

# **Building Report**

## **17 Shrubbery Street, Kidderminster**

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### **Introduction**

This report was undertaken as part of the Historic Kidderminster Project. The house is of particular interest being built on land acquired by the Shrubbery Land Society. The houses on this land occupy both sides of the southern part of the street, and they are of unusually high quality. Resources of both Kidderminster library and Worcester Record Office have been used. Also we have been given access to deeds of the house by the current owner, Dr Abigail Brown.

### **History**

The Shrubbery Land Society was formed in 1873. Its object was to raise a fund to purchase White's Field, which was to be divided into 38 or more lots for conveyance to members. Subscriptions were ten shillings per share payable every fourth Tuesday. A plan of the Society's land five plots on each side of Shrubbery Street fronting Birmingham Road and a further 14 plots on each side of Shrubbery Street itself. (WRO BA 5278/32)



**17 Shrubbery St in 2007**

The land was part of the considerable holdings of the Lea family in this area of Kidderminster. The sale was by Mrs Lydia Wodehouse of Ham Hill, Powick near Worcester. She was the widow of Col. Philip Wodehouse. Her father was Joseph Lea of the Hill, Amblecote, and her grandfather was William Lea, cloth manufacturer, of the Shrubbery, Birmingham Road. (WRO BA10470/256)

On 1<sup>st</sup> October 1873 Mrs Wodehouse agreed to sell a piece of land called White's Field. The purchasers were three Kidderminster men, who we know were the trustees of the Shrubbery Land Society, even though it is not mentioned in the documents held by Dr Brown. (WRO BA 5278/32) They were William Leech of High Street, confectioner, William Mumford of Rose Cottage Batham Street, forgerman, and Henry Wright of Blackwell Street, plumber. We do not know the full purchase price, but by 1876 £900 had been paid as part payment. No conveyance was formally made.



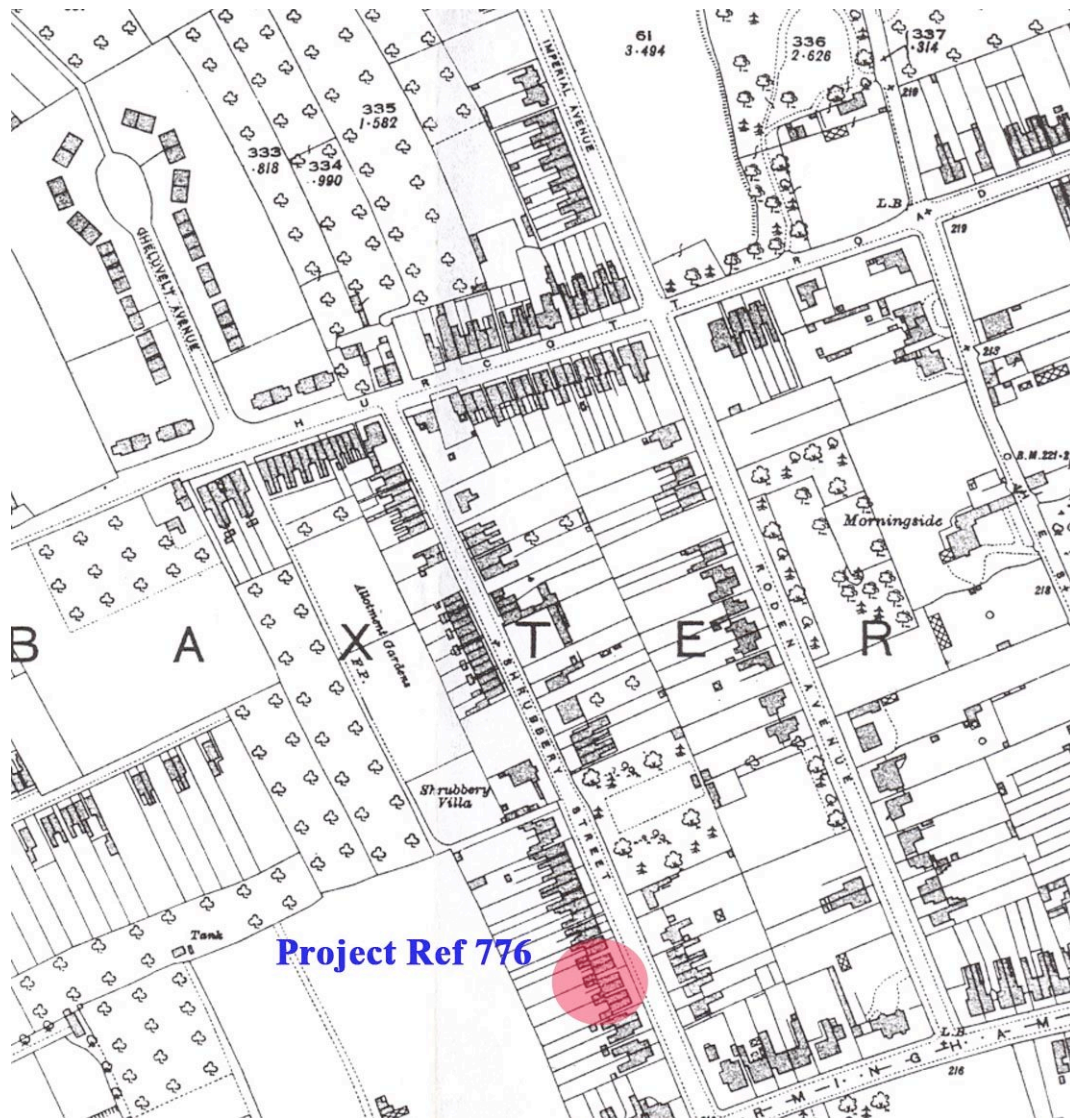
**A rear view of the four pairs of houses built together**

On 9<sup>th</sup> October 1876 the land on which no. 17 was to be built was conveyed by Mrs Wodehouse and the above three men to William Arnold, innkeeper of the Vine Inn, for £113 10s 10d. Arnold was a member of the Society, which seems to have held its meetings at his pub. His purchase consisted of two plots laid out by the society, numbered sixteen and seventeen. They had a frontage of twenty yards to the west side of Shrubbery Street.

William Arnold had built four houses by 1887 when they are shown on the poor rate list. (WRO BA 10470/231). They are included in his will dated 1889, in which he left them to his son Walter Arnold. (See papers relating to 120 Park Street) Walter died on 11<sup>th</sup> May 1908, and his will of 1906 shows that these houses were numbered 9, 10, 11 and 12. At some stage there has been a renumbering of Shrubbery Street with odd numbers and even numbers on opposite sides of the road. Today Arnold's houses are numbered 17, 19, 21 and 23.

## Description

Number 17 is a semi-detached house built in red-brick with a slate roof. It is part of a row of four pairs of houses which appear to be identical and to have been built together. Four of these houses, now numbered 9, 11, 13 and 15, were owned by Thomas Hall Garlick in the 1887 list, although it is J. Garlick who appears in the list of members among the 1873 papers. Clearly William Arnold and the Garlick family co-operated in the construction of these houses.



**9-23 (odd numbers) Shrubbery St 1921 – OS Ref 839772**