

Heritage Statement

Hunsdonbury, Hunsdon, Ware, Hertfordshire SG12 8PW

Written by: Ignus Froneman B Arch Stud ACIfA IHBC **Date:** 11 October 2023
On behalf of: Mr F Montanaro **Ref:** 0558

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Ignus Froneman, Director at Cogent Heritage, in consultation with the Applicant, and GML Architects. It supports a planning application for a replacement of the modern stables, to the south of the pool house extension and in the garden of, the grade II listed Hunsdonbury in Hunsdon. The replacement building would be for ancillary accommodation to the main house. It would be of modular construction, albeit in a bespoke arrangement that is similar to the layout of the existing stables, but of a more compact form. Unlike the existing stables, the replacement would have a flat roof and be of a high quality of design and materials.

1.2 The author of this report is a qualified heritage consultant with over 20 years of experience in the historic environment. This includes regular appearances as an expert witness at public inquiries, on behalf of both appellants, public bodies and local planning authorities. The Heritage Statement should be read alongside the full suite of submission documents.

Purpose of the report, site inspection and research

1.3 The Heritage Statement assesses the effects of the proposed development on the heritage significance of the relevant heritage assets (see below). The assessment accords with Historic England's guidance on heritage assessments, *Statement of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets* (Historic England Advice Note 12, October 2019). The assessment was carried out to a proportionate degree of detail, in accordance with paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

1.4 The Heritage Statement was informed by a site visit, in May 2022, and documentary research.

1.5 Photos were taken on the site visit, including drone photography. A selection of these has been included to illustrate the report; they have not been altered, aside from cropping or annotation.

1.6 The purpose of the documentary research was to establish readily available sources of information about the history and evolution of the application site and its context. This is intended to be informative, but it is not intended to be comprehensive/exhaustive, and it is therefore possible that other sources of information relating to the application site and its context exist.

Heritage assets

1.7 The listed buildings in the vicinity of the application site, all of which are listed grade II, can be seen highlighted in purple on **Fig 1**, an extract from East Herts District Council's online policy map. The application site/stables is highlighted red. The listed buildings closest to the application site are listed below, from south to north:

- i. Hunsdonbury House;
- ii. the Gatehouse; and
- iii. the mock ruin in the garden of Longcroft.

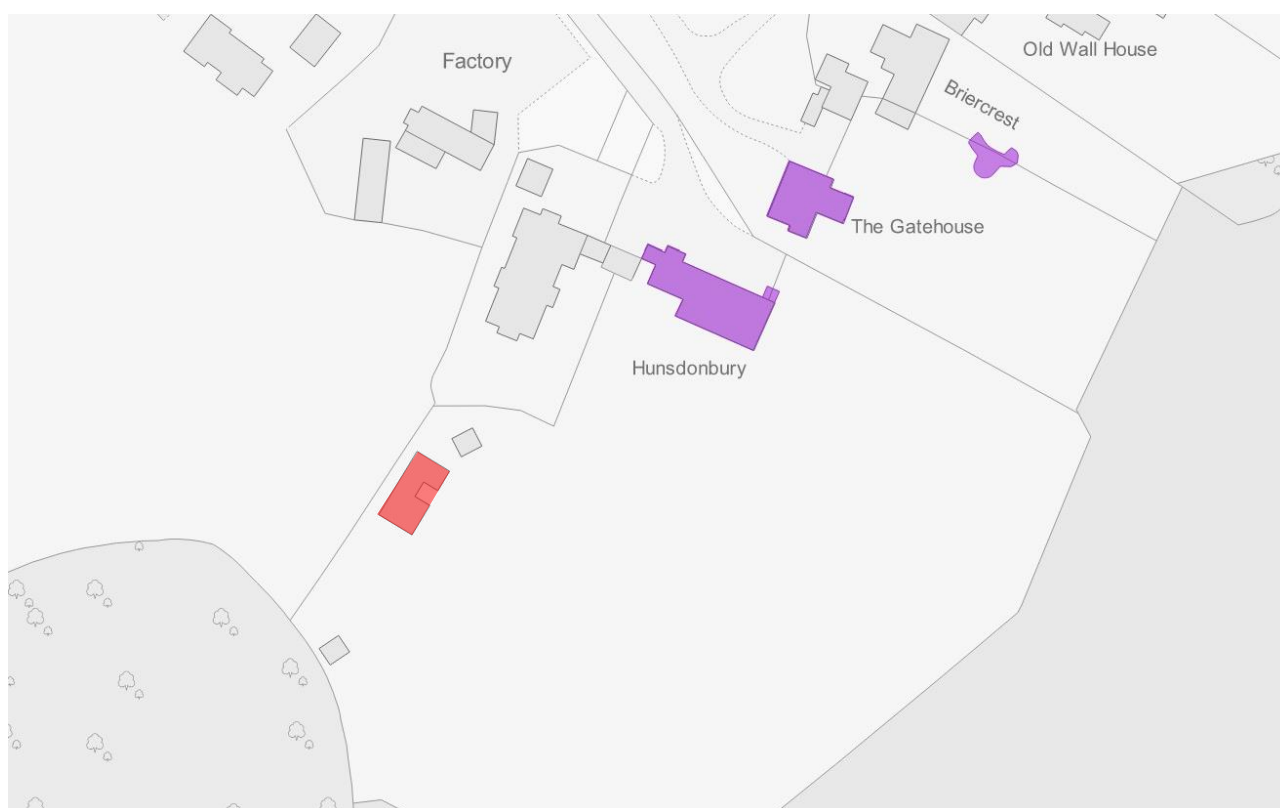


Fig 1: An extract from East Herts District Council's online policy map, showing listed buildings in purple and the application site/stables in red.

1.8 Given the spatial relationship and absence of experiential relationships between the application site and the Gatehouse, as well as the mock ruin, these are not considered further, in accordance with 'Step 1' of the assessment process as advocated in Historic England's setting guidance *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3* (Second Edition) (GPA 3).

1.9 Additionally, the application site falls within the Hunsdonbury locally important Historic Park and Garden, as identified on Figure 44 of the Hunsdon Area Neighbourhood Plan (replicated at **Fig 2** below).

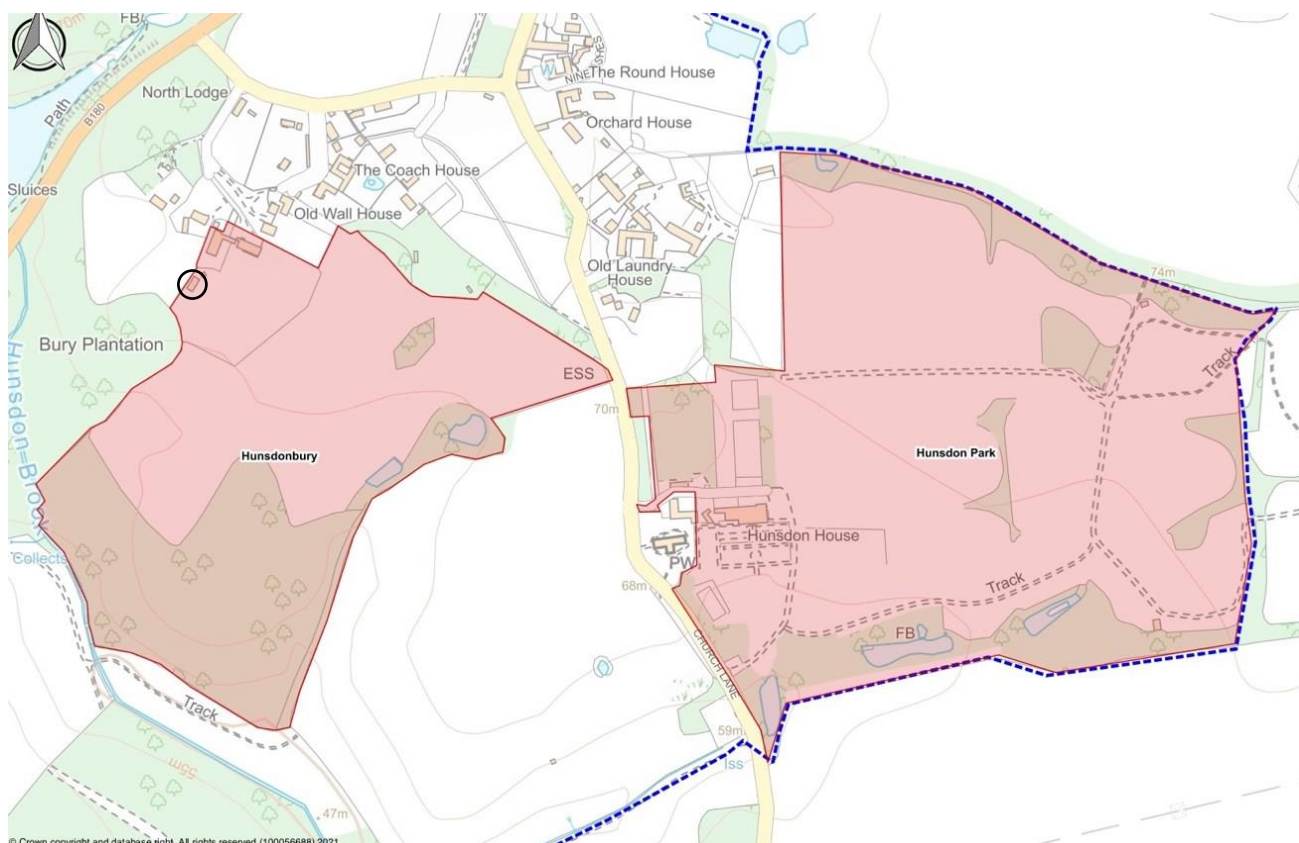


Fig 2: An extract Figure 44 of the Hunsdon Area Neighbourhood Plan, with the application site encircled.

1.10 It is not clear how the area shown on the Hunsdon Area Neighbourhood Plan relates to the actual register entry for the Hunsdonbury locally important Historic Park and Garden, as described in the *Historic Parks & Gardens Supplementary Planning Document* (SPD) to the East Herts Local Plan Second Review (indeed, para 8.28 of the Neighbourhood Plan refers to the SPD). The description in the SPD (extract below) refers to the Wilderness and lake, which are both, in fact, on the west of the B180 and some distance to the NW of the application site.

Site:	Hunsdonbury, South of Hunsdon
Landscape Character Area:	81 (Stanstead to Pishiobury Parklands)
Description:	Extensive woodlands (the Wilderness), lake survived former house.

1.11 The Hertfordshire Gardens Trust has no information about a historic park at Hunsdonbury. Historic maps and information record that there was historically never a designed landscape, as is shown in the Hunsdon Area Neighbourhood Plan, although satellite images show that latterly (since around 2000), there have been an emergence of a designed landscape to the south and SE of Hunsdonbury. Although the designation in the Neighbourhood Plan is therefore questionable, for the purposes of this assessment and for the sake of completeness it has been assumed that the application site falls within a locally designated historic park and garden, which has been assessed on its merits.

Legislation and policy summary

1.12 The section below summarises the key provisions of s.66 & s.72 of the Planning Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework and the Development Plan policies.

1.13 **Legislation:** Legislation relating to listed buildings and conservation areas is contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the Act). Section 66(1) of the Act sets out the statutory duty in relation to development affecting the setting of listed buildings and section 72(1) sets out the statutory duty in relation to any buildings or other land in a conservation area.

1.14 It is a well-established concept in case law that 'preserving' means doing no harm for the purposes of the 1990 Act. The Court of Appeal's decision in *Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Ltd v East Northamptonshire District Council* [2014] (EWCA Civ 137) established that, having 'special regard' to the desirability of preserving the setting of a listed building under s.66, involves more than merely giving weight to those matters in the planning balance. There is a strong statutory presumption against granting planning permission for any development which would fail to preserve a listed building or its setting (and the same for conservation areas). In cases where a proposed development would harm a listed building or its setting (or a conservation area), the Barnwell decision has established that the duty in s.66 of the Act requires these must be given "*considerable importance and weight*". The character or appearance of land in a conservation area attract a similar duty under s.72 of the Act.

1.15 The key legal principles established in case law are:

- i. 'Preserving' for the purposes of the s.66 and s.72 duties means 'to do no harm'¹.

¹ *South Lakeland District Council v Secretary of State for the Environment* [1992] 2 AC 141 per Lord Bridge at p.146E-G in particular (obiter but highly persuasive).

- ii. The desirability of preserving the setting of a listed building, or the character or appearance of a conservation area must be given 'considerable importance and weight'².
- iii. The effect of NPPF paragraphs 199-202 is to impose, by policy, a duty regarding the setting of a conservation area that is materially identical to the statutory duty pursuant to s.66(1) regarding the setting of a listed building (and s.72 in relation to the character and appearance of a conservation area)³.
- iv. NPPF paragraph 202 appears as part of a 'fasciculus' of paragraphs, which lay down an approach corresponding with the s.66(1) duty (and similarly the s.72 duty)⁴.
- v. If harm would be caused, then the case must be made for permitting the development in question, and the sequential test in paragraphs 200-202 of the NPPF sets out how that is to be done. If that is done with clarity, then approval following paragraph 202 is justified. No further step or process of justification is necessary⁵.
- vi. In cases where there may be both harm and benefits, in heritage terms, great weight has to be given to the conservation and enhancement of a listed building, and its setting, and the preservation and enhancement of a conservation area. It is, however, possible to find that the benefits to the same heritage assets may be far more significant than the harm⁶.
- vii. An impact is not to be equated with harm; there can be an impact which is neutral (or indeed positive)⁷.

1.16 **The National Planning Policy Framework:** Section 16 of the revised (September 2023) National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF) deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment, in paragraphs 189 to 208. Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

1.17 According to paragraph 194 applicants should describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail

² *Bath Society v Secretary of State* [1991] 1 WLR 1303, at 1319 per Glidewell LJ and South Northamptonshire DC v SSCLG [2014] EWCA Civ 137 (Barnwell Manor), at [22-29] per Sullivan LJ.

³ *Jones v Mordue* [2015] EWCA Civ. 1243 per Sales LJ [at 28].

⁴ *Jones v Mordue* [at 28] per Sales LJ.

⁵ *R (Pugh) v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government* [2015] EWHC 3 (Admin) as per Gilbert J [at 53].

⁶ *R (Safe Rottingdean Ltd v Brighton and Hove CC* [2019] EWHC 2632 (Admin) as per Sir Ouseley [at 99].

⁷ *Pagham Parish Council v Arun District Council* [2019] EWHC 1721 (Admin) (04 July 2019), as per Andrews, J DBE at 38.

should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

- 1.18 According to paragraph 199, which applies specifically to designated heritage assets, great weight should be given to a heritage asset's conservation (the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This reflects the provisions of the 1990 Act in that it applies irrespective of whether it involves total loss, substantial harm, or less than substantial harm to significance.
- 1.19 Paragraph 200 states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset should require clear and convincing justification. It then deals with substantial harm to, or total loss of significance of, different types of designated heritage assets. Paragraph 201 continues on the subject of substantial harm (this level of harm is not relevant to the present proposals).
- 1.20 Paragraph 202, on the other hand, deals with less than substantial harm. Harm in this category should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) describes public benefits as "*anything that delivers economic, social or environmental progress*".
- 1.21 According to paragraph 203, the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining applications. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
- 1.22 The **Development Plan** is the East Herts District Plan 2018 (the EHDP), and the Hunsdon Area Neighbourhood Plan (the Neighbourhood Plan).
- 1.23 The heritage policies relevant to the consideration of this application in the EHDP are quoted below:

Policy HA1 Designated Heritage Assets

- I. Development proposals should preserve and where appropriate enhance the historic environment of East Herts.*
- II. Development proposals that would lead to substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss. Less than substantial harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.*

- III. *Where there is evidence of neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset will not be taken into account in any decision.*
- IV. *The Council will, as part of a positive strategy, pursue opportunities for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment recognising its role and contribution in achieving sustainable development.*

Policy HA2 Non-Designated Heritage Assets

- I. *The Council will engage with key stakeholders and local communities to identify non-designated heritage assets that contribute to local distinctiveness and refer to existing information in the historic environment record.*
- II. *Where a proposal would adversely affect a non-designated heritage asset, regard will be had to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.*

Policy HA7 Listed Buildings

- I. *The Council will actively seek opportunities to sustain and enhance the significance of Listed Buildings and ensure that they are in viable uses consistent with their conservation.*
- II. *In considering applications the Council will ensure that proposals involving the alteration, extension, or change of use of a Listed Building will only be permitted where:*
 - (a) *The proposal would not have any adverse effect on the architectural and historic character or appearance of the interior or exterior of the building or its setting; and*
 - (b) *The proposal respects the scale, design, materials and finishes of the existing building(s), and preserves its historic fabric.*
- III. *Proposals that affect the setting of a Listed Building will only be permitted where the setting of the building is preserved.*

1.24 The Neighbourhood Plan policies relevant to the consideration of this application are quoted below:

POLICY HHC1 Heritage and Conservation

- I. *Development proposals should preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the Hunsdon Conservation Area as set out and noted in the Hunsdon Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan 2013. The architectural quality of listed buildings in Hunsdon conservation area is in part due*

to the sensitive decoration of white weatherboarding and render, in the High Street. This uniformity should not be eroded.

- II. Throughout the conservation area, important views and spaces contribute to the areas of heritage value. Views along the High Street in both directions, and along Drury Lane in both directions are important and should be protected*
- III. Development proposals which affect all designated heritage assets should preserve and enhance the significance of the assets and their settings (Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Registered Historic Parks and Gardens) in the Area. Enabling development to retain heritage assets at risk will only be supported where the heritage benefits of the proposed development would outweigh the disbenefits in accordance with District Plan Policy HA9.*
- IV. Development proposals which affect outlying clusters of Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments should preserve and enhance the overall character and appearance of that cluster, specifically:*
 - Hunsdonbury to Hunsdon House Gatehouse*
 - Hunsdon Pound, including Hunsdon Lock and other artificial watercourses associated with the River Stort Navigation*
 - Briggens House Estate*
 - Olives Farm*
 - Hunsdon Brook Fishponds.*

POLICY HHC2 Non-designated Heritage Assets

- I. The following non-designated heritage assets have been identified:*
 - Wynchlows, No. 91 High Street*
 - Hunsdon School*
 - Hunsdon Lock*
 - Hunsdon House Historic Park*
 - Hunsdonbury Historic Park*
- III. Development proposals, which affect the above-named assets or other non-designated heritage assets, will take into account the significance of the heritage asset to enable a balanced judgement to be made having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.*

2.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE AND CONTRIBUTION

- 2.1 This section starts by first referring to the list entry, before considering the historic background of the application site and its surroundings. This includes observations about the so-called Hunsdonbury Historic Park. The final part before considers the significance of Hunsdonbury, and the contribution of the existing stables buildings on the application site to its significance.

Hunsdonbury: list entry and historic background

- 2.2 According to its list description on Historic England's National Heritage List, Hunsdonbury was listed on 19 September 1984. The main descriptive text from the list description is quoted in full below:

"Country house, reduced by demolition of centre. Rebuilt 1832 (blundered inscription in cellar noted by Gibbs (1915) 22 'This house rebuilt [sic] 1832 at the expense of the Revd R U Calvert Rector. C. Kemp. architect'). Altered in later 1840s when Calvert family abandoned Hunsdon House and moved here to former Rectory. Centre part demolished c1950 and 2 wings became separate premises. White brick with stone dressings and stucco in parts. Red tiled roof behind parapets and gable parapets. A large irregular rectory in Tudor style recorded in Buckler drawings of 1835 (HRO) and the Tithe Map of 1842 (HRO). Shallow W entrance wing and its 2 storeys porch are alterations of the later 1840s. The present house is a compact rectangular 2 storeys house facing N. The 2 window N front shows marks of the original single storey porch around the W window, and the E window is probably a modern copy since a similar sized wing ran northward from this wall and had the other surviving part of the house (now called The Gate House qv) connected with its NE corner. Single storey vaulted stucco cloister on E end with 3 pointed arches, angle buttresses and fine moulded figures as hood mould stops to windows. Lofty stuccoed buttressed wall with open work cusped parapet, links house to a tall octagonal stucco pillar to the W, carrying a lion rampant holding a vane. The wall is partly concealed by the 2 storeys brick and stucco W entrance wing with a 2 storeys parapeted porch. An 8-panelled door under a 4-centred arch. Single storey canted bay window on S; front at E end. Plaster rib vaulted passage leads from a Gothic half-glazed garden door at the NE to the stair hall with flat panelled ceiling, stone arched moulded fire surround and Gothic staircase. An elaborate Gothic rectory of 1832 of outstanding architectural and historical interest, and especially notable for the contemporary interiors and the vigorous grotesques used as label stops. Reduction in size has not reduced its interest. Part of a group with The Gate House. (RCHM Typscript: Gibbs (1915) 22: HLHS 1979) 41.)"

- 2.3 There are two historic engravings of the house, dated 1835 and therefore shortly after its completion in 1832 (**Figs 3 & 4**, from Buckler, *Views of Hertfordshire*).



North West View of the Parsonage House at Hunsdon, Hertfordshire.

Fig 3: An extract of Hunsdonbury, from the NW, in 1835 from Buckler, *Views of Hertfordshire*.



South East View of the Parsonage House at Hunsdon, Hertfordshire.

Fig 4: An extract of Hunsdonbury, from the SE, in 1835 from Buckler, *Views of Hertfordshire*.

2.4 The 1837 tithe map (**Fig 5**) records the area at around the same time, with Hunsdonbury labelled 'Rectory'. The footprint of the house as it was built can be seen. It can be seen from the map that there was no parkland planting recorded in the area to the south of the house. That is unsurprising, given that the land to the south, labelled 163, was listed in the apportionment as pasture. The house had a defined, L-shaped rear garden at this time.

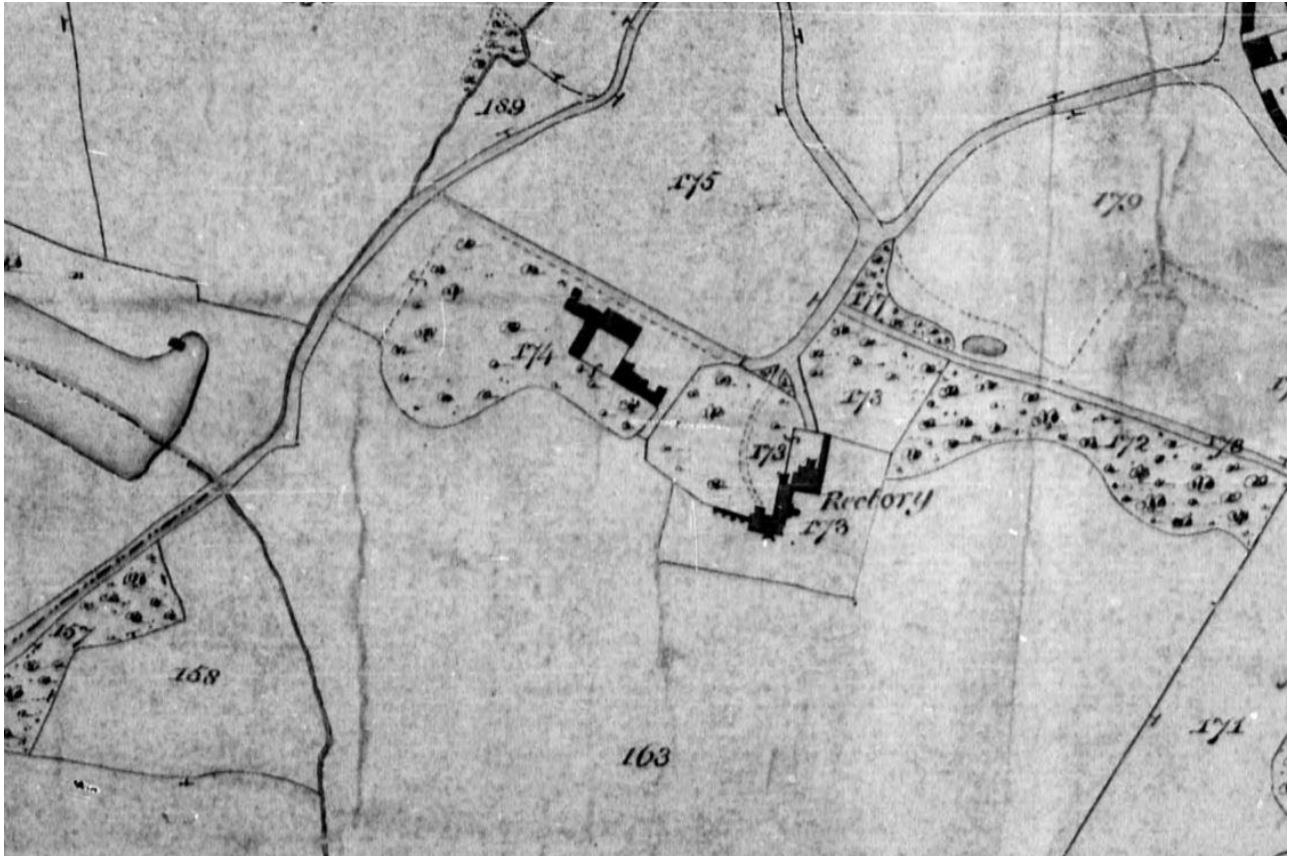


Fig 5: An extract of the 1837 tithe map.

2.5 A map accompanying a mortgage in 1848 (**Fig 6**), when the house was sold, similarly shows Hunsdonbury, and the land to the south was labelled 'Late Glebe Land' (glebe land being typically land that the rector would lease out to support himself, and it being 'late' presumably because of having changed hands and no longer supporting the rector).



Fig 6: An extract of a map accompanying a mortgage in 1848.

2.6 A conveyance plan of 1858 (**Fig 7**) again shows the house, and it is notable that the L-shaped rear garden is still clearly delineated, corresponding with the 1837 tithe map and the 1848 mortgage map. By this time the house had been extended, and a stables block (assumed) built to the north.

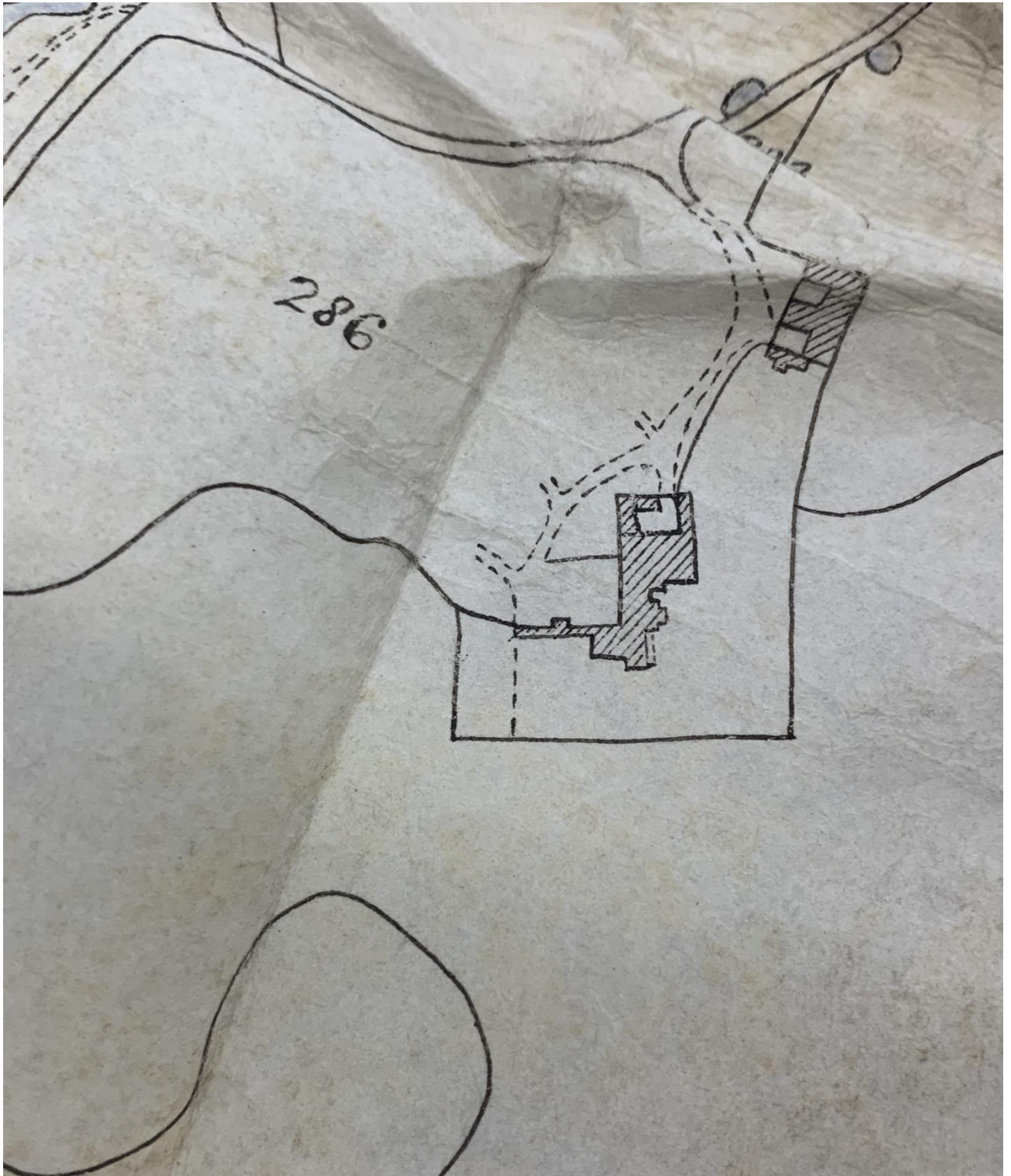


Fig 7: An extract of a conveyance plan of 1858.

2.7 The best and most accurately surveyed/detailed map of the grounds of Hunsdonbury is the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1880 (**Fig 8**). It can clearly be seen that the gardens of Hunsdonbury were contained in the L-shaped rear garden, as recorded on previous maps. There were woodland paths to the woodland surrounding the house. To the NW, the Ordnance Survey map notably records the lake and the Wilderness, both of

which are noted in the register entry for the Hunsdonbury locally important Historic Park and Garden, as cited in the *Historic Parks & Gardens Supplementary Planning Document*.

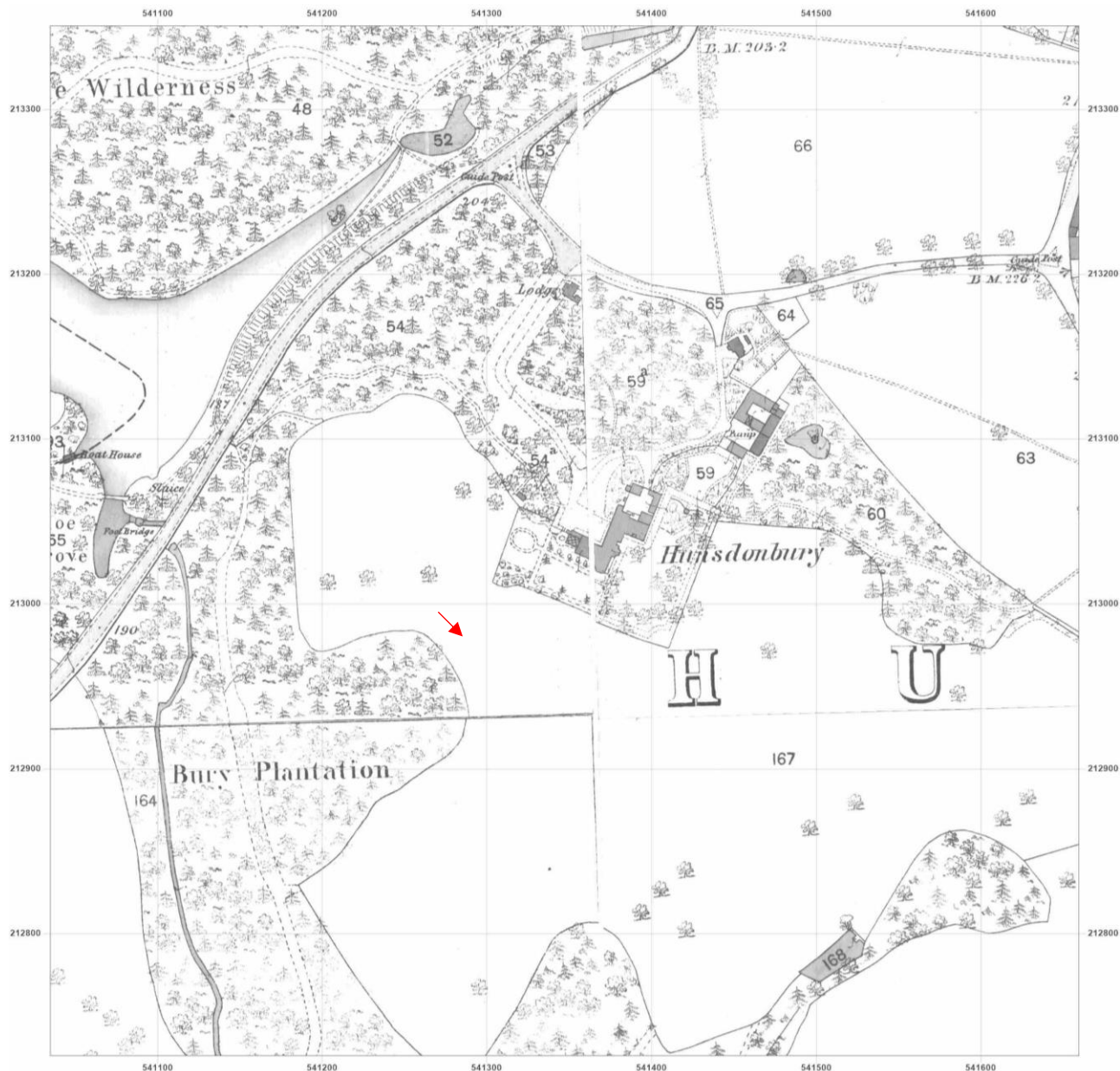


Fig 8: An extract of the 1880 Ordnance Survey map. The red arrow shows the approximate location of the application site.

2.8 Hunsdonbury is also recorded in a series of photos, from a sales catalogue of 1910 (Figs 9-11).



Fig 9: A photo of Hunsdonbury (from the SW), from a sales catalogue of 1910.



Fig 10: A photo of Hunsdonbury (from the SE), from a sales catalogue of 1910.



Fig 11: A photo of Hunsdonbury (from the NW), from a sales catalogue of 1910.

2.9 The 1898 Ordnance Survey map (**Fig 12**) records the building and the grounds similarly, as do a sales plan of 1910 (not reproduced) and the 1921 Ordnance Survey map (not reproduced).

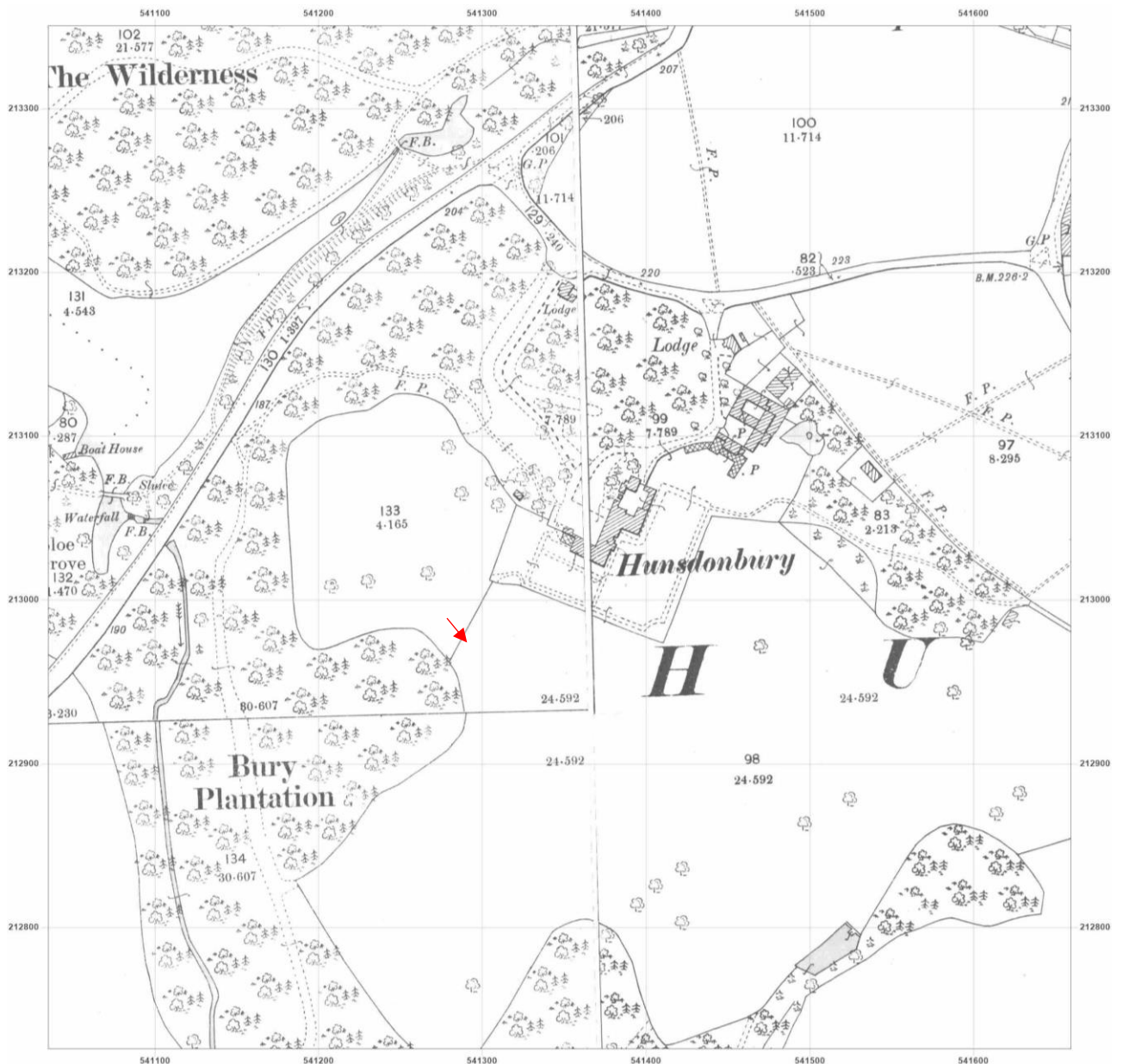


Fig 12: An extract of the 1898 Ordnance Survey map. The red arrow shows the approximate location of the application site.

2.10 A photo of 1943 (**Fig 13**) records the house being partially demolished, to create what is now the two separate properties (i.e. Hunsdonbury and Gate House). An aerial photo taken a year later, in 1944 (**Fig 14**), records the two separate houses.



Fig 13: A 1943 photo of Hunsdonbury (from the east), undergoing demolition. The central section with the two tall gables was removed.



Fig 14: A 1944 aerial photo of Hunsdonbury and the Gate House (from the north), after they were separated.

2.11 An aerial photo of 1952 records Hunsdonbury in its setting (**Fig 14**). As can be seen from the photo, it does not appear as though there was very much by way of a parkland character to the area now shown as the 'Hunsdonbury locally important Historic Park and Garden' in the Hunsdon Area Neighbourhood Plan. A total of five trees can be seen; a

group of three and two smaller shrub-like specimens which, judging from their diminutive size, could not have been of any great age.



Fig 15: A 1952 aerial photo of Hunsdonbury (encircled red). The red arrow shows the approximate location of the application site. The Wilderness, and the lake, can be seen in the foreground.

2.12 The satellite image from Google Earth below, from the year 2000 (**Fig 16**) shows the presence of the stables subject to this application, and there were what appears to be field boundaries across the area to the east of the stables (a row of trees still exists here), where there was also a football pitch. The wider context (not included in the image below) does not show any discernible signs of a designed landscape (this is touched on again in the next section).



Fig 16: An extract of a satellite image from the year 2000, with Hunsdonbury encircled red and with the red arrow showing the stables on the application site. © Google Earth

Summary of significance

- 2.13 Turning then to its significance, Hunsdonbury has considerable architectural interest as a good, albeit now truncated, example of a once large, early C19 Tudor style parsonage, which has been severed from its northern wing and adapted over the years, and which is now perhaps best described as a small country house, created from a larger former parsonage. The aerial view below (**Photo 1**) is useful in showing the relationship between Hunsdonbury and the Gate House, which was once part of the same parsonage but which is now its smaller counterfoil. That said, today the two houses have to be understood in the context that although no distinct, historically, they were part of the same large house. It can immediately be observed that this important historic link between the two is also relevant to their setting; one cannot be understood without the other, and they are therefore inextricably linked. Each house is the most important component of the other's setting.
- 2.14 Hunsdonbury has historic interest in its age, and it has some associative interest in its origins as a parsonage, as well as its later associations with the local gentry. Despite its truncation, it has retained a good deal of architectural interest, both externally and internally, which make up a good deal of its overall significance. However, the house as

it is today has been extended westwards, with a large pool house and linking structure; although of no interest, these modern additions can be seen to compensate for the loss of accommodation when the once larger house was truncated to the north, and thereby still helping the house to fulfil something of its role as a minor country house, proportionally commensurate given its extensive grounds.



Photo 1: An aerial view of Hunsdonbury, from the SW, with the Gate House seen in the distance behind.

Setting assessment

2.15 The setting of Hunsdonbury is visually explained on the aerial photos below (**Photos 2 & 3**). Unsurprisingly, the setting of the house has changed radically when the Gate House was created, although other post-war developments have also affected its once somewhat isolated wooded setting, with the encroachment of residential properties to the north (**Photo 2**). A particularly unfortunate addition was the works yard to the north of the pool house, and bordering the front garden of Hunsdonbury. The second image (**Photo 3**) shows a more recently established/emerging parkland or designed landscape to the south and SE. This present arrangement, although perhaps tempting to attribute to historic origins, has been created from c. 2000 onwards, as is recorded in satellite images, and it is no historic value or precedent. Indeed, only one of the trees seen on **Photo 3** can be seen to predate the 1952 aerial view at **Fig 15**. The contribution and

'value' of this recent landscaping is no more than serving as a pleasant, manicured modern arranged landscape.



Photo 2: An aerial view of Hunsdonbury in its context, from the SE, with the red arrow showing the stables on the application site.



Photo 3: An aerial view of Hunsdonbury in its context, from the NW, with the red arrow showing the stables on the application site.

2.16 The stables buildings on the application site are generally very well hidden from Hunsdonbury, with a good spatial separation between them, and no intervisibility (**Photo 4**). This was almost certainly a deliberate choice of location, given the very poor quality and crude nature of the stables buildings; these can be seen on **Photos 5 & 6** and it is plain to see that these rudimentary structures detract from the quality and character of the setting of Hunsdonbury, insofar as there is an experiential link between them and Hunsdonbury. It is unsurprising that they were hidden from view.



Photo 4: An aerial view of Hunsdonbury in its context, from the NE, with the red arrow showing the stables on the application site.



Photo 5: The stables on the application site are rudimentary structures detract from the quality and character of the setting of Hunsdonbury.



Photo 6: The stables on the application site are rudimentary structures detract from the quality and character of the setting of Hunsdonbury.

- 2.17 Whilst the poor quality stables on the application site detract from the quality and character of the setting of Hunsdonbury, in reality the effect is rather neutral, as these buildings are experienced as separate from, distant and unrelated to Hunsdonbury as a historic house. Their effect is only felt inasmuch as there is a perception that they stand within the wider (expanded) garden of Hunsdonbury, albeit this is the more recent expansion of the historic L-shaped garden, as was recorded on historic maps and as can be seen on the 1952 aerial photo at **Fig 15** above.

3.0 ASSESSMENT

- 3.1 The proposal is for a replacement structure of similar footprint and arrangement as the existing stables buildings, albeit the structure is modern in appearance, rather than the unconvincing, quasi-traditional form of the existing stables buildings, with shallow corrugated sheet roofing, mass-produced timber weatherboarding and plastic rainwater goods, addressing a lacklustre little concrete yard partially under overhanging eaves in the open part of the U-shape.
- 3.2 The flat roof of the proposed replacement would be no taller than the ridge of the existing stables buildings, although the three elevations would all be shorter than the existing stables buildings, making this a more compact structure that would be no more visible, and have less of a visual presence, than the existing buildings. The design of the proposed replacement building is simple and clean, and there would be a notable qualitative improvement when compared with the poor quality existing stables buildings.
- 3.3 The materials (timber cladding, metal framed glazing) are appropriate for the garden context, and mark the building as a later added ancillary structure.
- 3.4 Much like the existing stables buildings, the replacement structure would not be visible from, or seen in conjunction with, Hunsdonbury. It would not be intrusive and it would not interfere with the significance of the house, or the ability to appreciate its significance. There would be a clear, qualitative improvement that would be an enhancement when compared with the poor quality of the existing stables buildings, but on the whole the significance of Hunsdonbury would remain unaffected.
- 3.5 As has been demonstrated above, it is questionable that there was ever a designed landscape in the area now identified on Figure 44 of the Hunsdon Area Neighbourhood Plan as the Hunsdonbury locally important Historic Park and Garden. It would appear that this is an erroneous designation that relates perhaps more to the present-day designed landscape than anything historic. There is no evidence that there was ever historically a designed landscape in this area, aside from the L-shaped gardens to the

rear of Hunsdonbury, as can be seen on the historic Ordnance Survey maps and up to recent versions (and corroborated by the 1952 aerial photo (**Fig 15**), as well as the Goggle satellite image from 2000, **Figs 16 & 17**). The only 'feature' seen on the satellite image of 2000 is the lozenge-shaped pocket of what appears to have been relatively newly planted trees to the SE of Hunsdonbury. Judging from how these have grown over the years, it can reasonably be assumed that this area of planting would have been relatively new when the image was taken in 2000 (today this is a copse of young woodland; the lozenge shape has now been lost).



Fig 17: An extract of a satellite image from the year 2000, showing the open areas of the Hunsdonbury locally important Historic Park and Garden to have been either lawns, bisected with hedge/boundary planting, or fields and scrub. © Google Earth

3.6 There is, therefore, no evidence of a discernible historic designed landscape that could be affected by the proposal. It is conceivable that the land to the south of Hunsdonbury was historically cultivated to have something of a 'parkland' character, but there is no evidence of a designed landscape historically. The Google satellite images show that, between 2000 and 2005, landscaping work had been done to create something of a more manicured and geometrically arranged landscape to the south and SE of Hunsdonbury, with trees having been planted, including an avenue that appears to be centred on a modern fountain in the rear garden of Hunsdonbury, or perhaps the pool house.

3.7 In all of this, the existing stables buildings play no discernible role as a 'landscape feature' or as part of a designed landscape. As before, all that can be said is that the poor quality of the existing structures is a rather unfortunate intrusion into the pleasantly manicured rear lawns and extended garden of the house. Again, it can be noted that the replacement structure would not be intrusive and it would not interfere with the appreciation of this modern arranged landscape, especially the more sculpted landscape towards the SE. To the extent that the replacement building would be noticed, it would be a clear qualitative improvement that would be an enhancement when compared with the poor quality of the existing stables buildings but, on the whole, any heritage significance that can be attributed to the modern landscape at Hunsdonbury would remain unaffected.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

4.1 The proposed replacement structure has been carefully considered to beneficially redevelop the existing stables buildings, and materially improve the present-day modern landscape. The replacement structure would qualitatively enhance the site's contribution to the setting of the listed building, and the landscape of the Hunsdonbury locally important Historic Park and Garden.

4.2 Because no harm has been identified, there are no policy conflicts with the Local Plan (the EHDP and the Neighbourhood Plan). Neither does the proposal trigger paragraphs 200 or 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework (in relation to either the setting of the listed building, or the Hunsdonbury locally important Historic Park and Garden). The proposed development also complies with the statutory duties in s.66 of the Planning Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act, 1990.

4.3 The material heritage benefits that would flow from the proposed development need to be brought forward in the planning balance, and be accorded the requisite 'considerable importance and weight' (NPPF paragraph 199).