

# No.1 Little Shambles York



Historic Timber Assessment

April 2019

Version 1

## 1. Non-Technical Summary

Maybank Buildings Conservation were commissioned by the City of York Council to provide a visual inspection of the timbers forming the rear elevation of No.1 Little Shambles, York, in order to indicate likely historic elements from those replaced during restoration in the 1950s. This report was written by Dr Dav Smith, based on a site visits on 8 & 10 April 2019.

It must be noted that without dendrochronology, it is not possible to reliably and accurately date historic exterior timbers. Therefore the results presented in this report are intended as indicative rather than definitive. Assessed timbers have been divided into three categories: (1) historic; (2) likely historic; and (3) likely C20th. Visual analysis suggests there was little timber replacement on the rear elevation during the 1950s with most of the timbers likely dating from the C15-C19, including substantial survival of the original timber frame. Figure 3150-0-001 annotates the assessment of indicative timber dates.

## 2. Site

No.1 Little Shambles, York, was constructed in the C15th as a house, likely with a commercial ground floor. Grenville (1994, 190) notes that 1 Little Shambles “may well represent an example of a type once far more plentiful in the centre of York and other towns.” This refers to Schofield’s ‘Type 2’ house, which are described as “a house with two rooms on three or more floors” (Schofield & Vince 1994, 72). Grenville goes on to state that “such low status buildings have for centuries been particularly vulnerable to the pressures of redevelopment, and the structures that onced hemmed 1 Little Shambles were demolished as recently as the 1950s”. The building is presently listed GII (1257477), belying its rarity and significance. The low grading is likely a reflection of its C20th restoration, which has also deterred modern scholarship and appreciation of the building.

The RCHME (1981, 156) describes the structure as:

*House, No. 1, of three storeys and timber-framed, with a pantiled roof, was built in the 15th century but has been heavily restored. It has a gabled street front, with both upper floors being jettied out, and was probably originally two bays deep. The original crown-post roof structure has been entirely replaced, except at the gable ends.*

The building was restored in the early 1950s, at which point many of the surrounding buildings were demolished. This clearance is documented the Yorkshire Architectural and York Archaeological Society Annual Report (1949).



Looking east along Little Shambles c.1933 prior to clearance (c) City of York Council.

There is little readily available documentary evidence for No. 1 Little Shambles and it has never been subjected to detailed study. The c.1950 restoration does not appear to have been documented. Historic photography suggests the building was in a very poor condition by the early C20, with props supporting the front elevation.



No.1 Little Shambles (L) seen far left in 1929 with the second floor propped © YAYAS; and (R) seen far right in the late C19/early C20 showing considerable lean in the front elevation © www.thecardindex.com.

Based on visual analysis, much of the 1950s restoration externally appears focused on the front elevation and internal joists, where many of the timbers have been replaced. On the western and rear elevations there is considerable survival of historic timbers.

### 3. Timber Assessment

There is little documentary evidence to inform any assessment of the timber frame and no historic images or descriptions have been found. In the absence of dendrochronology a more detailed search for documentary evidence, including for documentation of the restoration campaign, may bear fruit. Based solely on a visual analysis, there appears to be generally good survival of historic timbers on the rear elevation. Protected within a courtyard enclosed on three sides, this elevation is reasonably well protected from weather.

The first-floor floor joists are obscured internally, and therefore have not been assessed. Externally, the ground floor and eastern half of the first floor are obscured by later structures and therefore assessment has been limited to visible elements.

Visual analysis revealed many timbers demonstrated signs of considerable age, including weathering, shaking, later alteration (including peg holes, notches/indentations/mortices, and staining from nails commonly used as a key for render). Based on these features many of the main frame components, including the corner posts, rails, braces, and crown post are likely original timbers. Many of the subsidiary studs and window rails appear later, but may represent earlier (possibly C19th) repairs and replacements, and thus likely pre-date the 1950s restoration. Overleaf is a table, which accompanies the annotated elevation (drawing 3150-0-001), detailing the visual assessment of the timber.

## Bibliography

Grenville, J (1994) *Medieval Housing*. London: Leicester University Press.

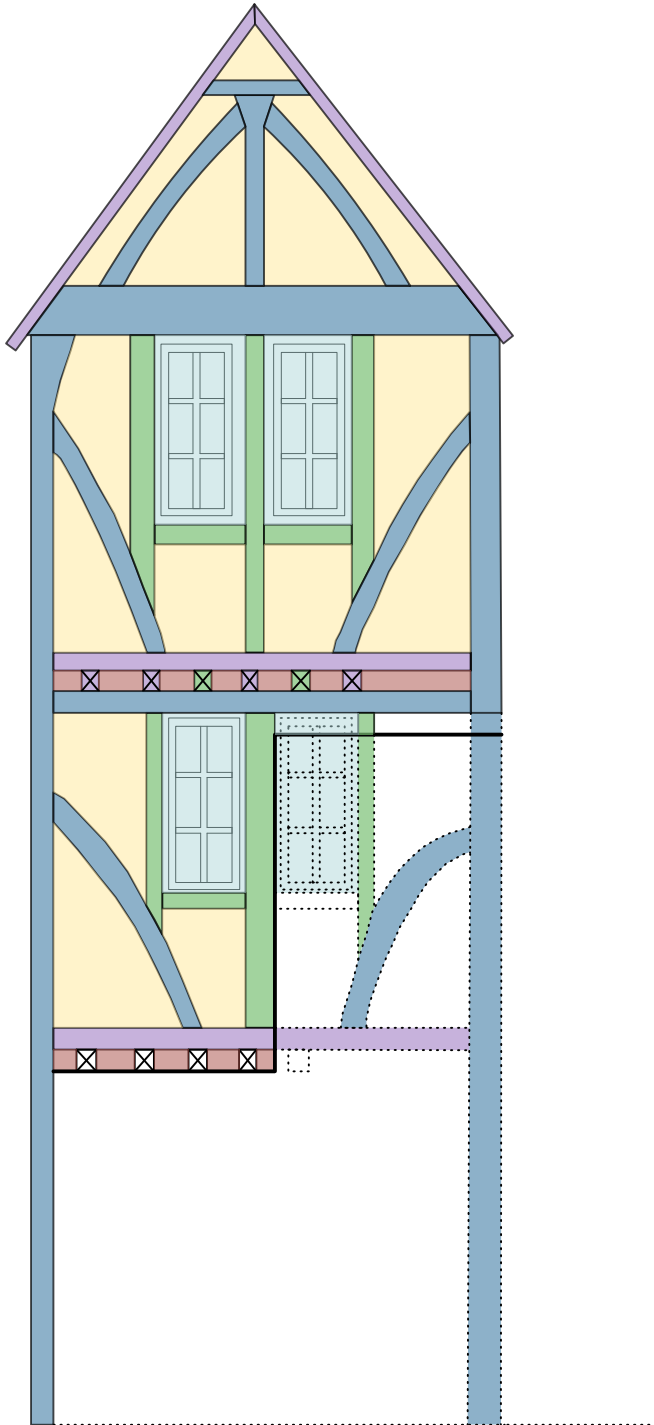
RCHME (1981) *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the City of York, Vol. 5*. London: HMSO.

Schofield, J and A Vince (1994) *Medieval Towns*. London: Leicester University Press.

YOYAS (1950) *Annual Report and Summary of Proceedings 1949-50*. York: The Society.

	Ref	Type	Description
	1	Jowl Post	Clear sign of aging (weathering, shaking etc.) and historic alterations internally. Very likely original.
	2	Jowl Post	Clear sign of aging (weathering, shaking etc.) and historic alterations internally. Very likely original.
	3	Principal Rafter	Very crisp and clean-edged. Much of the roof structure was replaced during c.1950 restoration. Very likely 1950s.
	4	Principal Rafter	Very crisp and clean-edged. Much of the roof structure was replaced during c.1950 restoration. Very likely 1950s.
	5	Truss Tie Beam	Clear sign of aging (weathering, shaking etc). Likely original.
	6	SF Upper Rail	Unusual placement, likely related to reinforcing structure. Very straight timber with little sign of aging. Possibly C19, but likely 1950s.
	7	SF Lower Rail	Heavily weathered with evidence of historic shaping and later lead flashing. Likely original.
	8	FF Upper Rail	Unusual placement, likely related to reinforcing structure. Very straight timber with little sign of aging. Possibly C19, but likely 1950s.
	9	Gable Brace	Clear sign of aging (weathering, shaking etc) and evidence of nail staining from rendering. Likely original.
	10	Gable Brace	Clear sign of aging (weathering, shaking etc). Likely original.
	11	SF Brace	Clear sign of aging (weathering, shaking etc). Likely original.
	12	SF Brace	Clear sign of aging (weathering, shaking etc). Likely original.
	13	FF Brace	Clear sign of aging (weathering, shaking etc). Likely original.
	14	Collar Tie	Nail stains suggesting rendering prior to 1950s restoration.

	Ref	Type	Description
	15	Crown Post	Clear sign of aging (historic peg holes and indents). Likely original.
	16	SF Stud	Largely obscured by pipework, but signs of aging. Likely historic, but inconsistent pegging suggests this might be a later replacement (C19?).
	17	SF Stud	Largely obscured by pipework, but signs of aging and historic nail stains, dating it to before the 1950s restoration. Inconsistent pegging suggests this to be a later replacement. Likely historic (C19?).
	18	SF Stud	Signs of aging. Likely historic (C19?), but inconsistent pegging suggests this might be a later replacement.
	19	SF Window Rail	Nail stains suggesting rendering prior to 1950s restoration, but otherwise very straight timber suggesting not original (C19?).
	20	SF Window Rail	Nail stains suggesting rendering prior to 1950s restoration, but otherwise very straight timber suggesting not original (C19?).
	21	FF Stud	Largely obscured by pipework, but signs of aging. Likely historic, but inconsistent pegging suggests this might be a later replacement.
	22	FF Stud	Largely obscured by pipework, but some signs of aging. Very straight and no evidence of nail stains. Likely historic.
	23	FF Stud	Largely obscured but clear signs of aging and nail staining. Likely historic (C19?).
	24	FF Window Rail	Some evidence of aging, suggesting pre-1950s but likely not original.
	25	FF Brace	Largely obscured, but clear sign of aging (weathering, shaking etc). Likely original.
	26	SF Floor Joists	Internal inspection reveals most joists are 1950s replacements, with no.2 exceptions. The 3rd joist (from west) features an etched carpenter's mark (VIII) suggesting a C19? Replacement scheme.



- Historic Timber (likely C15)
- Likely Historic
- Likely C20 Timber
- C20 cementitious render over historic(?) brickwork
- Re-set? Brickwork
- C20 Windows

\* base drawing adapted from Mass Architecture drawing no. A259-MAS-125

# maybank

BUILDINGS CONSERVATION

Marsden, West Yorkshire  
[www.maybankbuildingsconservation.co.uk](http://www.maybankbuildingsconservation.co.uk)  
[info@mbcllp.co.uk](mailto:info@mbcllp.co.uk)  
 Tel: 07976 365328

**Client:**

City of York Council  
 West Offices, Station Rise  
 York  
 YO1 6JA

**Project:**

No.1 Little Shambles  
 York

**Job Number:**

MBC/3150

**Title:**

Annotated rear elevation

**Date:**

April 2019

**Scale:**

1:50 @ A4

**Drawing Number:**

3150-0-001

**Revision:**

-

Drawing By: Dav Smith

## Appendix

# 1, LITTLE SHAMBLES

1 contribution

Overview

Heritage Category: Listed Building

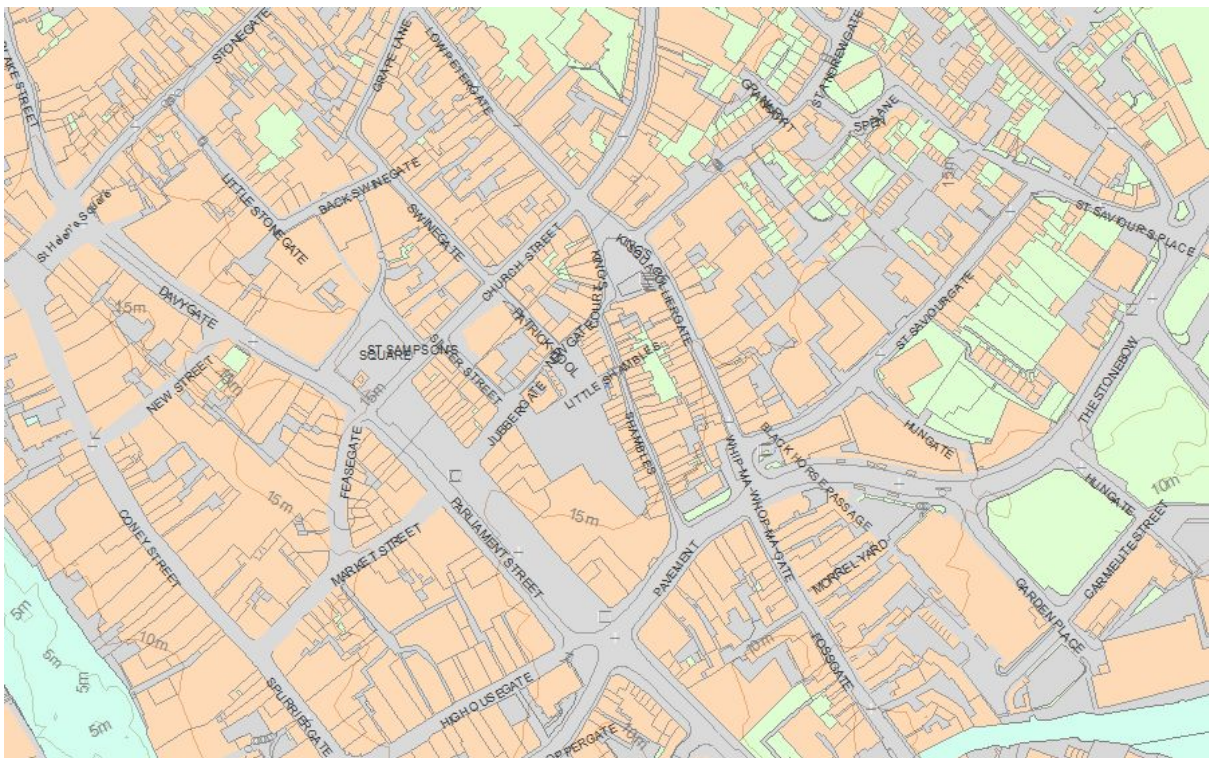
Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1257477

Date first listed: 14-Jun-1954

Statutory Address: 1, LITTLE SHAMBLES

Map



© Crown Copyright and database right 2019. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100024900.

© British Crown and SeaZone Solutions Limited 2019. All rights reserved. Licence number 102006.006.

Use of this data is subject to [Terms and Conditions](#).

The above map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. For a copy of the full scale map, please see the attached PDF - [1257477.pdf](#)

The PDF will be generated from our live systems and may take a few minutes to download depending on how busy our servers are. We apologise for this delay.

This copy shows the entry on 08-Apr-2019 at 11:05:53.

Location

**Statutory Address:** 1, LITTLE SHAMBLES

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

**District:** York (Unitary Authority)

**National Grid Reference:** SE 60445 51881

Details

YORK

SE6051NW LITTLE SHAMBLES 1112-1/28/554 (South East side) 14/06/54 No.1

GV II

House. C15, restored c1950. Timber-framed, ground floor encased in orange-red brick in English garden-wall bond, upper floors rendered; pantile roof with brick stack. EXTERIOR: 3-storey, 1-bay gabled front, first and second floors jettied. Framing exposed on upper floors and crown post roof truss in gable end. Half-glazed shop door between jowled posts, to left of wide shop window with small-pane glazing; upper floor windows are 2x6-pane casements. Right return: framing exposed on all floors, with 1- and 2-light 6-pane casement windows on all floors. INTERIOR: not inspected. (City of York: RCHME: The Central Area: HMSO: 1981-: 156).

Listing NGR: SE6044551881

Legacy

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

**Legacy System number:** 463830

**Legacy System:** LBS

Sources

Books and journals

An Inventory of the City of York V Central, (1981), 156

Legal

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

End of official listing