

# Design, Access and Heritage Statement



To support the submission of a Planning Application and Listed  
Building Consent  
for  
Fire reinstatement

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at

Bassus Green  
Walkern  
Stevenage  
SG2 7JG

BA Ref: P23-0310  
August 2023

This statement is written in support of an application for Full Planning and Listed Building Consent for Fire Reinstatement at 2 Bassus Green, Walkern, Stevenage, SG2 7JG.

Prepared For and on Behalf of:

Client Name:  
Walkern, Stev



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BA Job Ref.	P23-0310
Document Type	Design, Access, and Heritage Statement
Version & Revision	-
Date of printing	-
Electronic file name	P23-0310 Design, Access, and Heritage Statement
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Authorised for issue by	-
Date of issue	29 August 2023

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APPENDICES:

A Architectural Drawings:

P23310-BA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-2000 Location Plan

P23310-BA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-2050 Site Plan

P23310-BA-A1-GF-DR-A-2100 Ground Floor Plan

P23310-BA-A1-GF-DR-A-2120 First Floor Plan

P23310-BA-A1-XX-DR-A-2500 Existing Elevations

P23310-BA-A1-XX-DR-A-2550 Proposed Elevations

B Other documents:

flood-map-planning-2023-08-11T06\_35\_21.211Z

C Photographs

## 01 INTRODUCTION

This statement is written in support of the submission of an application for Planning and Listed Building Consent to repair and reinstate following fire at property at 2 Bassus Green, Walkern, Stevenage, SG2 7JG.

The proposals relate to the repair and reinstatement of the property following a serious house fire.

## 02 DESIGN STATEMENT

### 02.1 Location

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The site is located at 2 Bassus Green, Walkern, Stevenage, SG2 7JG.

Please refer to drawings:

- P23310-BA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-2000 Location Plan
- P23310-BA-ZZ-XX-DR-A-2050 Site Plan

The surrounding area is mainly countryside and formed by some detached dwelling houses.

In addition, the site is within flood zone 1 according to the Environment Agency flood map. Please refer to attached document for your information:

- flood-map-planning-2023-08-11T06\_35\_21.211Z

### 02.2 Use

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The use of the building will remain as existing: residential.

### 02.3 Amount

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The proposal has not got any implications on increase of floor area and the building footprint will remain as existing.

### 02.4 Layout

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The layout of the building remains the same.

### 02.5 Scale

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It is proposed to reinstate the existing building of a similar scale and volume to the pre-existing building.

### 02.6 Landscaping

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The present application has no implications for garden areas and landscaping.

### 02.7 Appearance

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The reinstatement of the existing building will be carried out using materials and detailing consistent as far as possible with the pre-existing building.

## 03 ACCESS STATEMENT

Access will remain as existing. Where accessibility can be improved during the course of the works and consistent with conserving the qualities of the historic setting, then it shall be.

## 04 HERITAGE STATEMENT

### 04.1 Description of the heritage asset

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Bassus Green is not located within any Conservation Area. However, the historic building appears on the list of historic buildings maintained by the secretary of state as follows:

SOUTH EAST OF JUNCTION

SOUTH EAST OF JUNCTION, 2, BASSUS GREEN

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#### Overview

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1308233

Date first listed: 31-May-1984

List Entry Name: SOUTH EAST OF JUNCTION

Statutory Address: SOUTH EAST OF JUNCTION, 2, BASSUS GREEN

#### Location

Statutory Address: SOUTH EAST OF JUNCTION, 2, BASSUS GREEN

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

County: Hertfordshire

District: East Hertfordshire (District Authority)

Parish: Walkern

National Grid Reference: TL 30402 25725

#### Detail

TL 32 NW WALKERN BASSUS GREEN (south side)

2/14 No 2 (SE of junction)

GV II

House. C17 or earlier, divided and N lean-to added in early C19. Timber frame roughcast with dark weatherboarding apron and lean-to, and steep thatched roof half-hipped at S but carried down over low N extension. A one and a half storeys, 3-cell, central-chimney, lobby-entry plan house facing W. 5 windows

to ground floor front, with one eyebrow dormer. Large rebuilt central chimney rises to rear of ridge, a third from N end, with door in line with it shielded by boarded screen. Later N gable chimney with lean-to extension beyond. Small-paned flush casement windows (renewed). Interior has chamfered joists to middle room, with an axial beam.

Listing NGR: TL3040225725

#### Legacy

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

Legacy System number: 159651

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.

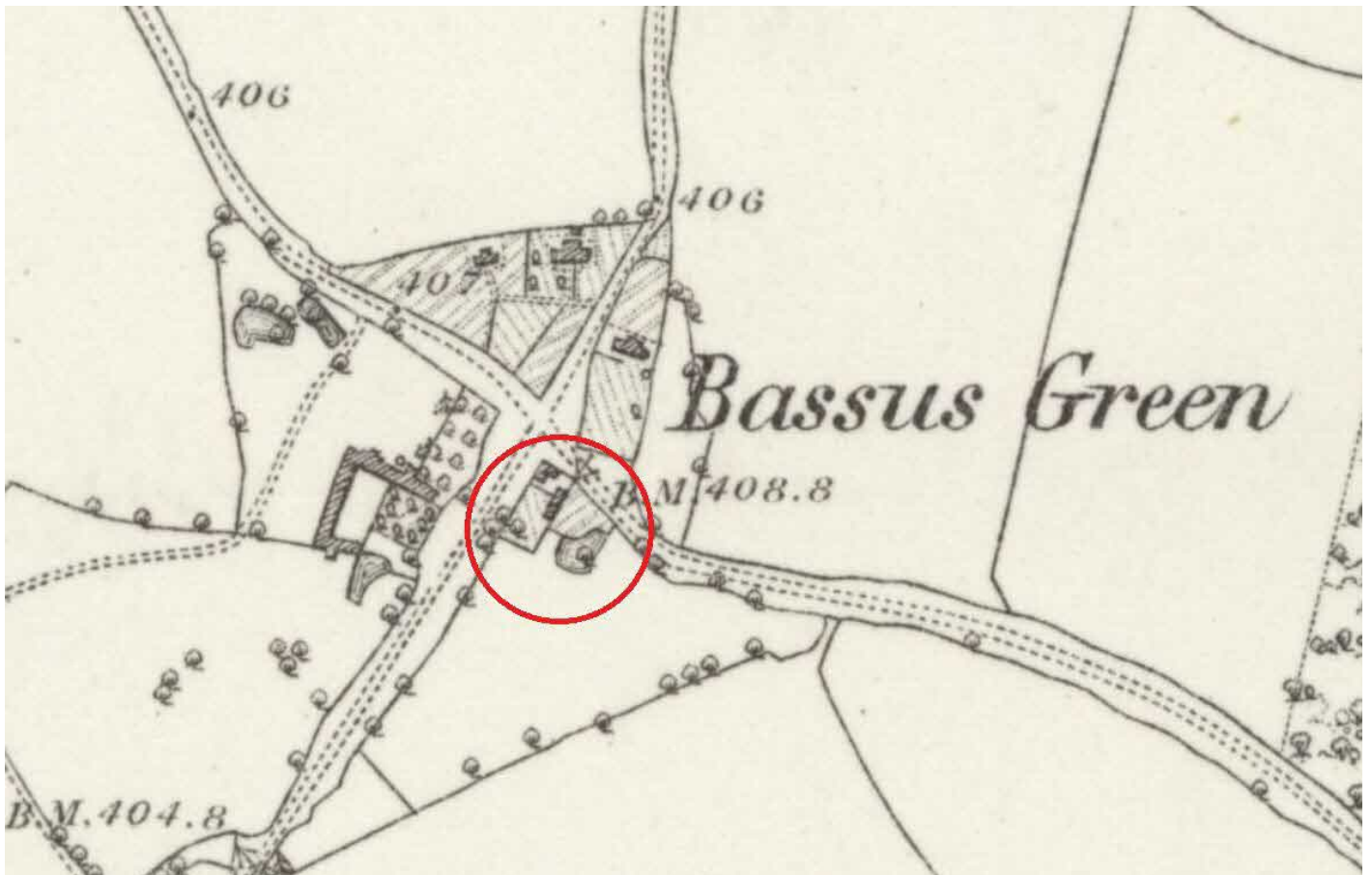
### 04.2 Significance of the heritage asset

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2 Bassus Green is located in the proximity of various farmhouses which appears on the list of historic buildings maintained by the secretary of state as follows:

- 1 Bassus Green (C16 - Grade II listed Building)
- 1 Bassus Green - Barn (C17 - Grade II listed Building)
- 3 Bassus Green (C18 - Grade II listed Building)
- 5 Bassus Green (C18 - Grade II listed Building)

The following maps from the Library of Scotland shows the historic evolution of the site:



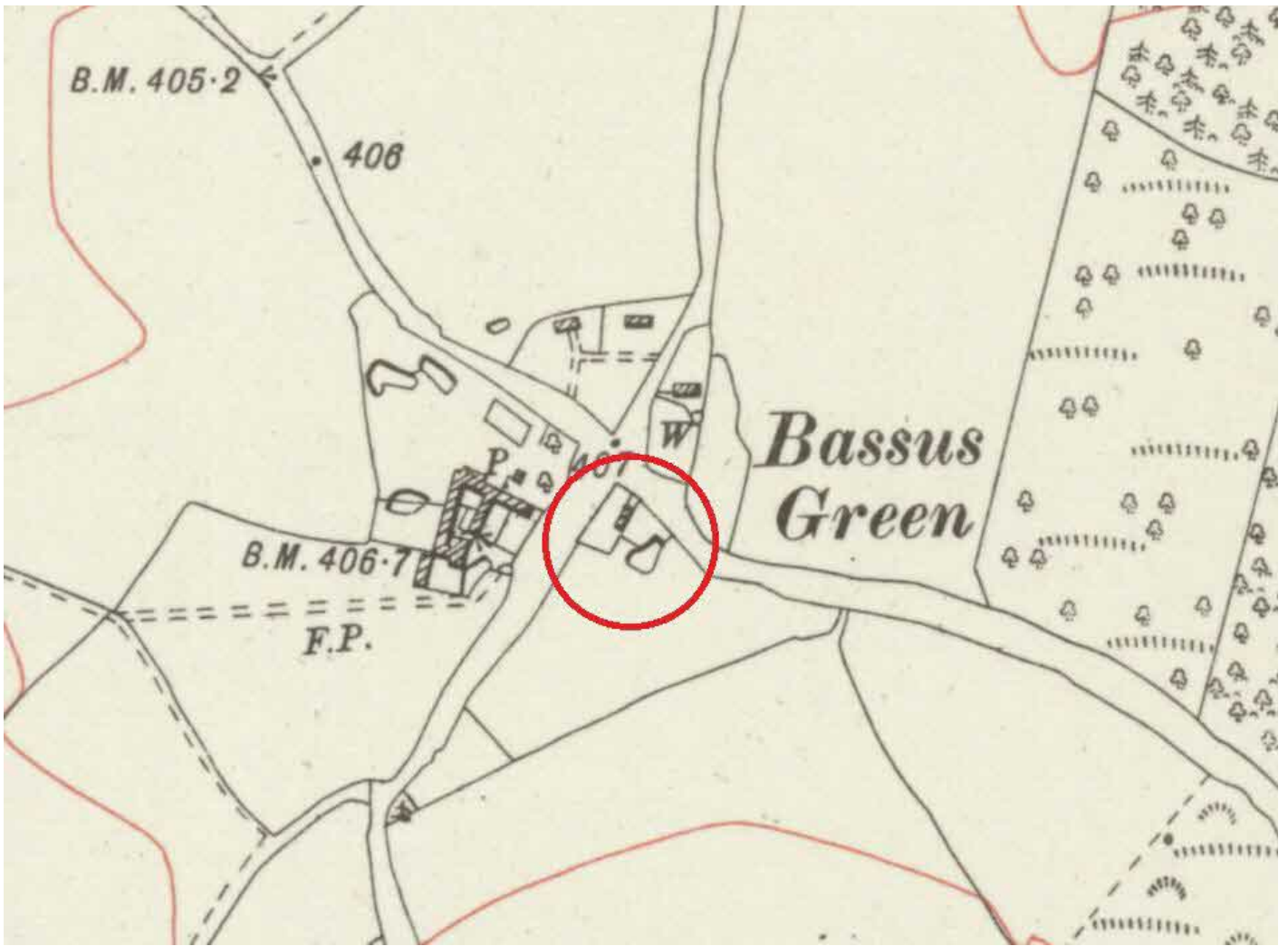
© National Library of Scotland

Hertfordshire Sheet XIII

Surveyed: 1877 to 1878, Published: 1884

Size: map 61 x 92 cm (ca. 24 x 36 inches), on sheet ca. 70 x 100 cm (28 x 40 inches)



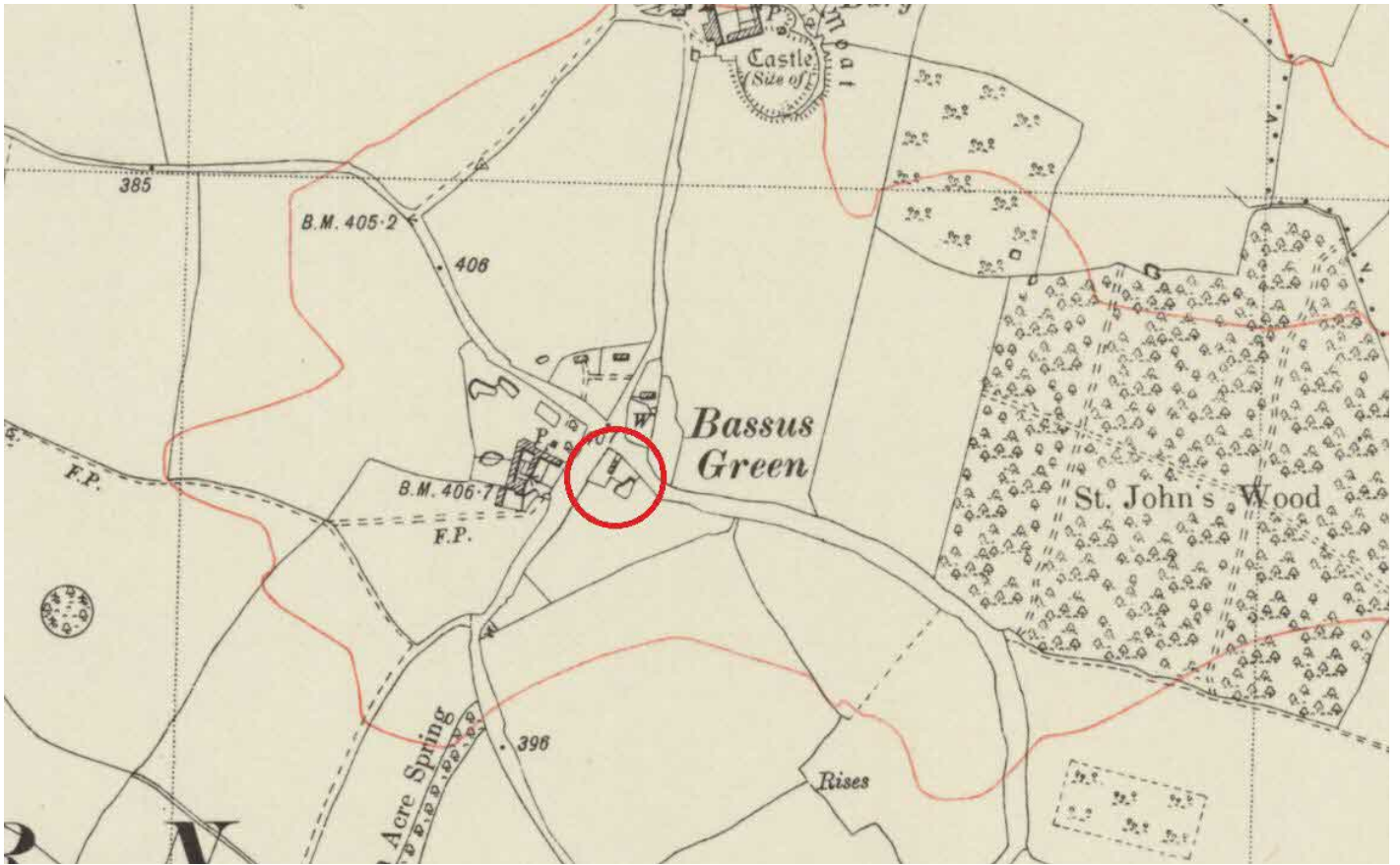


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Hertfordshire Sheet XIII.SW

Revised: 1922, Published: 1924

Size: map 31 x 46 cm (ca. 12 x 18 inches), on sheet ca. 43 x 58 cm (ca. 17 x 23 inches)

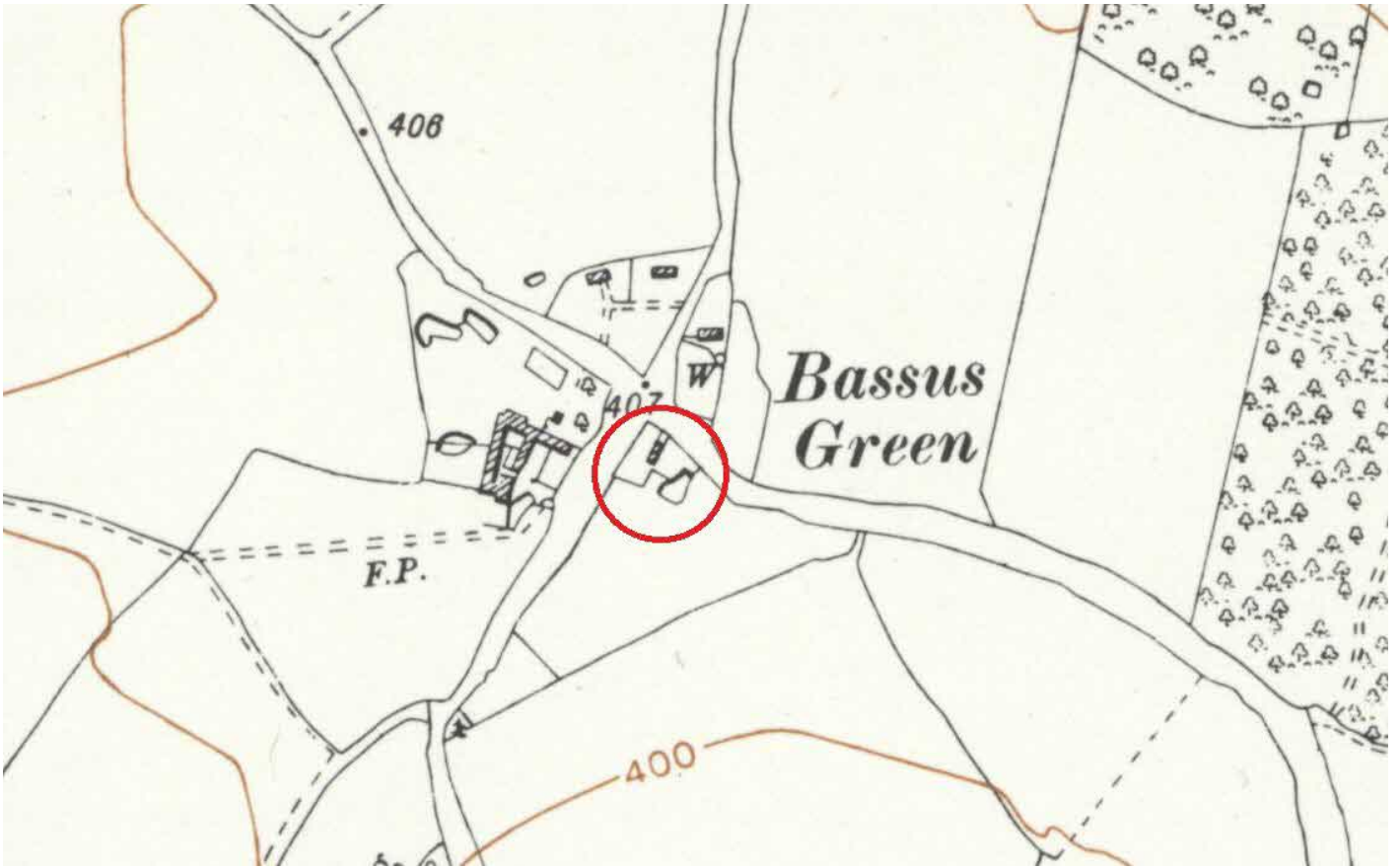


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Hertfordshire Sheet XIII.SW

Revised: 1946 to 1947, Published: ca. 1950

Size: map 31 x 46 cm (ca. 12 x 18 inches), on sheet ca. 43 x 58 cm (ca. 17 x 23 inches)



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TL32NW - A

Surveyed / Revised: Pre-1930 to 1959, Published: 1960

Size: map 47-50 x 47-50 cm (ca. 19 x 20 inches), on sheet ca. 68 x 58 cm (27 x 23 inches)

Assessing significance is a key principle for managing change to heritage assets and is embedded within the historic environment section of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2012). When considering the impact of proposed development, the NPPF advises that the more significant the heritage asset the greater the presumption in favor of its conservation (policy HE9). English Heritage issued Conservation Principles in 2008 to explain its philosophical approach to significance and managing change an identified four main aspects of significance: evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal. Within these categories, significance can be measured in hierarchical levels; the most usual levels are:

- Highest - an asset important at the highest national or international levels, including scheduled ancient monuments, Grade I and II\* listed buildings.
- High - a designated asset important at a national and sometimes at a regional level, including Grade II listed buildings.
- Medium - an undesignated asset important at a local or regional level, including local (non-statutory) listed buildings or those that make a positive contribution to the setting of a listed building or to a conservation area. May include less significant parts of listed buildings.
- Low - structure or feature of very limited heritage value and not defined as a heritage asset. May include insignificant interventions to listed buildings, and buildings that do not contribute positively to a conservation area.
- Negative - structure or feature that harms the value of a heritage asset. Wherever practicable, removal of negative features should be considered, taking account of setting and opportunities for enhancement.

2 Bassus Green is a C17 House classified as grade II. Grade II buildings are defined as of ‘buildings of special interest’ and comprise some 91.7 per cent of all listed buildings.

Bassus Green is a good example of a timber-framed thatched cottage, typical of the area and indicative of the typical vernacular development of such buildings.

#### 04.3 Conditions of the heritage asset

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The historic building has been severely damaged by fire specially on the first floor and damaged to the ground floor due to the water used to put out the fire by the fire brigade. Its surroundings are generally in fair condition and well maintained.

#### 04.4 Design principles

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The following order of priorities are being followed:

- Retention of remaining original historic fabric.
- Reinstatement of the building to its original state as far as possible.
- Upgrading the fabric generally to comply with current standards where this can be done without compromising the historic fabric.
- New proposals to be undertaken as far as possible on a “reversible” manner in order that any alteration is capable of removal without leaving any trace on the historic fabric.

#### 04.5 Schedule of work to the heritage asset

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The summary of the proposed scope of works has been developed to carry out the necessary work to reinstate the building to habitable use following a fire.

Following the advice from a thatch roofer specialist it has been decided to modify the entrance porch to provide a design which would increase the pitch of the roof to a suitable pitch to secure the long lasting

life of a thatch roof. No other significant changes are proposed to the appearance or layout of the building other than those necessary to comply with current building regulations.

The work comprises:

Externally,

- External render to be redecorated with an Earthborn clay paint to match the existing colour.
- Front door to be replaced with new oak door to match the existing.
- Porch redesigned on the advice of the thatcher. Using black weather boarding to match existing cladding.
- Ironmongery to external windows to be replaced where damaged.
- Dormer windows on the first floor to be rebuilt. One new window to match the existing and one existing window reused and glass replaced.
- Repair, re-point and extend height of chimney to 1.8 metres above ridge to comply with current building regulations.
- Rethatched with fire protection lining.

Internally,

- Generally, existing floor finishes to be removed and replaced as indicated on drawings.
- Generally, skirting boards and boxing to be removed and replaced with matching softwood timber skirtings and boxings.
- Generally, new internal decorations on a “like for like” format.
- All exposed timbers to be refurbished including ceiling joists throughout.
- Log Burner to be removed and replaced with an Electric Log Burner.
- Kitchen units to be completely removed and replaced with matching.
- Sanitaryware and pipework to existing bathroom on the ground floor to be retained. New W.C. and cistern to be provided on completion of the work.
- New window to first floor bathroom to match the existing. All other existing windows to be retained with new glass where damaged.
- Generally, remove existing lath and plaster to internal walls on the ground floor and reinstate with lath and plaster. Internal walls to be redecorated to match the existing colour.
- Generally, fire damaged timber walls to the first floor to be removed and replaced to match the existing with lath and plaster finish. Internal walls to be redecorated to match the existing colour.
- Generally new internal softwood ledged doors and door frames at first floor level to match the existing.
- All floorboards on the first floor to be removed and replaced with softwood. Carpet and tiles to be replaced.
- Sanitaryware and pipework to bathroom on the first floor to be replaced. Existing sink to be reused.
- Boxing removed and replaced with matching softwood timber boxing.
- Staircase handrail to be replaced. Carpet to be removed and replaced.

- o Entire heating system to be removed and replaced (existing oil fired boiler to be retained). All electrical wiring, outlets and lighting to be replaced.
- o New external electric meter kiosk. Electric meter required with the rewiring. Located next to existing service box and also painted black to match weather boarding.

Please refer to Appendix A: Architectural drawings.

The works are justified as those wholly necessary to reinstate this important building following a serious fire. No significant changes are proposed to the appearance or layout other than to the roof of the entrance porch and those necessary to follow good modern conservation practice.

The new roof will be a new thatched roof designed in a traditional style.

A Thatch Firewall Membrane System with Thatchbatts will be incorporated into the roof coverings to build up future protection against thatch fires and is proposed as an alternative to the Dorset model and has been used successfully on several similar projects overseen by Barker Associates.

#### 04.6 Impact on the heritage asset and its setting

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Historic England’s Good Practice in Planning Note 2, Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment confirms that “change in the historic environment is inevitable but is only harmful where significance is damaged” That is not the case here with proposal to reinstate the damaged building broadly to its original status.

The National Planning Policy Framework advises local planning authorities on decision-making, with Section 12 relevant to the historic environment. Local authorities are advised 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’, and the ‘desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness’ (section 131). A key principle enshrined in the NPPF is the conservation of heritage assets and the presumption against substantial harm to an asset’s significance (section 132). Significance must be taken into account in assessing the impact of a proposal, to avoid or minimise conflict between conservation and any aspect of the proposal (section 129).

The proposals for Bassus Green involve the necessary works to reinstate this heritage asset as a habitable domestic dwelling. This work will not result in “substantial harm” to the heritage asset, so the tests in Sections 133 of the NPPF do not apply. Section 132 applies instead, as the harm is “less than substantial”.

Section 141 of the NPPF advises that local authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part), in a manner proportionate to their significance (section 141). This report provides part of this record of affected areas.

#### Conclusion:

The building is recognised for its merits of setting, layout and historic materials. The overriding principle is to retain the valuable features and ensure the long term survival of the building.

Timber elements and historic features will be repaired where possible using traditional materials and techniques. Timber elements that cannot be repaired will be used elsewhere where possible in preference to the use of new timbers.

The proposed works are necessary in order to repair the damage sustained by the fire and are considered only those essential to fulfil this function. The opportunity has been taken where appropriate to reverse previous unsympathetic repairs and alterations to ensure the longevity of the building following the works.

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## Appendix A : Architectural Drawings

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## Appendix B : Other documents

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## Appendix C : Photographs

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PHOTO 001 External view



PHOTO 002 External view



PHOTO 003 Internal view. Damage to roof.



PHOTO 004 Internal view. Damage to roof.



PHOTO 005 Internal view. Damage to roof



PHOTO 006 Internal view. Ground floor not affected by fire.



PHOTO 007 Internal view. Ground floor not affected by fire.



PHOTO 008 Internal view. Ground floor not affected by fire.



PHOTO 009 External view



PHOTO 010 External view. Existing shed not affected by fire.



PHOTO 011 External view. Existing shed not affected by fire.