



Thingwall Hall
Thingwall Lane, Roby
Knowsley
L14 7NZ

Site Reference: LPL541

Heritage Statement

September 2026

Heritage appraisal and heritage impact assessment for proposed telecommunications mast.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report has been prepared to determine the potential for harm to heritage interest derived from proposals to erect a telecommunications mast within the grounds of Thingwall Hall which is a grade II listed building. The potential for harm relates to the impact the proposed mast may have upon the setting of the listed building via intrusion to views and thus the appreciation of heritage significance.

1.2 Inspections were undertaken in September 2026 to gain an understanding of the likely impacts of the proposals upon the building and the surrounding area. In accordance with the NPPF, this document and the research that informs it is proportionate to the asset's importance.

1.3 This report also responds to comments made within a consultation response from Growth Lancashire regarding heritage matters for a prior approval determination submitted to the LPA, Ref: 26/00282/TEL. This report aims to satisfy these concerns and matters raised.

1.4 **About the Author:** I am a chartered surveyor and a professional member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, qualifying by the specialist route with a key emphasis on historic building conservation. I hold two RICS and IHBC accredited degrees in related fields, including an undergraduate degree in building surveying and a master's degree in historic building conservation and adaptation. I work exclusively in the historic environment, specialising in advising on the condition and alteration of heritage assets across the UK.

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2.0 GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The building is designated at GVII and is described by Historic England as follows: *House, now residential school. c.1840, 1st 2 bays probably later. By H.L. Elmes. Stucco with slate roof. 2 storeys, 8 bays, 1st, 2nd, 5th, 6th and 7th bays project. 1st floor sill band and top cornice and blocking course, ground floor entablature to all but 1st 2 bays. Windows have architraves, except for 1st 2 bays, those to ground floor with sashes with single glazing bars, the 4th and 5th bays have later canted bay window. Casements to 1st floor windows. Round-headed entrance has complete fanlight and paired half-glazed doors; Doric porch has Ionic entablature and paired fluted columns. 4 stacks. Right return of 3 bays, central bay breaks forward with 2-storey canted bay windows. Ground floor has windows with flat pilasters; central bay window has attached Doric columns. 1st floor to bay window has consoled sills and apron panels to windows. Extensions to rear of 1901 of no special interest. Interior has stair with square balusters and decorative work between².*

2.3 The building first appears on OS mapping on the six inch to-a-mile OS map surveyed in 1845-47, with the facing south and an eastern wing projecting north, the northern half of this wing is no longer extant. Further north are a number of detached buildings which form a small courtyard, with other smaller buildings further south, located east off the northern elevation of the eastern wing, likely once a farm. Aside from the western most building, these buildings are no longer extant. By 1891 regressive mapping shows that the eastern wing of the hall had been altered with numerous small additions to its northern elevation, as well as to its western, courtyard side. By 1925, the western wing of the hall had been demolished and replaced with the brick-built chapel structure that exists currently. The wider site had also undergone extensive development with numerous buildings shown to the north west, assumedly housing, which are no longer extant. Present day aerial imagery shows that around 50% of the eastern wing has been demolished and the wider site extensively redeveloped with the addition of houses and other residential buildings constructed across the site in the mid-late C20th.

2.4 Historically, the hall was known as Summerhill in 1824, when it was occupied by Liverpool merchant Thomas Crowther. It was later owned by the Thompson family, including Samuel Henry Thompson and his grandson, the historian Henry Yates Thompson, before being sold in 1899. The house and approximately 10 acres of land were subsequently acquired by the Belgian Brothers of Charity. It became St Edward's Home, initially a Poor Law school and later a residential care home and sheltered accommodation for vulnerable adults³.

² LEN: 1075498. Historic England, see here: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1075498?section=official-list-entry>

³ Harding, Stephen (2002). The Things of Wirral and West Lancashire.



Figure 1: Lancashire sheet 107. Surveyed 1845-47.

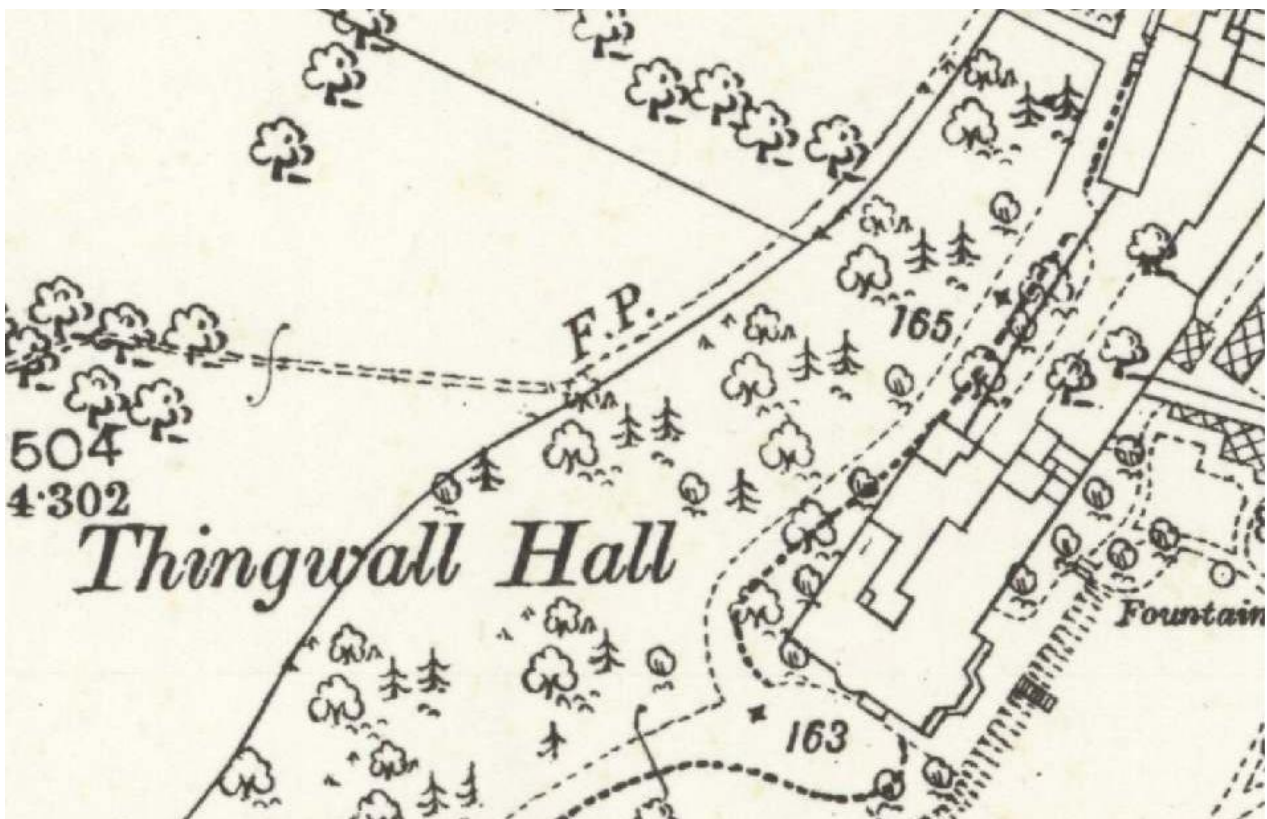


Figure 2: Lancashire sheet CVII.9. Surveyed 1891.

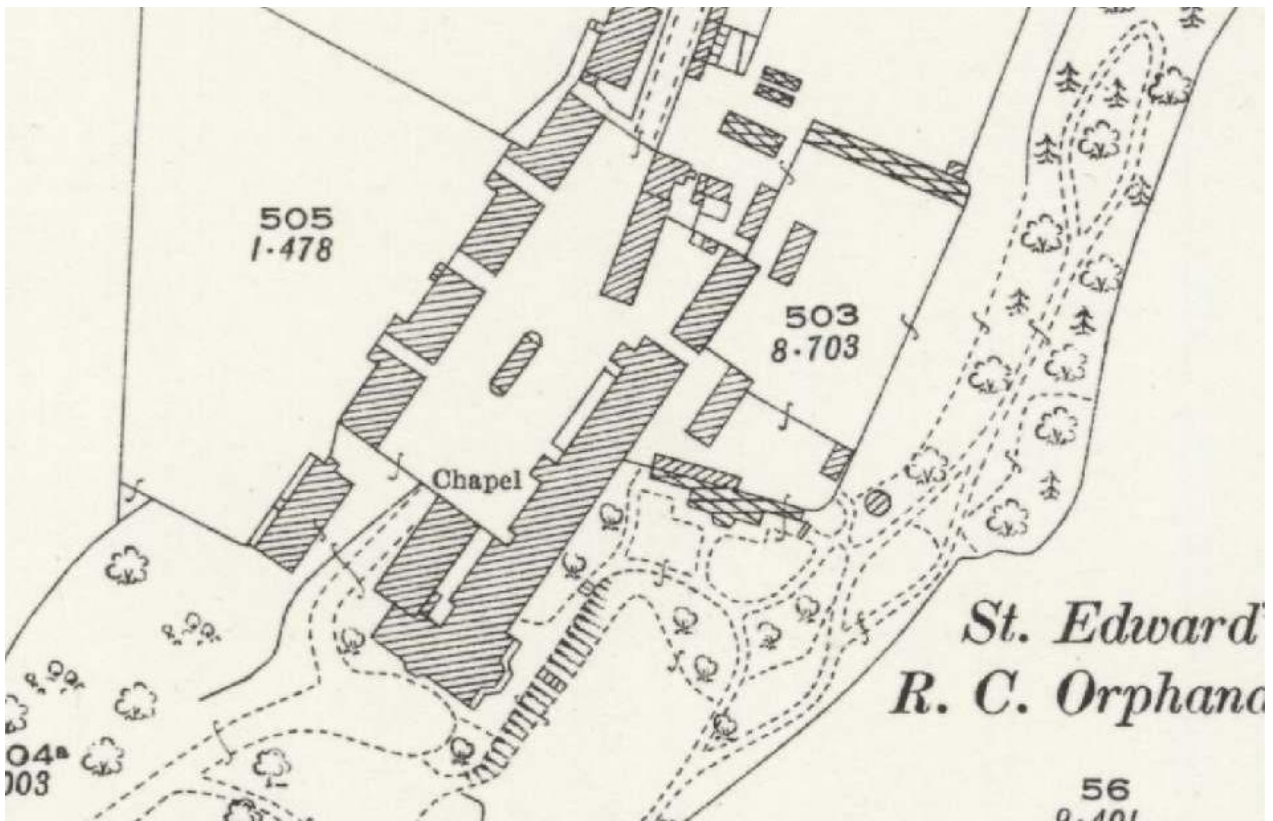


Figure 3: Lancashire sheet CVII.9. Surveyed 1925.

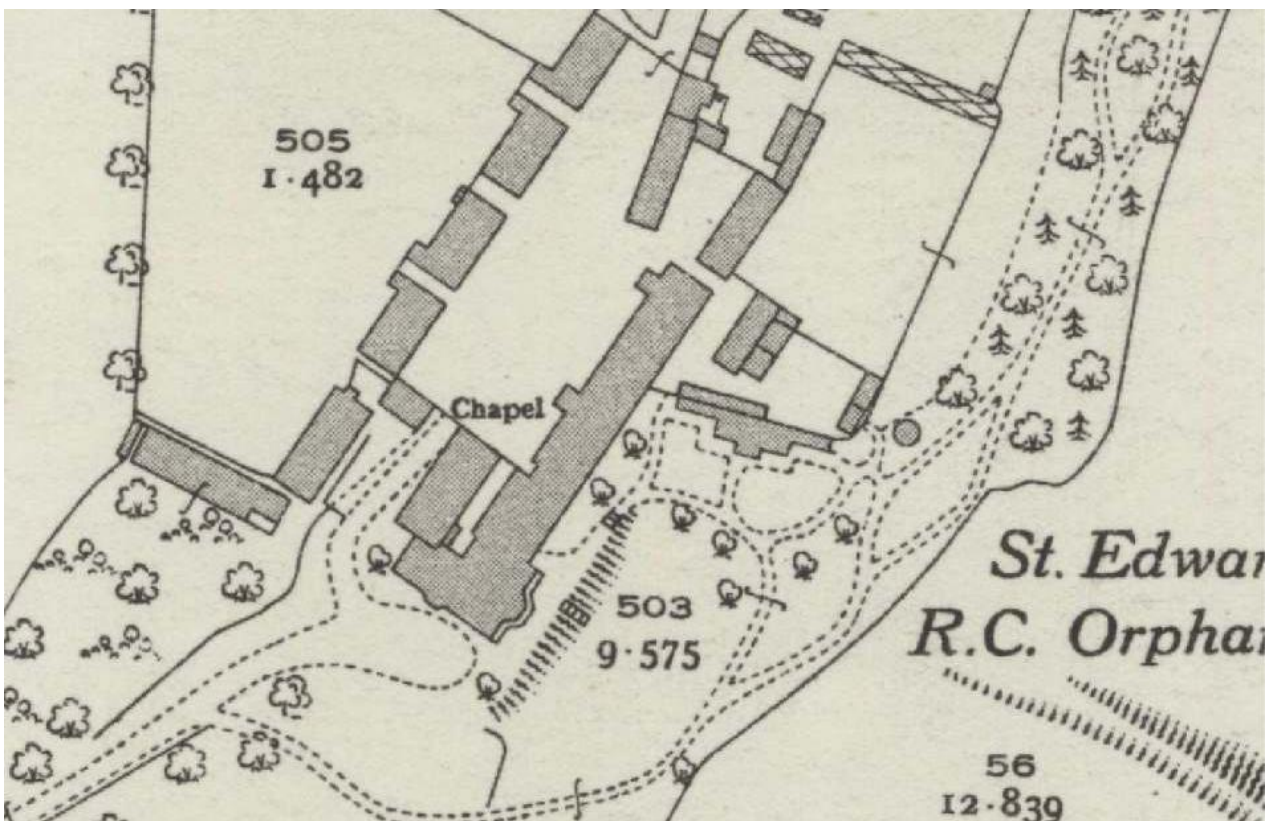


Figure 4: Lancashire sheet CVII.9. Surveyed 1937.

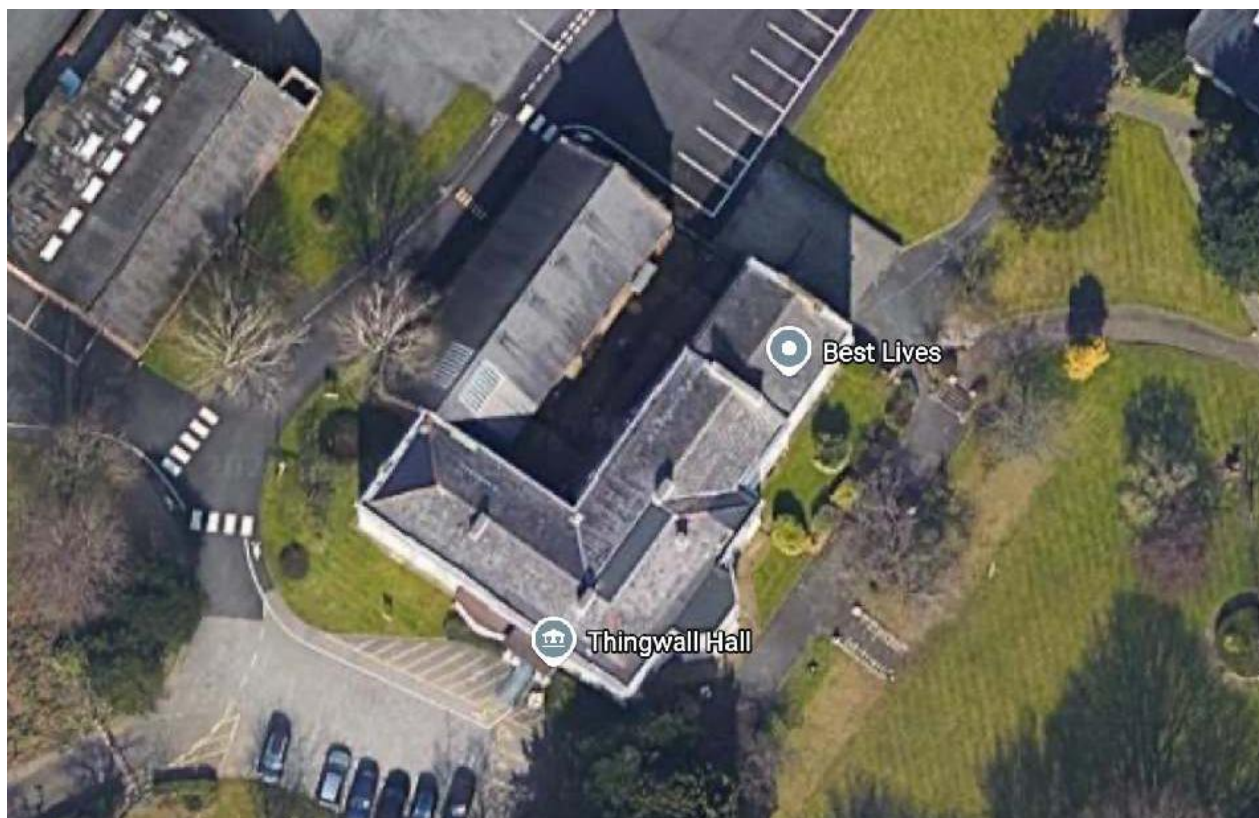


Figure 5: Present day.

3.0 HERITAGE APPRAISAL

3.1 This section of the report responds to the requirements as set out in paragraph HE5(1) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Under the heading “Assessing Effects Heritage Assets” is stated the following:

3.2 *“Development proposals affecting heritage assets should be accompanied by an assessment of the significance of the assets affected (including any contribution made by their setting) and of the potential effect of the proposal on their significance. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is necessary to understand the potential effect of the proposal on their significance. The relevant historic environment record should be referred to in making this assessment, and appropriate expertise employed where necessary”.*

3.3 Annexe 2: Glossary of the NPPF, defines significance as follows; *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.*

3.4 Annexe 2: Glossary of the NPPF defines setting as follows; *The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral. In addition, aside from the NPPF definition of setting, Conservation Principles, Policy and Guidance further define setting as: “Definition of the setting of a significant place will normally be guided by the extent to which material change within it could affect (enhance or diminish) the place’s significance⁴”.*

3.5 Thingwall Hall is a Grade II listed building, dating from the early to mid-19th century and attributed by Historic England to H. L. Elmes. It is a substantial two-storey stuccoed former house of formal classical character, retaining a number of architectural features of note, including its projecting bays, cornice and blocking course, architraved windows, round-headed entrance, Doric porch with fluted columns and Ionic entablature, and canted bay windows. The building also retains historic internal fabric, including its staircase with square balusters and decorative detailing.

3.6 Evidential value derives primarily from the survival of the historic building fabric and its ability to provide evidence of its original construction and subsequent adaptation. The survival of the principal elevations, plan form and architectural detailing allows the development and changing use of the building to be understood. The later alterations, including the canted bay windows and rear extensions, also provide evidence of the

⁴ English Heritage [2008] Conservation Principles Policy and Guidance.

building's continued adaptation, although Historic England considers the 1901 rear chapel addition to be of no special interest.

3.7 Illustrative historical value arises from the building's ability to illustrate the development of substantial high-status houses associated with Liverpool's prosperous merchant class during the 19th century. Its formal classical architecture and prominent position are characteristic of the period, when wealthy industrial and mercantile families established substantial residences on the fringes of the expanding urban area. Local historic-environment research identifies Thingwall Hall as an example of the high-status dwellings constructed in Knowsley during this period.

3.8 Associative historical value is modest. The building is attributed to H. L. Elmes, an architect of considerable importance in Liverpool, while its historical associations extend to the prominent local families and merchants connected with the property. The house was historically known as Summerhill and was occupied by Liverpool merchant Thomas Crowther before passing into the Thompson family. It was subsequently acquired by the Belgian Brothers of Charity and used as St Edward's Home, reflecting a significant change from private residence to institutional and charitable use.

3.9 Architectural and artistic interest is the primary component of the building's special interest. The formal composition and restrained classical detailing give the southern elevation of the building a strong architectural presence. The principal elevation remains clearly legible, if lacking symmetry somewhat, with the projecting bays, continuous cornices, pilasters, and distinctive columned entrance surviving as important elements of its architectural character.

3.10 As defined previously, setting is described as the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced, which in this case is limited to the area immediately surrounding the building, rather than the entirety of the grounds. This is most pronounced from the parking area in-front of the principle southern elevation and the eastern elevation when viewed from the eastern lawn, given the prominence of the building and architectural detailing apparent from these locations. Elsewhere to the north and west, the building is of lesser interest due to historic alterations. Interest is also significantly marred from the northern and western viewpoints given the extensive tarmac car parks and modern buildings present in these locations. Overall, the modern development of the wider historic grounds to the north and west has reduced the contribution to heritage significance significantly. As such, the setting of the building is limited to a radius around the building where the primary historic features are readily apparent.

4.0 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

4.1 For the purposes of this assessment, preservation is understood to mean an absence of harm to heritage significance. Harm is defined within Conservation Principles as change which erodes the significance of a heritage asset⁵. The assessment below considers whether the proposals would introduce change that would materially erode the significance of the listed building.

4.2 This assessment has been undertaken inline with "The Setting of Heritage Assets" GPA3, published by Historic England which advises a staged approach, as follows:

- Step 1: Requires the identification of the relevant heritage assets.
- Step 2: Establishes their significance.
- Step 3: Describes how the change within the setting of the assets might affect their significance.

4.3 It is proposed to install a telecommunications mast within the grounds of the building, to the northwest of the hall. The mast is to be located beyond a line of established trees which run approximately north to south and in close proximity to modern C20th development.

4.4 As discussed prior, the primary aspects of heritage significance which are appreciated from the grounds within close proximity to the building are the southern and eastern elevations. When viewing these elevations from the southern car park and the eastern lawn area, visibility of the proposed mast will be negligible/ non-existent as it will be obscured by the building itself and the detached building located nearby to the west, along with numerous mature trees. As such, there will be no significant adverse intrusion to these views and thus no harm will arise.

4.5 When viewed from the north, the northern and western elements of the building are apparent. These are of considerably lesser heritage interest than the principal southern and eastern elevations, owing to the presence of modern additions and alterations and lack of architectural detailing. In addition, the chapel building is expressly identified by Historic England as being of no special interest. Whilst glimpses of the very top of the proposed mast may be visible from northern vantage points, it will be largely screened by the established tree line and will be seen within an area characterised by established modern development, both within the grounds and beyond the site boundary. Intervisibility between the proposed mast and the listed building will be negligible and will not materially affect the ability to appreciate the building's heritage interest, notwithstanding that heritage interest experienced from the north is limited.

⁵ Conservation Principles, Policy and Guidance. English Heritage 2008. Para 84.

4.6 The National Planning Policy (August 2026) Paragraph HE4 (1)(b) states to: *Avoid (or if that is not possible, minimise) harm to the significance of heritage assets, and instead conserve this significance. In addition, Paragraph HE5 (2)(b) states: Assessments of the potential effects of development proposals on the significance of heritage assets (including through effects on their setting) should identify whether proposals would be likely to:...* b. *Have no effect on the significance of a heritage asset.*

4.7 As discussed above, the proposals align with these policies in that no harm will arise and the special interest for which the building was listed will be conserved, along with interest derived from appreciation of heritage significance from within the setting of the building,

4.8 Overall, the proposals will not erode significance as defined in paragraph 4.1 and no harm will arise as considered by section 20 of the NPPF. Accordingly, the proposals meet the statutory duty under Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to give special regard/ attention to the preservation of both the listed building and the conservation area and should be treated favourably.



Figure 6: Southern elevation.



Figure 7: Western elevation.



Figure 8: Northern elevations.



Figure 9: Location of the mast is to the right of the frame, the listed building is located to the left.