

Heritage Statement & Design and Access Statement

PHASE I ALTERATIONS

Mellifont Abbey
Mr Simon Parks

1897 Rev -



1.0 Historic and Special Importance of the Buildings

An Historic Building Assessment has been undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology which is included as supporting material for this application (ref. CR0713_01 dated June 2021).

This includes a thorough analysis of the existing buildings and their significance, including a series of plans indicating likely construction phases on pages 42, 61 and 67.

This initial application has been developed after considering the recommendations in the above report.

The Listing is as follows:

1925/21/169 22-NOV-66

WOOKEY HIGH STREET (South side) MELLIFONT ABBEY, BOUNDARY WALLS AND GATE PIERS (Formerly listed as: HIGH STREET Mellifont Abbey)

GII* Former rectory, currently a residential home. Mid- to late-C18 with earlier origins. The house probably stands on or close to the

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site of the medieval rectory, and is believed to incorporate parts of that building's fabric as well as possible elements of the medieval church house. Much of the site of the former pleasure ground to the south-west of the house has been built over and is thus not of interest. MATERIALS: The building is built of lias stone rubble and brick, with brick dressings and with Doulting stone quoins, under lead and slate roofs with brick stacks. PLAN: A multi-phase building comprising principally of late-medieval and C18 ranges on an ancient site. The principal range, with its west-facing façade, probably incorporates C13 to C17 material and was substantially extended in the C18 when it was refashioned in the Gothick style, This range fronts an irregular conglomeration of ranges including a south-east wing of late-C14 or C15 date, which is considered to represent part of the former high-status rectory house; the current kitchen block to the rear which is set at an oblique angle to the rest of the building and is probably C18 or C19; and an C18 stair block, also to the rear of the main range. Further alterations and additions were carried out in the early C19 and the second half of the C20. The C20 additions are not of interest. EXTERIOR: The principal (west) range is in a Gothic Revival style and incorporates considerable C13, C14 and C15 re-used freestone detail. It is of two storeys, four: one: three bays, with a crenellated and moulded parapet and brick stringcourses. The sash windows with exposed sash boxes are set in two-centred arched openings with brick surrounds and keys. Three of the windows are blank and infilled with brick; the left bay on the ground floor has C20 French windows with a laced Gothick fanlight. Above the heads of the first-floor windows are C13 medieval carved freestone busts and corbels of uncertain provenance. The façade is dominated by a three-stage, embattled central tower or porch constructed in a chequerboard pattern with alternating advancing and receding brickwork. It has diagonal buttresses and openings to each face of the ground floor with rusticated surrounds and carved heads as keys. The entrance doorway is Strawberry Hill Gothic with a half-glazed door, sidelights and elaborate ogee-arched fanlight. To the first floor of the tower is a re-used freestone oriel of four-lights with leaded lights, a lower decorative frieze and an ornamental cornice. To the third stage is an arcade of late-C13 medieval spandrel sections featuring mermaids and monkeys playing musical instruments, an C18 oculus, and two pedimented niches with brick surrounds. The right return has an opening to the ground floor with a late-C20 French door with a laced head surviving over, and there are tripartite-barred sash windows to the upper floor; the central window to the first floor is set within a pointed-arch opening. To the right is a canted bay of three storeys. It was added in the C19 and is built of brick with a brick string and coping. The coursed stone rubble walling beyond (east) forms part of the south elevation of the south-east wing. It is lit by C18 or C19 timber casements, including one whose opening has been reduced. The eastern end of this wing is obscured by a two-storey extension that was added in the 1980s and is not of interest. Attached to the east corner of the modern addition is a single-

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storey block (currently the kitchen) that is aligned north-west to south-east; a different alignment to the rest of the house. It has uncoursed stone rubble walls and is of two phases. There are window and door openings of various styles and dates, including simple brick arches (blocked) in the west and south walls. The battlemented parapet and stringcourse continue along the north side of the principal range. The north elevation includes a staircase block bay to the left-hand end which is lit by two C18 timber laced oculi in brick surrounds with leaded lights, and a sash window has been inserted beneath the lower of the two. To the right, at first floor, is a window set within a two-centred arch surround of brick matching others on the west front, with a further oculus above. INTERIOR: The medieval south-east wing has a narrow footprint and has been sub-divided into bedrooms. There is a blocked lancet window in the north wall which is only visible within the range. The roof has two arch-braced collared trusses that are both open and the cambered collars are chamfered. It comprises three bays and the end bays have been truncated by an inserted stack at the east end and the stone rubble rear wall of the main range to the west. The roof of the current kitchen block to the north-east, bounding the present churchyard, includes two re-used smoke-blackened trusses, probably re-used from a high-status building. The house retains fittings of a high quality, including rich, decorative plasterwork to a number of rooms. The entrance hall in the west front has a shaped ceiling and cornice with egg-and-dart decoration and a pendant frieze, and Gothick door cases with applied cherub faces and crocketed pinnacles to the jambs. The panelled doors leading off the hallway and the soffits of the arched windows in the two ground-floor reception rooms also feature fine cusped motifs. The dado rail, cornice and ceiling decoration in the dining room are particularly finely detailed with Gothic arcading and cusping. Unfortunately original fireplaces do not survive in the reception rooms. The principal stairway has a ramped handrail and encompasses chinoiserie in the form of fretwork balustrading, and a matching fretwork frieze at the top of the staircase. The vaulted ceiling above is lit by an octagonal lantern which has applied decoration to the panels. A lift has been inserted within the stairwell. The quality of the fittings to several of the first-floor rooms in front range, including several Gothick door surrounds and a decorative cornice (hidden above a suspended ceiling), suggest that these rooms were originally a large drawing room, that has since been sub-divided, and an antechamber. A further fine doorcase with cusped pinnacles survives beyond. Other panelled doors are covered with flush fire proof boards. Most of the other upstairs rooms have plain cornicing or no decoration. Some of the plasterwork detailing appears to date from the early to mid-C19, and contrasts with other plasterwork that stylistically is attributed to the mid-to late C18. Examples of the later work probably include the cherub's heads, which appear to be applied to the doorframes in the hallway, and possibly some of the Gothic-arched motifs at the top of the stairway. At the north end of the range is a plainer, rear staircase. The attic floor retains some

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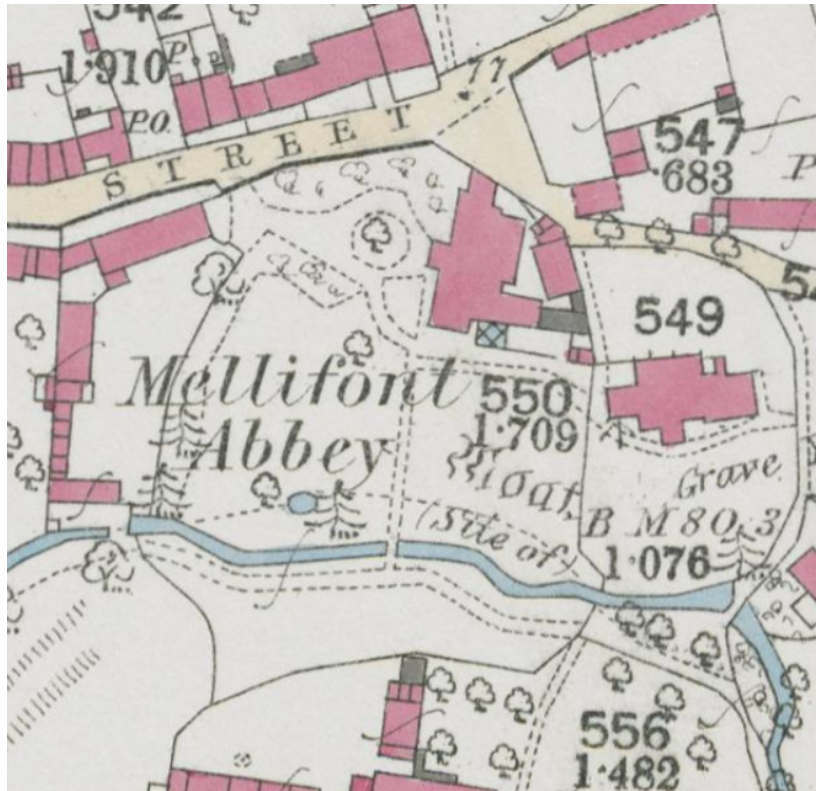
plank doors with L-shaped and strap hinges, respectively. The accessible attic bays at the north end of the principal range have exposed queen post trusses with lead flats, possibly replacing a ridged roof. SUBSIDIARY FEATURES: The house is bounded on three sides by contemporary and later high stone rubble and brick walls and is approached via a pair of C20 wrought-iron gates on earlier gate piers with brick lacings and moulded caps. There is a Gothick doorway with brick jambs and a plank door in the east boundary wall, providing access into the churchyard. HISTORY: From at least the eleventh century and until the Reformation, the manor of Wookey was held by the Bishops of Wells and an episcopal manor house (Grade II* listed Court Farm qv) was built adjacent to Mellifont Abbey in the C13. An ecclesiastical peculiar (outside the jurisdiction of the bishop of the diocese) was created at Wookey in the form of rectorial lands, initially for the dean of Wells and then re-assigned to the sub-dean of the Cathedral for the upkeep of his post which, unlike the rest of the Episcopal manor, pertained until 1847. The sub-deans were also the rectors of St Matthew's Church in the village, and a rectory house (parts of which survive within Mellifont Abbey) was built to the north-west of the church. In 1548 the rectory house was leased to the Godwyn family and was described in a terrier of 1634 as containing 'a hall, a parlour, a kitchen, a buttery, a scullery, a pantry, and a brewhouse, with chambers over them one storey high'. The rectory also had a house in the churchyard, containing a hall a kitchen and a loft over that under one ruffe' (1557 Survey of the Manor). It is likely that this building is what probably became known as the old church house and which was subsequently said to have been incorporated into the main fabric of the rectory house as appurtenances to Mellifont Abbey. The rectory was extended substantially in the C18 as a country house when it was leased to the Piers family, who, like the Godwyns before them, had held high posts in the diocese. The house was re-fashioned in a medieval, Gothick idiom. William Ekins Piers, son of William Piers, the MP for Wells (who was also included in the lease), inherited the lease to the rectory house from his uncle, Thomas Piers, in 1753; and the lease to the adjacent manor house in 1758. Following his death in 1765 these interests were passed to his sister Lady Elizabeth Montague Bertie. Recent documentary research (2010) into the history of Mellifont Abbey has sought to demonstrate that the Gothic Revival work was carried out in two phases: in circa 1753-65 and during the 1770s. A description of the house in 1783, as a 'late new-built MANSION-HOUSE at Wookey' may imply that a great deal of rebuilding and improvement had recently taken place. Furthermore an analysis of the building's fabric suggests that the lower two storeys of the tower and the restyling of the façade of the principal range were not carried out at the same date, and that the third storey of the tower may have been added in conjunction with the restyling of the façade. A sequence of contrasting walling materials at high level in the southern part of the rear (east) elevation of the principal range may possibly represent further evidence for two phases of C18 aggrandisement, although the Reverend William Phelps, writing from

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Mellifont Abbey in 1836, was of the opinion that the C18 aggrandisement dated from circa 1730. A pleasure ground was laid out to the south-west by 1794. Shortly after this date, in circa 1800, the house was re-named Mellifont Abbey, possibly after the abbey of the same name in County Louth, Ireland. For much of the C19 and C20 the rectory house was leased to various individuals including, from 1817 to 1824, the Reverend William Phelps who undertook cosmetic improvements to the reception areas and added some accommodation. Shortly after the Second World War the house was converted to a residential nursing home. SOURCES Charles L Eastlake, A History of the Gothic Revival (1970) John H Winstone, Mellifont Abbey, Wookey, Somerset. An Assessment for Planning Purposes (1997) English Heritage, Mellifont Abbey, Wookey, Somerset (2010), unpub. REASON FOR DECISION: Mellifont Abbey, a mid-C18 house with earlier origins is designated at Grade II* for the following principal reasons: *Evolution: it illustrates a history that dates back to at least the C14; the surviving medieval elements and the C18 work, which is a skilful example of the Gothick style, combine to create a synthesis of different periods *Architectural interest: the C18 remodelling contributes to the more than special interest of the building; the idiosyncratic, exuberant facade of the principal range is a notable and well-preserved example of C18 gentrification in the Gothick style, possessing its own character as a fashionable re-working of an earlier dwelling *Interiors: the principal rooms are richly adorned with mid- to late-C18 and early-C19 decorative plasterwork, doors and door furniture of particularly high-quality craftsmanship *Sculptural interest: the medieval architectural fragments incorporated in the tower are especially fine and some, particularly the spandrels, are of more than special interest in the corpus of C13 English sculpture *Historic interest: one of the key buildings, along with the Grade I listed church and the Grade II* Court Farm, that reflects the importance of Wookey as a settlement from the Anglo-Saxon period onwards.

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Historic mapping



1888



1910-1940

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2.0 Justification of the Listing.

The house is of significant historic importance hence it's Grade II* status. Of particular note is the locally unusual 18th century Gothick work of which a good deal remains along with medieval elements.

3.0 The Buildings' Setting

The building occupies a village setting, in a prominent position within the village of Wookey and in an historically significant location adjacent to the church.

4.0 Justification for the proposed works and specification

- 4.1 Mellifont Abbey is a large house which until recently has been in use as a care home. Over the years, it has accumulated a good deal of unsympathetic additions and is in need of a significant amount of care and attention. It is proposed to undertake the work in a number of phases, with the first phase being to provide the owner with a number of habitable rooms in which he can live whilst the remainder of the work is carried out.
- 4.2 This application is to cover the first phase of work, as shown on the drawings and will propose work to the following rooms: G. 04 to 06 and G. 09 to 11. On the first floor, F. 09 to F 13.
- 4.3 An application has already been approved for work to install a kitchen in room G. 04.
- 4.4 **External works:**

- 4.4.1 It is proposed to tidy up the existing cast iron soil stacks to the north of the building. See drawings. The new external soil stack is proposed to be fitted in cast iron and painted black with a satin finish paint.
- 4.4.2 The new oil tank is to be situated to the east of the main gate. The reason this location has been chosen is that it can be sited here without disturbing the existing, protected trees in any way. It can be easily screened, and has the significant advantage of allowing re-filling with the oil lorry remaining in the street. A good deal of damage has been caused to the gate pillars in the past by the regular passing of small lorries through this gate entrance, in particular when they turn in and out of what is a very narrow street with on street parking significantly reducing the effective road width. The proposed oil tank will be sat on a concrete pad in accordance with the latest regulations and manufacturer's instructions. It will be hidden by new native species hedging. See site plan.



proposed oil tank location

4.5 Windows:

- 4.5.1 All windows to be overhauled, repaired and redecorated. Some sash windows have a cill profile which encourages water to pool on top of the cill. Where this is the case, the cills are to be changed to introduce a steeper profile since this existing detail has produced areas of rot.

4.6 Heating:

- 4.6.1 The boiler will sit in new room G.07, formed using timber stud and modern plasterboard and skim. The flue will exit through the east wall, over GW5.

- 4.6.2 No cage will be required over the flue at this height. This location is possible because it is proposed to fix GW5 closed. This is an image of the proposed flue:

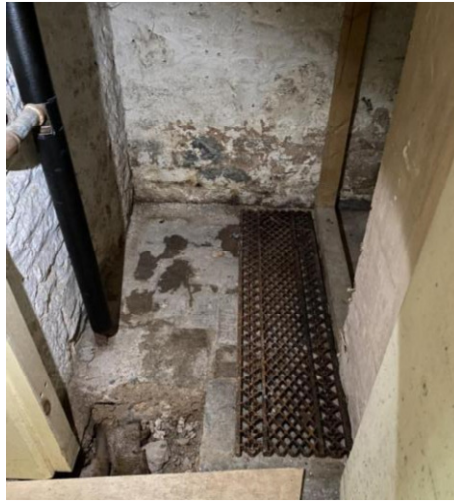


- 4.6.3 Heating pipes will pass from the boiler room into the existing service trench in the service corridor G. 09:



service trench with connections to G. 04

This will mean extending this existing service trench under the north service stairs and into the north courtyard. There is a brick floor under these stairs. It is proposed to carefully lift and number 8 bricks, dig the service trench then refit the bricks in the same positions as existing. Lifting these bricks is not ideal but this solution offers the least disruptive option for housing the services as it allows the existing service trench in the corridor to be reused.



Brick flooring under north stair

Upon completion of the fitting of the services in the main corridor, it is proposed to bed reclaimed blue lias flags over the existing concrete trench sides, to complete the floor.

- 4.6.4 The surface to the north courtyard is concrete. It is proposed to remove this concrete and finish the open courtyards using new blue lias flags.
- 4.6.5 The heating pipes will also pass into the first floor void and the pipe routes will be carefully planned to be minimally visible. Radiator positions are shown on the plans. Radiators will be of the column type to fit into the aesthetic of the Listed Building.
- 4.6.6 The cellars G. 10 and G. 11 are proposed to be fitted with electric heating. This will enable them to be heated periodically, and independently of the main heating system.
- 4.6.7 The kitchen G/04, whilst it will have two radiators, will also have underfloor heating. This is proposed to be a Nu-heat diffuser panel system, with trays sitting between each existing joist holding underfloor heating pipes. There is proposed to be additional insulation fitted under the trays between each joist and held in place using treated timber battens. Air flow is to be maintained across the sleeper walls under. The manifold will sit within one of the kitchen cupboards on the south side of the room. The existing floor boards are to be re-fitted, with the underfloor heating being set so that it will not get hotter than 27 degrees in order to avoid the boards warping.
- 4.6.8 A wood burner is to be fitted to the fireplace in room G.04, the kitchen. The combination of the three heat sources in the kitchen (woodburner, radiators and underfloor heating) will offer flexibility for both mild and very cold weather in a room with a large volume, which will be one of the most heavily used in the house.

4.7 Electrics

- 4.7.1 Re-wiring is required throughout the phase I area of the house. It is proposed to re-use existing wiring routes wherever these are suitably discrete and non-destructive. New wiring routes are to be chased into existing plaster which is to be made good using lime plaster. Cornices, skirtings, dado rails, picture rails etc are not to be cut. Cables are to pass behind each of these.
- 4.7.2 A new electric mains supply is to be brought into the house. There are to be two distribution boards. One in the utility room G. 06 and the second will be in the south service corridor in the location shown on the drawings. The

cable will pass from the existing service trench in the north service corridor under the hallway and into the south service corridor using an existing duct.

- 4.7.3 Heat Detectors and smoke alarms to be fitted throughout in accordance with the building regulations. These are to be fitted in unobtrusive way as possible, using visually minimal fittings.

4.8 Insulation and roof void access

- 4.8.1 Insulating a property such as this is difficult, but it is proposed to do as much as reasonably possible, using breathable insulation material where appropriate.
- 4.8.2 In the two attic room and landing floors, it is proposed to carefully lift every fourth floor board, clean, and fill the floor void with Thermafleec or similar approved sheep's wool insulation.
- 4.8.3 Elsewhere above the corridor, bed 2 and tower area, it is proposed to fit up to 240mm Thermafleec or similar approved sheep's wool insulation above the ceilings. This is with the caveat that it is safe to do so without further works.
- 4.8.4 A ceiling hatch is to be fitted over the ceiling to G. 07 to enable the maintenance inspection of the flue and general inspection of the roof void
- 4.8.5 Utility room walls: In room G. 07 Boiler room there is a blocked external door. This has been bocked using a single skin of bricks. It is proposed to dry line this eastern wall in order to preserve heat generated by the boiler. The dry lining is to be made from treated timber studs sat on dpc, with PIR insulation in between and plasterboard and skim to finish. Similarly, there is an area of very thin wall above the door GD3. It is proposed to treat this in the same way.



shelf above GD3 (white)

4.9 Structural repairs

- 4.9.1 Two truss ends in the attic are very rotten. See drawings for location and structural engineer's drawings for details.



East truss foot



West truss foot

There is an extensive amount of rot in each of these truss feet, along with a design fault in the historic roof which has led to significant deflection in the tie beam spanning across to the east truss foot shown above. This has been remediated in the past using an additional timber beam. When the end of the truss and the timber beam rotted out, a dense block pier was built under in an attempt to support it. This was built off the floor boards and a beam end. The floor boards have since rotted out, leaving the masonry pier unsupported. The historic principle truss foot and tie end is proposed to have new sections scarfed in below the purlin and the whole treated for beetle. All new timber to be oak with the exception of packers between the steel and the underside of the existing historic tie which are proposed to be softwood.

It is proposed to remove the masonry pier along with the additional timber beam and replace it with a new steel beam, bedded into the masonry on either side and resting on precast concrete padstones.

It is not proposed to intervene directly with the west truss foot, but instead to fit an additional purlin above which will take the weight off the truss foot and direct it into the masonry wall adjacent and the new steel beam.

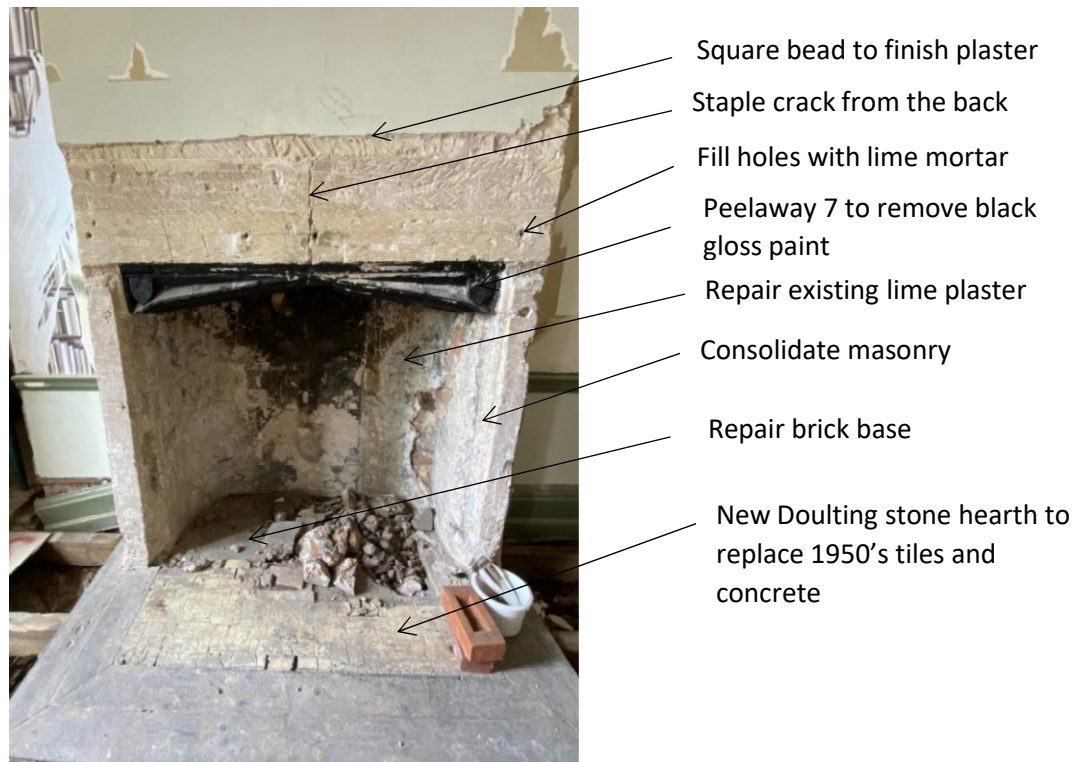
It is proposed to bring the new steels into the roof in sections through the house.

4.9.2 It is proposed to repair these truss ends as described by the structural engineer.

4.9.3 Underpinning to G.06, the utility room, along with a new limecrete floor, and underpinning to the southern buttress on the east tower are the subject of a separate application

4.10 Kitchen G.04

4.10.1 **Fireplace:** The existing fireplace is a stone tudor fireplace, re-sited from elsewhere (it is sitting on brick, a material not widely available in this area until the 18th century. It is proposed that a mason, specialising in conservation of historic stonework, repairs the tudor fire surround in accordance with the image below. A new woodburner, flexible flue liner and register board will be fitted along with a cowl to the chimney pot in order to comply with the Hetas regulation requirements.



4.10.2 **Floor:** the existing floor is a suspended timber floor. The timber boards are likely to date to the 19th century. These sit on timber joists which in turn sit on timber sleepers. There are two floor vents to the west wall of the house. These have not proven sufficient to ventilate the sub floor and as a result, there is extensive rot in the timber sleepers. A number of the timber joists have also suffered from rot.

It is proposed to carefully lift and number the timber joists, then replace the sections of timber sleeper with new oak sections. The new sections are to be the same dimensions as the existing, good areas. At the end of each sleeper, a small section of DPC is to be fitted to ensure that the sleeper end is isolated from any damp passing from the masonry wall adjacent. The timber joists are to be re-fitted, with rotten areas supported using new soldier timbers adjacent. The insulation and underfloor heating are then to be fitted as described above, and the floor boards re-fitted using cut nails, lightly sanded, and oiled with linseed oil (sample available for inspection on site).



floor void generally



rotten timber

- 4.10.3 **Door GD5:** It is possible that this door did not sit in this position historically, or it indicates a lower status entry, because it is less ornate than the other doors in the hallway. A large modern fire stop has been applied and it is proposed to carefully remove this. Intumescent strips and a brush have been fitted to the thickness of the door. It is proposed to remove these and make good the timber before decorating. It is proposed to mirror the door swing so that the circulation works better into the kitchen and does not obstruct movement between the two areas of units.



GD5 from the corridor



modern door stop

- 4.10.4 **Door GD7 between the kitchen and breakfast room.** It is proposed to replace the rotten lintels here with new timber lintels designed and specified by the structural engineer. See structural engineer's information
- 4.10.5 It is proposed to fit a door in this position, with linings and architrave to match that which has been temporarily removed to allow for the lintel replacement.

4.11 **Breakfast Room G.05**

4.11.1 It is proposed to use room G. 05 as a breakfast room since this is adjacent to the kitchen.

4.11.2 **Fireplace:** Rooms G. 04 and G.05 along with the spaces immediately above on the first and attic levels would appear to belong to a building which sat on the site prior to the 1750's work which was subsequently engulfed and altered to suit the new Gothick building phase.

The fireplace to the Breakfast room G.04 has been partly opened up in consultation with the Conservation Officer in order to learn more about the historic fabric of the fireplace.

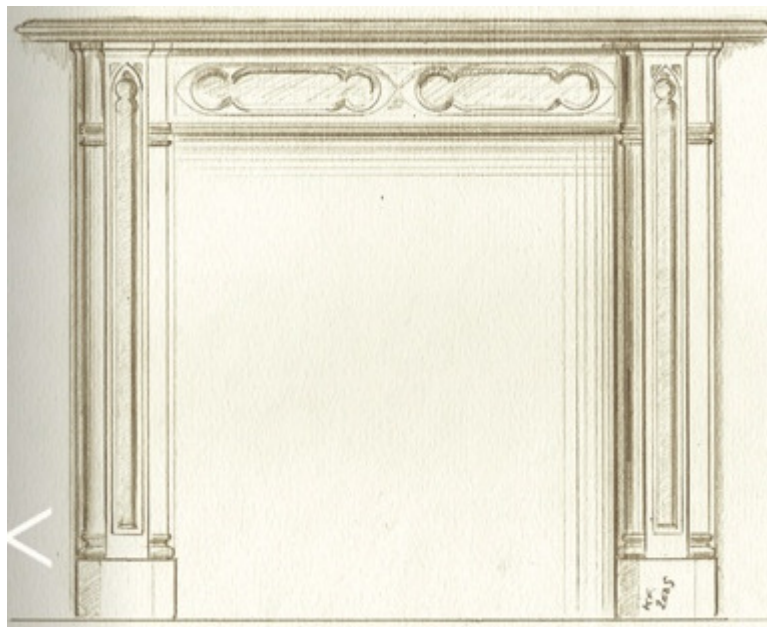
In the photograph below, to the right and left of the fireplace reveals, is dressed stonework, built to be seen, and subsequently keyed to allow a plaster finish. This would indicate an earlier, wider fireplace opening.

Later, the head of this opening was altered, to fit a brick arch and the whole plastered over, including the underside of the arch. It is possible that this work dated to the first phase of the Gothick work mentioned in the Listing. There was a subsequent phase of work which involved fitting infill brickwork, supported over the head of the opening with a metal strap. This work is rather more 'rough and ready' but the lime mortar used for this work, with large lumps of lime, would indicate that the work may be pre-Victorian, corresponding with a second phase of Gothick works. The fireplace recess under was plastered throughout, the remains of which can be seen.

A brick back was fitted to the opening at some time during one of these two phases of work. The floor of the fireplace opening is a mixture of brick and stone which is likely to date to the earlier of the two Gothick phases of work. Finally, a 19th century fireplace was fitted, which was coal burning, and the fireplace opening filled with brickwork to allow the fire basket to be set further towards the room. The fireplace along with its surround has since been lost, and the infill brickwork has been removed and placed alongside the fireplace.



It is not proposed to re-instate the lost 19th century fireplace since there is no evidence of what this may have looked like. Instead, it is proposed to retain the fireplace opening dimensions as shown above in the photo, retaining all the masonry as is, including the hearth. It is proposed to consolidate the existing plaster to the fireplace opening, and complete with new lime plaster. A new stone fire surround is to be fitted to the opening, the design of which is inspired by Strawberry Hill.



4.11.3 **Door GD2:** It is proposed to change this door back into a window. The masonry surrounding the door surround on the exterior clearly shows that this used to be a window. Externally, this will help the rhythm of the

windows on the external elevation read better. The 1750's window head is still in situ. For this reason, it is proposed to complete the sash window below with the same smaller panes as the north and south windows of the tower first floor.



Door GD2

- 4.11.4 **Ceiling:** It is proposed to fit a false ceiling, approx 200mm below the bottom of the existing ceiling. This will house the soil stack from the en-suite above and enable it to run internally, thus tidying up the external elevation. No cornice is proposed. The structural engineer has proposed incorporating a steel support into this ceiling to carry the hearth to bedroom F. 13 above. There is currently a temporary support to this hearth since there was none previously. The new ceiling is proposed to be constructed from timber sections and finished in plasterboard and skim. The existing picture rail and embossed wallpaper is to remain in its existing location and is not to be disturbed.



underside of first floor joists, showing embossed wallpaper (orange) above picture rail along with the modern ceiling height (ceiling since removed) and modern picture rail. The modern picture rail is to be removed.

4.12 Utility and Boiler rooms G.06 and G.07

- 4.12.1 It is proposed to create room G. 07, Boiler Room by constructing a new stud and plasterboard partition as show in the drawings. The existing window GW5 is to be overhauled and redecorated to provide light.
- 4.12.2 New flooring is proposed to be laid over the limecrete floor: new blue lias, honed finish
- 4.12.3 It is proposed to replace external door GD3 with a new boarded door. This is a modern door in a poor condition.



Door GD03

- 4.12.4 It is proposed to replace the glazing and fit a door in opening GD4 which is presumably a previous window to match those on the west elevation.

4.13 Service Corridor G.09

4.13.1 The service corridor is to remain generally unchanged, with the exception of works to the existing service trench running along its length. This service trench is currently edged with a concrete section to the west, poured in-situ. There are four trench connections through to the floor void in room G. 04. It is proposed to re-use this service trench and the connections through to G. 04 floor void to provide additional ventilation to the floor void, for electrical cabling and heating.

4.14 **Cellars G.10 and G.11**

4.14.1 It is proposed to remove the existing modern window GD 09 since this window is modern and in poor condition. It is likely that this opening was historically used for deliveries. For this reason, it is proposed to install a pair of robust boarded timber doors.



GD9 as existing

4.14.2 It is proposed to block up the opening to the rear of G. 11, cellar II. It is proposed to block this opening using a concrete block inner skin, insulated cavity and brick outer skin, pointed using lime mortar.

4.14.3 It is proposed to replace door GD08. This is currently a modern flush fire door. It is not proposed to replace the architraves or lining.

4.15 **Corridor F. 10**

4.15.1 It is proposed to remove the modern angled section of partition as shown on the drawings.

4.15.2 It is proposed to reinstate the partition between rooms F. 10 and F. 11. It is clear from the existing cornice and scarring on the external wall that there was an earlier partition in this position. The existing angled piece of partition which currently sits across this corridor is modern and is proposed to be removed.



Existing disruptions to cornice indicating location of former partition



view of cornice return from corridor. Modern angled partition to the centre.



window FW3. wall scar where partition sat previously; scar in cornice. Also, modern picture rail addition to the right.

4.15.3 The resultant corridor creates a visual link back to the front of the house via window FW3, allowing daylight into the top landing of the grand stairwell

and creating a space outside the entrance to what will be bedroom 1 but what was formerly an entertaining space.

4.15.4 It is proposed to build up the partition using timber studs and lime plaster. New plaster cornice is proposed to be run on both sides of this partition to match into the existing cornices. The profile of the new cornice is to match that of the existing cornice.

4.16 **Bedroom 2 F. 09**

4.16.1 The partition forming this corridor is historic. It is constructed from historic timber studs. The cornices also respect this partition. It is proposed to fit en-suite sanitaryware into the tower to service the bedroom. This is to be done sensitively, using free standing sanitaryware. Drainage is to pass through the floor void to one of the external soil stacks on either side of the tower.

4.16.2 Access to the sizeable roof void over the tower ceiling is difficult via the roofs. Access is required to survey the condition of the roof carpentry and to lay insulation. It is proposed that the hatch will have no architrave and will be painted in the same as the ceiling. An external hatch through the roof has been considered but it was felt that this would introduce the risk of leaks and would in itself be difficult to access since the tower roof sits much higher than the surrounding roofs.

4.16.3 Remove additional picture rail which has been fitted to the bottom of the cornice.

4.16.4 It is proposed to replace door FD07. This is currently a modern flush fire door. It is not proposed to replace the architraves or lining.

4.16.5 Make good all skirtings to match existing.

4.16.6 Fireplace:



This fireplace has been opened up in consultation with the Conservation Officer to remove modern plasterwork covering assumed 19th century rubble infill into the

fireplace opening. This has revealed an opening formed with brickwork, similar to that used elsewhere in the gothic phase(s) of work. Of particular note with this fireplace is the stone head of the fireplace opening which is formed from a single piece of stone with a basket handle arch.

The bottom of the fireplace opening is formed from brick and stone, and the large hearth is formed from a single piece of Douling Stone.

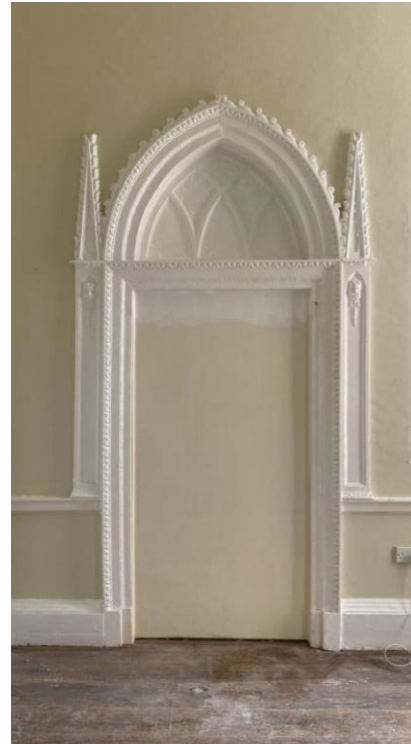
The fireplace recess is finished with plaster, remnants of which can be seen in the photo.

The dado rail has been cut off on either side of the chimney breast but it is assumed that this would have been incorporated into the fireplace design in a similar way to the ornate door surrounds.

It is possible that the effort put into carving an arched stone head was countered by the savings in cost and effort gained by applying a non-structural fireplace surround. This would lead one towards a similar method of construction as the existing ornate door surrounds, so building up the surround in timber and plaster to create the desired effect. The fireplace below at Strawberry Hill, although much more elaborate than is required here, would be a good influence for the design.



Fireplace at Strawberry Hill



Blocked door FD3

4.17 **Bedroom 3 F. 12**

4.17.1 There are no cornices in this room or in the adjacent corridor.

4.17.2 The modern, angled section of partition to the southern end of the corridor is proposed to be removed and the partition instead completed to mirror that in Bedroom 2 adjacent. The reasoning for this is to be able to retain the existing cut through opening in the structural wall, thus avoiding destructive work involved in moving it. This also has the advantage of creating a corridor that is broken - we don't want to straighten it as the resultant corridor would be very long and unattractive. This way, we will have the opportunity

for a picture or other item of interest to be placed on the partition return, which will also assist in breaking up the corridor.

- 4.17.3 It is proposed to replace door FD08. This is currently a modern flush fire door. It is not proposed to replace the architraves or lining.
- 4.17.4 Make good skirtings to match adjacent historic skirtings, where these have been damaged or are absent.
- 4.17.5 Make good plaster using lime plaster where this has been damaged by a partition installation.



- 4.17.6 **Fireplace:** This fireplace is similar to the opening in bedroom 4. It has a brick arch and surround, indicating that it is of similar date to the other gothic work.



The hearth has been removed and boarded over, leaving a clear indication of its size. It is likely that it was a Douling stone hearth similar to that in bedroom 2 and the attic rooms.

A later coal burning fireplace has been fitted, now lost, the fitting of which required hacking back the brickwork on either side of the fireplace opening. The fireplace was filled with rubble in order to fit this type of fireplace.

The earlier fireplace opening can be seen to have been plastered. Behind the plaster on the side of the opening can be seen the timber support to an earlier dado rail.

It is proposed to clear out the rubble infill from the fire surround, make good the plaster in lime plaster and reinstate a Douling stone hearth to fit the dimensions of that which has been removed. The design of the plasterwork around the windows is of a very distinctive design. It is proposed to fit a new cast iron fire surround over the opening which matches the window motifs.



4.17.7 En-suite: It is proposed to fit an en-suite into this room using the return created by the new section of partition. The proposed en-suite will be fitted behind a modern stud partition which will not extend to the ceiling. See drawings. This partition will not sit further into the room than the southern edge of the reveal of window FW5. In order to contain the steam which will be produced by the shower, it is proposed to have a ceiling over the en-suite. The extract ducting can then pass from this ceiling and through the new partition to exit through the roof.

4.18 **Bedroom 4 F. 13**

4.18.1 The proportions of this room are currently heavily compromised by the size of the existing modern en-suite partitions.

4.18.2 It is proposed to reduce the size of this en-suite to sit in line with the eastern return of the chimney breast using modern stud and plasterboard partitioning to replace that which is removed. The access to the en-suite will then be moved to the corridor, creating a space of a single bed to sit in the bedroom, and allowing the fireplace the address the room. A niche is created in the corridor which is it proposed to use as a service void through which to pass the heating pipe risers and electrics.

4.18.3 Fireplace: This fireplace is similar to the others described here, with a brick arched head and brick reveals and back. There are remains of plaster to the fireplace surround internally. The floor of the opening is finished with stone.



Unfortunately, the hearth has been removed but when seen from underneath, the brick support to the hearth can be seen. From this, the size of the former hearth can be approximated.



It is proposed to clear out the rubble infill, again, because there is no evidence showing what the later fireplace might have looked like. It is proposed to reinstate the hearth, using Douling stone to match those elsewhere.

This is a less high status room than those found elsewhere in the house. It is proposed therefore to fit a cast iron fireplace surround with simple Gothick motifs.

- 4.18.4 A new door and architrave are proposed to be fitted into new openings FD9 and FD10
- 4.18.5 It is proposed to replace door FD11 adjacent. This is currently a modern flush fire door. It is not proposed to replace the architraves or lining.

4.19 **Attic A. 02**

- 4.19.1 It is proposed to make good window opening AW3 which is currently boarded over.



Internal view of AW3

Note: This specification is written for the purposes of the Listed Building Consent Application **only**. It is not a fully detailed specification and is not to be used as such on site.

Design and Access Statement

1.0 Context

The building occupies a village setting, in a prominent position within the village of Wookey adjacent to the church.

2.0 Amount

One campaign of alterations as set out in the Heritage Statement

3.0 Layout

The alterations are proposed to be laid out to be in locations on the existing building where significant repairs or alterations are required to enable the use of the abbey as a modern family home.

4.0 Scale and Appearance

The scale and appearance of the alterations are to be of appropriate scale and appearance in each case to match the needs of the building from both a functional and conservation perspective.

5.0 Landscaping

The historic landscaped gardens already exist. The only proposed alteration is to fit an oil tank with a hedge screen in front.

6.0 Access

Access to and within the building is to remain unchanged

CJ Architects

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