



## HERITAGE AND DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

### **The Almshouses, The Street, Little Bardfield**

Repair works of the rear roof of the almshouses

July 2023



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# 1 Introduction

1.1 Brighter Planning Ltd have been appointed by the Trustees of the Little Bardfield Almshouses to prepare a supporting Heritage Statement for repair works to the roof to the rear elevation of the complex. A Certificate of Lawful development had been submitted (UTT/23/0792/CLLB) but this was refused. This established that Listed Building Consent is required for the works and that a heritage statement would be required to justify and support the proposals. This document seeks to meet this requirement.

1.2 The almshouses and former school are Grade II Listed Buildings. The listing description (Appendix 1) dates the row of buildings to C18 with the former school dating from 1871. The almshouses are of red brick construction with red clay tile roofs. The dwellings are one and a half storey in scale with rooms within the roof lit by dormers to the front elevation. To the rear elevation the dwellings have had modern extensions.

1.3 This Heritage Statement seeks to meet the requirements of the local heritage policy requirements and the national guidance set out in the NPPF (2021). The heritage assets on or adjacent to the site are identified. It considers the heritage value and significance of the almshouses. A brief history of the location and site are provided. The proposals are set out including any mitigation measures to limit the potential impact of the proposals. A heritage impact assessment has been undertaken to assess the potential impact of the proposed works on the significance of the Listed Buildings and their setting.

1.4 This statement also includes a Design and Access section in accordance with the national guidance.

1.5 A site visit was undertaken in June 2023 when the photos which illustrate the report were taken.

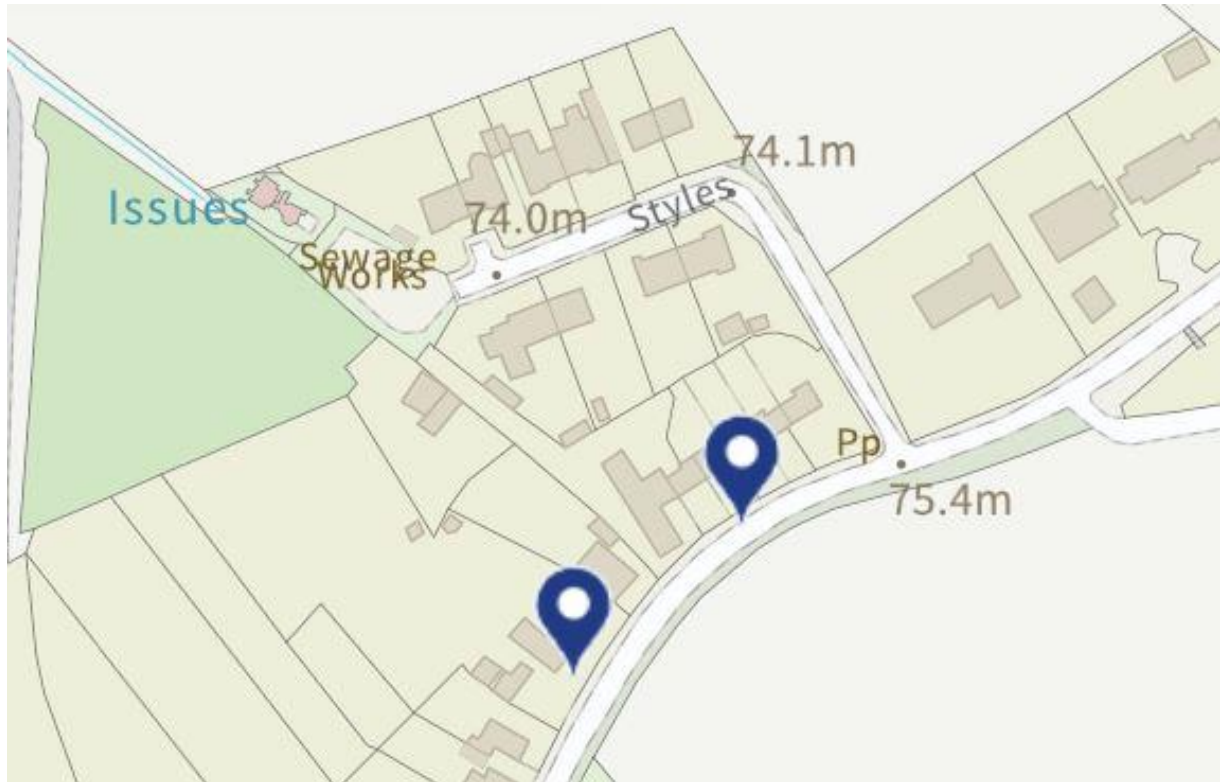
1.6 This statement should be read in conjunction with the following details:

- The existing and proposed drawings – Lisa Vohmann Architecture
- Method statement – Lisa Vohmann Architecture



# 2 Identified Heritage Assets

## Listed buildings



Historic England Website

2.1 The above map from the Historic England web site illustrates that in addition to the almshouse complex there is one other Listed Building to the northern side of The Street close to the site - Appletrees.



## The Almshouses (SMR 38203)



*Street frontage of former school and almshouses*

2.2 The five almshouses are Grade II Listed in conjunction with the former school. The almshouses were built by a Trust founded by money left in the will of Sarah Barnard, widow of the Rev Thomas Bernard in 1774. The school wing was rebuilt in the late C19, and the Listing clearly states that this has been included for group value.

2.3 The almshouses all have front gardens and are screened from the road by a mature boundary hedge. To the rear is a communal parking area and each of the houses has had a single storey rear extension.

## Appletrees (SMR 38202)

2.4 This is also a Grade II Listed Building dating from the C18 with a C19 extension. The building is timber framed and rendered with a thatched roof.



## **Conservation Area**

2.5 The site is not within a Conservation Area.

## **Essex HERS records**

2.6 There is a HERs record entry for the almshouses under the SMR number recorded on the previous page which sets out the listing description details.



# 3 Brief History of the Site and its Context

3.1 Little Bardfield is located approximately 8.5 miles southeast of Saffron Walden. The settlement is on the River Pant. Little Bardfield Hall was listed in the Domesday Survey of 1086.

## The almshouses



*The Almshouses 1956 – The Red Book Collection Historic England*

3.2 The almshouses were built in 1774 as detailed on the stone plaque located to the front elevation. The will of Sarah Bernard, which established the Trust for the construction of the almshouses instructed her executors to cut down all the timber in Halsted Grove and from the proceeds of this to build the almshouses. The complex originally contained five





houses and a school. The almshouses were for five poor widows or single women and a sixth house was for the school mistress.

3.3 The provisions of the will left land in trust to support the school and almshouses. In 1870 John Marius Wilson's Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales recorded the income for the almshouses as being £89.

3.4 The two photos dating from 1956 in the Historic England Collection illustrate the almshouses before a major refurbishment was undertaken in 1964.



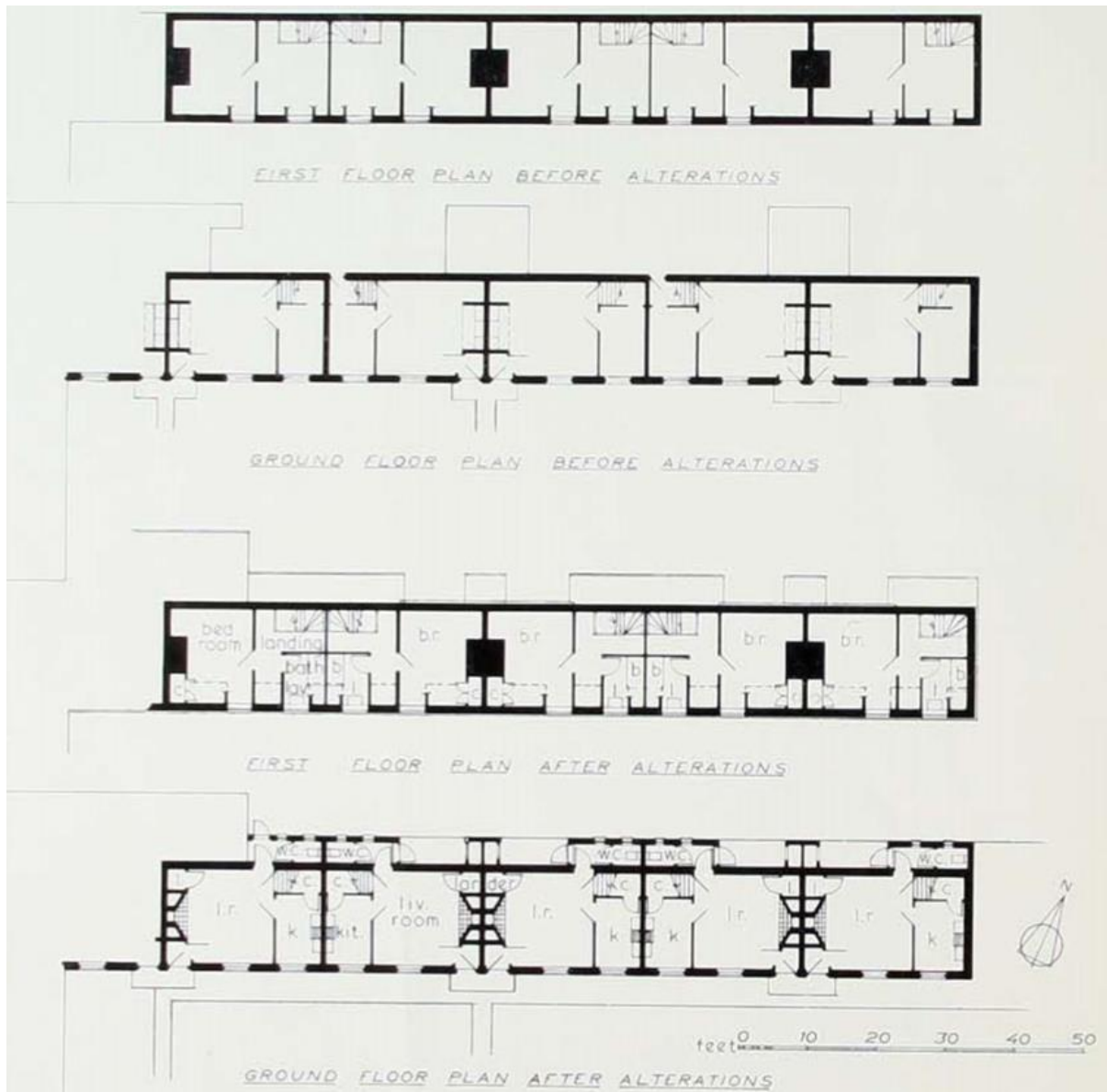
*The commemorative plaque – The Red Book Collection Historic England*

3.5 The works undertaken were by Messers Moore Simpson and Partners. The Almshouses Gazette details the works in the December 1965 edition. The plans on the next page are from this document and illustrate how the works sought to create bathrooms on the attic floor and a WC to the ground floor. Entrance lobbies were formed adjacent to the front doors. Prior to this the dwellings were one room up and one down.

3.6 Prior to the works being undertaken the dwellings had a coal range, earth closets and two water standpipes. The houses had no gas or electricity.



3.7 The article also states that the roofs were stripped, re-battened and tiles using the original tiles where possible, The chimneys were rebuilt and the windows to the dormers were replaced.

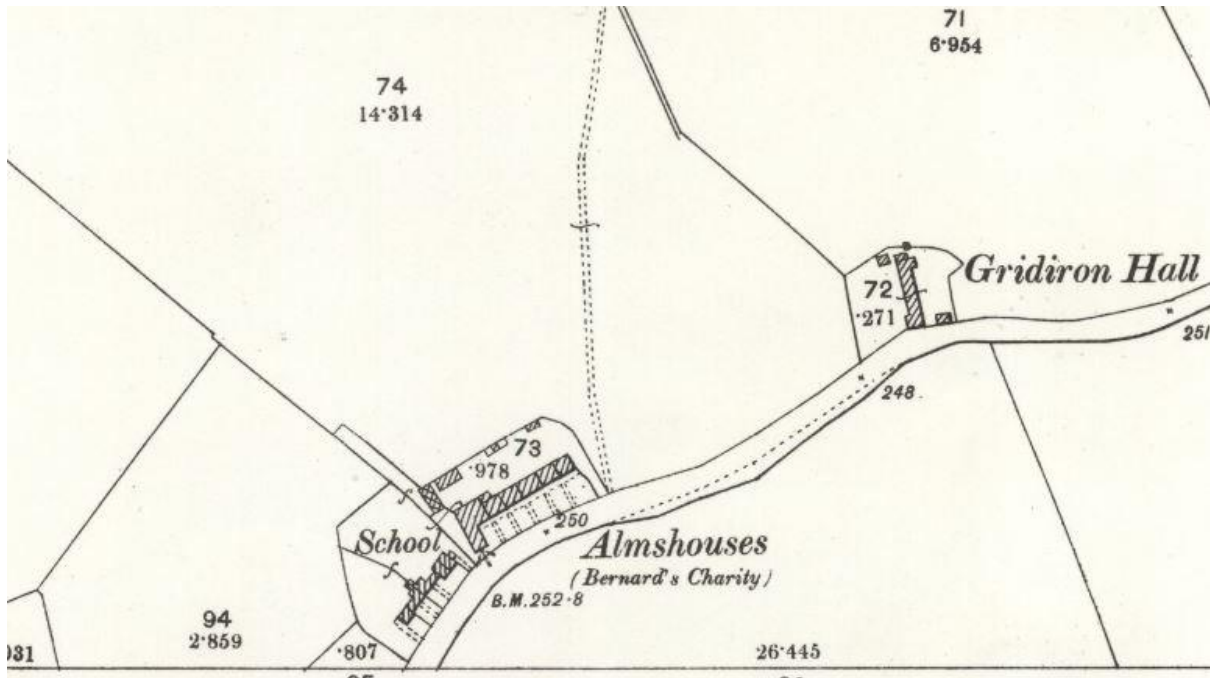


Extract from *The Almshouse Gazette* Dec 1965 showing the modernising works undertaken

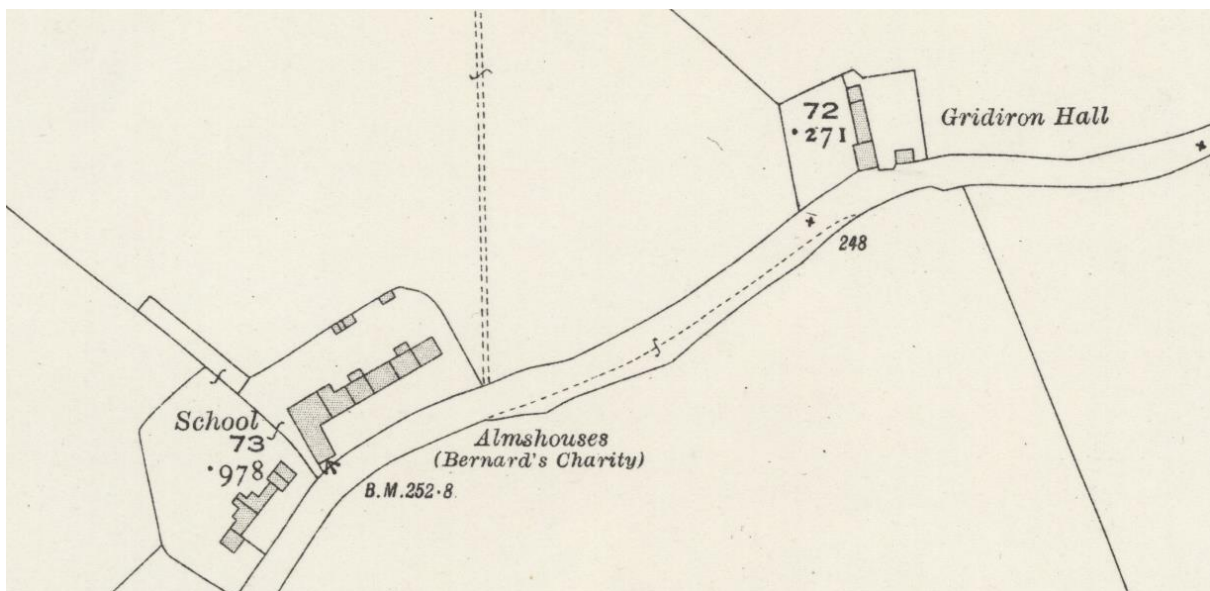


## Map regression

3.8 A map regression has been undertaken for the site using two Ordnance Survey maps in the twenty-five-inch series. The First Edition Revision map dates from 1897. The almshouses and school at this time had open fields adjacent to them.



First Edition OS Revised Twenty-five Inch Map 1897 (Reproduced with permission from the National Library of Scotland)



OS Twenty-five Inch Map 1921 (Reproduced with permission from the National Library of Scotland)



3.9 By the time of the 1921 OS map little had changed from the earlier map.

### **Planning history**

3.10 The planning history for the site is summarised in the table below.

Reference	Development	Decision
UTT/23/0792/CLLB	Certificate of lawful development for roof works	Refused



# 4 Heritage Policy Context

## National legislation

4.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 came into force in September 2004. It carries forward the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, giving statutory force to a plan-led system of development control. Under Section 38 of 2004 Act, the determination of planning applications must be in accordance with the approved development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

4.2 The statutory requirements of Section 7 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires any works which alter a listed building, in any manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest to be authorised.

## National guidance

4.3 National planning guidance is set out in the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021**. Section 16 of the NPPF sets out policies aimed at conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Paragraph 190 directs local planning authorities to take account of:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality;
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

4.4 Paragraph 200 of the NPPF requires that any harm to , or loss of the significance of a designated heritage asset – which can be from its alteration or destruction or from development within its setting, requires clear and convincing justification.



4.5 Paragraph 202 states that where less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated asset is found to occur this harm must be weighed against the public benefits resulting from the proposal.

4.6 The **National Planning Practice Guidance** (PPG), which is regularly updated online, provides additional government advice on enhancing and conserving the historic environment. This includes in paragraph 006 (18a-006-20190723) a definition of what significance is.

4.7 Heritage is also a material consideration in the **National Design Guide OGL** (2019). The National Design Guide addresses the question of how we recognise well designed places, by outlining and illustrating the Government's priorities for well-designed places in the form of ten characteristics. This includes context. Paragraph 38 states '*An understanding of the context, history and the cultural characteristics of a site, neighbourhood and region influences the location, siting and design of new developments*'. It advises that well-designed places are responsive to local history, culture, and heritage.

4.8 An additional design tool the National Design Code (2021) is also out for consultation and is anticipated to become formal guidance later this year.

## **Local Plan Policy**

### **The Local Plan**

4.9 The adopted Local Plan for the locality remains the Uttlesford Local Plan 2005. The emerging plan had been subject of an Examination In Public. Following the issuing of a Stage I Inspector's report, which raised significant concerns with regard to the soundness of the plan, particularly with regard to the proposed housing strategy, the plan was withdrawn. A draft new Local Plan is due to be published this Autumn for consultation with the aim of adoption by 2025.

4.10 The 2005 Uttlesford Local Plan therefore remains in force, with the weight to be ascribed to its policies affected by their degree of consistency with the National Planning Policy Framework. The following heritage policy is material to the development.



## **Policy ENV2 – Development Affecting Listed Buildings**

### **Neighbourhood Plan**

4.11 There is no Neighbourhood Plan either made or proposed for the village. There is however a Village Design Guide 2009 (see next section)

### **Supplementary Planning Policies**

4.12 The following documents are adopted as supplementary planning documents:

- **Little Bradfield Village Design Statement 2009** – this provides guidelines for development in the village.

### **Historic England Guidance**

4.13 The following publications which provide national guidance are material:

- Listed Building Consent – Advice Note 16 (2021)
- Historic Almshouses – A Guide to managing change (consultation draft 2023)



# 5 Assessment of Significance

5.1 The NPPF (2021) sets out in paragraph 194 that in determining applications local planning authorities should require applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. It also makes clear that the level of information required 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 Heritage assets and significance are defined in the Glossary in Annex 2 of the NPPF. The definition of heritage assets includes both national designations and assets identified by the local planning authority. The NPPF definition of significance states that ‘heritage interest’ may be archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historic, and that significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.

5.3 Heritage interests are defined as follows:

***Archaeological interest** in a heritage asset is if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point (NPPF, Annex 2)*

***Architectural and artistic interest** These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.(NPPG para 006)*

***Historic interest** An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation’s history but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity. (NPPG para 006)*

5.4 Setting is defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as follows:

*The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make*





*a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.*

5.5 Historic England's 'Historic Environment Good Practice in Planning: 3 The Setting of Heritage Assets' (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2017) makes it clear that setting is not a heritage asset and can only contribute towards the significance of a heritage asset. This document sets out a series of attributes that it may be appropriate to consider when assessing significance listed under two main headings: the physical surroundings of the asset, including its relationship with other heritage assets; and the way that the asset is experienced.

### **Little Bardfield Almshouses**

5.6 The historic interest of the building is now considered using the above definitions.



### **Archaeological interest – Moderate**

5.7 The standing fabric of the almshouses dates from the late C18 and the site has been used as five almshouses (plus the former school) for almost 250 years. The buildings were extensively refurbished in the mid 1960's to ensure they provided acceptable standards of living.



## Architectural and artistic interest – High

5.8 Being a Grade II Listed Building the building is of significant national importance. The row of houses has been built to a vernacular cottage form using a palette of local materials. The use of a series of dormer windows to the front elevation provides interest and articulation to the long roof line.

## Historic interest – High

5.9 The property is of local interest given the philanthropic origins of the building complex and the association with the local family of Barnard. Local families will still have memories of people who attended the school.

## Heritage significance of the almshouses

5.10 Almshouses are a historic form of providing accommodation for those members of the community in need. They are a form of affordable housing. The examples at Little Bardfield follow the local vernacular and craft traditions of North Essex. The group at Little Bardfield have a rural setting which the cottage gardens to the front of the properties reinforce.

5.11 The date of the construction and the background to the works follows the will of the benefactor. The buildings being Grade II Listed are held to have considerable heritage significance. It is noted that the former school is later and the Listing notes this is included for group value.

	Grade I (and II*)	Grade II
Exceptional	Possesses features of very high significance which survive in a relatively unaltered state. These define why the building has a high listing. The loss or serious alteration of such features is likely to result in ‘substantial harm’ to the heritage significance.	
Considerable	Possesses features which make an important contribution to the special	A feature which is important to the special architectural or



	architectural or historic interest of the asset. The loss or major alteration of such features may constitute 'substantial harm' .	historic interest of the heritage asset. The loss of or major alteration to such features may constitute 'substantial harm' to its heritage significance
Some	A feature which makes some contribution to the special architectural or historic interest of the heritage asset. The loss of or major alteration to such features may constitute 'less than substantial harm'.	A feature which makes some contribution to the special architectural or historic interest of the heritage asset. The loss of or major alteration to such features is likely to constitute 'less than substantial harm'.
Local	A feature which makes little contribution to the special architectural or historic interest of the heritage asset. The loss of or major alteration to such features may constitute minimal harm to heritage significance.	A feature which makes little contribution to the special architectural or historic interest of the heritage asset. The loss of or major alteration to such features is likely to constitute minimal harm to heritage significance.
None	Features making no contribution to the special architectural or historic interest of the heritage asset which can be removed or altered without any harm to heritage significance.	Features making no contribution to the special architectural or historic interest of the heritage asset which can be removed or altered without any harm to heritage significance
Negative or intrusive	Those elements which detract from the value of a site and where its removal may be a clear benefit.	Those elements which detract from the heritage significance and their removal may be a clear benefit.



5.12 Using the above table the significance of the building is considered. Whilst the row of dwellings is collectively held to have considerable heritage significance it is accepted that some areas or parts of a building may have lesser significance if the buildings have been extended or altered in the past.

5.13 Only the exterior is assessed as the works proposed do not entail any internal alterations.

## Exterior

STREET ELEVATION (SOUTH) *Considerable significance*



5.14 This is the principal elevation of the complex. The roof forms an important unifying element and the length of the roof forms a striking feature in the context of the village. The almshouses have a modest cottage appearance with the dormer windows forming the visual focus to this elevation. The plaque which indicates these are almshouses and the history of them is centrally located above two of the entrance doors.



REAR ELEVATION (NORTH) *Some significance*



5.15 This rear elevation is where the 1964 extensions have been added and thus this façade is more altered than the front elevation. The extensions have been sensitively added by forming a cat slide roof to the rear and therefore continuing the clay tile roof. The rear elevation lacks any dormer features. The chimneys are known to be rebuilt in 1964.





5.16 This end elevation contains a half-hipped roof detail. The elevation has been altered with the addition of a modern end chimney stack. The upper part of the elevation is rendered rather than being all brickwork like the front elevation.

## Summary

5.17 The street elevation has the highest aesthetic and historic significance. The rear elevation has been altered as part of the 1960's upgrade where it is known the roof was stripped and the chimneys rebuilt.



# 6 The Proposals

6.1 The rear roof of the almshouses was damaged in a storm in July 2021. Being north facing the rear roof also shows a high level of moss build up on the tiles. The proposal seeks to strip off all the damaged tiles, felt and battens and re-felt and batten the roof using breathable materials. The rear elevation of the roof will be re-roofed using as many of the original tiles as possible and new handmade clay tiles to match. New clay ridge tiles are proposed. The chimneys are proposed to have new lead flashings. No eaves protection is now proposed.

6.2 The roof is known to have been stripped in 1964 and whilst the roof timbers were retained, and the original roof tiles were salvaged and reused where possible the chimneys are known to have been rebuilt and the rear roof slope is assessed as containing a large number of modern tiles.



# 7 Design & Access Statement

7.1 The design and access of the proposed design is now assessed under the following headings:

## Design

7.2 **Use** – the building will remain optimum use for which it was built – specialist affordable housing for people meeting the charity’s criteria for occupancy.

7.3 **Amount** – The level of intervention is focused on the rear elevation where known damage to the roof has taken place and the tiles are subject to a greater level of deterioration than the southern front elevation.

7.4 **Layout** – The internal layout of the building will not be altered by the proposals.

7.5 **Scale** – the scale of the works is proportionate to addressing the repair of the roof. Less than 25% of the roof covering will need to be replaced so there is no requirement under Building Regulations to upgrade the thermal performance and ventilation of the roof.

7.6 **Landscaping** – this is not applicable.

7.7 **Appearance** – the objective of the works is to conserve the original form and appearance of the roof whilst addressing the storm damage and organic growth issues. The proposals do not propose to alter the appearance of the roof profile or the covering. The use of tiles to match as closely as possible the existing tiles on this roof plane is proposed. The ridge tiles are all to be replaced to secure the long-term conservation of the roof.

## Access

7.8 The pedestrian and vehicular access to the site are not affected by these works.





# 8 Heritage Impact Assessment

8.1 The proposals are not considered in terms of the potential impact on the heritage significance of the building. There will be no impact on the interior of the buildings.

## Justification

8.2 The works are justified as needed repairs to the buildings to secure the long-term conservation of the almshouses. The roof suffered damage from a hailstorm in 2021 and a number of the tiles to the rear elevation need replacing. The roof is known to have been subject to extensive works in 1964. The tiles to the rear elevation appear to have largely replaced at this time and the chimneys are known to have been rebuilt. The rear extensions forming a series of cat slide roofs to the rear elevation were also added. The works will thus be affecting fabric which dates from a previous refurbishment and the works seek to use matching materials to ensure the repairs harmonise with the building. The proposals do not seek to alter the profile or form of the rear roofs.

## Loss of fabric

8.3 There will be no loss of the timber roof frame. There will be replacement of broken or failing tiles. Where tiles are assessed as being capable of reuse these will be salvaged and mixed with the new clay tiles.

## Impact on the exterior of the building

8.4 The comments from Place Services with regard to the Certificate of Lawfulness Application UTT/23/0792 raised concerns at the re-roofing with the use of felt, new battens, new tiles and leadwork would materially alter and affect the special interest of the building. The history of the building has revealed that the existing battens, felt, chimneys with lead flashings and most of the tiles to the rear elevation date from 1964. The proposals will not be leading to the loss of original fabric. The works are justified on the basis of repairs to the roof given that the tiles to the rear elevation have been damaged and are failing. The aim is to reuse as many of the tiles as can be salvaged. The ridge tiles will all be replaced. The proposals do not include any eaves protection. The works seek to repair on a like for like basis and thus the impact on the appearance of the building is held to be minimal.



## Compliance with Local Plan Policy

8.5 The provisions of the relevant Policy ENV2 require any alterations to be the most practical way of preserving the building and its architectural and historical characteristics. There is a clear need to ensure the building is weather tight whilst still being able to breathe. The materials selected secure this as well as harmonising with the existing external finishes.

## Compliance with Historic England guidance

8.6 The consultation draft of the almshouses guidance produced by Historic England (2023) makes it clear in paragraph 3 *'Their use for housing is part of that significance and ensuring that they continue to provide accommodation for their beneficiaries reinforces that significance. Indeed reinforcement of architectural and historic character is often at the heart of the well-being of residents. However, it is clear that almshouses will only continue to provide appropriate accommodation if they can be upgraded in ways which allow them to provide adequate and appropriate housing'*

## Level of harm

8.7 The proposed repair works are necessary due to past damage to the roof and further deterioration which has resulted which requires the damaged tiles to be replaced. The works seek to ensure the materials used harmonise with the existing roof appearance. It is therefore held that the works will result in no harm to the special character and appearance of the building.

## Heritage benefits

8.8 The lack of identified harm does mean that the provisions of paragraph 202 of the NPPF are not engaged and there is no need to balance any harm with heritage or public benefits. However, in the event of the Heritage Officer considering that harm will result the following heritage benefits are identified as flowing from the alterations:

- Sustaining the heritage asset in the optimum use for which it was built.
- Removing the risks to the heritage asset, resulting from water ingress and deterioration by ensuring the roof is fully functional.



# 9 Conclusions

9.1 The external elevations of the buildings have been assessed in terms of their heritage value and significance. The research into the background history of the site has identified that the buildings were subject of a major refurbishment in 1964 when the roof was stripped, and the chimneys rebuilt etc. The current roof form is considered to date from this last major refurbishment.

9.2 The proposed works seek to address deterioration of the rear roof because of storm damage and general deterioration of the roof coverings.

9.3 The repair works seek to reuse the existing tiles which are salvageable and to supplement matching new clay tiles. The roof already has breathable felt and lead flashings to the chimneys thus the works will be matching repairs.

9.4 The proposals have therefore been shown to accord with the provisions of the national planning guidance contained within the current NPPF and the aims and objectives of the heritage policy ENV2 in the adopted Local Plan 2005. The works are held to result in no harm and will respect the special significance of the buildings and their setting. Regard has been given to the guidance in the emerging Historic England guidance on almshouses.

9.5 The comments made by Place Services with respect of the previously submitted certificate of lawful development have been considered in submitting this Listed Building Application. The works have been justified as part of this Heritage Impact Assessment and Design & Access Statement. It is therefore considered that there are no heritage grounds on which to resist the proposals.



# References

- Bettley J & Pevsner N **The Buildings of England – Essex**  
Yale University Press 2007
- RCHME **An Inventory of the Historical Monuments of Essex - Volume 1 North West**  
HMSO 1915
- Whites Directory of Essex 1848
- [Little Bardfield Parish - History](#)
- [Little Bardfield - Inhabitants in 1863 \(historyhouse.co.uk\)](#)
- [www.historyhouse.co.uk/placeL/essexl22.html](http://www.historyhouse.co.uk/placeL/essexl22.html)



# Appendix 1

**List description**

# ALMSHOUSES AND SCHOOL ATTACHED TO LEFT

## Official list entry

Heritage Category: **Listed Building**

Grade: **II**

List Entry Number: **1336958**

Date first listed: **20-Feb-1967**

Date of most recent amendment: **22-Jul-1985**

List Entry Name: **ALMSHOUSES AND SCHOOL ATTACHED TO LEFT**

Statutory Address 1: **ALMSHOUSES AND SCHOOL ATTACHED TO LEFT, THE STREET**

This List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest.

Unless the List entry states otherwise, it includes both the structure itself and any object or structure fixed to it (whether inside or outside) as well as any object or structure within the curtilage of the building.

For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure must have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.

**Understanding list entries** (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/understanding-list-entries/>)

**Corrections and minor amendments** (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/minor-amendments/>)

## Location

Statutory Address: **ALMSHOUSES AND SCHOOL ATTACHED TO LEFT, THE STREET**

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County: **Essex**

District: **Uttlesford (District Authority)**

Parish: **Little Bardfield**

National Grid Reference: **TL 65924 30835**

## Details

TL 63 SE LITTLE BARDFIELD THE STREET (north side)

2/24 Almshouses and School 20.2.67 attached to left (Almshouses formerly GV II listed)

A row of almshouses with attached school now used as a library. C18 almshouses, c.1871 school. Red brick with some black headers. Red plain tiled roof with 10 gabled dormers and a larger gable to left over a tall window. 4 red brick chimney stacks. One storey and attics. 1:4:4:2 window range of diamond leaded 3 light casements with segmental arches, excepting the tall window to left with central mullion and 3 transoms. 3 pairs vertically boarded doors with flat canopies over. A large stone plaque above central doors relates the foundation of a Trust by Sarah Barnard in 1777 to provide almshouses, school house and house for a school mistress. Sun Insurance Plaque. To the left is the c.1871 red brick and tiled school with gable to road. This with pierced bargeboards. Crenellated tiles to ridge. Red brick chimney stack. Single storey. Large window with 2 centred arch of 3 lights with Gothic heads to gable end. 3 windows with segmental heads to right return. Vertically boarded door to left return. Bell spire to gable. Apex surmounted by a cross. School included for Group Value.

Listing NGR: TL6592430835

## Legacy

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number: **121148**

Legacy System: **LBS**

## Legal

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.



## Map

This map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale.  
This copy shows the entry on 05-Jun-2023 at 14:35:57.

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End of official list entry







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