



HERITAGE STATEMENT

Pratts Green Farmhouse, Maltings End
Kirtling CB8 9HH

Proposed alterations and extension including removal of existing side addition and formation of linked rear extension.

October 2023



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[Appendix 1](#) List description of the farmhouse

[Appendix 2](#) Conservation Officer comments dated 8 July 2022



1 Introduction

1.1 Brighter Planning Ltd have been appointed by the owners of Pratts Green Farmhouse to continue to assist with the proposed extension ‘the Proposed Development’ of Pratt’s Green Farmhouse ‘the Farmhouse’.

1.2 The Farmhouse is a Grade II Listed Building within the hamlet of Pratts Green in the parish of Kirtling. The Farmhouse is a residential dwelling in the form of a cottage. The Proposed Development will extend the Farmhouse to the south, into the existing residential curtilage and garden.

1.3 The listing description (Appendix 1) dates the building to the C16 and C17. To the northwest elevation the Farmhouse has a single-storey flat roofed modern extension. An existing modern garage is to the south- eastern side of the building.

1.4 These applications for planning permission and listed building consent are made after the withdrawal of the previous dual applications 22/00682/FUL and 22/00683/LBC. The Proposed Development has been amended and additional information has been provided so as to respond to comments on the earlier withdrawn applications.

1.5 To the north east of the application site is a thatched barn, now called Ash Leas, once associated with the farmstead which is listed in its own right and has been converted to a separate dwelling.

1.6 This statement seeks to meet the requirements of the local heritage policy requirements and the national guidance set out in the NPPF (2023). It identifies the heritage assets in the locality and their heritage value and significance. A brief summary of the background history of the site is set out. A justification for the works proposed has been made together with a response to the objections raised to the principle of extending the Farmhouse. A heritage impact assessment has been undertaken to assess the potential impact of the proposed development on the heritage significance of the identified heritage assets, either directly or by the impact on their setting. The assessment of impact on setting follows inter alia the methodology within the Historic England guidance on Setting of Heritage Assets (2017) . An assessment of the impacts on the identified heritage assets resulting from the proposed development has been made together with any heritage or public benefits flowing from the proposed development.



1.7 This statement is not intended to be an archaeological report.

1.8 This statement should be read in conjunction with:

Existing and proposed drawings – Snell David Architects

Design & Access Statement Sept 2023 – Snell David Architect



2 Identified Heritage Assets

Listed buildings



2.1 The above map from the Historic England website identifies the listed buildings in the locality with a purple triangle. There are two listed buildings denoted in the locality.



Listed Building 1 Pratts Green Farmhouse



Principal elevation to the north

2.2 The application building is a Grade II Listed. It was listed in 1983. The list description dates the western three bay part of the Farmhouse to the C16 with a later two bay C17 lobby entry addition to the east (where the main entrance to the Farmhouse is located). It is a timber framed and rendered building with a thatched roof. Each of the two component parts of the building have central chimney stacks.

Listed Building 2 Ash Leas

2.3 The second listed structure is located northeast of the farmhouse. This thatched aisled barn is dated in the listing to the late C16. It is weather boarded. The two buildings were originally both part of the farmstead of Pratts Green Farm.

Conservation Area

2.4 The site is not within a Conservation Area or the setting of a Conservation Area.



Cambridgeshire HERs records

2.5 There are no HERs records relating to either of these buildings.



3 Brief History of the Site and its Context

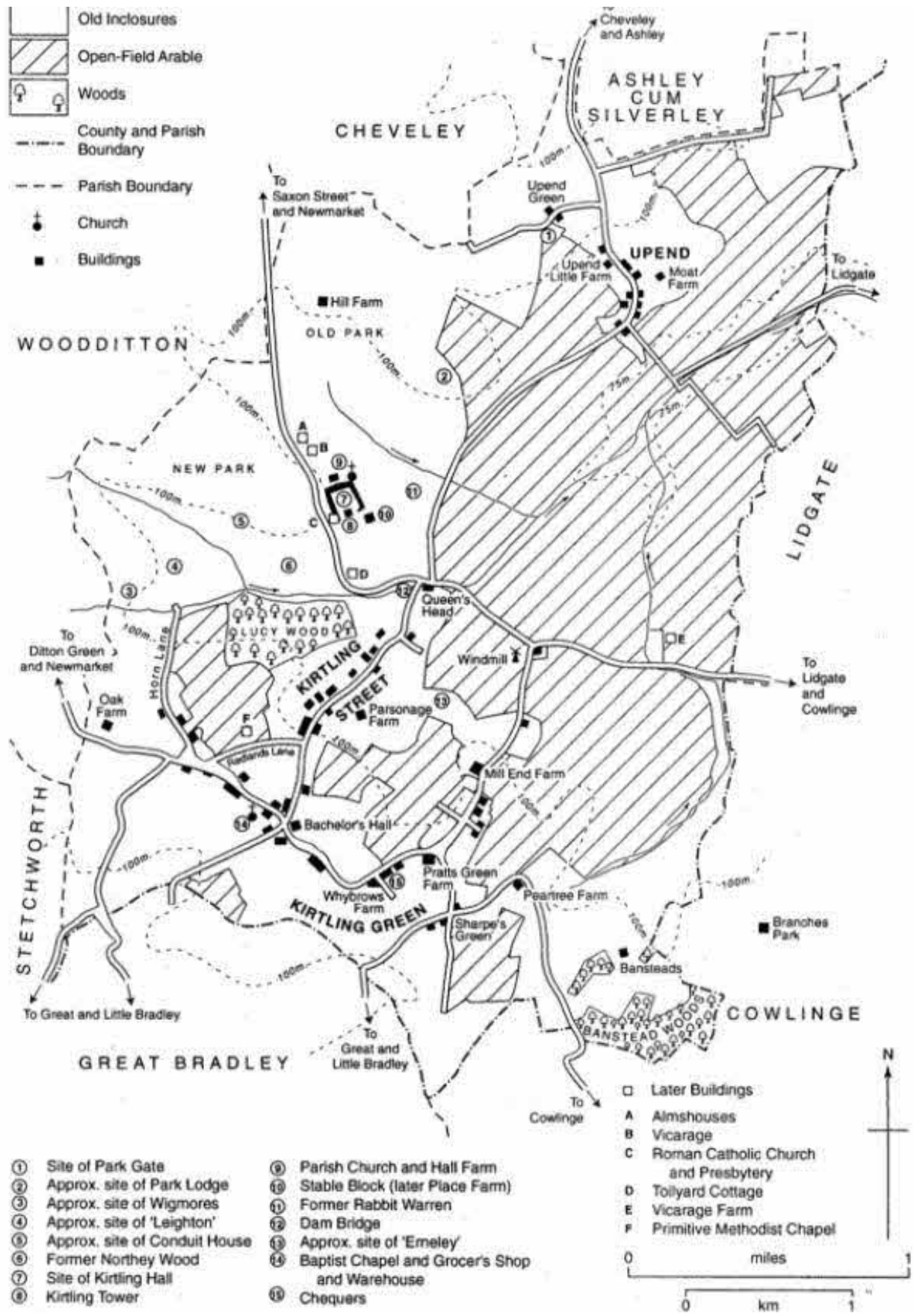
3.1 The parish of Kirtling is on the border with Suffolk, 5 miles to the southeast of Newmarket. The settlement had its economy based on agriculture which originally was an open field system with pasture to the south and west of the parish. Most of the parish was inclosed in the late Middle Ages with just the remaining open field area enclosed in 1815. Pratts Green Farm is located south of the main area of open arable fields of the village as the map below illustrates.

3.2 In 1000 the manor of Kirtling was given to Ely Abbey but this ownership appears never to have been effective as it passed to King Harold and thus became a royal manor until 1514. In 1086 at the time of Domesday Kirtling was the most populated parish in the area but after the Black Death it became depopulated. The parish had a single manor focused on the castle which is first documented in 1219. The castle site then developed into the Kirtling Hall. This had 60 hearths and was the largest country house in Cambridgeshire.



Kirtling Hall before demolition





Kirtling in 1815 (A History of the County of Cambridgeshire and the Isle of Ely Vol 10 2002)



3.3 The development within the parish is closely tied to Kirtling Hall and the estate owned by the Lords North from the 1530's to 1677. The substantial brick built Hall built for Edward 1st Lord North, and was designed by Frances Adams. The Hall had a deer park associated with it. Edward was a Chancellor to the King and he dealt with the spoils following the dissolution of the monasteries, from which position the family became very rich. Elisabeth I is known to have visited the Hall. After 1677 the Hall was little used and was managed by non-resident agents until its demolition in 1801. The estate continued to be owned by the North family until 1941. In 2001 it was purchased by Lord Fairhaven of Anglesey Abbey who resides in Kirtling Tower the former gatehouse of Kirtling Hall.

Pratts Green Farm

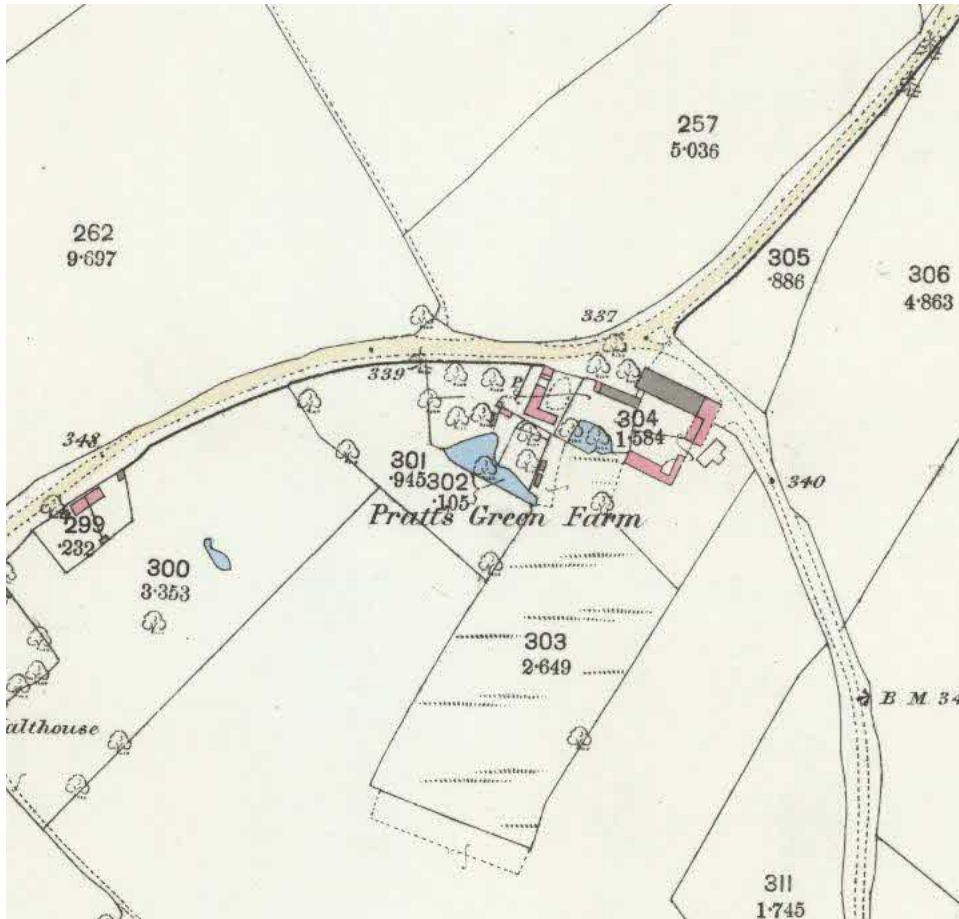
3.4 The name of the hamlet and the farmstead is derived from a local family who are recorded as residing in the Parish from 1327. The hamlet of Pratts Green comprises five or six houses in 1587/8. It is one of a series of family named tofts or farms with pasture closes which developed on the greens outside the main village.

3.5 The farm was part of the Kirtling Estate and after inclosure in 1815 when the farms were reorganised it comprised 150-200 acres. During the agricultural depression in the 1850's the agent for the Kirtling estate sought to counter the unemployment on farms in the area by encouraging emigration and provision of allotments for the poor – which can be seen on the map regression for Pratts Green, below.

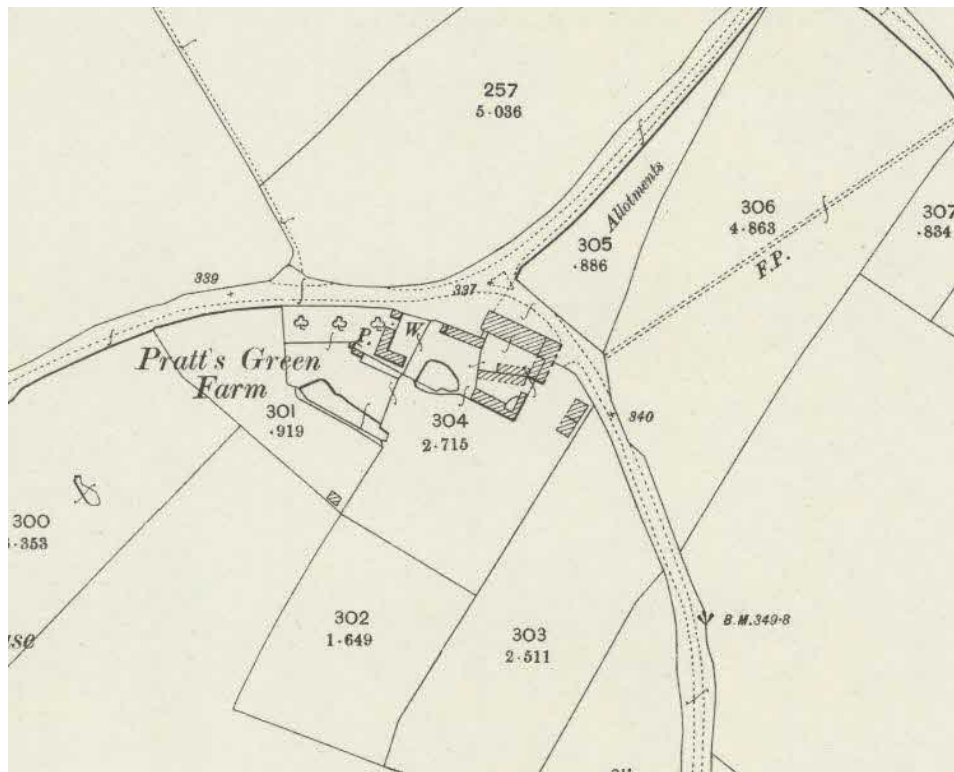
Map regression

3.6 A map regression has been undertaken for the area which has two Ordnance Survey maps (OS) spanning the period 1886 to 1903.





1886 OS Map Twenty five Inch series (Reproduced with permission of the National Library of Scotland)



1903 OS Map Twenty Five Inch series (Reproduced with permission of the National Library of Scotland)



3.7 The first map of 1886 shows the farmstead with the L shape farmhouse located to the west of the courtyard of farm buildings. To the east and south of the Farmhouse are substantial ponds. The land to the west of the farmhouse appears to be laid to orchard. A pump is located to the west of the house and what is assumed to be the wash house is to the southwest of the main building.

3.8 The layout on the site had changed little by 1903 except that the land to the north of the farmstead is demarked as being used as allotments.

Planning History

3.9 The relevant planning history for the Farmhouse is summarised as follows

Ref	Description	Decision
04/00146/LBC	Underpinning of gable end, repair to windows and repointing chimney stacks	Approved
22/00683/LBC 22/00682/FUL	Refurbishment and extension of farmhouse, demolition and replacement of existing garage and outbuilding with new garage and first floor accommodation.	Withdrawn



4 Assessment of Significance

4.1 The NPPF (Sept 2023) 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’.

4.2 For the purposes of paragraph 194 of the NPPF, the terms ‘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.

4.3 Heritage interests are defined in the NPPG 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)



4.4 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.

4.5 Historic England’s ‘Historic Environment Good Practice in Planning: 3 The Setting of Heritage Assets’ (2nd ed. 2017) (‘GPA3’) explains at paragraph 9 that:

‘Setting is not itself a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, although land comprising a setting may itself be designated (see below Designed settings). Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or to the ability to appreciate that significance’

4.6 GPA3 sets out a stepped approach to the assessment of the effects of development on the setting of a heritage asset (see paragraph 19). GPA3 explains each of those steps. This statement follows that guidance.

Pratts Green Farmhouse



4.7 The Farmhouse is positioned well back into the site with a north facing front garden enclosed by a flint and brick wall to the street. The principal elevation faces north and is on a raised level to the road.

4.8 The oldest part of the Farmhouse is the western range of three bays with the gable end to the street. This cojoins the second two bay range built a century later. Both elements are timber framed and rendered with thatched roofing. Using the definitions on the previous page the heritage values of the building are assessed, using a scale of Considerable, High, Moderate to Low or No significance:

Archaeological interest – *High*

4.9 The standing fabric dates from at least the C16 with the western wing probably being a hall house but the later C17 section being built from the outset with a floor and to a lobby entry floor plan.

Architectural and artistic interest – *High*

4.10 The standing fabric is held to be of high architectural interest providing the evidence of how the vernacular form of Farmhouse evolved from the C16 and C17, built using local materials. The building has subsequently been updated every 100 years or so, but the changes are datable, with sash C18 windows added to the cross range and replacement windows in the C19 and C20.

Historic interest – *High*

4.11 The Farmhouse is one of the historic buildings which survive in the Pratts Green hamlet and reflect the past focus on farming for the economy of the village but also the development of the village as part of the Kirtling Hall estate. As a farm the site would have had employees and as such would be part of the local memories of villagers.

Heritage significance of the Farmhouse

4.12 As a Grade II Listed building the structure is assessed as having considerable significance as a designated heritage asset. The following table sets out the levels of heritage significance used to assess the building. This acknowledges that some parts of the building may have different levels of significance than others. The right-hand column is the relevant one.



Table of heritage significance

	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 architectural or historic interest of the asset. The loss or major alteration of such features may constitute 'substantial harm'.	A feature which is important to the special architectural or 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.



Low/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 actually 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.

Exterior

NORTHERN PRINCIPAL ELEVATION *Considerable significance*



Front elevation at the junction of the two ranges



4.13 This is the principal elevation to the property where the two differing halves of the property, of differing dates, can be compared. The location of the door to the western range and the location of the central chimney suggests this may have been the location of a cross passage before the stack was added. The front room to the road was the service wing with the double bay to the rear forming the hall/parlour each being one single bay. Dormers were added when the western bay was floored possibly at the time the eastern cross range was added.

4.14 Elements which detract from this elevation include the modern replacement windows and porch and the cement render finish. The application of a decorative block cut ridge to the thatch is also a modern addition and not a traditional feature.

WESTERN SIDE ELEVATION *Some significance*

4.15 The western elevation is the best vantage point to view the C16 wing of the house. This elevation has no dormer windows added so the roof would appear to be similar to when the Farmhouse was first built (without a chimney). The elevation includes the brick projection of the remains of the bread oven which formed part of the later inserted principal back-to-back hearths and chimney stack.



Western elevation – the bread oven has horseshoes on it



4.16 The C20 flat roofed single storey extension has had a very negative impact on the significance of this elevation. This forms a poor-quality addition which detracts from the simple form of this elevation and reduces the legibility of the façade. The modern window inserted adjacent to the extension also has a negative impact on the significance.

EASTERN ELEVATION *Some significance*

4.17 The eastern gabled elevation to the C17 range contains one window. It is largely obscured from view by the vegetation which is growing here and is showing signs of damp penetration notably within the Farmhouse. There is one modern casement window to the gable and double pentice board details. The eaves of this range are higher indicating that this was built with an attic floor from the outset.



Rear and eastern side elevation



SOUTHERN REAR ELEVATION *Some significance*

4.18 The rear elevation is mainly composed of the C17 range with the gable end of the C16 range. The insertion of larger modern window and a pair of French doors have led to a loss of the historic fabric and had a negative impact on the significance of the elevation. The size and form of these windows do not echo the original small windows or later replacement sash windows to the principal elevation. The gable end of the C16 wing is currently compromised by the flat roofed side extension and the location of the oil tank.



The garage outbuilding

THE OUTBUILDING *No significance*

4.19 The existing garage building is located within 4 metres of the cottage. It has a blockwork plinth and weather boarding with a sheet metal roof. The structure is considered to be post 1948 in date and therefore not curtilage listed. It is not considered to have any architectural or historic interest. It is sited on lower ground than the cottage. Given the



comparative modern age of the structure and utilitarian materials it is considered to detract from the significance of the setting of the Farmhouse.

Interior of Farmhouse

Ground floor

4.20 The names of the rooms follow those as existing rather than on the proposal plans.

STUDY *No significance*



The Study showing the C20 internal finished and fire surround



Study– the modern hearth

4.21 The eastern ground floor room to the C17 wing this room has been lined with modern timber boarding in what appears to be an attempt to address the dampness of this room. The spine beam of the frame is exposed. To the western wall is the inglenook fireplace which has been much modified in the mid C20 with a modern flush door added to the side cupboard and modern smaller hearth applied to the main wall. An opening has been cut in the southern wall where a pair of modern French doors have been inserted. The treatment to the walls, significant alterations to the hearth and the opening to the rear wall have all had a cumulative harmful impact on the heritage significance of this room.





4.22 This is the western room to the lobby entry part of the house and contains the second of the back-to-back hearths. This has been largely rebuilt in the C20 to accommodate a wood burner with modern bricks and a cement mix but the bressummer could be original. There are some taper burns and possible apotropaic marks of an M and W on the timber. The room has some exposed framing comprising of a spine beam and wall plate. The height of the room again indicates this was built with an attic floor from the outset.

4.23 The room has been upgraded to reflect the fashions of the time with C18 sash windows to the front elevation, a gothic style metal window to the rear elevation which appears to be a reused salvaged window and four panel C19 doors added. It currently sports a modern wallpaper finish.





4.24 The kitchen is to the central bay of the C16 wing at present and the fittings date from the C20. The fenestration has all been changed to a series of modern top hung timber windows which have enlarged any original window openings beyond recognition. The ceiling heights are much lower to this end of the building. There is an exposed spine beam at ceiling level. The room has a red quarry tile floor covering which is probably C20. The southern end of the room has been altered and a large opening formed to provide a utility area and access to the modern extension to the western elevation.

4.25 The main feature of interest is the remains of an inglenook fireplace has been adapted to fit an aga cooker. Part of the bressummer is exposed. What is believed to be the door on the alignment of the screens passage to the eastern side elevation gives access to the existing location of the kitchen side on to the chimney breast but off centre. It is assessed that the kitchen has been relocated to its current location having originally been within the front room.



FRONT ROOM *Some significance*



4.26 This northern orientated room contains features suggesting this was once the kitchen with a bread oven to the western side of the back- to- back hearth. The hearth has been reduced in size.. The room has the spine beam and sole plate exposed with repairs visible but over painted. The northern wall has been subject of underpinning and the room has a modern concrete floor.

UTILITY ROOM EXTENSION *No significance*

4.27 This is an entirely modern addition to the western elevation and whilst the thatch has not been cut to form the addition , the extension has a very awkward relationship with the thatched eaves. A doorway has been formed to link the extension to the main house. The door is a modern pine one of no significance.

4.28 The extension is constructed of poor-quality materials. It has a shallow flat felt roof with the rafters exposed within the room . The upper section of the main façade is composed



of soft wood timber windows which are showing signs of deterioration. These form a continuous run of seven light casement windows which sharply contrast with the smaller windows of this part of the building.

4.29 The room has very limited insulation and is thus used for storage and to house a sink and washing machine rather than any habitable space. There are no historic features within the structure.

4.30 The extension is assessed as detracting from this elevation of the building as it has an awkward juxtaposition with the modern window which lights the kitchen and detracts from the understanding and appreciation of this elevation of the building. Given that the structure is of poor-quality construction and very clearly of C20 in date it is held to have no heritage significance. Its removal is identified as being an important heritage benefit.



Utility room

MAIN STAIRS *Some interest*

4.31 The main stairs have been inserted to the southern end bay of the C16 wing. A winder stair with timber risers and handrails dating from the C18 has been installed. The original framing jowl post has been retained as an exposed unpainted feature.

GROUND FLOOR BATHROOM *No significance*

4.32 Although within the C16 part of the building, this is a modern insertion with all modern fittings and finishes.



Attic rooms

BEDROOMS 1 AND 2 *Some significance*

4.33 These two rooms are on either side of the central chimney breast and linked via a corridor with a double door space leading into Bedroom 1. The corridor was formed by





Bedroom 2 dormer

modern partitions with glazing to upper level to give borrowed light and is considered to be C20 in date. Both rooms are lit by front dormers set above the wall plate – with bedroom 1 also having a window to the eastern gable. Other than the doors the rooms have little in the way of architectural features visible.



4.34 The ledged and braced doors with iron work handles are considered to date from the C18.

BEDROOMS 3 AND 4

Some significance

4.35 Access to bedroom 4 is via bedroom 3. Both rooms have been modernised with built in cupboards to Bedroom 4. The main features of interest are the doors – the photo shows the round ended strap hinge to one of the plank doors which is considered to be late C17 or early C18 in date.





BATHROOM *No significance*

4.36 Although this is in the C16 part of the Farmhouse this is a modern addition formed in the stair landing area with C20 fittings.

Summary

4.37 The heritage significance of the interior and age of the building are summarised on the following floor plan diagrams. The age diagram illustrates the two clear halves of the building with later alterations focused to the south west end of the building including the staircase and C20 extension.

4.38 The interior of the building does include datable evidence of changes over the five hundred+ year history of the Farmhouse however much of the interior has been compromised by unsympathetic modern alterations and changes. In particular, the areas of damp treatment which have included the lining of the study walls and insertion of concrete floors to the front room of the western wing. The hearths have all been modified and many of the windows have been replaced with low-quality softwood wooden frames. The application of a cement-based render to the building has reinforced rather than solved the



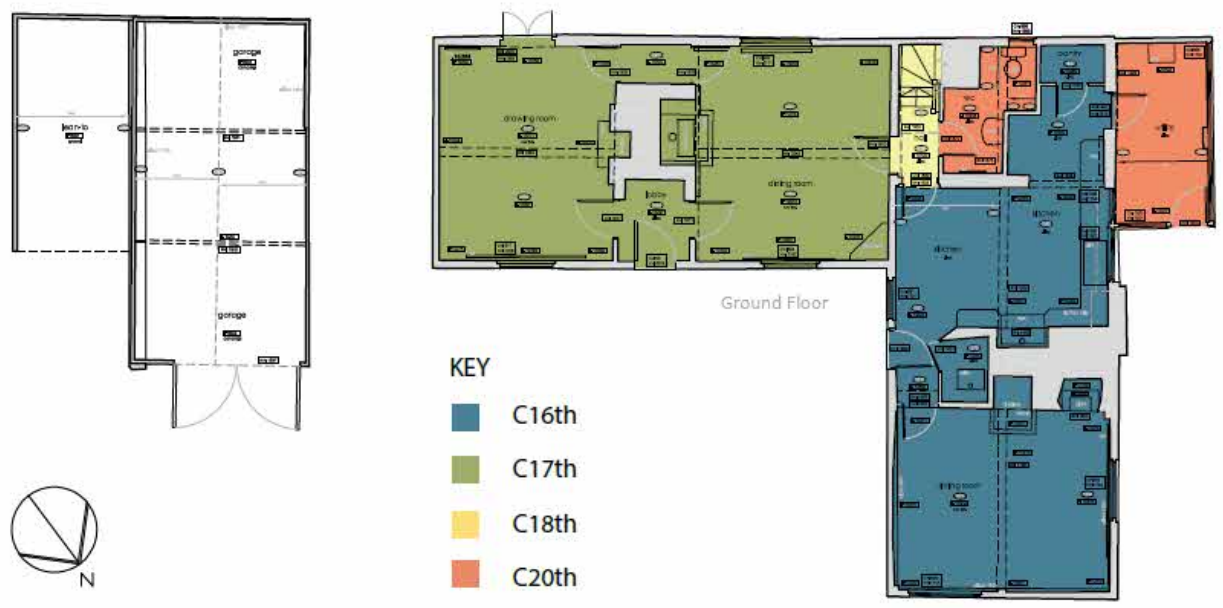
damp problems of the building. The flat roofed extension to the western elevation forms the main visual intrusion externally and this forms a low-quality alien addition to this historic elevation. These modern changes and additions have cumulatively detracted from the heritage significance of the Farmhouse and its setting.

4.39 There is considerable scope to undo the past poor-quality changes and alterations and seek to restore the character and significance of the building, with sensitive repairs and alterations which enable the features which do survive to be clearly legible. The poor condition of the building means that it needs major conservation work to secure its long-term future as a habitable dwelling. This in conjunction with the removal of the flat roofed extension are the key identified remedial measures needed to the building.

Significance Diagram



Age Diagram



Setting

4.31 The glossary to the NPPF defines setting as the surroundings in which a heritage assets asset is experienced. The Listed Building is set in the open countryside outside of the main village of Kirtling. The Farmhouse is read as part of the group of buildings which formerly formed the farmstead, which included the barns to the north-east, now a dwelling. The location and raised position of the farmstead on the bend of the road means that it forms an eye-catching focal element in the street scene. This reinforces its importance as the main building within the farmstead.

4.32 The Farmhouse is set within its own residential curtilage with the former orchard area to the west of the house and large front and rear gardens, which the map evidence indicates were separate from the farmyard areas. The residential curtilage is clearly defined to the roadside and eastern boundary by a brick and flint boundary wall. The modern garage sits outside of this walled area.

4.33 The two halves of the building are clearly legible in the main views of the building, notably from the road. The older western wing is orientated such that the front elevation faced east towards the barns and farmyard. The addition of the later southern wing altered the orientation of the building such that the principal façade now faces the road to the north.



4.34 When approaching the site from the west the single-storey extension is visible in the views across the western side garden. In the views from the east the presence of the timber-clad and corrugated sheet metal roofed garage detracts from the setting of the building given the poor quality of materials and poor condition of the external appearance of the structure.

4.35 The rear elevation which is not visible within the public realm relates to the most private part of the residential curtilage. The immediate setting of the building has a concrete area adjacent to the house with lawn and shrub beds beyond this. The wider context is one of the wider countryside setting with a wooded area to the south of the residential curtilage.

4.36 There is scope for enhancement to the immediate and wider setting of the building in the round to ensure that the special character and appearance of the building and its setting are both enhanced. As well as addressing the issue of the quality of the existing modern development adjacent to or added onto the Farmhouse, works aimed at improving the environmental conditions for the historic building need to be considered as part of its long-term conservation.



Street view





Barn to the north east as viewed from the application site



5 Planning and Heritage Policy Context

National legislation

5.1 Pursuant to s. 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, when determining an application for planning permission the local planning authority must have regard inter alia to the development plan and any other material considerations. Further, pursuant to s. 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, when a local planning authority is required to have regard to the development plan, it should exercise its powers in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.2 The statutory requirements of s.66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ‘the LBA 1990’ requires the decision maker in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. Preserving a listed building and its setting means doing no harm to its heritage significance: see *South Lakeland District Council v Secretary of State for the Environment* [1992] 2 AC 141.

National policy and guidance

5.3 National planning policy is set out in the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023**. 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.



5.4 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 from development within its setting, requires clear and convincing justification.

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

5.6 The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), which is regularly updated online, provides additional government advice on The Historic Environment. This includes in paragraph 006 (18a-006-20190723) a definition of what significance is and paragraph 20 covers what are heritage benefits.

5.7 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.

Local Plan Policy

5.8 The adopted Local Plan for the locality is the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2015 (Reviewed 2020) The following policy from the Plan is material to the development:

ENV12 Listed buildings

This states ‘Proposals that affect a Listed Building will not be permitted where it would have a detrimental impact on the visual, architectural or historic significance of the asset.

Proposals to extend, alter or change the use of a Listed Building will only be permitted where they would:

Preserve or enhance the significance of the building and not involve substantial or total loss of historic fabric.

Be compatible with the character, architectural integrity and setting of the Listed Building; and

Facilitate the long-term preservation of the building.



Proposals that affect the setting of a Listed Building will only be permitted where they would:

Preserve or enhance those elements that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the heritage asset.

Not materially harm the immediate or wider setting of the Listed Building. This setting may extend well beyond the immediate building curtilage and may include an extensive street scene or a wider urban design context, especially when the proposal is within a Conservation Area; and

Facilitate the long-term preservation of the building.

Proposals to demolish all or part of a Listed Building will not be permitted other than in wholly exceptional cases where:

All possible measures to sustain the existing use or find an alternative use have been exhausted, including active and genuine marketing²⁸ of the asset.

Reasonable endeavours have been taken to secure a public or charitable organisation to take on the asset and failed.

The building is structurally unsound (for reasons other than deliberate damage or neglect) beyond all reasonable repair and its redevelopment would bring wider public benefits; and in all cases

Comprehensive proposals for reconstruction or redevelopment have been submitted and have received planning permission.

5.9 This policy is inconsistent with the NPPF because it does not allow development where heritage harm is outweighed by public benefits, as set out in paragraph 202 of the NPPF.

5.10 There is an emerging single issue Local Plan Review (Reg 19) which focuses on housing provision in the District. This is due to be subject of an examination.



Historic England Guidance

5.11 The main guidance produced by Historic England of relevance to this application are:

The Setting of Heritage Assets – Historic Environment Good Practice Advice Planning Note 3 (2017).

Listed Building Consent – Historic Building Advice Note 16 (June 2021)

Farmstead Assessment Framework (2015)



6 The Withdrawn Proposals

6.1 The withdrawn proposals proposed to:

Relocate the kitchen to the eastern end room to the C17 range with the dining room located adjacent to this;

Remove the utility room structure to the western elevation;

Move the living spaces to the C16 wing;

To retain four bedrooms in the main Farmhouse with current bedroom two being altered to form a new ensuite to the new master bedroom of bedroom 1;

Create a new garden room to the rear elevation;

A new flint and brick wall is proposed to enclose the western side of the garden to mirror the walling to the eastern and northern sides of the Farmhouse; and

A replacement garage building which will include a boot room and utility area to the ground floor with a new guest bedroom suite in the garage attic linked to the farmhouse by a glazed link.



Front elevation with proposed replacement garage with attic room and glazed link (Snell David Architects)



The Conservation Officers concerns

6.2 In a memo dated 8 July 2022 the Conservation Officer raised the following concerns – this is set out in full in **Appendix 2**. The comments are summarised as follows:

No objection was raised in principle to the removal/demolition of the garage outbuilding and utility extension to the Farmhouse.

The design of the proposed new structures were held to be not without merit in their design but this did not outweigh the impact concerns.

Their replacement with larger structures raised concerns and the cumulative impact of both the replacement garage building and the rear extension was held to result in a disproportionate amount of extension given the low level of alteration to the building.

The works lacked justification /public benefits to outweigh the harm resulting.

The use of a glazed link for both additions was not held to be a convincing means of mitigating the impact and a freestanding annex and garden room was held to be a better option.



7 The Resubmission Proposals

7.1 The current proposals follow on from a pre-application submission made in 2022. The discussions held are set out in Section 4.4 of the DAS. No agreement was reached that the Farmhouse could be subject to any form of extension.

7.2 The resubmission proposals seek as follows:

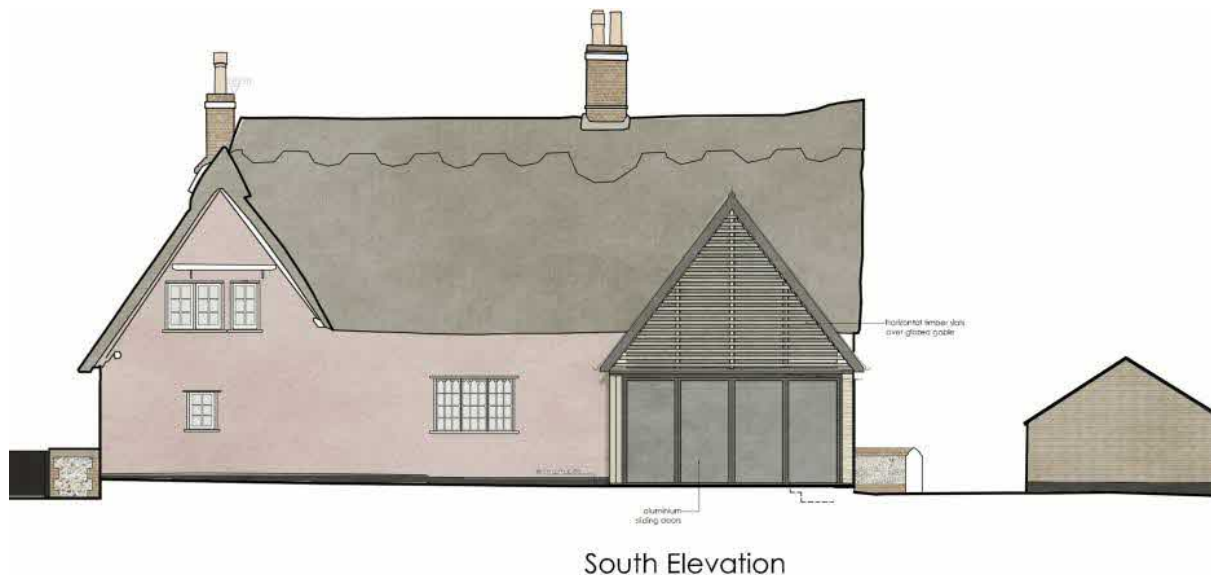
The garage building would remain as existing.

To demolish the utility room to the western elevation.

To alter the eastern end room to be the kitchen and form a linked dining/garden room via the existing French doors to the rear elevation.

The existing kitchen would be used as a utility/boot room and snug area. The snug would double up as ground floor accessible bedroom to accommodate wheelchair users.

Add partitions to the bedrooms to the eastern range to form a better circulation layout and an ensuite – there would be no increase in the number of bedrooms.



Proposed rear elevation (Snell David Architects)



8 Heritage Impact Assessment

8.1 The potential impact of the proposed development on the identified heritage assets is now considered:

Alterations to existing Farmhouse

8.2 *Ground floor* – the main change proposed is the relocation of the kitchen to the eastern end of the C17 wing. It is considered that the kitchen has already moved to the central bay from the northern end bay of the C16 wing. The present location of the kitchen is therefore not the historic location for this function. The relocation enables the kitchen to relate to the proposed extension which includes dining space. In relocating the kitchen, the layout enables use of the chimney breast which has been much altered in the existing study. The fitting out of the room as a kitchen will not result in any loss of any historic features. The works to this room also seek to address the dampness to this part of the building. The circulation and inter relation of rooms has a logic and meets modern day requirements without any harmful intervention to the ground floor fabric.

8.3 In retaining the two main rooms to the C16 part of the house as living rooms the inglenook and related fireplace features can be the focal point of the room rather than being concealed or overwhelmed by modern kitchen fittings. This is assessed as being a heritage benefit as it aids the understanding and appreciation of the historic development of this western wing of the building.

8.4 *The attic floor* – the changes are focused on bedroom 2 which has already been divided by a modern partition. This is to be further modified and added to by dividing the room into two areas to partially serve the adjacent bedroom which will become a master suite. The works will not harm any historic fabric or the circulation and room layout which currently exists.

8.5 These works are assessed as not harming the internal or external fabric of the building and will maintain the circulation within the building and plan form. The overall impact is held to result in no harm to the significance of the heritage asset. There was agreement from the Conservation Officer at the pre application stage that there was no direct harm resulting from these works.



Demolition

8.6 The proposals seek the removal of the modern flat roofed extension to the western elevation to restore this elevation. This structure is built of poor-quality materials which are showing signs of deterioration and has an awkward relationship with the thatched roof to the western wing. The overall form of the extension is assessed to detract from the appearance of this elevation of the building. The structure has been assessed as having no historic significance and detracts from the character and appearance of the Farmhouse. There is common ground between all parties that the removal of this structure will be a significant heritage benefit.

8.7 The removal of this extension enables the western elevation of the cottage, which is to the older C16 part of the Farmhouse to be restored. The thatch roof line and form of this elevation including the presence of a bread oven to the side of the central chimney stack will be far more legible. No modern extensions will therefore be visible in the views of the Farmhouse from the public realm thus enabling the C16/C17 parts of the building to be appreciated. . It follows that this demolition is a heritage benefit that will positively enhance the significance of the listed building

Repairs

8.8 The Farmhouse is currently in a poor condition with dampness and water penetration within the building, and outdated heating and bathroom and kitchen facilities. As part of the works a refurbishment programme is proposed. A Preliminary Schedule of Works prepared by Snell David Architects has been submitted as part of the application. These Works will be undertaken as part of the Proposed Development. The condition of the farmhouse will be significantly improved as a result of these Works which will not only repair the listed building, but also assist in securing its optimum viable use, as explained below.

Addition of a proposed garden room

8.9 The garden room will be located to use the existing French door opening to the southern elevation. The use of a glazed link enables the structure to be set away from the Farmhouse and have a minimal area of fabric attached to the main building with no impact on the historic fabric or the thatched roof or eaves. The new structure makes best use of the southern aspect and rear garden. The proposals result in 36 sq m of floor area being added to the building, with 10 sq metres of floor space being removed with the proposed demolition of the flat roofed extension to the western elevation.



8.10 The use of a glazed link has been questioned but this enables the junction of the new extension and the historic building to be minimised and focused on the existing French doors as well as ensuring the thatched roof is preserved. There will therefore be no loss of any historic fabric as a result of adding the proposed extension onto the rear elevation. The use of a link does also mean that the proposals are potentially more easily reversed in the future should any future owner wish to remove the addition given that its form results in minimal intervention and attachment to the historic building.

8.11 The design of the new garden room is considered in more detail in the DAS. It is considered that the structure echoes the vernacular form of the existing Farmhouse and is of a high-quality contemporary design which will read as a subservient addition to the existing Farmhouse and respectful of the architectural form of the Farmhouse. The location and form of the proposed extension will not intrude or be out of keeping with the countryside setting of the building. The height, size and location of the extension will not form a visually dominant or intrusive element within the setting of the building. Whilst it will be read against the backdrop of the existing property, the use of the glass link will ensure the profile of the thatched roof will still be legible and the addition will read as a C21 subservient addition to the main house. The form of the extension has been designed to provide a better interaction of the living space with the private garden area to the rear of the house.

8.12 The design and location of the proposed extension has mitigated the potential for any harmful effects to the significance of the building by including the following design elements:

Minimal attachment to the host building.

The extension is to the younger C17 half of the building and to a location where C20 French doors have been added.

Being single storey so as to read as subservient to the host building.

The use of a steep roof pitch echoes that of the existing Farmhouse.

The form and materials ensure this is legible as C21 vernacular design.

The location of the extension means that it is not visible in the public realm.

8.13 Having regard to these matters, it is concluded that there is no direct harm to the listed building from the addition of the Proposed Garden Room. The proposed extension will not result in any harm to the setting of the Listed Building – which is considered in the section on setting below.



Schedule of changes

8.14 The following table summarises the changes to the existing building (direct change) and identifies if these result in positive, neutral or harmful changes to the heritage significance of the cottage.

Proposed works	Significance of part of building	Positive neutral or harmful?
Relocation of kitchen to south eastern end of building	Some significance	Neutral
Formation of snug in existing kitchen	Some significance	Neutral
Formation of utility and shower room to larder/ground floor bathroom	No/some significance	Neutral
Removal of C20 extension to western elevation	No significance to structure	Positive
Formation of ensuite to Bedroom 1 and reducing size of Bedroom 2	Some significance	Neutral
Alteration of corridor area to Bed 1 and 2	Some significance	Neutral
Refitting of bathroom	No significance	Neutral
Repairs	Some significance	Positive



Impact on the Setting

8.15 The National Planning Practice Guidance – The Historic Environment paragraph 013 notes that the contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights of way or an ability to otherwise access or experience that setting. The buildings setting must be considered ‘in the round’.


8.16 This statement has sought to follow the methodology set out by Historic England in GPA3 and includes the following:

Step 1 – the heritage assets and their setting have been identified in Section 2 above

Step 2 – The degree to which the setting contributes to the significance of the heritage assets. This is considered using the checklist of potential attributes using those relevant from the Historic England guidance in the following table.

Potential attributes/experience	Assessment of the site existing (Baseline)	Consideration of the impact of the proposals
Proximity to the asset	The Farmhouse is located centrally in its residential curtilage and is surrounded by garden land with an outbuilding to the east.	The new extension is to the rear garden area and the glazed link off sets the addition from the southern elevation so there is no resulting direct and indirect harm to the Farmhouse.
Position in relation to topography	The application site is set above the level of the land to the north (the road) but is generally level within the plot.	No change



<p>Inter-relation of the site with other assets</p>	<p>The inter relationship with the former barn/farmyard to the northeast is important to understand the past function of the Farmhouse, although the two listed buildings are now in separate ownership and the barn converted to residential use.</p>	<p>No change</p>
<p>Key views</p>	<p>The principal views of the Farmhouse are from the road which runs north of the site. The views are of the northern elevation and western elevation of the building so the existing single storey flat roofed extension is visible in the public realm.</p>  <p>North elevation from public realm</p>	<p>Removal of the existing extension will enhance views from street. New extension not viewed in key views from public realm</p>
<p>Orientation</p>	<p>The original Farmhouse was orientated with the entrances facing to the east towards the farmyard. In the C17 the addition of the eastern wing resulted in the building being formed into an L shape with a north south orientation and the principal elevation became the northern facing one.</p>	<p>No change</p>



Openness	The front and side garden area is at a raised level from the road and relatively open aside from enclosing boundary walls. The rear of the site is enclosed by trees both on the site and the adjacent land which reduce the openness and views to and from the site.	No change
Degree of change over time	There have been two significant periods of building on the site which are captured in the distinct two ranges of the building. Whilst the building has undergone subsequent refurbishment on a regular basis c. every 100 years, this has led to less significant changes such replacement of windows , replacement of the staircase and provision of bathroom facilities. The western C20 extension is the only modern addition to the building.	Removal of less sympathetic and poor quality C20 alterations and extension will be a significant benefit. New extension will be legible as high quality C21 addition
Prominence or dominance of the development	The slightly raised position and the orientation and position in relation to the road which bends towards the Farmhouse, means that this forms a focal building in the cluster of buildings on the small green.	No change
Competition with the assets	Given the former farmhouse and barn are the only buildings of any standing in the location there is no competition with other assets. The buildings form part of a former farmstead unit which remains legible notwithstanding the alterations which have occurred as part of the change of use of the barn and division of land ownership which have taken place.	No change
Visual permeability	The rear southern elevation of the site is only visible from within the site and is screened from	No change



	view in the public realm including from the farm access to the east by the buildings on or adjacent to the site and the trees and shrubs to the south of the site. The main northern elevation and the western side elevation are fully visible from the public realm	
Introduction of movement and activity	The addition of the extension in a location where a pair of French doors have been added in the C20 is an extension of the existing movement pattern through the eastern end room into the garden area. The rear garden area is already part of the residential curtilage and the main focus for private amenity use.	No change
Diurnal or seasonal change	The main views to the site are not significantly affected by diurnal or seasonal cycles	No change
Heritage baseline		
Changes to the built surroundings/l and use	The built form which exists on the site today has evolved from the C16 onwards with dateable evidence of both extensions and internal alterations. The C20 changes have been poor quality and are in a poor repair . The biggest change to the wider setting has been the separate use and ownership of the adjacent farmyard and conversion of the barn to residential use.	Removal of C20 poor quality alterations and extensions and C21 addition of higher quality and less direct or indirect harm
Changes to skyline	The roof profile of the Farmhouse forms the focal element to the skyline when the site is viewed from the north (public realm). The trees to the rear form a backdrop rather than dominant skyline elements.	No change





The roof profile of the Farmhouse also forms the dominant skyline feature in the views from the south/rear garden.

Noise, odour, vibration etc	Not applicable – the property remains in the optimum use for which it was built , as a single dwelling.	There will be a level of disturbance during the construction
Changes to public access	There is currently no public access to the site and this is not proposed to be altered.	No change
Changes to landscaping	The immediate setting of the Farmhouse is experienced from the garden of the property which is not laid out to any format and is held to be a low quality landscape setting	Enhancement of the garden setting with landscape enhancement works. The location and form of the rear extension is part of the greater appreciation of the garden setting and context of the site.



8.17 In summary having considered the assets physical surroundings and how it is currently experienced, the impact of the proposed alterations and extension are assessed using this baseline information. The majority of the potential attributes remain unaltered by the proposals. The works to remove the single storey extension to the western elevation are held to be a heritage and visual benefit. The proposed works to the landscape setting of the Farmhouse will not harm the significance and understanding of the building. The proposed extension to the southern elevation will introduce change to this part of the site but the design has sought to minimise the connection to the building and uses the existing French door opening. It will be subordinate to the main Farmhouse and legible, only within the site, as a high quality C21 addition to the building. Given the lack of change identified to the majority of the existing site parameters it is held that the proposals will not result in harm either directly to the building or to the setting of the Listed Farmhouse.

Conclusion on direct and indirect effects

Step 3 of GPA3 seeks to assess the effects of the proposed development to see if these are beneficial or harmful and whether the impact is direct or indirect.

Step 4 Explores mitigation measures to minimise harm and maximise the benefits.

8.18 These two steps are considered together in this summary.

8.19 *Harmful direct effects* - it is assessed that there will be no harmful direct effects. The demolition of the existing western single storey extension is held to be beneficial not negative as it will remove a poor-quality addition and will better reveal this elevation which is visible in the public realm. The new extension will not result in any direct harmful impact as there will be no loss of historic fabric. None of the other repair and conservation works will be harmful as these also do not result in the loss of historic fabric.

8.20 *Positive direct effects* These will seek the removal of inappropriate features and materials and better reveal the historic fabric of the building. This includes the works to the hearths and replacement of the windows.

8.21 *Harmful and beneficial indirect effects*—The proposed new extension is assessed as having a minor impact on the ability to read all the rear elevation building and the appreciation of this. However, it is considered that the mitigating measures (see discussion below) included in this design have reduced this potential impact to a very low level. The means by which the extension will link onto the main Farmhouse, will ensure there is no loss of historic fabric. The sensitive addition will be visually subservient to the host



building. The use of a small, glazed link added to an existing opening will enable the external fabric of the original building to still be visible in a very large part. The overall amount of fabric obscured by the extension is thus very low and that which is obscured is not the oldest part of the building. The form of the extension enables the majority of the host building to be legible.

8.22 It is assessed that the proposals as a whole, will result in greater positive indirect effects by virtue of the removal of the single-storey side extension and the removal and replacement of the identified inappropriate details and materials with appropriate and higher quality ones. The heritage significance of the building and the appreciation of the building will be enhanced overall as a result of these proposals.

8.23 *Mitigation measures to minimise harm and maximise benefits* – the main conservation works to the house seek to address the poor condition of the building and remove past modern alterations which have exacerbated the problems. The works aim to maximise the benefits to the building by retaining the features of heritage significance which survive and employing traditional materials to repair and conserve the building. The removal of the poor design quality and construction flat roof extension to the west elevation is held to result in an overall positive benefit to the external appearance of the oldest part of the building.

8.24 The location and form of the new extension proposed seeks to ensure the structure is not visible in the public realm so that only the historic form of the building is legible. The extension is of a far higher quality design which echoes the pitched roof form of the host building. It will be subservient in scale and use high-quality materials which harmonise with the main Farmhouse. The design of the extension will result in a successful union of old and new elements without any direct harm resulting to the heritage asset. The level of indirect harm is assessed to be reduced to the lowest potential level. The conclusion is that the internal balance of overall impact weighed against the benefits accruing from the proposed works tips firmly in favour of the development with there being far greater benefits than the very low level of harm identified as resulting from the proposed new extension. Accordingly, overall, the Listed Building is preserved and enhanced and therefore there is compliance with the required statutory duty.

Compliance with Local Plan Policy

8.25 The proposals are assessed to fully comply with the relevant parts of Policy ENV12. The proposals will preserve and enhance the significance of the Farmhouse and the loss of fabric is minimal. The design of the proposed extension is held to compatible and responds to



the character and appearance of the Farmhouse whilst clearly reading as subservient new element to the Farmhouse. The works will not intrude on the public realm or the understanding of the past relationship with the former farmyard to the east. The proposals are part of the long-term conservation and repair of the building to ensure the house is fit for habitation into the C21. The removal of the existing poor-quality C20 side extension to the western elevation will enhance the special character of the listed building notably to the earliest element of the building. The proposals will make a positive contribution to the building and its setting.

Heritage benefits

8.26 The heritage benefits flowing from the development are identified as follows:

The proposals are part of a much-needed package of conservation repair work for the building (which is in a poor condition). A schedule of works is submitted as part of the application including works to address dampness and water penetration in the building and improve the insulation of the structure.

The package of works proposed to the building will ensure the building is conserved into the long-term future and will secure it in its optimum viable use as a single dwelling.

The proposals remove the poor-quality flat roofed modern extension to the western elevation which detracts from the appearance and appreciation of the building.

8.27 The guidance in the Planning Practice Guidance set out in The Historic Environment (2019) sets out in Paragraph 14 that the deteriorated state of a heritage asset can be taken into account when reaching a decision except where there has been deliberate neglect, which is not the case here.

8.28 Paragraph 15 of the PPG stresses that putting or retaining a heritage asset in a viable use will lead to the investment in their maintenance necessary for their long-term conservation. The optimum viable use of the Farmhouse is as a single dwelling, which is the purpose for which it was constructed, and the proposals wish to retain the building in this use. To retain a building in viable use changes may be necessary reflecting changing living standards and requirements. In such cases harm may thus be justified, especially where it can be shown to be low and mitigation measures have been sought to minimise this.

8.29 The refurbishment works to the interior follow the ongoing pattern of change which has historically taken place to the building. The proposed extension enables a low-quality existing extension to be removed and the western elevation to the older part of the building



restored. The provision of a new extension to the southern elevation will introduce both change to this façade and harm to its visual appearance and composition. Whilst the design and location has sought to minimise this there will be a resulting level of harm, which arguably is not fully outweighed by the heritage benefits identified.

Public benefits

8.30 In undertaking the planning balance for the scheme wider public benefits can also be taken into account. In this instance, there are identified two clear areas of public benefit:

Biodiversity enhancement – as part of the supporting work for the submission an ecological survey including a bat survey was undertaken and the ecologists (MKA Ecology) have identified the provision of bat boxes and planting to encourage bees as part of the proposed biodiversity enhancement of the site.

Provision of green energy and conservation – the DAS sets out the proposals including improved insulation of the building which ensure the works are sustainable and as carbon neutral as possible. The works also ensure the building is brought back and remains in habitable use ensuring the embodied energy used in the building of the cottage is conserved.



9 Conclusions

9.1 In summary, this heritage statement has reached the following conclusions:

9.2 First, the Proposed Development will cause positive direct effects on the significance of the listed building and there will be no harmful direct effects resulting.

9.3 Secondly, the indirect effects (i.e., effects on significance via changes in setting) of the Proposed Development on the significance of the listed building will be beneficial overall (see footnote 1). The proper conclusion is that the Proposed Development enhances the significance of the Listed Building. (i.e., on the basis of an internal heritage balance – see *City & Country Bramshill Ltd v Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government* [2021] EWCA Civ 320, [2021] 1 WLR 5761).

9.4 Thirdly, it follows that, overall, the Proposed Development will enhance the significance of the listed building. Accordingly, the Proposed Development complies with the statutory duty in s. 66 LBA 1990, Chapter 15 of the NPPF and the relevant development plan policies.

Footnote 1

Some very low indirect harm has been identified but when an internal balance has been undertaken this is assessed as being outweighed by the positive direct and indirect effects that have been identified flowing from the proposed works to the building.



References

Bradley S & Pevsner N *The Buildings of England – Cambridgeshire*
Yale University Press 2014

A F Wareham and A P M Wright, *A History of the County of Cambridge and the Isle of Ely: Volume 10, Cheveley, Flendish, Staine and Staploe Hundreds (North-Eastern Cambridgeshire)* (London, 2002), pp. 57-63. The Manor is described pp 63-69 The economic history pp69-73

[Kirtling, Cambridgeshire Family History Guide - Parishmouse Cambridgeshire](#)



Appendix 1

List description of the farmhouse



PRATTS GREEN FARMHOUSE

Overview

Heritage Category:
Listed Building

Grade:
II

List Entry Number:
1126286

Date first listed:
29-Nov-1983

Statutory Address:
PRATTS GREEN FARMHOUSE, MALTING END

Map



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The above map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale. For a copy of the full scale map, please see the attached PDF - **1126286.pdf**

(https://mapservices.HistoricEngland.org.uk/printwebservicehle/StatutoryPrint.svc/121046/HLE_A4L_Grade|HLE_A3L_Grade.p

The PDF will be generated from our live systems and may take a few minutes to download depending on how busy our servers are. We apologise for this delay.

This copy shows the entry on 28-Jul-2021 at 11:47:32.

Location

Statutory Address:

PRATTS GREEN FARMHOUSE, MALTING END

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

County:

Cambridgeshire

District:

East Cambridgeshire (District Authority)

Parish:

Kirtling

National Grid Reference:

TL 69077 55739

Details

TL 65 NE KIRTLING MALTING END (South-West Side)

7/114 Pratts Green 29.11.83 Farmhouse

II

Farmhouse. C16 with late C17 extension to east. Timber framed with pargetted plastered panels. Thatched roofs. Two red brick ridge stacks. Two storeys, and one storey and attic. L-plan. Original farmhouse three unit plan, with lobby entry two unit plan extension. Two first floor, and two ground floor C19 sixteen-paned hung sash windows and four-panelled door. Boarded door, casement window, and gabled dormer window in C16 range. Interior. Stop-chamfered ceiling beams, inglenook hearths, one with baking oven and two sealed. RCHM (Cams notes), 1952.

Listing NGR: TL6907755739

Legacy

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

Legacy System number:

49192

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.

End of official listing

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Appendix 2

Conservation Officer comments dated 8 July 2022

EAST CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

PLANNING SERVICES

Conservation Officer - INTERNAL CONSULTATION



To: Holly Chapman

Date: 8th July 2022

Proposal: Refurbishment and extension of farmhouse, demolition and replacement of existing garage and outbuilding with new garage and first floor accommodation

Location: Pratts Green Farmhouse, Kirtling

Reference: 22/00682/FUL & 22/00683/LBC

Comments:

The application site is NHLE ref 1126286 Pratts Green Farmhouse, a Grade II listed C16-17 timber framed & thatched cottage in a rural location within Kirtling parish. Although the building has suffered minor depredations such as the C20 outshot and replacement windows, on the whole it is a remarkably well-preserved representative of local vernacular traditions, and has group value with its individually-listed C16 barn (NHLE ref 1331814).

The NPPF states:

'Heritage assets...are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.'

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.

Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.'

Historic England's 2017 Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 'The Setting of Heritage Assets' states:

'When assessing any application for development which may affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities may need to consider the implications of cumulative change....Where the significance of a heritage asset has been compromised in the past by unsympathetic development affecting its setting, to

accord with NPPF policies consideration still needs to be given to whether additional change will further detract from...the significance of the asset.'

The present application proposes the replacement of the garage with a larger garage/annexe block and addition of a garden room extension to the principal building, together with the removal of the C20 scullery and a package of other refurbishment works. The existing garage and scullery are no loss in themselves but the proposal to attach other, much larger elements in their place is more contentious. The *combination* of both the annexe and garden room is disproportionate in relation to the existing dwelling, and no 'clear and convincing justification' has been advanced for an impact of this order. The deployment of the glazed link stratagem to overcome this objection is not especially convincing: even a nominally transparent structure still involves impacts and the drawings gloss over the reality of what this entails: panels have joints, roofs have abutments etc, and no glazed structure is truly invisible.

Pratts Green Farmhouse has survived relatively unscathed for 400 years and there is a very strong public interest in preserving it as such for the future. Given the nature of the accommodation proposed, these requirements could be met in genuinely freestanding annexe and garden pavilion buildings, with no great functional penalty, and no impact on the integrity of the listed building. That would fulfill the duty of responsible stewardship which underpins the purpose of conservation.

No building has an infinite capacity to absorb change and this is especially true of modest traditional buildings such as Pratts Green Farmhouse, which are very vulnerable to over-aggrandisement. The design of the proposed extensions are not without merit in themselves but their cumulative impact risks overwhelming the host. The protection of listed buildings and their settings from piecemeal development is a vital conservation consideration and this point has been upheld in appeals recently in Dullingham (20/01347/FUL) and Soham (21/00209/LBC).

The scheme represents a cumulative impact which is considered to be detrimental to the character and setting of the host listed building. This constitutes less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, and no *public benefit* has been advanced to offset that harm. The application is therefore contrary to section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, Local Plan Policy ENV 12 and section 16 of the 2021 NPPF.

Recommendation: objection

Chris Partrick
Conservation Officer

