STONEHOUSE & CO
ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

HERITAGE STATEMENT

In support of a householder planning application

Site Address	Moreno, Horsley Lane, Coxbench, Derby DE21 5BH
Client	Mr D Rothwell
Local Planning Authority	Amber Valley Borough Council
Conservation Area	Coxbench Conservation Area (designated 5 September 1994)
Listed Status	The dwelling is not itself statutorily listed
Proposal	Removal of non-original front porch and erection of a new natural stone and oak-framed porch with a clay tiled roof; replacement of a side window with French doors
Prepared By	Stonehouse & Co. Ltd, Architectural Design
Project Reference	J26-031
Date	July 2026

1. Introduction

1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Stonehouse & Co. Ltd on behalf of Mr D Rothwell in support of a householder planning application relating to Moreno, Horsley Lane, Coxbench, Derby DE21 5BH ('the site'). The application seeks permission for the removal of the existing, non-original front porch and its replacement with a new porch of natural stone and oak-frame construction with a clay tiled roof, together with the replacement of an existing side window with a set of French doors.

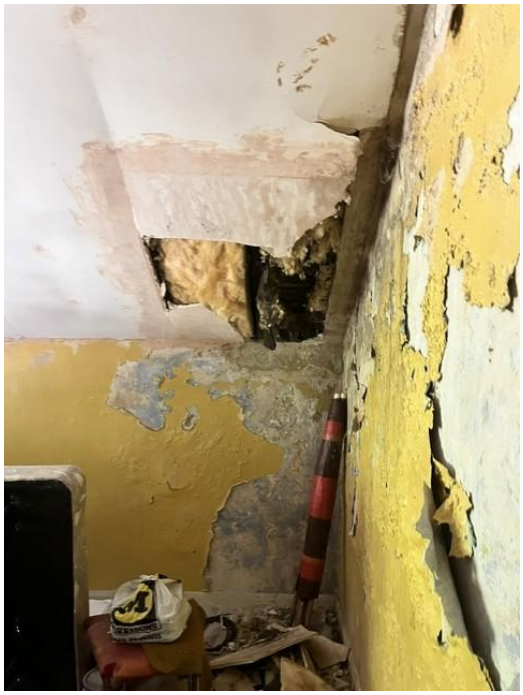
1.2 The site lies within the Coxbench Conservation Area, designated by Amber Valley Borough Council on 5 September 1994. The dwelling is not itself a statutorily listed building. This statement has been prepared to accompany the planning application in order to describe the significance of the conservation area so far as it relates to the site, to assess the effect of the proposed works upon that significance, and to demonstrate that the proposals accord with national and local planning policy relating to the historic environment.

1.3 The statement should be read alongside the accompanying drawings prepared by Stonehouse & Co. Ltd (drawing nos. A100, A200 and A201) and the planning application form and supporting documents.

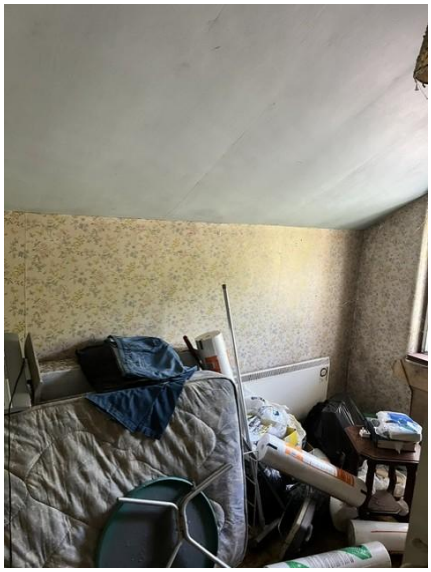
2. The Site and its Surroundings

2.1 Moreno is a modest, stone-built detached dwelling set within a mature garden plot fronting Horsley Lane in the hamlet of Coxbench, within the civil parish of Horsley, Amber Valley, Derbyshire. Coxbench lies approximately five miles north of the City of Derby, within the historic rural landscape between Little Eaton and Holbrook, and forms part of a small, loosely clustered group of traditional stone buildings that give the conservation area its character.

2.2 The existing dwelling is a two-storey, stone-built property beneath a pitched roof, retaining features typical of the area's vernacular building tradition, including natural stone walling and a chimney stack . The property is understood to be a relatively small dwelling that is, in its current condition, significantly degraded and in need of extensive renovation to secure its long-term, viable use as a dwelling.



Internal roof with damage to roof



First floor bedroom

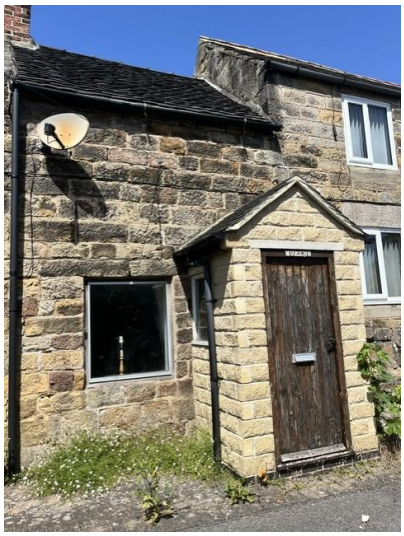


Existing bathroom



Existing kitchen

2.3 The existing front porch, sited on the principal (east) elevation facing Horsley Lane, is constructed from artificial (reconstituted) stone. As recorded on the accompanying survey drawings, this material does not match, and was not designed to match, the natural stone of the main dwelling. The porch is a later, non-original addition of no discernible architectural or historic merit, and its appearance currently detracts from, rather than contributes to, the character and appearance of the host building and, by extension, the wider conservation area.



2.4 No character appraisal or character statement specific to the Coxbench Conservation Area has been formally adopted by Amber Valley Borough Council. Character statements have to date been prepared and published only for the Dethick, Lea and Holloway, Holbrook and Holbrook Moor, South Wingfield, and Belper conservation areas. In the absence of an adopted appraisal for Coxbench, the assessment of significance below is based on the statutory designation, the Council's published guidance on conservation areas and traditional buildings, and an assessment of the site and its immediate context.

3. Legislative and Planning Policy Framework

3.1 Statutory Framework

3.1 Under section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, in the exercise of planning functions with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. This statutory duty applies to the determination of the current application.

3.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) sets out the Government's planning policies for England, including at Section 16, 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment'. The Framework confirms that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

3.3 The NPPF requires that, in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting, with the level of detail proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on that significance. This statement is intended to satisfy that requirement in relation to the modest scale of works proposed.

3.4 Where a 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, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use. As set out in Section 5 below, it is considered that the proposed works would not in fact give rise to any harm to the significance of the Coxbench Conservation Area; on the contrary, they represent a heritage benefit through the removal of an incongruous, non-original element and its replacement with a scheme of traditional materials and proportions. Nonetheless, the wider public benefit of enabling the continued, viable residential use of a small and currently degraded dwelling is a material consideration which weighs firmly in favour of the proposal.

3.5 Section 12 of the NPPF (achieving well-designed places) is also relevant, requiring that development is sympathetic to local character, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.

3.6 The Government published a further draft revised NPPF for consultation in December 2025, with a final version anticipated in summer 2026. As at the date of this statement, that revision had not been formally adopted, and the December 2024 NPPF therefore remains the operative national policy against which this application falls to be assessed. This position should be verified by the Council at the point of determination.

3.3 Local Planning Policy

3.7 The statutory development plan for the site comprises the Amber Valley Borough Local Plan 2022-2040, formally adopted by Amber Valley Borough Council on 2 March 2026, which replaces the previous Adopted Amber Valley Borough Local Plan 2026 and now carries full weight in the determination of planning applications across the Borough.

3.8 The Local Plan's Environment chapter includes a suite of policies (Policies EN2 to EN10) addressing landscape and heritage matters, prepared to protect and enhance the environmental quality and local distinctiveness of the Borough, including the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings. Among these, Policy EN4 sets out the tests to be applied where a proposal would affect a heritage asset, requiring that any resulting harm be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal in a manner that reflects the approach set out in the NPPF.

3.9 As the current application involves only minor external alterations to an unlisted dwelling within a conservation area, rather than the loss of a heritage asset, it is considered that the proposal is fully consistent with the thrust of these policies, which seek to secure development that preserves and, where possible, enhances the character and appearance of the Borough's conservation areas.

3.4 Supplementary Planning Guidance

3.11 The Council's adopted Supplementary Planning Document, Listed Buildings and Buildings in Conservation Areas (April 2007), provides more detailed guidance on alterations within conservation areas, including the principle that all repairs and alterations should, where possible, use natural materials that match the existing building in size, colour and finish, and that the covering of walls with artificial stone requires planning permission and is generally to be avoided in favour of traditional, natural materials. Although prepared to support the policies of the 2006 Local Plan, this SPD continues to provide a material consideration of relevance to the design and materials of the current proposal, pending any future review by the Council.

4. Significance of the Conservation Area

4.1 The special interest of the Coxbench Conservation Area derives principally from its character as a small, historic rural hamlet, retaining a loose-knit pattern of stone-built dwellings and farmsteads set within mature gardens and grounds, with a strong sense of enclosure provided by boundary walls, hedgerows and mature trees, and long-standing visual and historic links to the surrounding agricultural landscape.

4.2 The contribution made by the site to that significance lies in the modest, traditionally-scaled form of the dwelling and its use of local, natural materials, rather than in any particular architectural set-piece or landmark quality. The existing artificial stone porch does not derive from, and does not positively contribute to, that significance; rather, as a later addition in an incongruous material, it represents a departure from the traditional palette of materials that defines the character of the conservation area.

5. Description of the Proposed Works and Heritage Impact Assessment

5.1 Removal of the Existing Porch and Erection of a New Porch

5.1 It is proposed to remove the existing artificial stone porch to the front (east) elevation and replace it with a new porch of natural stone and oak-frame construction, beneath a clay tiled roof to match the dark grey clay tiles of the main dwelling roof.

5.2 The existing porch is not an original feature of the dwelling and, as recorded on the survey drawings, is constructed from artificial stone that does not match the natural stone of the host building. Its removal is therefore a heritage-neutral event at worst, and the loss of a feature which has been identified as visually discordant with the traditional character of the building and conservation area.

5.3 The replacement porch has been designed to reinstate an appropriate, traditional palette of materials: natural stone at low level, matching the walling of the main dwelling, and an oak frame above incorporating glazing to maximise natural light to the entrance while keeping the original external wall in its present form. The clay tiled roof has been selected to match the existing roof covering of the main dwelling, reinforcing a coherent and legible relationship between old and new.

5.4 The use of an oak frame, rather than a fully solid-walled structure, allows the new porch to read *as a lightweight, subordinate addition to the principal elevation*, rather than a heavy or dominant feature, consistent with the guidance in the Council's Listed Buildings and Buildings in Conservation Areas SPD that extensions should be *designed to be clearly subordinate to the host building and constructed using natural materials appropriate to the locality*. The proportions, scale and detailing of the new porch have been kept modest and are considered appropriate to the vernacular character of the dwelling and the conservation area.

5.5 On this basis, it is considered that the replacement of the existing porch would result in a heritage benefit, correcting a previous unsympathetic alteration and reinstating an appropriate palette of natural, traditional materials to the principal elevation of the dwelling, thereby enhancing rather than harming the character and appearance of the Coxbench Conservation Area.

5.2 Replacement of Side Window with French Doors

5.6 It is proposed to replace an existing window to the south side elevation with a set of French doors, providing improved and more usable access to the side garden. This change would, in turn, allow the existing kitchen door to be closed up internally, freeing additional wall space for kitchen storage and worksurfaces within what is a compact kitchen in a small dwelling.

5.7 This alteration is proposed to a s*ubordinate, side elevation of the dwelling, away from the principal (east) elevation that fronts, and is most visible from, Horsley Lane* and the public realm of the conservation area. The sensitivity of this elevation to change is correspondingly lower than that of the principal elevation.

5.8 The change from a window to a set of doors in the same general location is a modest and largely reversible alteration. It is considered that this element of the proposal would have a neutral effect on the character and appearance of the conservation area, and would not harm the significance of the heritage asset.

5.3 The Wider Public Benefit: Securing the Long-Term, Viable Use of the Dwelling

5.9 Moreno is a modest and, in its current condition, significantly degraded dwelling in need of extensive renovation. The proposed works form part of a wider scheme of improvement intended to secure the long-term, viable residential use of the property. The NPPF recognises the importance of securing the optimum viable use of heritage assets as part of the public benefit to be weighed in the planning balance, and the sensitive, fabric-led renovation of an under-maintained dwelling within a conservation area is itself a public benefit which supports

the objectives of Section 16 of the Framework and the Council's own strategic objective (Objective 7 of the Local Plan 2022-2040) to protect and enhance the environmental quality and local distinctiveness of the Borough's heritage assets.

5.10 In this context, the proposed works should be seen not as isolated alterations but as a coherent, modest scheme that removes an unsympathetic historic alteration, reinstates traditional materials, and enables the continued beneficial use of a small heritage-adjacent dwelling within the conservation area.

6. Conclusion

6.1 This Heritage Statement has assessed the effect of the proposed removal of a non-original artificial stone porch and its replacement with a natural stone and oak-framed porch, together with the replacement of a side window with French doors, at Moreno, Horsley Lane, Coxbench.

6.2 The proposed works have been designed with regard to the character and appearance of the Coxbench Conservation Area, using a palette of natural, traditional materials appropriate to the local vernacular. The new oak frame porch has been designed as a *lightweight, subordinate addition to the principal elevation.*

It is concluded that the proposals would preserve and, in respect of the replacement porch, enhance the character and appearance of the Coxbench Conservation Area, in accordance with section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework, and the heritage policies of the Amber Valley Borough Local Plan 2022-2040.

6.3 On this basis, it is respectfully submitted that the application should be considered favourably by Amber Valley Borough Council.