

HERITAGE STATEMENT

In respect of:

REPLACEMENT CONSERVATORY

At:

OAKLANDS MANOR, MARL LANE, FORDINGBRIDGE, SP6 1JR

On behalf of:

Mr & Mrs Colyer

Date:

November 2023



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CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION	3
2.0	HERITAGE DESIGNATIONS	6
3.0	DESCRIPTION	7
4.0	HISTORY	10
5.0	ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE	12
6.0	PROPOSALS	14
7.0	POLICY CONTEXT	15
8.0	HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT	18
9.0	CONCLUSION	20
	SOURCES USED IN THE REPORT	21

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig.1: *Location plan*

Fig.2: *Pre-application proposals for replacement conservatory*

Fig.3: *Proposed south elevation in early 2023*

Fig.4: *Front (west side) of Oaklands Manor*

Fig.5: *South side of the house*

Fig.6: *Conservatory on the east side of the house*

Fig.7: *Front (south elevation) of the conservatory*

Fig.8: *Window in position of a former door and scarring in the brickwork*

Fig.9: *Ordnance Survey map of 1875 showing the newly built Oaklands*

Fig.10: *Ordnance Survey map of 1947*

Fig.11: *Currently proposed south elevation*

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This heritage statement accompanies applications for a replacement conservatory at Oaklands Manor, a Grade II listed building.
- 1.2 Marl Lane is a rural lane to the north-west of Fordingbridge town centre. Oaklands Manor is located within substantial grounds on the east side of the lane. Immediately to the north is a dwelling in separate ownership known as The Coach House. There are modern housing developments to the north on Marl Lane and to the east off Normandy Way.

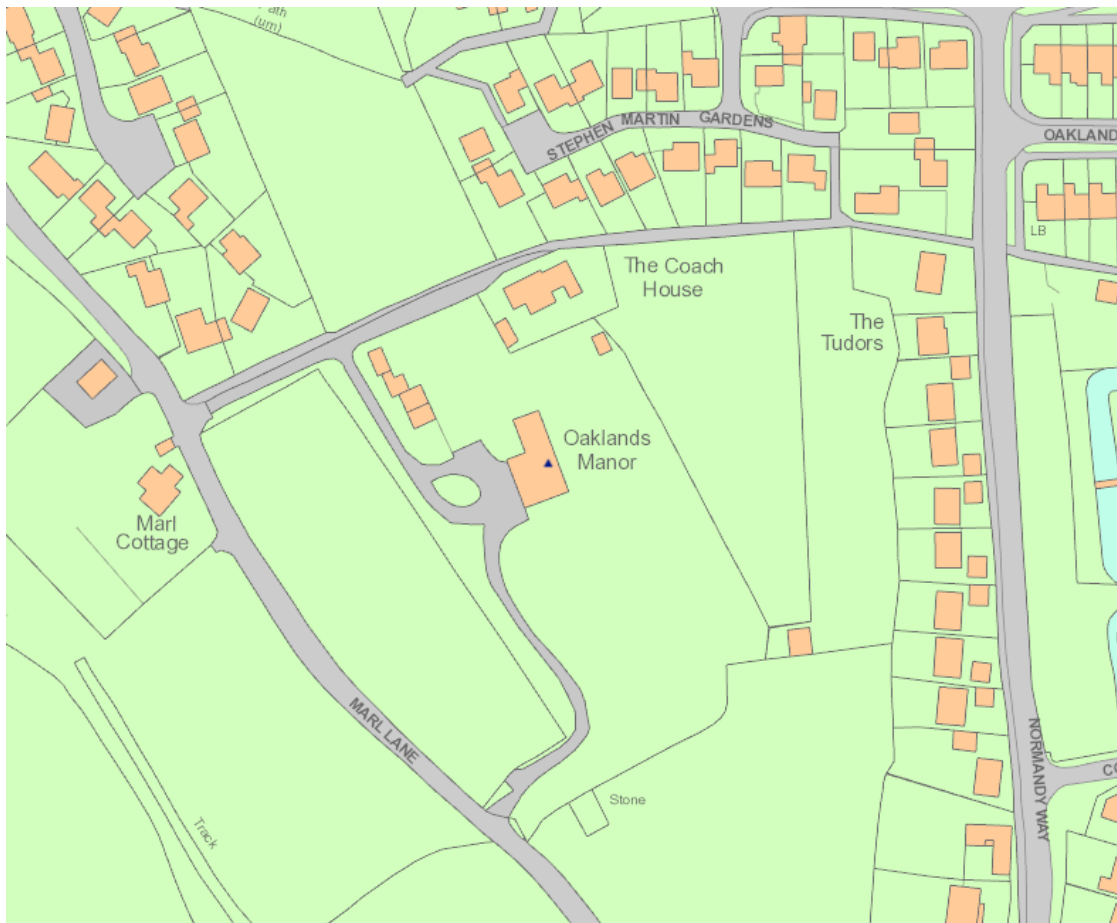


Fig.1 Location plan

- 1.3 The report describes the heritage significance of the property and provides an assessment of the impact of the proposals in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF, revised July 2021) and to meet the council's local validation checklist for applications affecting heritage assets.
- 1.4 The report was commissioned by the applicants, Mr & Mrs Colyer, and has been prepared by Elaine Milton BSc (Hons) MSc DipArchCons MRTPI IHBC, an individual

with ‘appropriate expertise’ as advised by paragraph 194 of the NPPF. A site survey was undertaken on 9 February 2023.

- 1.5 The significance of the site was identified using the guidance contained within the Historic England documents *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (2008), *Statements of Heritage Significance: Historic England Advice Note 12* (October 2019) and *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* (December 2017).
- 1.6 Information on the history of the site has been drawn from several sources, a list of which is presented on **p21**.
- 1.7 A pre-application enquiry was made to the local planning authority in late 2022 for proposals that included a replacement conservatory and new greenhouse (reference ENQ/22/20355/EHH).



Fig.2 Pre-application proposals for replacement conservatory

- 1.8 The conservation officer commented that the principle of replacing the existing conservatory, a later addition, was acceptable but that the proposed replacement would be ‘standard’, have an ‘awkward window arrangement’ and would create a ‘disappointing boxy form of addition’.
- 1.9 The design of the replacement conservatory was amended to address the pre-application comments, and the proposed replacement formed part of an application in early 2023 (reference 23/10334 – see drawing below).



Fig.3 Proposed south elevation in early 2023, application reference 23/10334

- 1.10 The conservation officer commented that the proposed replacement structure would have a 'poorly proportioned and incongruous boxy and elongated form which distracts from the well-balanced proportions of the main building' and there was a concern regarding the off-set nature of the lantern light. Under the circumstances, the applicant withdrew the conservatory element of the application.

2.0 Heritage Designations

- 2.1 Oaklands Manor was added to the *List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest* at **Grade II** on 9 August 1977. The list description reads as follows:

'Villa. Mid C19. Yellow brick, slate roof. 2 storey, 3 x 2 bay and 2 bay service wing. Front 2 storey, 3 bay with service wing to LH. Central Doric portico with twin columns on each side and dentil cornice. Side lights and segmental fan-light to panelled door. 4-Pane sash windows with stucco lintel. Central 1st floor tripartite sash. Dentilled eaves cornice. Hipped roof with 4 corniced chimneys.'

- 2.2 The property is located outside and to the west of the Fordingbridge Conservation Area.

3.0 Description of the Building

- 3.1 Oaklands Manor is a substantial detached house set within generous grounds. It is constructed in yellow (gault) brick with fine joints and has a hipped slate roof with deep overhangs and dentilled eaves cornices. There is a gravel turning area to the west of the house. The frontage (west side) is a symmetrical, double-fronted elevation with central Doric portico and sash windows with central glazing bars. Set back from the frontage and to the north is a two-storey former service wing.



Fig.4 Front (west side) of Oaklands Manor

- 3.2 The south elevation of the house faces onto the garden. It is symmetrical and has two canted bay windows with white-painted timber dentil cornices and lead flat roofs.



Fig.5 South side of the house

- 3.3 Attached to the east side of the house is a modern, white-painted timber conservatory with a pale yellow brick plinth. It has a semi-circular east end with a curved roof. The main body of the conservatory has a pitched roof with a full-length lantern rooflight.



Fig.6 Conservatory on the east side of the house



Fig.7 Front (south elevation) of the conservatory

- 3.4 Changes in the east wall to the south of the conservatory show that a window has been inserted where there was once a door opening and the scarring in the brickwork where a former structure existed.



Fig.8 Window in position of a former door and scarring in the brickwork on the east side of the house where a previous structure stood

4.0 History

- 4.1 In her book *Gypsy Caravan* published in 1982, Jean Westlake describes how Oaklands was constructed in 1870 by her great grandfather, Thomas Westlake who was from a respected Southampton Quaker family and was at the end of the 19th century a successful sail-cloth manufacturer at East Mills, a major Fordingbridge industry. Thomas's son, Ernest described the house as *'built of white bricks from Fisherton, slates with an extra deep lap, 11-inch floor joists, plate glass windows and everything solid and of the best'*.
- 4.2 The Ordnance Survey map of 1875 shows the newly built Oaklands in what was then a relatively isolated position along a lane. The house was accessed from a drive to the north. A conservatory is illustrated towards the southern end of the east side of the house. To the north-east of the house are coach house and stables. There is a field or paddock to the east.

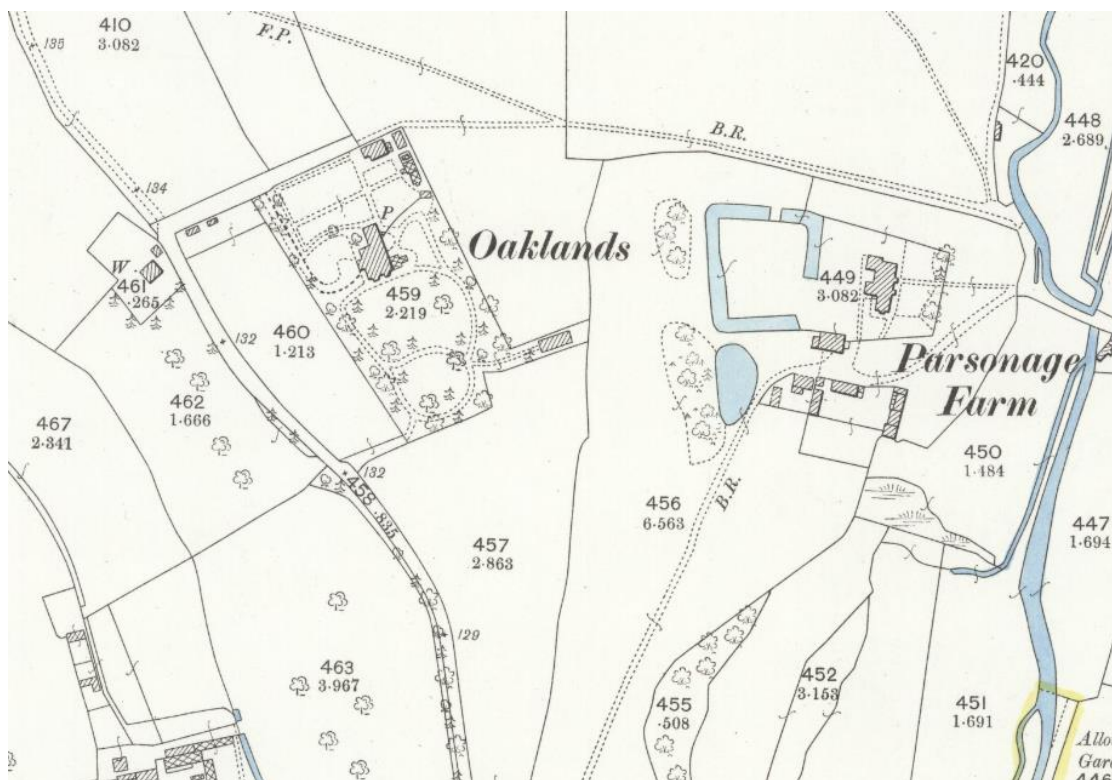


Fig.9 Ordnance Survey map of 1875 showing the newly built Oaklands

- 4.3 It was known that the house was owned by Mr S B Rake in 1929 as it was reported there was a fire in January of that year that nearly gutted the house. Water to extinguish the fire was supplied from a pond 'some 300 yards away', perhaps the

one at Parsonage Farm to the east. Most of the house was said to have been burnt out with the damage estimated to be in the region of £2,500.¹

- 4.4 The form of the house appears to have remained unchanged after the fire with the 1947 OS map continuing to show the same footprint and a conservatory. Even by 1947, little development exists within the surrounding area with the new housing developments occurring in the second half of the 20th century.

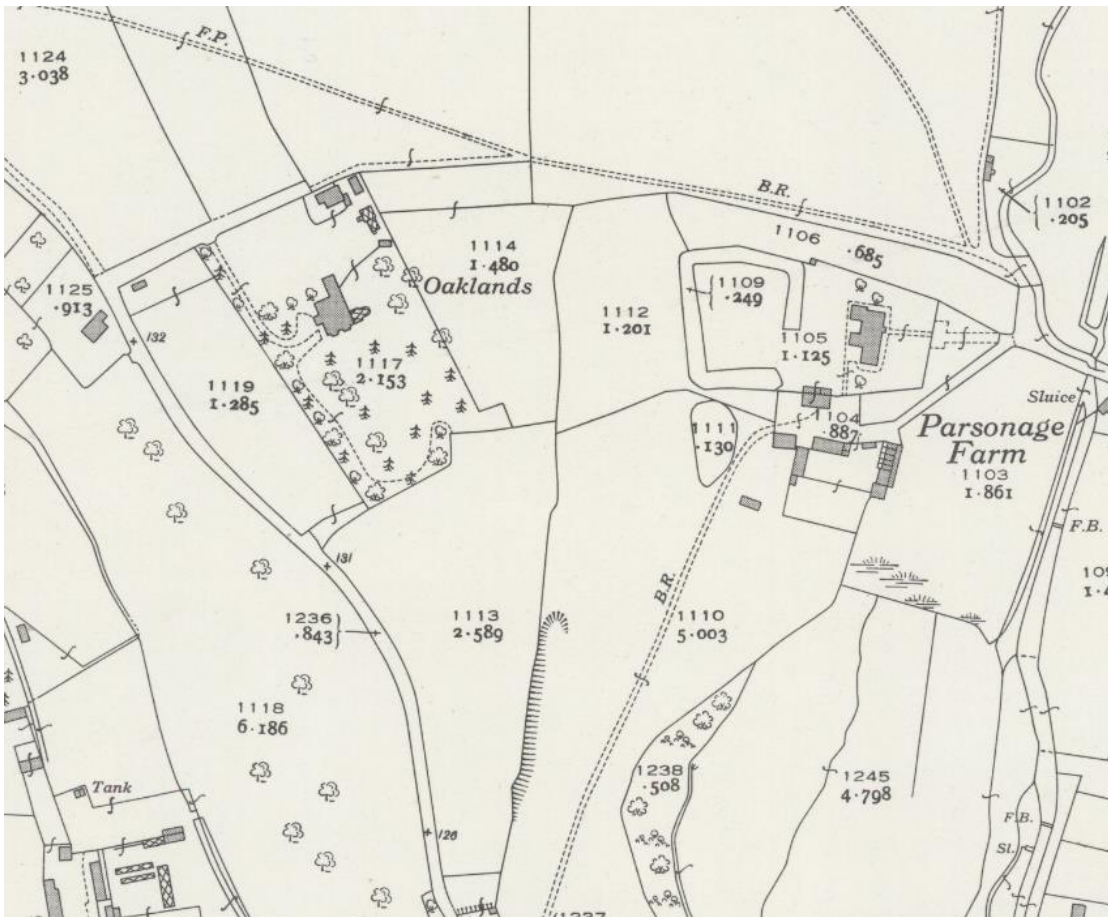


Fig.10 Ordnance Survey map of 1947 – no change to the footprint of the house

- 4.5 The coach house was converted to a dwelling in 1981 and with it, the layout of the site was altered including reconfiguration of the access to Oaklands from the west.
- 4.6 The planning history records indicate the conservatory was demolished and replaced with one set further north following permission in 1998 (references 98/NFDC/63799 & 98/NFDC/63522/LBC). The garage was also built in around 1998.

¹ <https://johnmouland.wixsite.com/fordingbridgefire/history>

5.0 Assessment of Significance

Significance of Oaklands Manor

- 5.1 Oaklands Manor is a Grade II listed building of special architectural or historic interest. The significance of the building mainly lies in its architectural value as a good example of a late 19th century villa situated at the edge of town.
- 5.2 A significant feature of the house is the high-quality Fisherton brickwork indicative of the building's status as a gentleman's Victorian residence.
- 5.3 The layout of the house and the presence of the former coach house are of historic value for their illustration of past ways of living. The house is also of historic value for its associations with a notable local family.
- 5.4 The roof and the window joinery are unlikely to be original due to the devastating fire in 1929 and are therefore deemed of limited historic value.
- 5.5 The existing conservatory is a modern and substandard structure having a mismatched brickwork plinth that is unsympathetic to the house. The roof of the conservatory is relatively high and blocks views of the first floor of the house. While not of special interest, the conservatory reflects an original form of construction to the house (as evidenced by historic mapping and the physical scarring on the east wall) and a typical feature of Victorian villas.

Contribution Made by Setting

- 5.6 The substantial landscape grounds around the house contribute to appreciation of the Victorian set villa within a semi-rural retreat and in turn the significance of the house.
- 5.7 The land to the east of the house is a vestige of the rural setting to the house. Its contribution to the significance of the house is however diminished by its use for the growing of vegetables, giving it a domestic feel associated with the house, the modern housing development immediately to the east, the boundary separation and the low levels of inter-visibility with the house.
- 5.8 The former coach house provides some evidence of the historic function and associations with the main house. The severance in use and ownership of the

building has diminished its contribution to setting. The original approach to Oaklands has been eradicated.

6.0 Proposals

- 6.1 The existing modern, substandard conservatory is proposed to be demolished and replaced with a flat-roofed orangery on the same footprint.



Fig.11 Currently proposed south elevation

- 6.2 The orangery would have a plinth constructed in gault bricks that would match the main walls of the house. The windows would be formed in painted hardwood (of neutral colour such as Farrow & Ball ‘String No.8’), have vertical proportions and horizontal glazing bars within the top third of the frame. The structure would have a flat roof formed in EDPM and finished at the perimeter with a slender, profiled timber cornice. The roof would incorporate a painted hardwood lantern rooflight with a two-stage pitched roof.
- 6.3 The amendments made from the application scheme in early 2023 are:
- Footprint amended to have a curved end to the structure rather than squared;
 - Glazing pattern amended to have glazing bars within the top third of the frame rather than midway;
 - Lantern light amended to have a taller, two-stage pitched roof; the position has been adjusted so that it would sit centrally within the main body of the orangery and in line with the doors.

7.0 Policy Context

Primary Legislation

- 7.1 Statutory duties exist under sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act') for the local planning authority in considering whether to grant listed building consent or planning permission for development that 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.

Development Plan

- 7.2 The statutory duties are reflected in the following policy of the *Core Strategy: New Forest District Outside the National Park* (October 2009):

- Policy CS3: Protecting and enhancing our special environment (Heritage and Nature Conservation).

- 7.3 The following policy of the *New Forest District Council Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management* (April 2014) is also relevant:

- Policy DM1: Heritage and Conservation.

National Planning Policy

- 7.4 National planning policy relating to the historic environment is provided within section 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, revised July 2021). It advises in paragraph 189 that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

- 7.5 Paragraph 199 advises that 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. It explains that significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Any harm or loss

to a heritage asset's significance should require clear and convincing justification and needs to be weighed against identifiable public benefits. Substantial harm or loss of a Grade II listed building should be exceptional.

- 7.6 Paragraph 201 advises where proposals would lead to substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the proposals should be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of four listed criteria therein apply.
- 7.7 Paragraph 202 advises that where proposals would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals, including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
- 7.8 Paragraph 206 advises that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within conservation areas or the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance.

National Guidance

- 7.9 It is advisable that proposals for repair, restoration and alteration of heritage assets follow the guidance within the *Historic England Advice Note 2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets* (HEAN2, February 2016). The document acknowledges (paragraph 3) that the best way to conserve a building is to keep it in use, and that a reasonable and proportionate approach to owner's needs is therefore essential.
- 7.10 As a general principle for adaptation, HEAN2 advises as much of the historic fabric and plan form that contributes to the significance of a heritage asset should be retained as possible, with new work ideally being reversible. Harm to significance may be justified on grounds of overriding public benefit that may accrue including maintaining the building in its optimum viable use.
- 7.11 HEAN2 also advises that some of the issues to consider in respect of new additions are proportion, height, massing, bulk, materials and setting, and that new work should not dominate the existing in terms of scale, material or siting. The guidance advises that an assessment of the asset's significance will usually suggest an appropriate form of any extension.

7.12 HEAN2 provides guidance on restoration of lost or damaged features. It advises that restoration is likely to be acceptable if *inter alia* the significance of the elements that would be restored 'decisively outweighs' the significance of those that would be lost, and the work proposed is justified by 'compelling evidence' of the evolution of the heritage asset and is 'executed in accordance with that evidence'.

8.0 Heritage Impact Assessment

8.1 The proposals would see the removal of the existing unsympathetic and substandard conservatory. The principle of removal and replacement was supported by officers at pre-application stage.

8.2 The replacement conservatory would continue the narrative of this form of construction on the east side of the villa in an appropriate way:

- The conservatory would occupy the same footprint as the existing structure;
- As before, the conservatory would be situated in a position of low prominence at the rear of the house;
- The conservatory would be of high-quality, bespoke design;
- The roof of the replacement conservatory would be set lower than the existing structure and incorporate a smaller lantern light, thereby resulting in a building with a lower profile and less visual impact, and allowing greater exposure of the original east wall of the house;
- The structure would be of simple, unfussy detailing, adding to its subservience;
- It would be of traditional and sympathetic design and materials with a gault brick plinth matching the Fisherton brickwork that is of significance to the house, and white-painted timber framing and cornice;
- The windows and cornice would have slender profiling giving the conservatory a light-weight appearance;
- The vertical proportions and horizontal glazing bars would mirror the sash windows within the house;
- The flat roof and slim-profile moulded cornices would echo the form and detailing of the bay windows on the south elevation of the house.

8.3 The curved end of the replacement structure would reflect the existing plan form of the conservatory, soften the edges of the structure and create articulation, addressing the suggestion of it being ‘boxy and elongated’.

8.4 The amended glazing with glazing bars within the top third of the frame would better reflect the existing proportions of the conservatory and the vertical emphasis of the windows within the house.

8.5 The proposed lantern light would be centrally positioned within the main body of the orangery rather than off-set and positioned in line with the doors, creating a more

balanced appearance. The taller, multi-faceted lantern would create more height, again addressing the suggestion of being 'elongated'.

9.0 Conclusion

- 9.1 Oaklands Manor is late 19th century Grade II listed suburban villa, the significance of which mainly derives from its external appearance and historic associations.
- 9.2 The proposals have been informed by an assessment of significance in line with the recommendations of the NPPF and have been developed following a recent pre-application enquiry and application submission.
- 9.3 The principle of a replacement conservatory was considered acceptable at the pre-application stage. Taking account of the responses to the pre-application and ensuing application, the proposed orangery has been redesigned so that it is of bespoke construction and has sympathetic proportions, materials and detailing.
- 9.4 The shape and design of the orangery would give it the appropriate finesse and proportions.
- 9.5 The structure would appear more sympathetic, lower profile and subservient than the existing conservatory and would enable more of the original east wall of the house to be revealed.
- 9.6 There would be heritage benefits from replacing the brickwork on the plinth to better match the main walls of the house.
- 9.7 The net effect of the proposals would be no harm to the significance of the listed building or its setting.
- 9.8 The proposals would therefore accord with the adopted development plan policies for the area and in doing so, would comply with the national policies contained within the NPPF.
- 9.9 The proposals would follow best practice for making changes to heritage assets as set out within the current Historic England guidance.

Sources Used in the Report

Publications

Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance, English Heritage (now Historic England), April 2008.

Designation Listing Selection Guide - Domestic 2: Town Houses, Historic England, December 2017.

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets, Historic England, December 2017.

Historic Environment Advice Note 2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets, Historic England, February 2016.

Westlake, Jean., *Gypsy Caravan: A 100 Years' Story* (Godshill, 1982).

Websites

A History of Fordingbridge Fire Station

URL: <https://johnmouland.wixsite.com/fordingbridgefire/history>

Date accessed: 9 February 2023.

Mapping

Ordnance Survey maps of 1875 and 1947.