

Land at Wenny Road, Chatteris

Site History

Chatteris is a small town located approximately 10km south of March and 16km north west of Ely. Ireton's Way to the south of Chatteris was constructed by the Parliamentary General during the Civil War to transport troops from Chatteris to Ely.

Ireton's Way was a private road with toll gates. The Ordnance Survey map dating to 1803 shows one of these toll gates, known as 'Tucks Gate', to the south of the proposed site.

The 1803 map also shows that the site did not appear to form part of the domestic curtilage associated with the Manor House. As the Manor House dates to the late 18th century, this is likely to be the original arrangement.

By 1888, it appears that there were formal laid out lawns/gardens to the south of the Manor and barns, with the land to the east forming a parkland extension to this. This land appears to be separated from the more formal grounds by a trackway and possibly a wall. Tuck's Gate is still referenced on this map to the south of the site.

By the late 19th century, the separation between the land to the east and the gardens of the Manor House had been formalised by the 19th century wall seen today.

The arrangement of the land remains in a similar condition until the mid-20th century when 19 Wenny Road was constructed to the north west of the Manor House. By the 1980s, the Parkside housing development was constructed to the north of the Manor House (ref: F/1051/86/O), as was the Manor Gardens development to the south (ref: F/1032/86/O) within the former garden area to the south of the Manor. The development to the north, in Parkside, has effectively sub-divided the Manor House



Figure 1 Ordnance Survey 1803

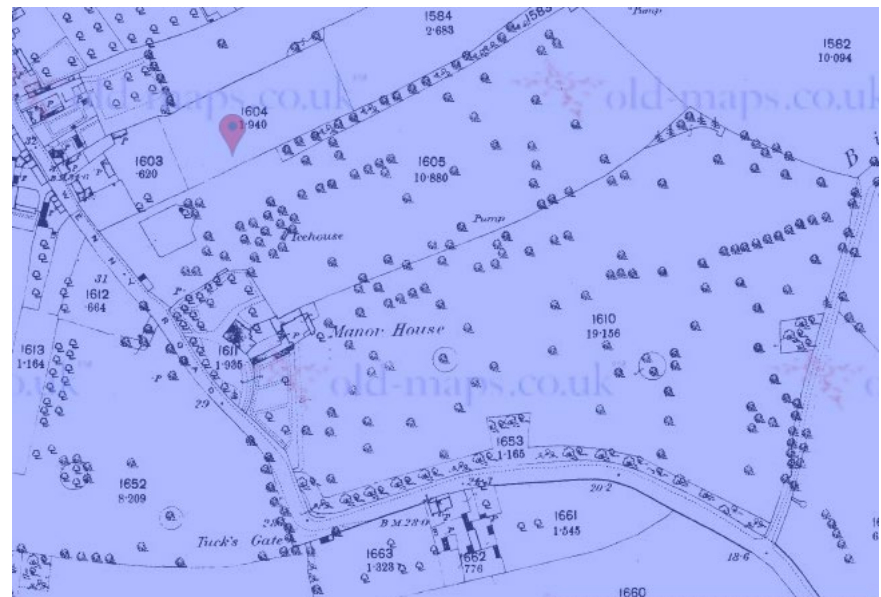


Figure 2 - Ordnance Survey 1888

experience of the surroundings, and also assists in defining those elements of setting which actively contribute to significance and those which contribute less or are neutral in effect.

The 'immediate' setting of the Manor House is considered to be formed by its direct association with Wenny Road, the domestic curtilage in which it sits and its integral relationship with its agricultural buildings, which are also statutorily listed Grade II.

The principal façade of the Manor House faces north west towards the Wenny Road, away from the proposed development site. The focus of the house is directed towards Wenny Road, although it is visually blocked from public views by a large, Grade II listed wall to the front of the property. There are, however, views of the property from the entrance gates.

The House sits within an open lawn area which is bounded by large mature trees. This open space allows a full appreciation of the building in its historic context and allows the architectural detail and design of the building to be appreciated. To the east of the house, facing the rear of building, are a range of agricultural outbuildings. These outbuildings have close visual and physical relationship with the Manor House and contribute to the understanding and significance of the building, strengthening its historic and agricultural context as a 'manor'.

The immediate land and agricultural buildings make a **good** contribution to the setting of the Manor House, with Wenny Road making a **medium** contribution.

The 'extended' setting of the Manor House comprises the housing developments to the north and south of the building, including 19 Wenny Road, the open parkland to the east and the wider context of Wenny Road including the Cromwell Community College.

Within this extended setting, it is relevant to note the variety of built form in terms of its design, quality and age. The majority of the properties are set back from Wenny Road and have limited visual connectivity with the site as a result of its enclosed nature and due to the existing boundary walls and mature vegetation.

The land to the east of the property provides a rural context for the Manor House. This land was not part of the original curtilage of the Manor House and was utilised as extended parkland over time. This connection has been eroded as a result of the construction of a 19th century boundary wall around the formal lands of the Manor House and the piecemeal development of the land to the north and south.

The agricultural barns to the rear of the Manor House retain a connection with the open land to the east due to their location adjacent. Although a key element of their significance is the relationship with the Manor House, the connection with the land to the east also contributes to their setting as helping to explain the context, use and historic association of these buildings. As the agricultural buildings form an important part of the immediate setting of the Manor House, this contribution to their significance also contributes to the understanding and context of the Manor House itself.

The extended setting therefore makes a **medium** contribution to the significance of the Manor House.

Boundary Wall to Manor House and 19 Wenny Road – Grade II

The wall is considered to have a setting which is restricted to its immediate context and its relationship to the Manor House. The wall to the west of the Manor House has a relationship with Wenny Road and the grounds within the site, whilst the wall to the east of the Manor House has a relationship with

the open land. This relationship is appreciated in short range views and as a result, the setting of the wall is considered to make only a **moderate** contribution to its significance.

Barn, Stables and Cowhouse to Manor House – Grade II

As previously discussed, the setting of the agricultural buildings relates closely to its connection with the Manor House. This connection is an integral part of the functionality of these buildings and therefore makes a **good** contribution to its significance.

The adjacent open land also contributes to the understanding of their use and historic context. This has been compromised to a degree by the Parkside development to the north which was constructed in the 1980s, eroding the open space which used to adjoin.

The 19th century wall which was constructed around the Manor House grounds, incorporating the agricultural buildings, coupled with the general orientation of the buildings, restricts a clear visual relationship with the land to the east and as such the wider landscape makes a **medium** contribution to the significance of these buildings.

Icehouse, 100 yards east of No 19 Wenny Road – Grade II

As with the boundary wall, the setting of the icehouse is restricted to its immediate context and its relationship with the Manor House. The connection with the Manor House has been compromised as a result of the Parkside development in the 1980s. As such the contribution of the setting of the icehouse makes to its overall significance is **medium/low**.

Church of St Peter and St Paul – Grade I listed

The 'immediate' setting of the Church is considered to be formed by its immediate context and its relationship with Market Hill, Church Lane and surrounding buildings. This setting forms an integral part of the Church's importance as a local landmark building and makes a **good** contribution to its significance. This immediate setting will not be affected as a result of development within the proposed site.

As a result of the Church's design, location and height, its setting is considered to extend over a considerable distance. In terms of the proposed development site, long range views of the Church can be gained from a small area to the north-eastern edge. The relationship of this land and the Church from this location is, however, compromised by the intervening settlement and landform, and the church tower and spire are largely screened or lost in views. We are of the opinion that this part of the site does not contribute to its extended setting.

The settings of the Manor House heritage assets have been colour coded below to show their relative value. **Red – Good, Orange – Medium, Yellow – Medium/Low**

Figure 4- Illustrative map of settings and views



Key Views

There are a number of short range views of the Manor House heritage assets from within the proposed site. These views are from east to west and focus on the rear of the Manor House, agricultural buildings and listed wall.

Although these views are short range, they allow for an understanding of the context and setting of the highlighted heritage assets.

To the east of the site, from public footpath locations alongside the A142, is a long distance view towards the Church tower. Although the spire can only be partially viewed from this location amongst a tree group, the distance, intervening landform and built form reduce the contribution this view makes to the overall significance of the building. As such, although the site's relationship with the Church should be considered, it is unlikely that development on the site would have a harmful impact on the significance or appreciation of the Church or its wider setting.

Glimpsed views westwards into the open land from the public footpath along its east side have also been highlighted. These views currently help to express the character of the land on the edge of the settlement. Although these views allow for an understanding of the character of the existing land, they do not contribute significantly to the understanding of the heritage assets and, as such, are of lower significance than the short range views previously noted above.

Development approach

In order to recognise and respond to the setting of the Manor House and the other identified heritage assets, it will be important that the development follows the following design and layout parameters:

- Achieve a physical, open and sufficient spacing between the Manor House, listed boundary wall and outbuilding group to retain a sense of the historic open land to the east. The extent of this spacing is indicated on the accompanying diagram.
- The layout and design of built form and roads should front this open space so that it can be viewed as a well-managed context for the development and the heritage assets.
- Development to western side of the site should be a maximum of two storeys in height in order to remain subservient to the Manor House heritage assets. Height impact (including rooflines) should be checked to ensure that no built form would be visible in views of the Manor House frontage from within its domestic curtilage, or from views into the Manor House curtilage from Wenny Road. In other words, there should be no built form appearing as a 'backdrop' in these views.
- A palette of materials should be selected for the built form which respect and compliments the historic building fabric.
- The design of new buildings, including the layout, form and massing, should be responsive to the character and appearance of the historic properties.
- Landscape treatments within the buffer area should be maintain or enhance the existing, semi-parkland nature of the land.