

Assessment of Significance – 19 Roxley Cottages

Site Description

19 Roxley Cottages is part of the Grade II Listed group: Nos. 18, 19 and 20 Roxley Cottages. It also lies within the Willian Conservation Area. The proposal relates to the replacement of the first-floor bedroom window at the front elevation. No other works are proposed.



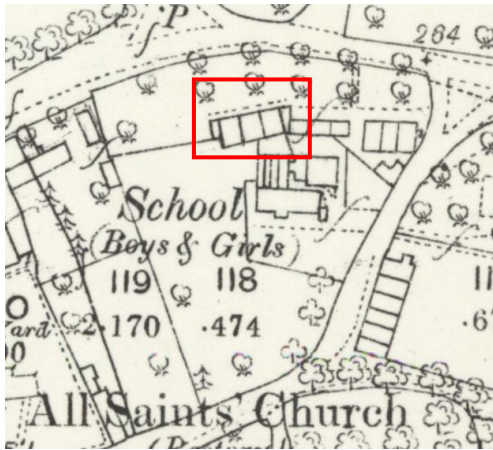
Front elevation of 19 Roxley Cottages, highlighting window to be replaced; block plan of 19 Roxley Cottages (please see the drawing pack for the PDF site/block plan)

Historic Significance

19 Roxley Cottages forms part of a terrace of early 19th century cottages (nos. 18-20). The terrace is located in the village of Willian, which was recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086. Formerly a rural settlement, Willian was brought within the administrative boundary of Letchworth Garden City in the early 20th century; however, it still holds an historic village character.

Roxley Cottages are located within the historic core of Willian, in the area bounded by Willian Road and Willian Church Road, which also contains the medieval church and the old village school. Nos. 18, 19 and 20 Roxley Cottages are Grade II Listed as a group and are located within the Willian Conservation Area. There are 7 Listed buildings/ groups of buildings within Willian, and several other unlisted historic buildings including other 19th century terraces.

Nos. 18-20 was originally a range of 4 cottages, now divided into 3 dwellings. They hold a good level of historic significance as a surviving example of a modest early 19th century workers' terrace with a vernacular character, which dates to the period when Willian was still a rural, agricultural settlement.



1879 Ordnance Survey map with the site highlighted in red.

Architectural and Artistic Significance

The terrace is two storeys high, with roughcast fronts painted white. Although originally comprising 4 dwellings, the terrace has been reduced to three, with one of the front doors being infilled. Windows throughout the terrace are predominantly original timber casement windows of 2 or 3 lights with glazing bars, with frames and casements painted white. Windows have tile creasing above (also painted white) and black cills. All windows on the front elevation are believed to be original.

The terrace is of modest design and has few exceptional features; however, it has retained its original character to a good degree as well as many of its original features. The Listed group is therefore considered to hold a good level of architectural significance.

The window at 19 Roxley Cottages to which this application relates is the first floor bedroom window at the front elevation. This window is believed to be original. The frame is in sound condition, however the casements have areas of rot and damage. One pane of glass is broken, and the window is currently boarded up to prevent further damage or movement. The window is therefore considered to make a limited contribution to the architectural significance of the listed group, due to its poor condition.



External photographs



Internal photographs



Details of the left casement



Details of the right casement

Impact of Proposals

The proposal would result in the loss of an original window at the front elevation of the listed terrace. This original window contributes to the historic and architectural significance of the group, as one of many surviving original windows, however its damaged condition has a negative impact on the aesthetic appearance of the building, and it is also negatively impacting the living conditions inside the property due to the broken glass and structural damage.

The proposed replacement will be an exact replica in terms of design and proportions, which will preserve the traditional appearance of the frontage. It will be made of timber and will have single glazing; the original ironmongery will also be re-used in the new window. The design of the replacement has therefore taken into account the historic and aesthetic significance of the terrace and the window itself.

The loss of the original window, and its sensitive replacement, is considered to have a minor negative impact on the listed group, which amounts to less than substantial harm. The replacement is mitigated by the benefit of bringing the window back into use, and the careful design of the replacement.