

THE RURAL PLANNING PRACTICE



Planning Statement including Heritage and Design & Access Statements

**In Support of a Planning Application for Alterations and
Extensions to the House and Garage Building**

ADDRESS	Blenheim Orchard House, Upper Oddington, Gloucestershire, GL56 0XG	
ON BEHALF OF	Mr and Mrs Williams	
PREPARED BY	The Rural Planning Practice	
DATE	March 2023	ISSUE FINAL

Document formatted to print on A3 or be viewed on screen



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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Extract of Oddington Conservation Area Statement

Figure 1: Blenheim Orchard House, Upper Oddington, GL56 0XG

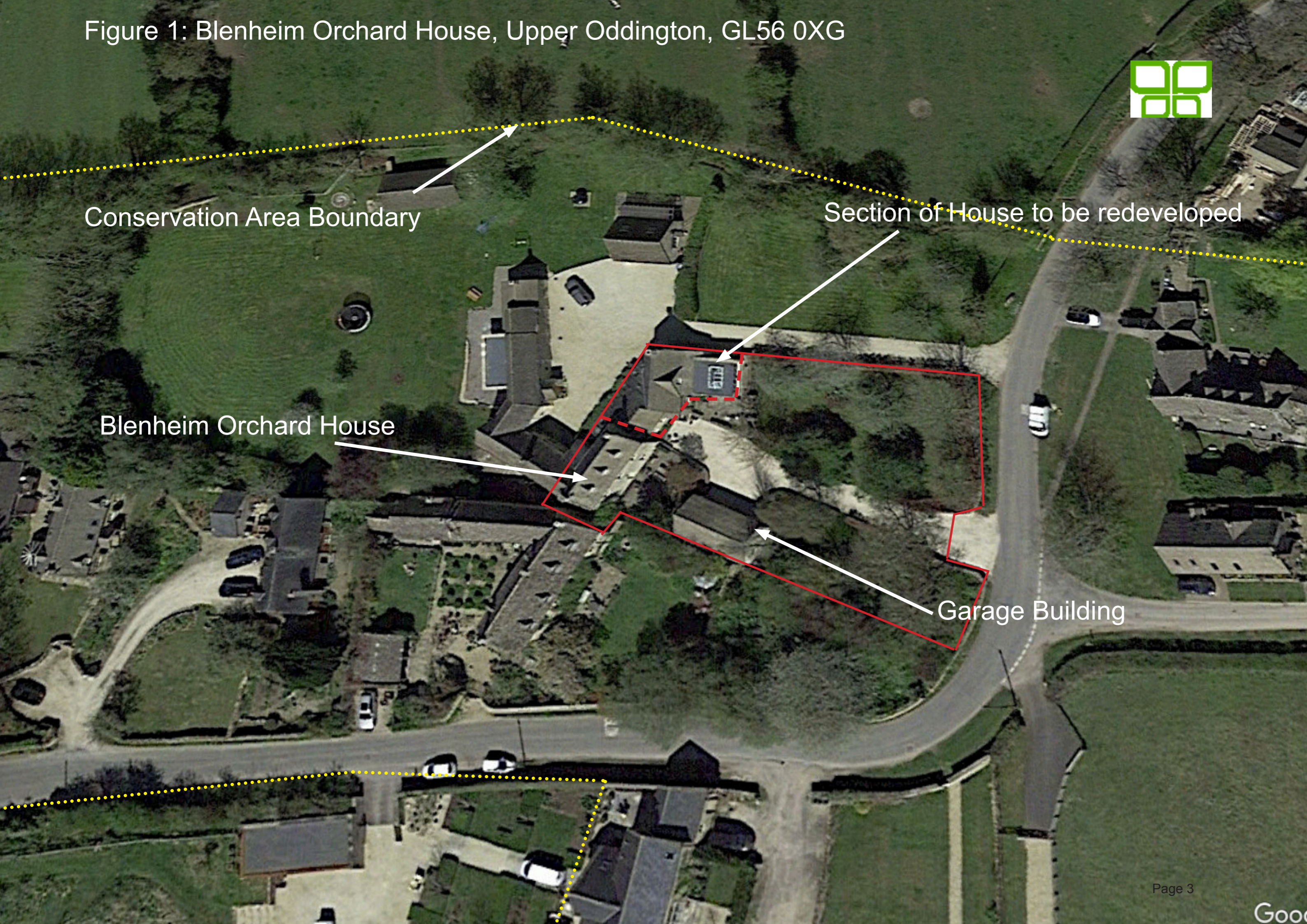


Conservation Area Boundary

Section of House to be redeveloped

Blenheim Orchard House

Garage Building





1. Introduction

- 1.1. This statement is in support of an application on behalf of our clients, Mr and Mrs Williams to accompany their planning application for the alteration and extension to the house known as Blenheim Orchard House, Upper Oddington, GL56 0XG (Figure 1).
- 1.2. Planning permission is sought for alterations and extensions to the existing later additions to the house and the garage building. The proposal has been carefully designed by a renowned local architect firm, Yiangou
- 1.3. This statement describes the application site, its context, the proposal and the relevant planning policies plus any other material considerations in appraising the planning and heritage merits of the proposal.
- 1.4. The Heritage Statement and Design & Access Statement are incorporated within this Planning Statement.
- 1.5. This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the application forms and the following drawings and documents:
 - 2737-0001 P1 Site Location Plan
 - 2737-0100 P2 Proposed Site Plan
 - 2737-0101 P2 Proposed Floor Plans and Elevations
 - 2737-0102 P2 Proposed Garage Building
 - 2737-0103 P1 Existing and Proposed Roof Plan
 - P-0581-RW 1 of 7 Existing Site Plan
 - P-0581-RW 2 of 7 Existing Ground Floor and Basement Floor Plan
 - P-0581-RW 3 of 7 Existing First and Second Floor Plan
 - P-0581-RW 4 of 7 Existing Elevations (South, East, South-West and South-East)
 - P-0581-RW 5 of 7 Existing Elevations (North and North-West Elevations)
 - P-0581-RW 7 of 7 Existing Garage Elevations and Floor Plans
 - Preliminary Roost Assessment and Bat Activity Survey by Abricon Ltd.

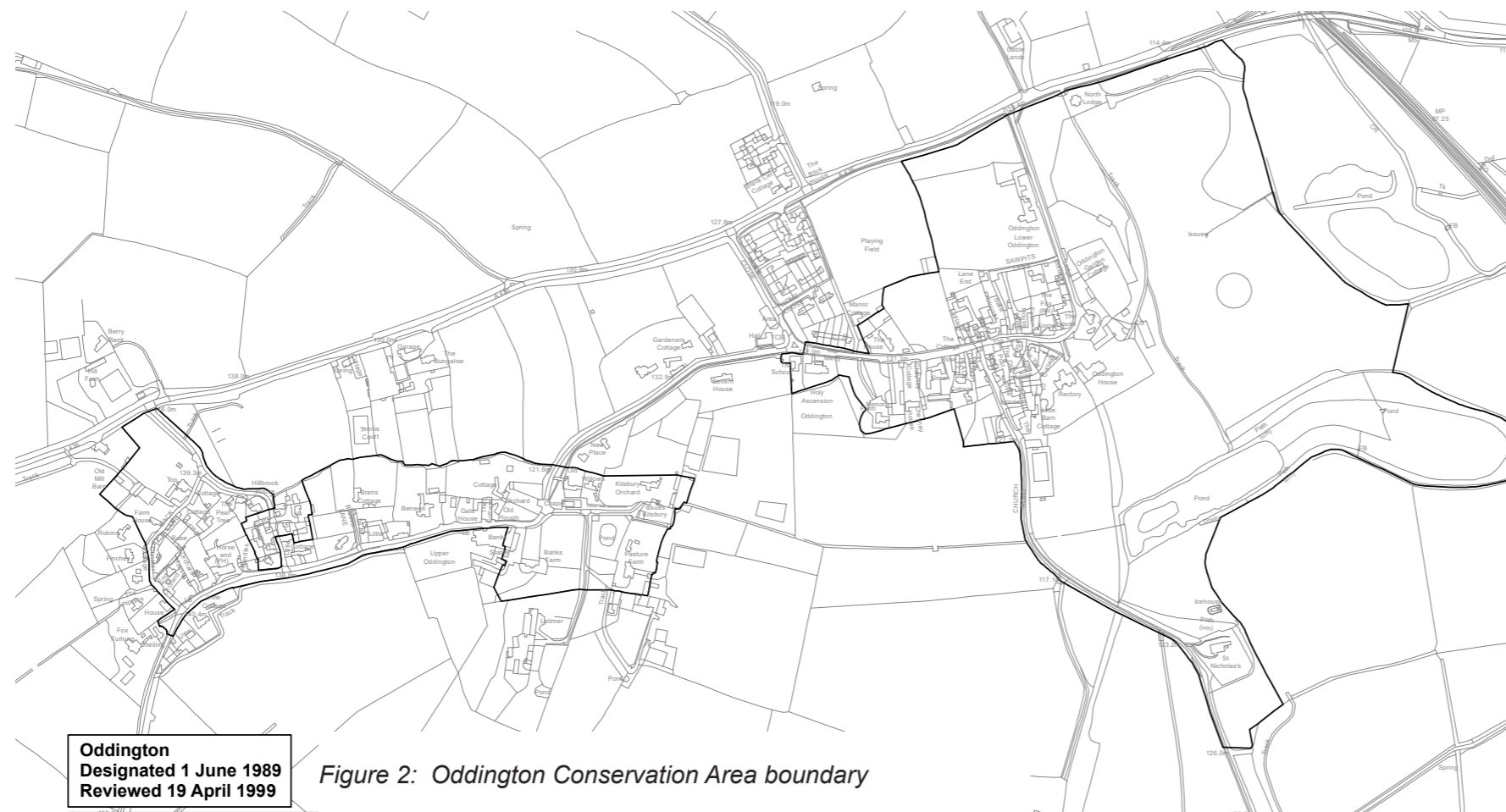


Photograph 1: Principal elevation of original house



2. The Site and Context

- 2.1. The settlement of Oddington comprises two distinct areas, Upper and Lower Oddington, generally arranged linearly along the principal road running through the villages.
- 2.2. Upper Oddington, in which the application site is located, is the smaller of the two villages and lies tucked away in a valley below the higher wolds approximately 0.4km to the west of Lower Oddington.
- 2.3. The majority of the build form of both villages, including the application site, are located within the Oddington Conservation Area (CA), which is split into two encompassing Upper and Lower Oddington and shown on Figure 2.
- 2.4. The villages are also within the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- 2.5. The original house is a Cotswold stone two storey dwelling with gabled dormers to the Cotswold stone slate roof. It is situated to the rear of the plot in which it sits with no rear access or amenity space to the rear. All the land and garden area are located to the front of the property, between the house and the road through the village. The front garden is laid to lawn with a gravel drive with several trees enclosed by formal box and beech hedging.





2.6. According to the Environment Agency flood maps, the site is located in Flood Zone 1 – an area with low probability of fluvial, pluvial or surface water flooding. Therefore, there is no need to undertake a Flood Risk Assessment.

2.7. The site has no other known environmental or landscape constraints.

3. Planning History

- 96/02128 Conversion of playroom store into family room and new link extension to form dining hall. Application Permitted.
- 97/01193 Raise barn eaves level by 150mm. Change roof pitch to 50; change kitchen door to window, reduce kitchen window size, provide door in barn south gable and 2 first floor windows in north gable. Application Permitted.
- 01/01475/FUL Single storey extension to form larger living room. Construction of carport and store. Application Permitted.
- 01/01755/FUL The construction of a new dry stone boundary wall to the front boundary of the site. Raise the height of the existing dry stone boundary wall. Application Withdrawn.
- 02/01578/FUL Construction of external stairs and external door to roof space above carport. Application Permitted.
- 17/04753/FUL Erection of timber framed garden room. Application Permitted.

4. The Proposal

- 4.1. Planning permission is being sought for alterations and extensions to the house together with alterations to the existing garage building.
- 4.2. It is not proposed to alter the original host building externally, although there are some minor changes at ground floor level to existing openings in the hallway and the sitting room. All proposed alterations are shown in green on the proposed plans.
- 4.3. It is proposed to demolish parts of the 1 1/2 storey element and existing garden room located at the north of the original building and to rebuild and extend. The redevelopment will generally follow the footprint of the existing structures. The whole of the new extension will be 1 1/2 storey.
- 4.4. Drawing 2737-0101 P2 shows the proposed floor plan and elevations with the original shown by a red dashed line. The proposal generally follows the footprint of the existing extensions.
- 4.5. The existing garaging building is located in front of the main house. It is proposed to enclose



Top Photograph 2: Link extension
Middle Photograph 3: Garden room
Bottom Photograph 4: Garage building



one of the open fronted bays with horizontal timber boarding to match the existing building to provide a storage area with a personnel door from the remaining open bay. It is also proposed to insert three rooflights to the front roof-slope and use the existing loft storage area as ancillary accommodation to the main house. These elements do not require planning permission.

- 4.6. The element that does require planning permission is the relocation of the external staircase from the north-west elevation to the south-east. This will be of timber construction to match the existing building. A new access door is required in the gable end and the blocking up of one of the two existing windows at ground floor level.
- 4.7. All new materials will match existing material on site.

5. Heritage

- 5.1. This heritage section seeks to identify and assess historic assets and their setting that may be affected by the proposed development.
- 5.2. The building is not listed but falls within the definition of a non-designated heritage asset when considered against the criteria set out in Table 6 of the Cotswold District Local Plan 2018.
- 5.3. As mentioned previously, the site is within the Oddington Conservation Area and an extract of the CA character map is shown at Figure 3. This identifies the area of garden between Blenheim Orchard House and the road as an 'Area of Landscape value: Important green open space'.
- 5.4. The CA Statement discusses the significance of this part of the village and the striking feeling of space here with buildings well set back from the roadside and how a swathe of orchards sweeps in from the hillside around Bank Farm plays an important part in the appearance of the CA. The relevant extract of the CA Statement is included at Appendix 1.
- 5.5. Notable listed buildings close to the application site are The Old Plough to the south, believed to be an old coaching inn and Stone House opposite. These buildings are shown in red on Figure 3 and the CA Statement refers to these and the immediate buildings as 'a tightly packed cluster of historic buildings arranged in a courtyard comprising Gate House, The Plough Cottage and The Old Plough, with Blenheim House not yet in view'.
- 5.6. The County Series of Historic Maps at Figure 4 show the house and the adjoining barn present on site since 1884.
- 5.7. The site is not in an area of archaeological interest and the previous development of the site minimises any potential to disturb material of evidential value.

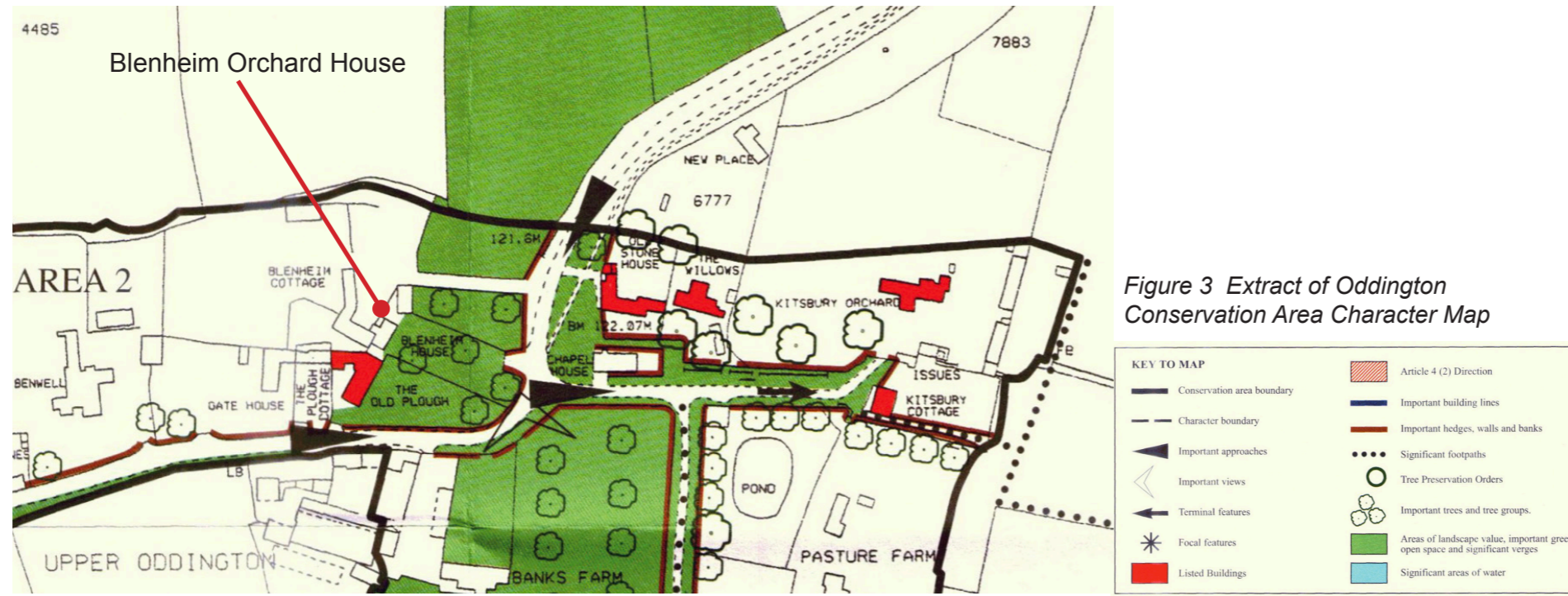


Figure 3 Extract of Oddington Conservation Area Character Map



Figure 4: County Series of Historic Maps Top Left to Bottom right 1884, 1898, 1990 and 1919



6. Ecology

- 6.1. A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) dated November 2022 was undertaken by Abricon Ltd and the report is submitted as a separate document.
- 6.2. This noted that the garage building showed evidence of bats in the eastern end of the roof void and potentially suitable roosting features. Consequently, a Bat Emergence/Re-Entry Survey was undertaken which found that the house and garage are being used by a low number (peak count 2) of common pipistrelle bats as a day roost. The report concludes the buildings are generally of low conservation importance for common pipistrelle bats.
- 6.3. It is recommended that prior to construction a Bat Mitigation Licence is obtained from NE, in order to allow works which would otherwise be illegal.
- 6.4. With regards to nesting birds the report concludes the site is unlikely to be of more than low local value to birds, as there is habitat readily available for nesting birds nearby within adjacent residential gardens, scattered trees, and hedgerows in the area. With mitigation, it is anticipated that there can be no impact on nesting birds.
- 6.5. No evidence of other protected species was found.
- 6.6. Ecological enhancements are recommended:
 - one bat box (e.g., Beaumaris Box or similar) is installed on a suitable mature tree on site.
 - one built-in bird box (e.g., Vivara Pro WoodStone House Sparrow Nest Box or similar) is installed on the external walls of the replacement right-wing or the garage

7. Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021

- 7.1. Paragraph 11 states that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.
- 7.2. Paragraph 174 states that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by '*protecting and enhancing valued landscapes*' and '*recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside*'.
- 7.3. Paragraph 176 of the NPPF states that '*great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in ... Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.*'
- 7.4. Paragraph 194 requires LPAs to request 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 asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

- 7.5. Paragraph 203 of the NPPF states that *'the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.'*

Cotswold District Council Local Plan (LP) 2018

- 7.6. EN1 Built, Natural & Historic Environment - states, inter alia, that new development will, where appropriate, promote the protection, conservation and enhancement of the historic and natural environment by: ensuring the protection and enhancement of existing natural and historic environmental assets and their setting, proportionate to the significance of the asset; and ensuring design standards that complement the character of the area and the sustainable use of the development.
- 7.7. EN2 Design of Built & Natural Environment - *'Development will be permitted which accords with the Cotswold Design Code. Proposals should be of design quality that respects the character and distinctive appearance of the locality.'*
- 7.8. EN4 The Wider Natural & Historic Landscape - 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.

'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.'

- 7.9. Policy EH5: Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty states;

'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'.

- 7.10. EN10 Historic Environment: Designated Heritage Assets states:

'Great weight shall be given to the asset's conservation, and that the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. It also states that 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.

...Proposals that would lead to harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset or its setting will not be permitted'.



7.11. EN11 Historic Environment: Designated Heritage Assets - Conservation Areas states, inter alia, that development that would affect Conservation Areas and their settings, will be permitted provided they:

a) preserve and where appropriate enhance the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area in terms of siting, scale, form, proportion, design, materials and the retention of positive features;

c) will not result in the loss of open spaces, including garden areas and village greens, which make a valuable contribution to the character and/or appearance, and/or allow important views into or out of the Conservation Area;

7.12. EN12 Historic Environment: Non-designated Heritage Assets states:

1. Development affecting a non-designated heritage asset will be permitted where it is designed sympathetically having regard to the significance of the asset, its features, character and setting.

2. Where possible, development will seek to enhance the character of the non-designated heritage asset. Proposals for demolition or total loss of a non-designated heritage asset will be subject to a balanced assessment taking into account the significance of the asset and the scale of harm or loss.

3. The assessment of whether a site, feature or structure is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset, will be guided by the criteria set out in Table 6.

7.13. The Cotswold Design Code is a supplementary guidance note to accompany the LP and sets out in more detail the key design consideration for residential extensions and outbuildings in section D.67 (1).

7.14. The site is located within the Cotswold AONB wherein the Council is statutorily required to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the landscape (S85(1) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000).

7.15. Cotswold AONB Management Plan 2018 - 2023 is also considered to be a material consideration in the decision making process. Policy CE6:Historic Environment & Cultural Heritage reflects the heritage policies contained within the LP.

8. Planning Considerations

8.1. Owing to the situation of the house at the back of the plot on which it stands there is no rear garden area and all the land associated with the property is located to the front between the house and the road. Therefore, this has dictated where previous extension and additions have been possible.

8.2. As the planning history in Section 3 shows there have been a number of additions to the main house over the years. This has resulted in a somewhat awkward and piecemeal evolution of the building. Figure 5 shows the evolution of the building over time.



- 8.3. This existing front elevation of the wing, beyond the link, is orientated east while the principal elevation of the main house faces southeast. This is a result of using the old barn structure and joining it to the house with the link under the 1996 permission.
- 8.4. This old barn was further extended with a small mono-pitch addition towards the road (01/01475/FUL) and again with the garden room in 2017. The original barn and its relationship to the main house is now unrecognisable as a result.
- 8.5. Garden rooms are not generally seen at the front of a property and the white timber and glazing structure is very conspicuous. It is not wholly compatible with the street scene and CA.
- 8.6. The redesign removes the conflicting angles and elements into a simpler and more harmonised design while working within the existing footprint as far as possible. The addition of the glazing to the link will help to define the separation of the original house from the subservient, later additions much more clearly.
- 8.7. It is unfortunate that the garage building was positioned in front of the original building obscuring the elegant frontage, but it is what it is. The size and scale of the garage building will not be altered. The garage will look less domestic from within the CA with the removal of one of the two windows in the gable and the introduction of the external staircase, commonly seen with ancillary buildings. The proposed alterations to the garage building are simple and retains the functional appearance of the ancillary building
- 8.8. By moving the garage staircase away from the principal elevation of the main building it will benefit its setting. The development will not detract from the setting of the main house or compete with it.
- 8.9. It is considered that the alterations proposed respect the character and appearance of the existing building. It is considered that the scheme will preserve the significance of the non-designated heritage asset and the CA.
- 8.10. The proposed development accords with Local Plan Policy EN4. The property is located within the AONB within a settlement and the proposed development will have no greater impact on the immediate landscape and wider countryside. Also, there will be no unacceptable increase in the levels of noise and disturbance that would adversely impact on the tranquillity of the AONB.

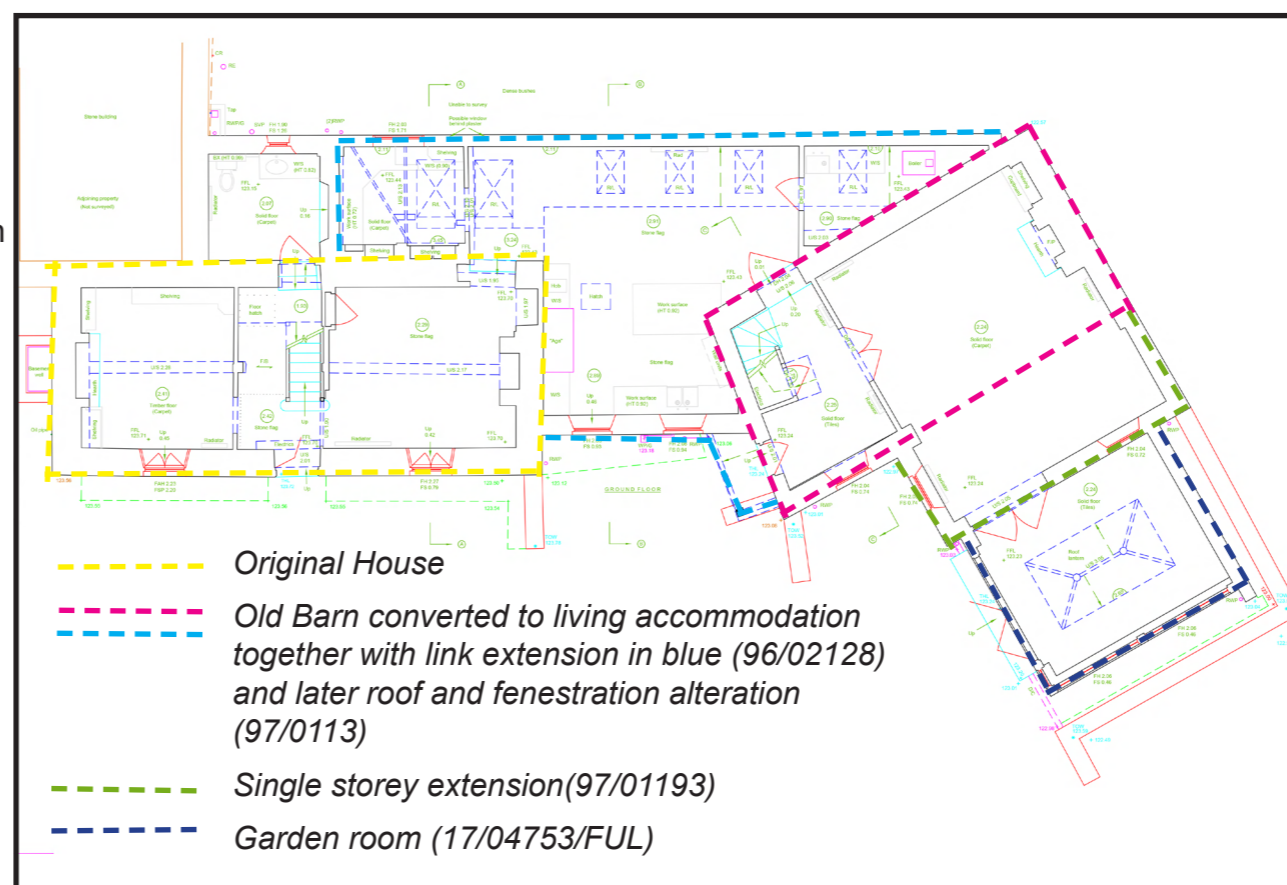


Figure 5: Building history



- 8.11. The scale, form and relationship of the proposed alterations and extension to the house have been carefully considered to ensure they respect the original building. They are still subservient and not competing with or detracting from the host building. The legibility of the non-designated heritage asset will still be very apparent and also improved. This will ensure the principal elevation remains prominent and the historical link with the open green area to the front of the property identified in the CA statement is not eroded.
- 8.12. The proposal will not result in harm to the character, appearance or setting of the non-designated heritage asset and the Conservation area. The proposal is in accordance with Local Plan Policies EN1, EN2, EN4, EN10, EN11, EN12, D.67 of the Cotswold Design Code and the guidance in paragraph 203 of the NPPF.
- 8.13. The existing drive and access point will be unchanged and adequate parking provision to serve the house will remain in accordance with Local Plan Policy INF5.
- 8.14. It is proposed to install bat and bird boxes in accordance with the recommendations of the PEA as an appropriate ecological enhancement in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN8.
- 8.15. The proposal would have no impact on the amenity of the occupants of any neighbouring properties.

9. Conclusion

- 9.1. The proposal has been carefully designed by a renowned local architect firm, Yiangou to respect the existing non-designated heritage asset
- 9.2. The proposed design of the scheme will conserve the features of the house and its setting which are of historic interest and that it will not have an unacceptable impact on the significance of the asset or the CA.
- 9.3. The development will not have a detrimental material impact on the character of the AONB.
- 9.4. The proposal meets national and local planning policy and the authority is respectfully asked to approve the application.



At the corner by Woodhall, is the short, gently descending, Brans Lane. The most noticeable feature here is a terrace of three humble cottages, fronting the narrow lane, separated only by a narrow grass margin. Opposite, hedges and semi-mature trees offer screening of more recent development which would otherwise intrude into this scene. At the foot of the lane is Brans Cottage, which may have formerly been a pair of cottages. The south facing gable end is all that is visible from the lane as the remainder is almost lost amongst the many well-established trees that surround it.



The lane linking the eastern and western parts of Upper Oddington is characterised by a gentle interface with the countryside on the south side and more formal dry stone walling enclosing the development to the north.

Proceeding eastwards, the terrace of cottages on Brans Lane is abutted, at the rear, by a much larger cluster of traditional buildings arranged in a courtyard surrounding private gardens. Little Barn has the appearance of a former school building with its principal elevation of pointed-arched windows and dormers. Partially concealing these buildings is a tall stone boundary wall under flat stone copings, with unusual bands of brick courses running along its length. Completing the group is a modest, brick-built outbuilding (now used as the garage for Milestones), with interestingly detailed dormer windows. The trees within the garden of Brans Cottage are an important backdrop to this group of buildings.

Next down the lane, is Milestones, a house which appears formerly to have been an agricultural building. Standing directly onto the road, it is a key feature at this location as the view eastwards is less dominated by buildings. An unfortunate alteration to this otherwise traditional building, is the recent insertion of plastic replacement windows.

Further along the road, the grassy bank becomes less steep and dominating. The lane has opened up as middle distance views become more apparent. These afford views of the modern farm buildings on this side of the otherwise traditional farmstead of Banks Farm.

Attractive stone boundary walls continue to define and contain the road on the northern side. Together with grassy verges, they ensure a pleasing rural atmosphere. The

spacious, open gardens which separate Benwell and Gate House allow middle distance views into open countryside, relieving the previously restrained village-scape. Mature trees continue to play an important role adding scale and texture to the scene.

Immediately opposite the modern farm buildings is a tightly packed cluster of historic buildings arranged in a courtyard comprising Gate House, The Plough Cottage and The Old Plough, with Blenheim House not yet in full view. The Old Plough is the more dominant and the earliest of the group. Worthy of note is a pair of decorative wrought iron gates hanging at its entrance. Historically, the group of buildings once formed The Plough, an old Coaching Inn.

As the road bends sharply northwards, a striking feeling of space emerges. Here, buildings are set well back from the roadside either behind low-walled gardens and orchards, or stood in areas of meadow. Worthy of particular attention at Banks Farm is the multi-functional range of farm buildings arranged in a continuous line with its gable end facing onto the road. Beyond this, past a large well-weathered Dutch barn, is the farmhouse standing well back behind a spacious garden contained by a stone wall with gate between formal gatepiers.

Orchards play an important part in the appearance of this part of the conservation area. A swathe of orchard sweeps into the village from the hillside around Banks Farm to the frontages of The Old Plough and Blenheim House. Perhaps more influential is the area of open space, which looks like a traditional village green. Not only does it provide a tranquil focus for village life but it also creates a pleasing, soft foreground to the attractive buildings that front onto it,



The Old Stone House defines the western edge of Upper Oddington.

namely Old Stone House and Chapel House. The former is a particularly attractive cottage, with gable end directly onto the green. The hedge-lined grassy fields north of the green and over the road, make an important contribution to this distinctly rural part of the village.

The former chapel, now Chapel House, stands on the corner of the entrance to a narrow, leafy lane leading off the main