

## Heritage Statement

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Erection of a two-storey side and single-storey rear extensions, with internal alterations and rebuilding of side wall.

Wild Farm, Harper Lane, Radlett, WD7 9ZJ



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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1.0 This heritage statement has been prepared to support applications for listed building consent and planning permission for erection of a two-storey side and single-storey rear extensions, with internal alterations and rebuilding of side wall at Wild Farm, Harper Lane, Radlett, WD7 9ZJ.

1.1.1 Wild Farm is a Grade II listed building standing in open countryside. It is not located in a Conservation Area.

1.1.2 Discussions with Hertsmere Borough Council with regard to proposals to alter and extend Wild Farm have been ongoing since late 2020 under pre-application reference 20/0146/PA. Two proposals have been submitted to the Council for comment. The application proposals respond to the suggestions and recommendations made by the Council and its heritage advisors, Essex Place Services, in response to these schemes.

## 2.0 SITE & SURROUNDING AREA

### 2.1.1 Introduction

Wild Farm, sometimes known as the White House, is located in open countryside to the south-east of Radlett. It was formerly part of the estate associated with the former Harperbury Hospital located to the north on Harper Lane. Following the closure of the hospital, the hospital site has been cleared and is currently being redeveloped for residential purposes.

### 2.2.1 Site

The buildings on the proposed application site comprise the two-storey farmhouse which faces north onto the access track which runs up to the former hospital site towards Harper Lane, and faces south over an open lawn, a detached single storey garden building which partially encloses the east side of the rear lawn and a two-storey detached annexe to the west, thought to be a former coach house. To the south-east of the farmhouse is a partially filled-in moat. The area containing the moat and part of the rear garden to the house has been identified as an area of archaeological interest. (see Historic Environment Records 715, 15363, 30315)



*Wild Farmhouse with single storey outbuilding to the left and former coach house to the right.*

- 2.2.2 Wild Farm was added to the list of buildings of architectural and historic interest on 17 August 2016. The list description is attached at Appendix 1. The list entry is a detailed and helpful document such that it is appropriate to set out the reasons for designation below.

*\* Architectural interest: it an unusual example of a Palladian inspired farmhouse which captures the spirit of the historicist approach to architecture that is so typical of the period;*

*\* Plan form: this has a certain elegance in its circulation route around the central, semi-circular, spiral stair, which creates an oval-shaped hall and landing, echoed by the bow-*

*shaped recess in the drawing room and bedroom;*

*\* Historic interest: it was built during the most significant period of agricultural development in England which resulted in a wealthier yeoman class whose gentrification was reflected in their farmhouses;*

*\* Historical context: it is associated with the medieval moated manorial site to the immediate east which evidently evolved over the centuries into the farmstead. Although the site is not scheduled, its vestigial remains represented by the partially filled-in moat provide an important historic context for the farmhouse.'*

### 2.2.3 Historical background.

The presence of the moat at the site indicates an early medieval date for the occupation of the site, supported by documentary sources which refer to a Manor of Weld in 1200. Variants of the name Weld/ Weald occur in records which refer to woodland. The site is located at the meeting point of three historic parish boundaries, Shenley, Aldenham and St Stephens which is likely to have accorded it some significance in the past. There was a farmstead known as Weald Hall on the site in 1646. The 1766 map and 1840 Tithe maps show buildings both to the north and within the moated site, but these have disappeared from the site by the time of the 1883 1:2500 OS sheet. At this time only sheep pens remained to the east of the moat.

2.2.4 The evidence of the OS map bases since 1883, as referred to in the list description, indicates that from the late C19th the footprint of the house is the same as it is today. A small conservatory was added to the rear and then removed. The long narrow range of outbuildings to the south-east of the house has remained in situ and the (assumed) coach house to the west.

2.2.5 The wider setting and use of land in the vicinity of the site underwent a change from the early C20th onwards with the acquisition of land of the Porters Park Estate by Middlesex County Council to establish Harperbury Hospital as a facility to treat patients with mental disabilities. The hospital opened in 1931 and Wild Farm was used as the home for the Superintendent of the Hospital.

2.2.6 Wild Farm is thought to have been vacant since approximately 1996.

### 2.2.7 Building Form.

The building is thought to date from the late C18th/early C19th, having an elegant, simple Palladian style. The original red brick walls have been painted white. The roof has red clay tiles and there is a central chimney stack. The building has 6/6 sash windows with two pairs of glazed French doors to the rear. The attic is lit by dormer windows to the east and west sides with lunette windows to the front and rear elevations. The core of the listed building is cruciform in shape having projecting bays to the front (north) and rear. There are two principal floors with an attic above. Each floor has three rooms in addition to the hallway and landings in the front bay, which are arranged around the central curved stairwell. The stairwell rises to the attic.





*North facing front elevation with later extension to the west side.*

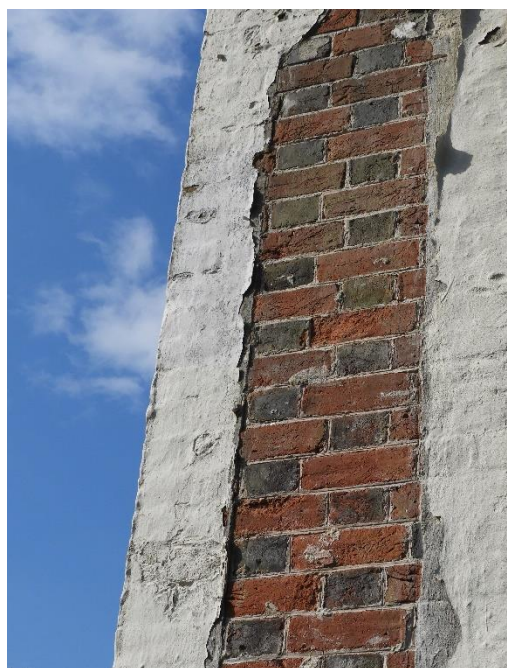


*South and west facing elevations. The detached single storey outbuilding can be glimpsed to the right*



*Rear elevation with former coach house to left (west) and outbuilding to the right (east)*

- 2.2.8 The historic core of Wild Farm has an entirely white painted finish. Examination of the walls reveals that they are constructed of red bricks with burnt headers laid in a Flemish Bond. A strip of the original wall finish has been exposed near the rear corner of the east elevation as shown below.



The condition of the white painted finish on the north-east corner of the building is now in a poor state of repair. On the front of the building, it appears as if some form of fine cement slurry has been applied to the brick, which has then been painted over. Given the condition of the bricks that have been exposed, it is assumed that these finishes were designed to protect the soft red brick from the effects of weather on this exposed corner of the building. See below.





2.2.9 The timber sash windows of the building are similarly in a poor state or repair and/or are missing, many being boarded up. Examples of condition are provided below.



Wild Farm has a two-storey extension on the west elevation that has been expressly excluded from the listing. The ground floor of this part of the building has a white painted rendered finish, the second floor has a red tile hung finish and there is a flat lead roof. Fenestration is late C20th and of no interest. Examination of the interior of this part of the building, in association with the main part of the farmhouse, suggests that this extension was constructed in the 1930's. The extension includes a cellar accessed internally.



- 2.2.10 As indicated above, map evidence indicates that this wing has been part of the footprint of the house since the early C19th. This is borne out by the nature of the brick work of the lower part of the walls of the cellar, these are the remains of an earlier structure. It is evident that the wing has been built off these walls. There are shelves around the walls which are pre-cast concrete, not slate as detailed in the list description. Their form is similar to shelves in the base of the chimney stack that rises through the centre of the cellar.
- 2.2.11 Whilst the interior of Wild Farm does retain a quantity of joinery, as indicated in the list description, not all of it dates from the construction of the dwelling. There are architraves, four panelled doors, windows, shutters, attic doors and the staircase but it is evident that some of the interior fittings are likely to result from what is thought to be the refitting and upgrading of the dwelling for use by the Superintendent of the hospital in the 1930's. This would have been associated with the construction of the west wing. Such fittings are thought to include the parquet floors, some of the doors and fireplaces.
- 2.2.12 The single storey outbuilding to the south-east of the farmhouse has not yet been fully examined, but external details suggest that this might also have been the subject of some alteration in the 1930's. There are open 'loggia' like areas within the building that have decorative timber frames using the detail of the gate posts at the front of the farmhouse. These all seem to be appropriate to the period.

### 2.3.1 Recent Relevant Planning History.

TP/07/1199: Conversion of workshop into ancillary residential accommodation: Approved 2/07/2007

TP/08/1480: Demolition of side extension and erection of two storey side extension: Approved 13/02/2009

Proposed extension to the east side of the farmhouse, on same plane as east side of the dwelling but extension attached by indented link, under a flat roof behind a parapet, linking to single storey outbuilding at the rear.

TP/11/1662: part demolition of annex and existing 2 storey side extension, erection of part single storey, part 2 storey side extension, single storey side extension, new rooflights, skylight and replacement dormers: Approved 24/10/2011.

Contemporary design of extensions.

17/1858/HSE: Single storey rear extension to main building, alteration to mansard roof of existing 2 storey extension and alterations to fenestration: Approved 07/12/2017 08/12/2017.

17/1859/LBC: Alterations to the roof and fenestration of the existing two storey side extension, single storey side extension, single storey rear extension and repair and minor internal alteration works to the main dwelling. Alterations to the adjacent annexe include changes to fenestration, refurbishment and internal layout. Approved 8/12/2017.

20/1570/DOC: Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 3(new windows, doors, eaves, verges, cills) and 5 (Archaeological written scheme of investigation) of planning permission reference 17/1858/HSE. Approved 21/12/2020.

20/1572/DOC: Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 3 (roof tile samples), 5 (schedule of works and 6 (additional drawings) of listed building consent reference 17/1859/LBC. Approved 21/12/2020.

#### 2.4.0 Archaeology.

The remains of the moat to the east of Wild Farmhouse are included within an area of Archaeological Interest but is not a Scheduled Ancient Monument (see 2.1.1 above). This area extends to include part of the single storey outbuilding to the rear and south-east of the site. Condition 3 attached to planning permission reference 17/1858/HSE required the submission and approval of a written scheme of archaeological investigation in respect of the application site. This was approved on 21/12/2020.

## 3.0 PROPOSAL

3.1.0 The application proposal has been developed following two pre-application submissions under reference 20/0146/PA. The first proposal included the proposed re-building of the existing west wing of the listed building together with a single storey extension to the rear and the provision of a 'balancing' two storey wing to the east side which would have been linked to the existing single storey outbuilding at the rear of the site. The two-storey addition on the east side and link were deemed to be inappropriate but the proposals for the additions to the west elevation were considered to be acceptable in principle subject to some alterations to the design. The detailed comments of Essex Place Services, heritage advisors to the Council, are contained in a letter dated 26 November 2010.

3.1.1 This original proposal was revised to omit addition to the east side and link to the existing outbuilding, together with design amendments. The response of Essex Place Services is contained in a letter dated 31 March 2021. This confirmed,

*'no in principle objections to rebuilding the current extension.'*

But required exploration of a reduction in the height of the eaves of the replacement addition and further analysis of the ground floor extension. In addition, Essex Place Services recommended that the extension be reduced by one bay of the two-storey range and that adjustments be made to the placement of fenestration and placement of a side door.

3.1.2 The application proposals have been designed to reflect and incorporate previous detailed design advice in a manner appropriate to respond to the design and character of the listed building. The purpose of the current proposal is to achieve the sympathetic repair and restoration of the listed building ensuring the retention of existing interior and external finishes and features, in addition to works of alteration and extension.

3.1.3 The proposals include works to Wild Farm that have already been approved as the result of applications 17/1858/HSE and 17/1859/LBC. All conditions attached to these applications have been discharged as the result of applications 20/1570/DOC and 20/1572/DOC. These included the approval of materials and details of replacement windows and doors where decay precludes repair. A constructive start has been made to this development.

3.1.4 The most notable alteration to the interior of the building will be the removal of the ceiling in the entrance hall to create a light well up to the first floor, as already approved in application 17/1859/LBC. The entry to the dining room will be rationalised to provide a pair of doors in the centre of the already altered wall to the passage. New doors will match the design of the existing interior doors. Single casements will be inserted into the side elevations of the forward projection of the building (ground floor casements approved a part of works in application 17/1859LBC). A new sash window will also be inserted in the existing recess on the east facing side elevation for the first-floor bedroom. Existing interior detailing such as skirtings, picture rails, doors, architraves, fireplaces and floors will be retained. Services will be replaced with the minimum of disruption to the existing building and historic surfaces will be repaired in a 'like for like' manner.



- 3.1.5 It is intended that the exterior of the building will be repainted with a paint appropriate to the original brickwork. In the north-east corner of the building the original red brick has been treated with both a cement slurry and paint. The removal of these later finishes has been considered but there is concern that removal is most likely to damage the underlying brickwork to an unacceptable degree. Professional advice has been sought and a proposal for the final treatment of the walls will be formulated should these applications be successful.
- 3.1.6 The application now proposes the removal and replacement of the existing two storey side extension with a single storey extension to the rear. It will have a white painted rendered external finish under a flat lead or lead substitute roof set behind a parapet. The latter will have a Portland stone coping. The proposal has been reduced in size to reflect the recommendation of Essex Place services. There has been a small adjustment to the height of the two-storey section to permit some differentiation between the proposed and existing roof line, but internal ceiling heights dictate the height of the replacement extension. A corbelled horizontal band will be provided above the first-floor windows. This is positioned below the dentil course on the existing building such that the proposed addition is visually subservient to the existing building. Visual subservience is also achieved by the use of two-pane wide sliding sash windows in the proposed extension.
- 3.1.7 The extension will provide a utility room and large open plan living area on the ground floor above a replacement basement. The side door access to the utility room is aligned with the window above on the first floor. Three bedrooms and a bathroom will be provided on the first floor.
- 3.1.8 The existing single storey outbuilding will be repaired and refurbished for ancillary residential purposes, including a workshop and storage. The connecting wall and archway access that has collapsed will be re-built.

## 4.0 POLICY CONTEXT

### 4.1.0 National Policy

#### **Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.**

Section 66 (1) imposes the following duty on decision makers;

*‘In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority .....shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting.....’*

### 4.2.0 National Planning Policy Framework

A core principle of the National Planning Framework (the Framework) is to conserve heritage assets, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life for this and future generations. Paragraph 185 requires that account be taken of

- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to a viable use consistent with their conservation*
- *the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness*
- *opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of place.*

#### 4.2.1 Paragraph 189 states 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. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.’*

#### 4.2.2 Paragraph 192 advises that in determining planning applications local authorities should take account of;

- *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation*
- *the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality*
- *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

#### 4.2.3 Paragraph 193 states that

*‘when considering the impact of development on the significance of a designated asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (the more important the asset, the greater weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.*

#### 4.2.4 Paragraph 194 advises that

*‘Any harm to, or loss of significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require*

#### 4.3.0 Local Planning Policy

The Hertsmere Local Plan 2012 -2027 is currently under review. Current relevant policies from the plan adopted in November 2016 include the following Core Strategy policy,

***‘Policy CS14 Protection or enhancement of heritage assets.***

*All development proposals must conserve or enhance the historic environment of the Borough in order to maintain and where possible improve local environmental quality. Development proposals should be sensitively designed to a high quality and not cause harm to identified, protected sites, buildings or locations of heritage or archaeological value including Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Historic Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Ancient Monuments or their setting, and identified and as yet unidentified Archaeological Remains. The Council will take account of available historic environment characterisation work, including Conservation Area appraisals and archaeological assessments, when making decisions affecting heritage assets and their settings.’*

And the following policy contained within the ‘Site Allocations and Development Management Policies’

***Policy SADM29 - Heritage Assets***

*Planning applications will be considered in accordance with the NPPF. When applications are submitted for proposals affecting any heritage asset the applicant must clearly explain what the proposal is for and provide sufficient detail to allow for an informed decision to be made. When assessing proposals, the Council will have regard to the significance of the heritage asset and the potential harm to it. The Council will not permit development proposals which fail to protect, conserve or where possible enhance the significance, character and appearance of the heritage asset and its setting. The scale, design, use and character of the proposal will be taken into account, as well as the detailed provisions following.....*



*Listed Buildings: The Council will not permit development proposals which would materially harm the setting or endanger the fabric of a listed building. Listed Building Consent will not be granted for alterations or extensions that would be detrimental to the special architectural or historic character of a listed building.'*

- 4.3.1 Additional relevant design policies include CS22: Securing a high quality and accessible environment; SADM30: Design principles together with advice in the Planning and Design SDP.

4.4.0 **Policy Guidance**

4.4.1 **Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance. English Heritage (now Historic England) April 2008.**

This is the core document which sets out the approach to the protection of the historic environment. It states that the idea of significance lies at the core of the principles. And

*'Significance is a collective term for the sum of all of the heritage values attached to a place.'*

- 4.4.2 Since people can value historic places in many ways, this document shows how they can be grouped into four categories of values i.e., evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal values.

- 4.4.3 The guidance accepts that the historic environment will be subject to development and advises that;

*'New work or alteration to a significant place should normally be acceptable if:*

*a. there is sufficient information comprehensively to understand the impacts of the proposal on the significance of the place;*

*b. the proposal would not materially harm the values of the place, which, where appropriate, would be reinforced or further revealed;*

*c. the proposals aspire to a quality of design and execution which may be valued now and in the future;*

*d. the long-term consequences of the proposals can, from experience, be demonstrated to be benign, or the proposals are designed not to prejudice alternative solutions in the future.'*

#### 4.4.4 **Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning 2. March 2015**

The purpose of this advice note is to provide information to assist all parties involved in the implementation of historic environment policy in the NPPF. It points out at Paragraph 4 that:

*“Development proposals that affect the historic environment are much more likely to gain the necessary permissions and create successful places if they are designed with the knowledge and understanding of the significance of the heritage assets that they may affect. The first step is for all applicants to understand the significance of any affected heritage asset and if relevant the contribution of its setting to its significance”*

- 4.4.5 The advice note provides guidance on a structured approach to the assembly and analysis of relevant information. This includes the understanding of both the significance of a heritage asset and the impact of any proposal on that significance together with considering the need to avoid, minimise or mitigate any impacts on significance as well as looking for opportunities to enhance significance. The degree to which information is gathered will depend on the nature or level of significance/impact in each individual case.

- 4.4.6 Paragraphs 7 -11 advise on the assessment of significance as part of the application process. Paragraph 7 states that:

*“Heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting, being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting early in the (development) process is very important to an applicant in order to conceive of and design a successful development and to the local planning authority in order to make decisions in line with legal requirements and the objectives of the development plan and the policy requirements of the NPPF.”*

- 4.4.7 This section indicates that an understanding of the nature, extent and level of significance are important since they enable an understanding of the need for and best means of conservation, how adaptable an asset may be and in total, how policies should be applied.

## 5.0 ASSESSMENT

### 5.1.0 Introduction.

Wild Farm has been neglected for over 20 years and is in urgent need of repair and rehabilitation. In practical terms as an unoccupied building, it can only be viewed as a 'building at risk'. Despite being located relatively close to centres of population the site remains isolated and has been the subject of vandalism. Given the current condition of Wild there is an urgent need to establish a scheme to bring the building back into use as a practical family home whilst ensuring that the character and interest of the building is respected and enhanced.

### 5.2.0 Significance.

The application of the Historic Environment policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (henceforth the NPPF) requires that an understanding of the significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by development is demonstrated as the basis for decision making. The level of detail 'should be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on (their) significance.' (NPPF p189).

5.2.2 Advice on the assessment of significance is provided by Historic England in 'Conservation Policies, Principles and Guidance. April 2008' (see p. 4.4.1 above). Stating that

*"Significance is a collective term for the sum of all of the heritage values attached to a place."*

It identifies the groupings of values for assessment which are evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal values. In the case of Wild Farm there is evidence of the occupation of the site since the early medieval period as demonstrated by the presence of the moat at the site, supported by documentary sources which refer to a Manor of Weld in 1200. It is known that there was a manor here in the mid C17th. The current building on site represents the most recent phase of occupation which can be identified on the OS map bases since 1883, (as referred to in the list description) indicating that from the late C19th the footprint of the house is the same as it is today.

5.2.3 The historic value of the farmhouse is described in the one of the reasons for its designation as a building of architectural and historic interest as follows,

*'it was built during the most significant period of agricultural development in England which resulted in a wealthier yeoman class whose gentrification was reflected in their farmhouses.'*

5.2.4 The aesthetic value of the building lies can also be sourced from the reasons for designation in so far as building represents,

*'an unusual example of a Palladian inspired farmhouse which captures the spirit of the historicist approach to architecture that is so typical of the period.'*



When considering the aesthetic value of Wild Farm, it is important to note the distinction that is made in the list description, that excludes the west wing of the building, thought to date from the 1930's.

- 5.2.5 The communal value of Wild Farm may be seen in its use as the home for the Superintendent of the Harperbury Hospital. The latter was established on land acquired by Middlesex County Council, close to the application site, which was formerly part of the site of the Porters Park Estate. The hospital to treat patients with mental disabilities was opened in 1931.

5.3.1 **Impact of the proposals on Wild Farm.**

The proposed works of alteration and extension to the listed building that are presented in the current proposal build on the principles of proposals that have been the subject of successful applications in recent years but have been refined and modified to complement the special character of Wild Farm.

- 5.3.2 As indicated in part 2 of this statement approved applications 17/1858/HSE and 17/1859/LBC refer to the refurbishment and repair of Wild Farm together with the construction of a single storey extension. The approval of the details required by conditions to execute this planning permission and listed building consent provide the basis for the repair and refurbishment of the major part of the listed building. The proposal in the current application, that differs from the approved scheme, is the complete replacement of the existing two-storey west wing of the building, as well as a re-design of the approved single storey rear extension.
- 5.3.2 As described above, Wild Farm comprises two distinct physical parts. The major part is the two storey Palladian style farmhouse that dates from the early C18th. The second part is to the west wing to which a 1930's date is ascribed. This probable date is not disputed, particularly since interior detailing such as the doors, provides confirmation and investigation of the structure indicates cavity wall construction as illustrated below.



It is equally evident that the extension is built off an earlier foundation which appears to be contiguous with those of the greater part of the building. Examination of the walls internally and externally reveals that new walls were raised for the current west wing above the basement, evidenced by a change in brick type and colour. Despite the retention of some

earlier brickwork in the foundations of this wing, which would have evident to the Historic England Inspector (who commented on the basement), this part of the building is excluded from protection. Thus, it must be concluded that the existing west wing does not contribute to the significance of the listed building and that in NPPF terms, removal will not result in 'harm'.

- 5.3.3 The proposed replacement two storey extension has been designed to form a subservient addition to the listed building. The use of a flat roof behind a parapet not only respects the position of the original dormer window element in the existing building but denotes a lesser order of 'pavilion like' addition replicate the tradition of servants' accommodation. The use of 2-pane width sash windows distinguishes the addition from the core of the listed building. The development of the position and design detail of the current proposal reflects discussions in a meeting with the Council's heritage advisors following the submission of the pre-application design scheme. The height of the proposed wing has been reduced to the minimum possible consistent with providing acceptable internal head heights. Design distinction is provided by a corbelled horizontal band above the first-floor windows and those of the single storey extension as well as an indentation on the side elevation between the proposed single and two storey additions.
- 5.3.4 Deliberate design decisions have been made with regard to the detailing of the replacement wing. These seek to ensure that whilst it appears to be a natural, elegant and appropriate part of Wild Farm, on closer inspection there are subtle design differences that will ensure that it can be read as an addition to the listed building so that there is no confusion as to the sequential development of the dwelling. These include a painted render finish to the walls rather than replicating the painted brick of the existing.
- 5.2.4 The existing 1930's west wing is a poorly designed addition to the listed building that detracts from the special character and appearance of Wild Farm. The application proposal provides very significant benefits in terms of design over both the existing situation and the proposal contained in the most recently approved applications. The latter retained the form of the 1930's addition, all be it repaired and refurbished as well as a new extension. The current applications, including the single storey extension, the footprint of which reflects the approved proposal, present a unified addition with design detail in the classical tradition which will complement and enhance the existing Palladian style of the greater part of Wild Farm.
- 5.2.5 The unified scheme for replacement of the west wing and extension will thus have a positive impact on the appearance and character of Wild Farm.
- 5.2.6 The application scheme also includes the reconstruction of the brick wall link between the east side of the farmhouse and the existing single storey outbuilding which will be repaired. These proposals to both restore and protect constituent parts of the site will enhance the setting of the heritage asset which is Wild Farm.

#### 5.4.0 Adherence to planning policy.

##### 5.4.1 The 1990 Act imposes the following duty,

*'In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority .....shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting.....'*

The application proposal not only preserves the listed building but will result in an enhancement of both its appearance and function by the proposal to replace the poor-quality west wing and to ensure the repair and restoration of the listed building. Works to restore the collapsed wall to the side of the building and the existing outbuilding result in preservation of historic fabric but also the enhancement of the setting of the prime listed building on the site. The application proposals have been developed with the guidance of the Council and its heritage advisors to ensure a development that makes a positive contribution to the significance of the heritage assets such that there is no conflict with the duty imposed by the 1990 Act.

##### 5.4.2 The policies of the NPPF seek to sustain and enhance the significance of heritage assets and to ensure that new development should make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (paragraph 192). As indicated above the existing condition of Wild Farm does not make a positive contribution to the significance or character of this heritage asset. The application proposals will sustain and enhance Wild Farm, reversing the past 20 years of physical decline to ensure the productive future of the listed building. The proposals will not result in any harm to the heritage asset and thus there is no conflict with the policies of the NPPF.

##### 5.4.3 The heritage policies of the Hertsmere Local plan are compliant with the overarching requirements of the NPPF in seeking the retention and protection of the constituent elements of the local historic environment, ensuring that new development makes a positive contribution to these aims. As demonstrated above, the proposals seek the restoration and enhancement of the listed building to return it to an active use as a residential property in a manner consistent with its historic interest. The application proposals fully respect and comply with these policies.

## 6.0 SUMMARY

- 5.1.0 Wild Farm has fallen into a state of disrepair due to the neglect and indecision about its future over the past 20 or so years. The condition of the building and the wider site now fails to reflect the historic significance of the site in terms of longevity of occupation and the architectural significance of the building. The intention of the proposal is to restore the listed building to the appearance and condition that it deserves to ensure a viable future. The respectful design proposed for the replacement of the existing west wing and new rear extension will enhance the existing building and overall significance of this unusual site in a manner fully consistent with established national and local planning policies.

## 7.0 APPENDIX

Wild Farm: statutory list entry.

### Summary

Farmhouse built in the late C18 or early C19.

### Reasons for Designation

The farmhouse to Wild Farm, known as White House and built in the late C18 or early C19, is listed at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

\* Architectural interest: it is an unusual example of a Palladian inspired farmhouse which captures the spirit of the historicist approach to architecture that is so typical of the period;

\* Plan form: this has a certain elegance in its circulation route around the central, semi-circular, spiral stair, which creates an oval-shaped hall and landing, echoed by the bow-shaped recess in the drawing room and bedroom;

\* Historic interest: it was built during the most significant period of agricultural development in England which resulted in a wealthier yeoman class whose gentrification was reflected in their farmhouses;

\* Historical context: it is associated with the medieval moated manorial site to the immediate east which evidently evolved over the centuries into the farmstead. Although the site is not scheduled, its vestigial remains represented by the partially filled-in moat provide an important historic context for the farmhouse.

### History

The site of Wild Farm may probably be identified with the manor of Weld which was held by Geoffrey de Childwyk in the early C13. It no longer exists as a separate manor as it was incorporated into Porter's Park to the south. The (unscheduled) moated site directly to the east of Wild Farm is assumed to have been the manorial centre. The Andrews and Dury map of 1766 depicts a cluster of buildings on the site of Wild Farm but the scale is too small for them to be identifiable. According to Historic Environment Data, both the 1766 map and the 1840 tithe map name this area 'Upper Wild'. The latter map shows a post-medieval farmstead with ranges of barns and other buildings, most of which had been demolished by the time of the first edition Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1883. The map shows a building that has the same footprint as the current farmhouse which, based on its architectural style, was probably built in the late C18 or early C19. There is an orchard to the south, a long range of outbuildings to the east, a small private gas works to the north-west, and sheep pens to the east of the moat. The second edition OS map shows that a small conservatory has been added to the house on the east side of the south (rear) elevation, and a small building, thought to be a coach house, has been erected to the west. On the third edition map of 1924 the gas works are no



longer shown and a small building has been erected in the garden to the south. By the time of the revised edition of 1939 this building has gone, as has the conservatory.

Wild Farm became the residence of the Superintendent of Harperbury Hospital (originally part of the Middlesex Colony for Mental Defectives) which first opened in 1931. It may have been around this time that the extension (excluded from the listing) was built on the west side of the farmhouse. This must have replaced an earlier extension as the footprint of the building has not changed since the 1883 OS map. The coach house has now been converted into a one-bedroom studio, and the farmhouse and the range of outbuildings to the east have been derelict for a number of years.

### Details

House built in the late C18 or early C19.

**MATERIALS:** handmade red brick, painted white and a roof covering of plain red tiles with bonnet tiles at the hips.

**PLAN:** the house has a rectangular plan with central projecting bays at the front and rear.

The two-storey extension on the west end, probably added in the 1930s, is not included in the listing.

**EXTERIOR:** the three-bay house is in the late-Georgian villa style. It has two storeys and an attic under a hipped roof with a dentilled eaves cornice, and flat-headed dormer windows wholly within the roof space on the east and west slopes. The principal south elevation has a central, projecting, gabled entrance bay with dentilled verges and a dentilled cornice across the gable which gives the impression of being a pediment. This is lit by a semi-circular attic window. The six-panelled door has been adapted to have four glazed upper panels and it is set within a concave moulded doorcase with a semi-circular fanlight. The semi-circular canopy above has a coffered soffit and is supported by scroll brackets. Each bay is lit by six-over-six pane sash windows with moulded architraves set flush in the wall and flat gauged brick arches. Four of the panes in the first-floor window in the central bay have been replaced by a single pane without glazing bars.

The rear (south) elevation has a similar composition except that there is a six-over-six pane sash window in place of the front door, and the flanking bays have semi-circular French windows with four panes to each leaf. Some of the glazing bars have been removed and the glass smashed. The east side is lit on the ground floor by a six-over-six pane sash window, whilst the window above is bricked up. **INTERIOR:** the interior is arranged on a cross-shaped plan with each arm of the cross occupied by a room with an interconnecting door, which creates a circular access route around the central semi-circular winding stair. This rises to the attic around a closed well that forms a semi-circular recess on the north wall of the entrance hall, ground floor and attic landings. The west rooms on the ground and first floors also have a wide bow-shaped recess on the inner wall in which the fireplaces are situated.

The interior retains a good deal of joinery, fixtures and fittings. These include parquet floors in the

hall and ground-floor east room, narrow wooden floorboards in most of the other rooms, pictures rails and some skirting boards. The moulded doorcases survive and those on the first floor retain panelled soffits and jambs, and four-panelled doors. The window in the ground-floor north room also has panelled jambs and tripartite panelling below. There are numerous fireplaces which mostly have relatively plain moulded surrounds and boarded up grates, some with later tiled insets. The fireplace in the first-floor south room is more elaborate with a mantelshelf supported by brackets, a three-panelled frieze, and fluted jambs which recede towards the bottom creating an elongated curve.

The four rooms in the attic have plank and batten doors with upright handles. The lath and plaster has been removed from the collar rafter roof leaving exposed timbers which retain the nails originally used to fix the laths. The small cellar retains a workbench with a slate counter.

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