

ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSION to
ROSSLEY MANOR
LOWER DOWDESWELL,
GLOUCESTERSHIRE,
GL54 4HG
HERITAGE, DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT



Heritage, Design and Access Statement
For
Proposed Alterations and Extension at Rossley Manor, Lower Dowdeswell, Gloucestershire,
GL54 4HG

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Design and Access statement forms part of a Listed Building Consent and Planning application for proposed alterations and extension at Rossley Manor, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL54 4HG. This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings and supporting documents.
- 1.2 Rossley Manor is a Grade II listed manor house. The site is situated within the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 1.3 The house is surrounded by formal gardens and parkland, and is sits in close proximity to the Dowdeswell Reservoir.
- 1.4 The house, originally built as a private residence and farmhouse in the 16th century, was used as a country club between 1931 and 1966. In 1966 its use was changed back to residential, although the house was divided into three private dwellings. In 1993 the house was re-instated as a single dwelling.
- 1.5 The core of the original farmhouse, dating from the 16th century, forms part of the existing southern wing of the current building. The extensions to the North and the East date from between the 17th and 20th century. In 1929 a new courtyard range was added to the North. Recent alterations include the conversion of the garage into an indoor swimming pool, and the erection of a new garage. Further details on the history of the house, including phasing plans showing the different stages of its construction, can be found in the Heritage Assessment supporting this application.
- 1.6 The current owner and applicant for this submission purchased Rossley Manor in 2021 and intends to use it as their long-term family home.
- 1.7 Following the initial submission on the 18th July 2022, the submission has been amended, and this document has been updated to reflect those changes. This document (Revision A) reflects the updated proposal.



Figure 1. An early 20th century view of the southern core of Rossley Manor

1.7 This document sets out the background of the property, its history, the client brief, and the considerations leading to the design of the proposed alteration and extension of Rossley Manor.

2.0 THE SITE

2.1 Rossley Manor is Located to the south east edge of Cheltenham, in the Cotwolds Area of Outstanding Natural beauty. The site is accessed from the London Road to the North via a gated entry.

2.2 The estate comprises approximately 140 acres, of which 100 acres is grassland. The main house sits in the North of the estate, which also contains is a Squash Court, first built in 1931, an outdoor swimming pool, a tennis court, and two late-twentieth-century cottages. The phasing and development of these buildings are explored in detail in the Heritage Assessment accompanying this application.

3.0 HISTORIC BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Rossley Manor has its origins in the 16th century, when it was a farm belonging to the Dowdeswell estate. The core of the original farmhouse was gradually extended over the centuries, including significance extensions in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, both of which survives today. By the nineteenth century, was one of the major farms on the Dowdeswell estate. By this time, a large range of farm buildings had been constructed to north and the main core of the house had been extended northwards.
- 3.2 Major alterations and extensions were carried out by Cecil Coxwell-Rogers, who inherited the property in 1916. Coxwell-Rogers took the house on as his private home and underwent a series of alterations and additions, probably after the First World War, or in the early 1920s. These appear to have been designed either by Sidney Pyle, or Charles Biddulph Pinchard, both architects who specialised in adapting and extending old Cotswold houses. The alterations enhanced the traditional vernacular character of the property according to the fashions of the time. It was at this time that Rossley Farm was renamed Rossley Manor.
- 3.3 Coxwell-Rogers' alterations continued into the 1930s and in 1931, he opened Rossley up as Rossley Manor Country Club. The Country Club ran until 1966 and during Coxwell-Rogers' lifetime (d.1953) he developed the mellow architectural character of the house and its interiors. Overall, his additions were relatively sensitively implemented, taking inspiration from the character of the original buildings on the site. The southern core of the house was retained and the remnants of the nineteenth century additions to the north were reconstructed as new accommodation.

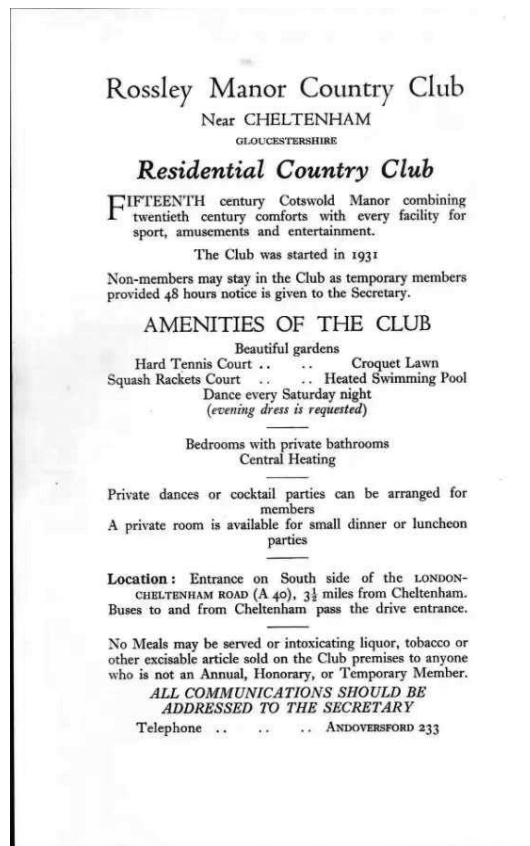


Figure 2. A brochure from 1953

3.4 It was at this time the new entrance wing, breakfast room, bay window and wood store were constructed, and the northern part of the house was remodeled as accommodation. The landscape was also redesigned.

3.5 The house reverted to private residential use in 1966 and was subdivided into three separate dwellings. Internal changes were made at this time and cottages were also built in the grounds.

3.6 Please refer to the accompanying Heritage Assessment document for a detailed history of Rossley Manor.

4.0 THE EXISTING HOUSE

4.1 Today, the main house is a long series of conjoined building ranges, laid out from south to north, with the oldest core of the house located in the southern section of the building. The southern elevation would have originally been the main entrance elevation to the house, prior to the 1920s.

- 4.2 The long, eastern elevation largely comprises a series of twentieth century additions, built around an earlier central range, probably added in the mid-nineteenth century. The eastern elevation acts as the main entrance to the house, and has done so since around 1920.



Figure 3. The eastern range in a 1920s photograph

- 4.3 The western elevation is partly focused upon a stone terrace, accessed by two loggias, added sometime after 1935. Both of these were designed as open structures. Today, the northernmost loggia is enclosed by three sets of modern doors.



Figure 4. A modern view of the enclosed northern loggia and breakfast room beyond.

- 4.4 To the north, conjoined to the original house at its north-western edge, is a large courtyard range, constructed from 1929 onwards. This comprises a wing of stables and store room, a gatehouse, a cottage, and a two-storey southern range that closes the yard. The southern range was built as a single-storey garage wing, but was raised in 1932 to include bedrooms above. This wing was heavily remodelled in 2005 (05/00260/LBC) when it was turned into an indoor swimming pool complex with cinema room. A modern covered passage links the pool hall and the main house.
- 4.5 The main house is built in coursed squared local limestone, with leaded light metal windows set in dressed stone surrounds. In contrast, the west elevation of the west range of the courtyard is built in brickwork, laid in English Garden wall bond. The corner links between the courtyard buildings are clad in painted weatherboards, on stone plinth walls. The roof is generally covered in Cotswold stone slates.
- 4.6 Generally, the building fabric of the main house is reasonable condition. It is intended that only localised repairs and improvements will be carried out as part of a general schedule of works. In addition, a maintenance regime will be put in place as part of a long term building management strategy.
- 4.7 The existing mechanical and electric services have been inspected which has revealed that overall they are in poor condition. Over the years alterations to the services, carried out as part of the conversion to a country club, then back to private dwelling(s), has been undertaken in a localised manner, rather than as part of a comprehensive service strategy. As a result, a high proportion of the mechanical and electrical services that are beyond their operational lifespan, will need to be renewed. With regard to the electrical services, it is intended that, where required, exposed internal cabling will be used to avoid the need to alter existing historic fabric. As far as possible, any existing service route that is suitable will be reused for the running of the new services, to limit the disruption to the historic fabric.
- 4.8 In recent years a number of alterations have been carried out which detract from the appearance of the heritage asset. It is intended that, where possible, such works will be reviewed and, where appropriate, corrected to enhance the appearance of the property.



Figure 5. A modern view of the courtyard, with the southern range (left) which now contains the pool.

5.0 STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

5.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Paragraph 128 states:

“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 is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.”

5.2 Significance is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework Glossary as:

“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site’s Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.”

5.3 In 2008 English Heritage (now Historic England) published Conservation Principles and Practice which assesses heritage assets in terms of four areas of value:

- Evidential Value – derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity.
- Historic Value – derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present.
- Aesthetic Value – derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from place.

- Communal Value – derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

5.4 Significance can be expressed as a hierarchical concept, using descending levels of value. The following guidelines have been established by James Semple Kerr, which have been adopted by the Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic England and others. The levels of significance are as follows:

- Exceptional – important at national to international levels.
- Considerable – important at regional level or sometimes higher.
- Some – usually of local value only but possibly of regional significance for group or other value.
- Little – of limited heritage or other value.
- Neutral - features which neither enhance nor detract from the value of the site.
- Negative/Intrusive – features which detract from the site.

5.5 HISTORIC VALUE

5.5.1 The earliest part of Rossley Manor is contained within the southern core of the existing house, which dates back to the 16th century. Traditionally, the property seems never to have been a manor house, only assuming this suffix c.1920. Instead, it appears to have originated as a humble farmhouse, gradually extended over the centuries. Despite modern alterations and the removal of the original cross passage, this part of the house retains high significance as the key remnant of these farming origins. Its origins are clearly still readable both externally and internally. The value of the historic core is considered to be **exceptional**.

5.5.2 This early fabric was added to in the 17th century, in the form of a new wing, now the Dining Room, creating a larger farmhouse. The basis of this structure remains on site today, albeit with alterations to windows, door openings and internal finishes. This wing is now largely consumed within twentieth century addition but retains some significance due to its internal character and original timber beams. A further new wing, this time in red brick wing, was built to the east of the original farmhouse in the eighteenth century. This was altered c.1920 by the addition of a two-storey bay to the southern elevation, but it is still legible as part of the gradual evolution of the farmhouse, aided in its distinction from the rest of the building by its more unusual brick finish. The value of this is considered to be **considerable**.

5.5.3 The historic and architectural significance of the house today partly stems from these earlier phases of building. Internally, these origins and development are still discernible within the existing floor plan. However, the alterations that were made to the house circa 1920 onwards, also hold some significance as a good example of a local architect working sensitively, within the Cotswold Vernacular. The value of this is considered to be **considerable**.

5.5.4 Rossley Manor was used as a country club for a considerable number of years from 1931-1966, the memory of which provides a historic link for local history. The history of the country club years is well documented in local newspapers, as well as mentions in the *Tatler Magazine* are indicators of some local historic significance. These years are also important to the history of the house, as much of the transformation of the house occurred during its time as a country club. This is considered to be of **some** value.

5.6 AESTHETIC VALUE

5.6.1 The aesthetic value of Rossley Manor stems from the sensitive application of the Cotswold Vernacular style, and the main recognizable features of this house are the triple-bay gabled front entrance hall wing, and the two open loggias on the western elevation, which despite being 20th century additions, are well in keeping with the local vernacular and amounted to a comprehensive remodelling and expansion in a sensitive manner. The value of this is considered to be **considerable**.

5.6.2 Despite the loss of the former farm buildings to the north, these alterations were implemented with relative sensitivity, showing great care for the preservation of the earlier parts of the main house. Cecil Coxwell-Rogers appears to have been a keen interior decorator and reportedly enjoyed collecting antiques that would add to the layers of history of the interior. The architects Pyle and Pinchard are not of any particular note today, but their work has stood the test of time due to its use of local materials, appropriate detailing and respect for vernacular building traditions. Internally, most historic timbers were retained and features were added to create a more obvious historicist appearance. Pyle's intention seems to have been to emphasise the 'old English' charm of the house and its historic features, whilst updating it for modern living at the time. The value of this is considered to be **considerable**.

5.7 COMMUNAL VALUE

5.7.1 The house does not have a specific communal value, although it may have a historic value to the relatives of the families who have in the past lived at Rossley Manor, previous generations of the local community employed on the estate, who may have personal family recollections, or those that have may been members of the country club. This is considered to be of **some** value.

5.8 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE

5.8.1 The southern core of the house is significant as it retains key remnants of the house's 16th century farmhouse origins.

5.8.2 The alterations carried out to the house under Coxwell-Richards by the architects Pyle and later by Pinchard are a good example of architects working within the Cotswold Vernacular style.

6.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSALS

GENERALLY

6.1.1 It is intended that the house will continue to be used as a single family home as the owner's permanent residence. The proposed alterations to the building seek to adapt the existing building to suit the needs of the present occupants without detracting from the appearance or historic significance of the heritage asset. The proposals are described in detail in the paragraphs below.

6.1.2 As part of the works, a localised reservicing of the building will be carried out, restricted to the replacement of the existing boilers. MEP equipment will be upgraded, and new energy-efficient boilers will be installed. Various repairs and improvements will also be undertaken.

6.1.3 The applicant is seeking to improve the energy efficiency of the house. The modern swimming pool has been identified as the most energy-hungry area of the building, and in order to address this, the applicant is seeking to supply renewable energy in the form of photovoltaic panels and air source heat pumps to supplement the running of the existing swimming pool, and reduce the consumption of fossil fuels incurred by the swimming pool. Please refer to the separate application submitted by others, as well as the accompanying report prepared by Bob Costello Associates. The client is pursuing 'option A', as set out in the report.

6.2 GROUND FLOOR

6.2.1 Utility Room

The existing utility room is to be converted into a scullery and flower room. The existing modern cupboard housing the existing boiler is to be removed, and the area to be made good with like-for-like materials. The existing paved floor is to be temporarily removed to allow for the construction of a service trench linking the main house to the relocated boilers. When reinstated, the stone paving is to be cleaned and repaired as required.

6.2.2 Courtyard garage

The existing garage will be converted into a new laundry room. The existing garage door is to be removed and the opening reduced to accommodate a stone mullioned window of same size and proportions to the ones alongside the same courtyard elevation.

New cabinetry, countertop, sink and laundry appliances will be installed. The contemporary obscured glass screen will be removed and replaced with a new lightweight stud partition, with a new timber door and frame. The existing window from the garage to the covered entry is to be blocked up internally with a new lightweight partition. The existing window and frame is to remain in situ.



Figure 6. The garage door which is to be modified into a window to match the adjacent windows.

6.2.4 Swimming Pool

While no changes are proposed to the existing swimming pool itself, the proposal includes measures to improve the energy efficiency of this power-hungry portion of the house by supplementing the

energy requirements of the running of the swimming pool with renewable energy sources, such as the installation of photovoltaic panels and air source heat pumps, which are detailed in a separate application by others. There is also further detail included in the accompanying report by Bob Costello Associates.

6.2.5 Stables

The existing 'lean-to' stable block will be converted into a gym and spa on the East side, and into plant room on the North side. The existing weatherboarding on the North facade is to be removed and new one installed to match existing, to accommodate the new openings in the wall. is to be demolished and replaced with a leisure area and a new boiler room. The new boilers are to be new, energy-efficient boilers, and will help to reduce the energy demands of the house. The East façade will feature three glazed doors with bronze frames set into a weatherboarded wall. The roof of the new infill will be a flat lead roof set below the height of the existing perimeter wall.



Figure 7. The existing lean-to southern stable block which will be rebuilt in timber weatherboarding to match the existing.

6.2.6 Covered passage

The proposed service trench is to go through the existing covered passage from the courtyard. The existing floor is to be lifted to facilitate the construction of the trench, and then reinstated.



Figure 8. The glazed, covered entry passage.

6.4 EXTERIOR

6.4.1 The changes proposed to the exterior are minimal, and do not affect the footprint of the existing house, consisting mainly of replacement to existing windows and doors, and new cladding to the walls of the stables, all described elsewhere in this document.

6.4.2 Stables

The existing 'lean-to' southern stable block, which is to be reconfigured into a leisure zone, will maintain the same footprint of the existing building. The new traditionally-detailed lead flat roof will be installed below the line of the top of the existing perimeter stone wall, so that it will not be visible from outside the courtyard. The existing wall and tiled coping will be retained.

The south-facing wall of the stable is to be reconfigured slightly, with the existing door widened into a larger double door for access to the boiler house, and the existing window blocked up. The existing weatherboarding is to be carefully removed and retained for possible re-use, and the window is to be blocked up. This façade will be re-clad in new weatherboarding to match the existing.

The new exterior west-facing wall is to be in timber weather boarding to match the existing adjacent wall, and will form a new glazed loggia, as mentioned in 6.2.1. It will be fitted with bronze glazed doors to match the new doors on the north and south loggias of the main house. The existing lightweight stable wall will be carefully removed and a new stud wall dividing the loggia and gymnasium be erected on a similar footprint to the existing.

As part of the new boiler house to be contained in the stables, a new stone chimney is to be constructed for the boiler flues. This will be constructed to match the existing chimneys in Rossley Manor, using the same stone and detailing.

6.5.3 Courtyard Garage

Works to the garage are described in paragraph 6.2.9.

6.6 MATERIALS AND DETAIL

6.6.1 The proposed alterations are designed to be in keeping with the existing fabric of the listed building. Where new external wall infills are proposed, these will be executed using materials matching the existing adjacent – coursed stone bedded in lime mortar, lime rendered masonry and painted weatherboarding.

6.6.2 The rebuilt stable roofs are all to be traditionally-detailed lead roofs with lead-clad timber rolls.

6.6.3 All new windows are to be metal-framed casement windows with small rectangular leaded panes to match those found elsewhere around the house.

6.7 ECOLOGY

6.7.1 An Ecological Impact Assessment has been carried out for the proposals to the stable block. The stable block to be modified was found to have low suitability to support roosting bats, and the internal inspection discovered no roosting bats, and identified no bat droppings in the internal spaces. An emergence survey was carried out on the 15th of August 2022, and no bats were identified emerging from the building. It is therefore considered that no mitigation is required for these works. Please refer to the accompanying report prepared by Darwin Ecology.

7.0 **PLANNING POLICY**

7.1 The proposals have been developed in accordance with local and national planning policy.

7.2 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY: COTSWOLD DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN

The Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031, adopted in 2018, states the following:

7.2.1 Policy EN1

BUILT, NATURAL AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

New development will, where appropriate, promote the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic and natural environment by:

- a. ensuring the protection and enhancement of existing natural and historic environmental assets and their settings in proportion with the significance of the asset;*
- b. contributing to the provision and enhancement of multi-functional green infrastructure;*
- c. addressing climate change, habitat loss and fragmentation through creating new habitats and the better management of existing habitats;*
- d. seeking to improve air, soil and water quality where feasible; and*
- e. ensuring design standards that complement the character of the area and the sustainable use of the development.*

7.2.2 Policy EN2

DESIGN OF THE BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Development will be permitted which accords with the Cotswold Design Code (Appendix D). Proposals should be of design quality that respects the character and distinctive appearance of the locality.

7.2.3 Policy EN4

THE WIDER NATURAL AND HISTORIC LANDSCAPE

- 1. Development will be permitted where it does not have a significant detrimental impact on the natural and historic landscape (including the tranquillity of the countryside) of Cotswold District or neighbouring areas.*
- 2. Proposals will take account of landscape and historic landscape character, visual quality and local distinctiveness. They will be expected to enhance, restore and better manage the natural and historic landscape, and any significant landscape features and elements, including key views, the setting of settlements, settlement patterns and heritage assets.*

7.2.4 Policy EN5

COTSWOLDS AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY (AONB)

- 1. In determining development proposals within the AONB or its setting, the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the landscape, its character and special qualities will be given great weight.*
- 2. Major development will not be permitted within the AONB unless it satisfies the exceptions set out in national Policy and Guidance.*

7.2.5 Policy EN10

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT: DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

1. *In considering proposals that affect a designated heritage asset or its setting, great weight will be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.*
2. *Development proposals that sustain and enhance the character, appearance and significance of designated heritage assets (and their settings), and that put them to viable uses, consistent with their conservation, will be permitted.*
3. *Proposals that would lead to harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset or its setting will not be permitted, unless a clear and convincing justification of public benefit can be demonstrated to outweigh that harm. Any such assessment will take account, in the balance of material considerations: the importance of the asset; the scale of harm; and the nature and level of the public benefit of the proposal.*

7.3 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY: NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

7.3.1 The over-arching aim of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which is expressed in the Ministerial foreword, is that:

'Our historic environment - buildings, landscapes, towns and villages – can better be cherished if their spirit of place thrives, rather than withers.'

7.3.2 Regarding preserving the significance of a heritage asset (see section 5.0) the NPPF Paragraph 195 states that:

"Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal."

7.3.3 NPPF Paragraph 197 states the following:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- (a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- (b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*

- (c) *the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

7.3.4 NPPF Paragraph 199 states the following:

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

7.3.5 NPPF Paragraph 206 states the following:

“Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.”

8.0 IMPACT AND JUSTIFICATION

8.1 The proposed alterations to the exterior of the house are limited and will not involve removal of historic material. They comprise:

1. Removal of modern asphalt roofs to stables and replacing with traditionally detailed lead flat roofs.
2. New chimney above stables for new boiler flues.

8.3 The proposed relocation of the boilers to a centralized boiler room in the former stables, and the replacement of the boilers with modern energy efficient ones will involve minimal alteration to the historic fabric. It is intended that the services be fed into the house via a service trench under the courtyard to minimise chasing services through historic walls. The improvement in energy efficiency will also help to safeguard the long-term future of the building. The affected floor and paving finishes will be retained and reinstated after the construction of the trench, causing minimal impact to the historic appearance when completed.



Figure 13. The existing boiler tank in the utility room.

8.4 The replacement of the boilers will improve the energy efficiency and comfort of the occupants, safeguarding the long-term future of the building.

8.6 The work to the stables involves the removal of largely modern construction, and the removal of the unsympathetic asphalt flat roof will improve the appearance of the house.

8.7 All the above complies with local planning Policy 13 and NPPF Paragraphs 131.

9.0 ACCESS

9.1 The existing east entrance and parking area will be retained. The access to the house will remain unchanged.

9.2 No changes that would affect the existing access are proposed.

10.0 CONCLUSION

10.1 In conclusion, the proposed alterations are intended to improve the heritage asset for its continued use as a family home.

10.2 The majority of the proposed alterations are limited to the areas built and altered in the late 1920's, and mostly affect the interior of the house, therefore not impacting the historic appearance of the

house. The exterior changes, such as new windows and doors, will be in keeping with the character and appearance of the existing house.

- 10.3 The proposed alterations will remove or improve poor quality earlier works, such as the modern asphalt flat roofs, that detract from the appearance and historic significance of the building.
- 10.4 The applicant is committed to ensuring the long-term maintenance and preservation of this important historic building and setting. Moreover, the applicant is keen to ensure that the existing quintessentially Cotswoldian character of the building and garden is enhanced and strengthened.
- 10.5 The proposals also improve the energy efficiency of the house by the replacement of aging services and boilers with modern, more efficient boilers, as well as the introduction of sustainable and renewable energy sources, improving the sustainability of the house in the long term.
- 10.6 The proposed works do not adversely affect the historic significance of this heritage asset, and the proposals are in keeping with the historic character of the house. They will help to preserve the historic character and appearance of the house, while also ensuring its long-term use as a family home into the future.