, on the northern end of Church Street, rather than the central position it now occupies. The door appears to have had a stone surround supported on pilasters and Doric capitals with a Romanesque arch. This was possibly the original arrangement but may also have been changed when the building became a bank. Since the early 1900s photos show the High Street façade had two ground floor shop windows with stone surrounds installed replacing the earlier window openings. Moving the door to the centre of the building and reinstating the sash windows was likely an effort by the museum to create a more symmetrical and polite appearance in the 1980s.

By the early 1900s the High Street façade is shown to have all its visible windows bricked up. Whether these were always intended as blind openings or they were blocked later is not clear.

By the 1970s there were a variety of window styles with two light vertical sliding sashes on the ground floor and the first floor of the Church Street whereas the first floor on High Street has the extant 12-light vertical sliding sashes. The extant blocked windows on High Street had sash windows in 1970.

⁰² Pevsner N. and Pollard R., (2006) *Buildings of England: Lancashire: Liverpool and the South West*.

⁰³ Pollard and Pevsner 2006, 543

⁰⁴ Philpott, R.A. (2021) Desk-Based Archaeological Assessment of Cockpit House, No 34 Church Street, Prescott

⁰⁵ <https://www.nmrs.org.uk/mines-map/accidents-disasters/accidents-incidents-in-lancashire-colleries-royal-colleries/>

HISTORIC BACKGROUND



Cockpit House on the immediate left c. 1900



High Street with Cockpit House behind c.1900



Cockpit House in 1970



Cockpit House c.1982

SECTION 4.0

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Significance can be defined as the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. The understanding of the significance of a place is vital to inform sensitively managed change. In accordance with Historic England Advice Note 12 – Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets the following criteria are employed within this report to assess significance:

Archaeological Interest

There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

Architectural and Artistic Interest

These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skills, like sculpture.

Historic Interest

An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The levels of relative significance used to inform the assessment of significance in this heritage statement are as follows:

Very High Significance

Attributable to those themes, features, buildings or spaces which are the most valuable. These elements are considered to be essential to the understanding and appreciation of the place and are contributors to its overall character and setting, as well as its local, regional, national and international importance. Large scale alteration, removal or demolition should be strongly resisted.

High Significance

Attributable to a theme, feature, building or space which has a high cultural value and forms an essential part of understanding the historic value of the site, while greatly contributing towards its character and setting, as well as its local, regional and national importance. Large scale alteration, removal or demolition should be strongly resisted.

Medium Significance

Attributable to a theme, feature, building or space which has some cultural importance and helps define the character and appearance of the site. These features are generally of local or regional value. Efforts should be made to retain features of this level if possible, though a greater degree of flexibility in terms of alteration would be possible.

Low Significance

Attributable to themes, features, buildings or spaces which have minor cultural importance and which might contribute to the character or appearance of the site. These features are generally of local value. A greater degree of alteration or removal would be possible than for items of high or medium significance, though a low value does not necessarily mean a feature is expendable.

Neutral Significance

Themes, spaces, buildings or features which have little or no cultural value and neither contribute to nor detract from the character or appearance of the site. Considerable alteration or change is likely to be possible.

Intrusive Significance

Themes, features or spaces which actually detract from the values of the site and its character and appearance. Efforts should be made to remove these features. The significance plans provide a level of significance for both the physical fabric and the spatial characteristics of internal areas.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

4.2 COCKPIT HOUSE: STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Cockpit House was built in the late 18th / early 19th century, as a particularly large and grand example of a townhouse in what was one of the higher status areas of Prescott on the fringe of the medieval town. The building replaced an earlier house on the site. The name refers to there being a cockpit – a venue for cockfights and the associated gambling – on the site during the medieval and early modern periods. Cockpit House was converted from a house into a bank in 1869, as a branch of the Warrington based Parr's Banking Company adding to the historical interest. The building is of high aesthetic interest as an example of polite architecture with important group value in the setting of other designated assets. The site is of high archaeological interest as the area was a focus for known activity from the medieval period with at least one earlier building on site and the cockpit. It is not known if any of the earlier buildings were incorporated in the extant building and further archaeological recording may reveal further information. The historical interest of the building is limited as relatively little is known about its original occupants before it became a bank, however, the status of the building suggests they were a person of importance locally.

Cockpit House is of high significance.



SIGNIFICANCE PLAN

- Red High
- Yellow Medium
- Green Low
- Purple Intrusive

This plan is not to scale

SECTION 5.0

PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.1 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

The *National Planning Policy Framework* (2021) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied in 'the presumption in favour of sustainable development'. It outlines the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. The NPPF is a material consideration for local planning authorities in determining planning and LBC applications. It supersedes and vastly simplifies the policy that previously existed in the form of Planning Policy Statements.

5.1.1 CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Within NPPF Section 6, 'Conservation and enhancing the historic environment', are the government's policies for the protection of heritage. The policies advise a holistic approach to planning and development, where all significant elements which make up the historic environment are termed heritage assets. These consist of designated assets, such as listed buildings or conservation areas, non-designated assets, such as locally listed buildings, or those features which are of heritage value. The policies within the document emphasise the need for assessing the significance of heritage assets and their setting in order to fully understand the historic environment and inform suitable design proposals for change to significant buildings.

- Paragraph 199 of the NPPF requires that great weight should be given to an asset's conservation, irrespective of the potential level of harm to the asset's significance.
- Paragraph 200 of the NPPF states that any harm to, or loss of significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.
- Paragraph 202 states that where a development proposal would 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 securing its optimum viable use.
- Paragraph 207 states that loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 200 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 202, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

5.2 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

Knowsley's Local Plan (2016) sets out the local authority's objectives in relation to heritage. These are broadly summarised by policy CS20 -

Policy CS20

Managing the Borough's Historic Environment

1) Development proposals in Knowsley should preserve or enhance the borough's historic and architectural assets, including Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Historic Parks and Gardens and archaeological remains, together with other local areas, buildings and structures of historic importance.

The Council will:

- a) Require preservation of the local distinctiveness and character of historic assets through sensitive design of new development, including appropriate integration with their setting and immediate landscape;*
- b) Prevent demolition and/or development which would result in substantial harm or the loss of a designated historic asset or its setting, unless the proposal would result in substantial public benefits which clearly outweigh the harm or loss;*

PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

c) Where a development proposal will result in less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset or its setting, assess such harm against the benefits of the proposal;

d) Facilitate long term conservation and enhancement of local assets and areas of historic importance, including through the preparation of Conservation Area Management Plans.

2) The re-use of vacant and underused historic assets will be encouraged, with favourable consideration given, where appropriate, to proposals which will:

a) Enable a use for a purpose sympathetic to its conservation;

b) Retain or introduce public access; and

c) Enhance the importance of the asset for local tourism, leisure or the economy.

3) Development proposals on sites which include, or are considered to have the potential to include, heritage assets or comprising archaeological interest, should be accompanied by a heritage impact statement.

4) Locally important historic assets which are not subject to statutory designation will be identified in a local list and will be afforded consideration in the decision making process.

SECTION 6.0

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

The proposal seeks to carry out external repairs and alterations to Cockpit House, Prescott. Please refer to drawings for further information. Generally, the proposals include the following.

Stonework and Brickwork

External stonework and brickwork repairs with full repointing of the elevations in lime mortar along with the removal of redundant or inappropriate fixings. Modern inappropriate brickwork and decayed brickwork will be carefully replaced with bricks to match size, coursing, colour, and texture of the original brickwork. Similarly, the stonework will be matched accordingly to the historic stone.

Cleaning of Stonework and Brickwork

Cleaning of decorated stonework to allow for inspection of stonework. Sills, string courses and cornices will remain un-decorated.

Roofworks and Rainwater Goods

Repairs to the chimney stacks and addition of appropriate chimney pots for the age of the building.

Provision of new cast iron rainwater pipes, and new connection to existing drainage as the existing gutter details are insufficient to deal with capacities. The current lead parapet gutters do not conform to modern standards. It is

proposed that these details are adjusted, with the addition of a new upstand to form a suitably deep gutter to cope with the capacities required. To avoid the need for drip, and increased height of the gutter, it is proposed that this is lined with a modern material. From ground level, this should be barely visible and any section visible will be clad in lead.

Addition of loose laid insulation within the loft space to meet required building regulations requirements.

We are allowing to re-roof the structure with new matching slates, however if existing slates are in a suitable condition a reclaimed top-up of welsh slate will be utilised. Like for like replacement of internal structural timbers is proposed, however early inspections of the roof structure have indicated this is in a reasonable condition.

The rear roof appears to have been adjusted to incorporate the external stairs and is currently covered in bitumen felt. It is proposed that this section is re-roofed in terne coated stainless to provide a long-term durable solution for the roof that is vandal resistant.

It is proposed that the modern metal profiled sheeting above the basement staircase will be replaced with a new structure, and slate roof to match the adjacent roofs of Cockpit House.

Windows

Several historic Georgian sash windows remain within the property on the Third Floor. It is proposed that various windows throughout the property are re-instated with accurate historic detailing to the timber stiles, rails, glazing bars and sash box. Ground floor windows will be re-instated with laminated glass for security measures which will provide the opportunity to remove the security grilles internally. Internal works to the windows will involve repair/ replacement; architraves, window surrounds and shutters, together with cills.

External Door

The main existing door is currently metal. It is proposed that the door is replaced with a suitable timber door, with a design appropriate for the age of the building. The proposed 'Georgian' design proposes to replace both the existing door and surround.

Investigation Works

It is proposed that further investigations work will be carried out the structure during the external repair phase to understand any restrictions / opportunities available for the next phase of works which will require internal refurbishment of Cockpit House.

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Boundary Wall

The existing boundary wall is to be partially rebuilt, with the top courses taken down and rebuilt to the existing height. All vegetation is to be removed with the existing wall raked out and repointed as necessary. Replacement brick will be required to match the existing with a sample required to be approved as a condition.

Access

The current proposals do not affect access or seek to improve access to the property as there relate to external repairs. Proposed maintenance access It is not possible to form maintenance access for the roof, and it is therefore proposed that maintenance of the gutters is undertaken via specialist cherry picker. Any roof repairs required will be required to be completed from a scaffold or cherry picker accordingly.

LIST OF SOURCES

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<https://www.nmrs.org.uk/mines-map/accidents-disasters/accidents-incidents-in-lancashire-collieries/royal-collieries/>

APPENDIX A

LIST DESCRIPTION

FORMER TOWN HOUSE AND PARR'S BANK

Overview

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1075500

Date first listed: 19-Mar-1987

Date of most recent amendment: 17-Jan-2022

Statutory Address: 34 CHURCH STREET, PRESCOT, L34 3LA

District: Knowsley (Metropolitan Authority)

Parish: Prescott

National Grid Reference: SJ 46514 92797

Details

PRESCOT CHURCH STREET SJ 49 SE (north side) 6/27 No.

34 - (Prescot Museum)

G.V. II

Summary

Former town house, subsequently a bank, built between 1774 and 1776, with C19 and C20 alterations.

Reasons for Designation

34 Church Street, a former town house, subsequently a bank, built between 1774 and 1776, with C19 and C20 alterations, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons: Architectural interest:

* as a type of C18 brick-built townhouse which is characteristic of later-C18 and early-C19 domestic architecture in this area; * as a high-quality town house, adapted to late-C19 bank premises, with an impressive but restrained outward appearance symbolising reliability and security; * for the retention of decorative fixtures and fittings which show its former phases of spatial configuration, including the decorated late-C19 banking ceilings, substantial strong rooms, late-C18 moulded door architraves and panelled doors and window panelling with internal hinged window shutters.

Historic interest:

* for its former association with Parr's Banking Company after its conversion to a joint stock bank, the emerging dominant banking system in the C19.

Group value:

* the building benefits from a spatial group value with the listed Church of St Mary and 9 Market Place.

History

Thirty-four Church Street or Cockpit House, built between 1774 and 1776, is prominently located at the corner of Derby Street and Church Street and positioned close to Prescott Parish Church and the Market Place. A survey of 1592 suggests that a cockpit has existed on this site from the C16, one of five within Lancashire, and remained in use until the mid- to late-C18. A house named Cockpitt House (with adjacent buildings and the cock pit) appears in a 1668 inventory and by a 1721 survey a new building, 'New House', was built alongside it. Both buildings were included in a 1771 plan relating to the transfer of buildings and land between Henry Hatton, Thomas Bromilow and John Parr and were subsequently demolished. Yet their foundations are partially retained in this late-C18 building, built between 1774 and 1776, which took on the local name of Cockpit House. The building first appears on the 1:500 1848 OS town plan, comprising a main building on the corner of two streets with a central entrance marked on the west elevation, an adjacent east extension and a rear yard. Attached to the south elevation was terraced housing, and two of these were included in the copyhold for Cockpit House. An 1825 plan indicates the terrace house attached directly south was occupied by Anthony Tyrer Ducker, a stationer and printer,

APPENDIX A

LIST DESCRIPTION

but it later became part of the main house in the late-C19 before its near complete demolition in the early-C20.

In July 1875 Parr's Banking Company relocated their Prescott premises to 34 Church Street. Parr and Company (also known as Warrington Bank) was a private bank established in 1788 by Joseph Parr, Thomas Lyon and Walter Kerfoot. Parr and Lyon derived profits from sugar refinery and were therefore part of a well-established network that depended upon and sustained transatlantic slavery in the West Indies. Between 1825 to 1865 the bank had various names, formerly Parr, Lyon and Greenall and latterly Parr, Lyon and Company. In 1865 the bank was reconstructed as a joint stock bank with limited liability and the Prescott branch was opened in 1869 as a sub-branch to the St Helens branch (1839) before moving to Church Street. The purchase of the fine former town house led to substantial late-C19 alterations. Photographs show the main bank entrance was re-positioned in the northernmost bay of the front (west) elevation and the majority of the north elevation windows were bricked in. The three-bay east extension was amalgamated in use but retained a separate pedimented doorway, with a staircase behind, and its upper windows were blocked. The terrace house to the south was also brought into the bank's use and provided separate access to the bank's ground-floor and first-floor. Internally the ground-floor was re-organised as a main banking room with upper floors divided between accommodation for the manager and other tenants (accessed from the adjoining terrace to the south). Alterations included inserting a basement strong room, re-laying the ground-floor with supporting brick

basement buttresses, inserting a new central staircase along with new door architraves and deep moulded skirting and adding decorated plaster beam banking ceilings in the main ground-floor room and east extension. Further alterations are suggested in the 1:500 1892 OS town plan which shows a glass-roofed extension to the rear.

In 1896 the company's name was shortened to Parr's Bank Limited and in 1918 the bank amalgamated with London County and Westminster Bank of London, to form London County Westminster and Parr's Bank; the name was shortened to Westminster Bank in 1923 and to the National Westminster Bank (NatWest) by 1970. Further alterations took place around or shortly after 1922 when the main building and eastern extension were connected through a major renovation, which extended the main ground-floor banking room across the former east extension's staircase, turned the High Street porched doorway into a window and punctured internal doorways through to all the east extension's floors. Shop frontages were inserted through the main north elevation, with the majority of the bricked in upper windows restored with sashes. The terrace house attached to the south elevation, which had provided separate stair access to the first-floor, was demolished, and part of the staircase and internal door surrounds were retained within an early-C20 pitched and catslide roof south extension. Between the 1:2500 1927 (revised 1925) and 1939 (revised 1937) OS maps the Hobbs, Hart and Co strong rooms was built into the south-east corner of the building extending out into another east extension. In the mid-C20 the fire-escape platform and stairs was installed

and between 1955 and 1963 further flat-roof extensions were built attached to the earlier south extension. The bank relocated to purpose built premises on Eccleston Street in 1980 and the building became the Prescott Clock and Watchmaking Museum between 1981 and 2012. As part of a program of works Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council adapted the building, which included removing the former north entrance and re-inserting a central pedimented east entrance with the symmetrical arrangement of C18-style gauged brick flat-arched and sashed windows across the ground-floor. A new entrance porch and metal door were inserted around 1996.

Details

Former town house, later a bank, built between 1774 and 1776, with C19 and C20 alterations. Late Georgian style.

MATERIALS: brick with stone dressings and a slate roof, and wooden sash windows.

PLAN: a three-storey main-block on the corner of High Street and Church Street, with a late-C18 and a C20 extension attached to the east. Attached to the south elevation is an early-C20 hipped and catslide extension with a series of flat-roof mid-C20 extensions.

EXTERIOR: the three-storey main-block and the three-storey east extension form the original late-C18 townhouse. The main block has a five-bay main (west) elevation, with a stone plinth and three central bays breaking forward under

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a heavily moulded pediment, with a cornice and blocking course to the bays either side. It conceals a hipped and gabled slate roof with three off-set and truncated chimney stacks (two joined as east end stacks). There is a late-C20 central entrance door with flat panelled pilasters supporting an entablature and pediment, and a metal six-panelled replica C18 bank door (inserted 1996) with a late-C20 three paned over-light. Flanking, and above, the central entrance is a symmetrical arrangement of windows. The window surrounds have gauged-brick flat arches, those to the ground-floor are a mix of original and re-inserted late-C20 surrounds, and a continuous string band forms the projecting sill to all first-floor windows. The windows have double-hung sashes, the majority of which are C20 replacements, but some late-C18 upper and lower sashes remain (on the first and second-floor of both the west and north elevation). The left (north) return, facing High Street, is of four bays, with matching fenestration to the front elevation, whilst the right (south) return is blind, with extensions attached at ground and first-floor level. The rear (east) elevation has two centrally aligned mid-floor arched stairwell sash windows, the lower blocked and the upper with late-C19 sash glazing. Directly south is a first-floor and second-floor brick bond segmental arched window, the lower blocked and the upper with a square late-C20 window.

Attached to the east elevation of the late-C18 main block is the late-C18 three-storey pitched roof extension. It has a three-bay north elevation of three ground-floor windows

which match the main block, the western window is inserted into a former doorway. The floors above have an off-set window (now - 2021 - blocked). The side (east) and rear (south) elevations are substantially altered. The east elevation has a wide C20 flat lintel two-leaf entrance door and a late-C19 window (with one-over-one sash) on each floor above. The south elevation has been partially re-built in the early-C20 and the fenestrative arrangement adapted, with first and second-floor doors, to provide access to a mid-C20 metal framed fire-escape with platforms and staircases. The fire-escape extends across to an early-C20 single-storey flat-roof brick built east extension (which forms one room of the early-C20 ground-floor banking strong room), which has white ceramic tiles to the north elevation.

Attached to the south elevation of the late-C18 main block is a brick built early-C20 extension, rising from a brick plinth. The single-bay west elevation has one ground-floor top casement wooden paned window. Above is a half-hipped roof which terminates at a set-back two-storey catslide roof containing a single C20 four-pane wooden window. The south elevation is of four bays, with three top casement wooden paned windows to the west and a brick built projecting porch which contains a late-C19 panelled two-leaf side-door. Two mid-C20 single-storey brick built, and flat-roof, extensions are attached to the east side of the early-C20 extension, with doors into the rear yard.

INTERIOR: the original internal arrangement of townhouse rooms has been altered to form a strengthened floor-plan for a late-C19 bank, with strong rooms on the ground-floor and basement. The main open-plan ground-floor room, accessed directly from the central door, has four window surrounds to the west and five C20 windows to the north, all of which retain re-set late-C19 window surrounds with panelling and internal hinged window shutters. Flanking either side of the central door is a floor to ceiling moulded window architrave, with rectangular stops. The room retains deep C19 skirting with two different moulding profiles and a late-C19 plastered banking ceiling, ornamented with dentillated and egg-and-dart corning along the beams, and a simpler moulded cornice elsewhere. A stepped early-C20 two-leaf door gives access into the east extension's ground-floor, which has matching C19 window surrounds and shutters. Within the main room a late-C19 staircase rises up through the floors, which is ornamented with square chamfered and finialled newel posts and decorative scroll brackets to the open-string stair. To the rear (east) of the staircase there is a short passage with an external east door leading into the rear yard and a below stairs cupboard (formerly giving access to the basement). South of the staircase an early-C20 concrete-built strong room, three-rooms deep, has been built into the room's south-east corner. It has an iron two-leaf mesh door set behind a substantial Hobbs, Hart and Co Progress D security door. The south wall has a chimney breast and to the east a heavily moulded and wide late-C19 door architrave (and early-C20 metal door) which accesses the early-C20 south

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extension. The extension comprises an L-shaped corridor with a west and south room (the latter now a kitchen). The south end of the corridor terminates with a re-set late-C19 door architrave and a substantial late-C19 panelled mock two-leaf bank door. To the right is an internal access door to a subsidiary and heavily altered brick-built basement which formed part of a pre-existing terrace building to the south. It has early-C20 concrete steps, with a corrugated roof, leading down to a C18 brick-built basement with C19 and C20 alterations. The east elevation of the early-C20 extension gives access to two single-storey flat-roof 1950s extensions; which contain two ground-floor rooms to the east and to the south a short north-south aligned corridor leading to a WC block.

The first-floor is accessed from the main staircase, which has a dogleg-with-half-landing and a blind arched window. The landing provides access north and south to a series of inter-connected rooms, comprising four rooms to the main block and a single room to the late-C18 east extension. Late-C18 square stopped window surrounds, with panelling and shutters, remain in situ across the north and west elevation and sections of C19 cornicing and remnants of historic wallpaper are in situ (now concealed beneath suspended ceilings). A late-C19 door surround leads to the south-west room, with a matching late-C19 surround in the south-east room which provides access to a cupboard. The cupboard extends into the upper floor of the early-C20 south extension and partially retains a late-C19 staircase (which provided access between the upper floors and

former south terrace house). The north-east room (now subdivided) is accessed through a late-C18 shouldered and bolection moulded door architrave, with a C20 metal door. Two east C20 doorways give access to the extension's first-floor, which retains a late-C19 cross-beam plaster ceiling. The first to second-floor staircase has a dogleg-with-quarter winder stair, with an arched staircase window which retains a moulded architrave supported on brackets. The second-floor has a similar arrangement of rooms, and retains late-C18 door surrounds and panelled doors to the north-west and north-east rooms, with late-C18 square stopped and simply moulded window surrounds to the north and west elevation. C20 doorways have been punctured between rooms on both floors.

The basement is now accessed through a ground-floor trap-door and it contains four rooms, all with late-C19 brick buttresses abutting pre-existing walls to support a late-C19 concrete plank, metal frame and iron girder banking floor. The rooms are formed from sandstone wall footings of earlier buildings, most likely those of the former Cockpitt House and New House, with sandstone quoins marking former external walls and openings. Inverted and infilled late-C18 brick arches cut through the earlier stone masonry to support and strengthen the late-C18 elevations above. The north-west room has a stone-flagged floor, whilst the south-west room has an irregular arrangement of red brick flooring with a C18 brick chimney breast against the south wall (infilled with late-C19 brickwork and a cast-iron clean-out door). An east doorway in the south-west room gives

access to a now blocked late-C18 stone basement staircase (with a C19 wooden stair-frame set over it). Directly south of the stair is a late-C19 brick built south-east strong room, accessed by a substantial raised and fielded metal safe door. The north-east room has an C20 access shute in the north wall (concealed externally).

Legacy

Legacy System number: 215285

Legacy System: LBS

Legal

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

