

Ampney Park Ampney Crucis Gloucestershire.

Statement of Significance and Heritage.

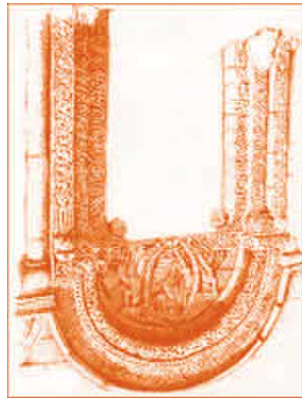


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Research parameters:

This Statement of Significance and Heritage Statement has been prepared to support applications for planning permission and listed building consent for development and works associated with a change of use of Ampney Park to a venue and events location. An initial phase of work including the comprehensive refurbishment of the main house and the adjacent former stable has already been approved by the Council and has largely been completed. This further phase of development includes demolition of the substantial and poorly detailed equestrian buildings and associated stabling and yards and their replacement with two new buildings, an events venue and a grounds building, as well as additional parking and landscaping together with alterations to the west entrance, to improve vehicular access. The modern former stable yard will also be converted as part of this phase of works which has benefitted from pre-application discussions with the Council during 2022 and 2023.

Ampney Park is a Grade II listed building, which was first listed on 4th June 1952 together with The Lodge at the (east) entrance to the site, the Garden Cottage and the former coach house, all of which were separately listed on 17th June 1986. The entrance gates at the west end of the park, together with their gate piers and walls and the pump house were also listed in 1986. Other pre-1947 structures which were in the same ownership as Ampney Park on 1st January 1969 are considered to be curtilage listed; include the walled garden, the small bridge over the Ampney Brook, and the garden walls within the park. The south terrace was reconstructed and enlarged and the ha-ha remodelled in the 1970's and are not therefore considered to be curtilage listed. Adjacent to the house is the Grade I listed Holy Rood Church, and in the churchyard is one of a pair of scheduled preaching crosses, and the whole of the site lies within the Ampney Crucis Conservation Area.

This statement provides a proportionate assessment of significance for the purposes of understanding the significance of the designated heritage asset, its setting, and the impacts of the works in order to inform the current proposed applications. It is based upon a visual assessment of the heritage assets supported by sufficient documentary research to elucidate the results of this assessment. A full examination of the property and of the documentary and other sources has not been undertaken.

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Ampney Park, Ampney Crucis Gloucestershire, Statement of Significance and Heritage Statement.

Brief description of Ampney Park and its setting:

Ampney Crucis is a small village approximately three miles to the west of Cirencester, on the north side of the A417 (London Road). Ampney Park is a large country house set in its own parkland within the historic core of the village enclosing and to the west of the historic parish church. The current parkland and gardens extend over an area of approximately 9 ha with an impressive gated entrance onto the main road to the west of the Ampney Brook. Although the landscape appears a historic one both this entrance and the current form of the gardens and parkland setting to the house are the result of carefully considered 20th century remodelling.



Fig 1. The current house, seen in its carefully landscaped grounds immediately adjacent to the parish church which dates back to Saxon times.

Ampney appears to have developed as a royal manor in the later Saxon period and by the time of the Norman conquest it had been divided into four estates of which three, Ampney Crucis, Ampney St Mary and Ampney St Peter survive as separate settlements. Ampney St Nicholas was subsequently amalgamated with Ampney St Peter, whilst another estate, Ampney Mereys) was deserted by 1086. These separate settlements line the main road running eastwards from Cirencester to the crossing point of the river Thames at Fairford.

The main part of the modern village of Ampney Crucis is set on either side of a narrow lane that encloses a large rectangle of land on the north side of the main road. At its western end the lane leaves the main road and almost immediately crosses the Ampney Brook by way of a medieval stone arched bridge and runs northwards through the settlement. Immediately beyond the bridge is a small former lodge to Ampney Park marking the point where the lane forks and the historic main entrance drive leading to Ampney Park continues northwards whilst a second access lane branches off to the west.



Fig 2. The historic main entrance to Ampney park with its modest and well detailed grade II listed vernacular entrance lodge. In front of the lodge is a lane running off to the left (west) leading to the mill, the church and the former stable yard and coach house and other properties that are now all in separate ownership.

Set adjacent to the river at this road junction is one of a pair of medieval wayside crosses. This lane follows the course of the brook past a now-converted water mill, before turning northwards to follow the boundary wall to Ampney Park, past the churchyard and grade I listed Saxon church of the Holy Rood, and now terminates at the entrance to a converted dwelling within part of the Grade II listed former coach house and stables to Ampney Park which is now in separate ownership.

The boundary to Ampney Park wraps around the churchyard, with its fine Grade I listed Church of the Holy Rood which is of Saxon origin, but is primarily of 13th century date but with a 15th century tower and other alterations. Within the churchyard are a number of fine memorial tombs and the

second grade I listed and scheduled medieval wayside cross. Although the park is screened from the church by a tall boundary wall and mature planting there are glimpsed views between the house and church and on the north side, the northern boundary of the churchyard follows the wall of the former coach house and stable building which has been converted to residential use and has windows directly overlooking the graveyard. A gate in the west wall of the churchyard opens into the park adjacent to the house.



Fig 3. The church of the Holy Rood with on the left Ampney Park visible through the parkland trees. Gate piers to the left of the tower mark the private pedestrian access to the house.



Fig 4. On the north side the churchyard is overlooked by the converted coach house and stables (right). The east elevation of the house with its single storey extensions house can be seen beyond the churchyard wall.

The mansion at Ampney Park comprises a principal early 17th century range which is of two storeys with attics and a basement. This is rectangular in plan with the principal rooms to the south and ancillary spaces, including the entrance and stair hall, to the north and west. A double piled range is attached to the north end of the 17th century range, in the early 19th century, and this contains west-facing reception rooms and east-facing service rooms, and terminates in a short cross wing.



Fig 5. The taller 17th century principal range on the right with the early 19th century double pile north range on the left terminating in a short later 19th century cross wing.

A substantial two storey extension was added to the east side of the 17th century range in the early-mid-19th century with later single storey extensions, comprising a library or smoking room to the east (added by 1874) and the single storey billiard room and former ballroom (now swimming pool) to the north and east respectively (added between 1882 and 1901).



Fig.6. The south elevation with the mid-19th century two storey extension and the single storey late 19th century library or smoking room just visible on the right.

The house is detailed with mullion and transom windows to the principal elevations, and small paned sashes to the service elevations; and with the roofs concealed behind parapets with coped gables. Its principal south facing elevation overlooks a formally designed garden, whilst its formal front elevation faces westwards across a gravelled forecourt towards a more informal area of parkland and lakes laid out in the later 20th century in the picturesque tradition.

In addition to the historic service ranges at the north end of the mansion, there are detached outbuildings including the remains of an outbuilding immediately to the north of the house, and the substantially altered and partly rebuilt remains of the former coach house and stable yard to the east of the house, which is now in separate ownership and converted into a separate residential unit.

This former coach house and stable range has an L-shaped footprint and extends around the north-west corner of the churchyard; and historically partially enclosed the large stable and service yards to Ampney Park. There are reciprocal views from the lane across the north half of the churchyard towards the rear service and later ancillary ranges. Until the residential conversion, the lane continued



Fig. 7. The former stable and coach house range (barely recognizable after its 1980's conversion) overlooks the churchyard with the east elevation of Ampney Park visible on the left. The hipped single storey range is the former smoking room and ballroom extension now a library and swimming pool with its entrance porch.

into the service yards, with a spur joining the principal driveway serving the house, however this service access is now in separate ownership and no longer serves the main house.

The current east access to Ampney Park was, until the new west entrance drive was created in the early 20th century, the principal entrance to the site. Beyond the entrance lodge this driveway ran through a belt of woodland round the east side of the park before arriving at the northeast corner of the service yard. Spurs off this drive now lead to historic and modern cottages built within the former grounds of Ampney Park including one within the former walled garden on the north side of the site and all now in separate ownership.



Fig.8. The current main access to Ampney Park is via the narrow east access to the right of the grade II listed East Lodge. Shared with a number of private houses it is manifestly inadequate for modern traffic. Modern entrance gates at the end of this drive mark the entrance to the remaining service area beyond which the access drive divides with one arm turning southwards towards the former coach house and stables, with a second spur to the north serving the modern riding arena. The main drive continues westwards round the north side of the modern stable yard to arrive at the gravelled forecourt extending the full width of the west front of the house. A late 20th century gabled “gatehouse” feature with its four-centred arched opening facing onto the access drive, occupies the space between the entrance drive and the main house.



Fig. 9. The modern former stable yard with its gabled entrance. On the left is the gated inner service yard and the service ranges of the main house and on the right is the drive to the front of the house.

Two attached modern ranges are set at right-angles to each side of the gabled entrance gate and enclose the north and east sides of the modern former stable yard. The east range also contains garaging with staff accommodation above. The south side is enclosed by a historic former workshop and garden store now converted to ancillary accommodation and a modern extension that abuts the modern wall and entrance gates enclosing the inner service yard to the south.



Fig. 10. The disused modern stable yard with the staff flat and garage range on the right. A historic range of workshops and staff accommodation on the south side of this yard (not shown) separates it from the house.

Dominating the north side of the main drive, opposite this stable yard is a substantial modern timber boarded agricultural building containing an indoor horse arena, beyond which is a tennis court and further stable ranges with associated enclosed paddocks extending westwards to a manège.



Fig. 11. The substantial and unsightly indoor riding arena dominates the north side of the site with additional stables, a manège and tennis courts extending westwards along the north side of the park.



Fig 12. The historic former workshop and garden store (now converted to staff accommodation), together with the attached modern hipped range to the right, enclose the south side of the stable yard. The adjacent wall and gates enclosing the inner service yard are modern.

The south side of the outer service yard adjacent to the garages forming the stable yard is a metalled parking area beyond which is a modern coursed stone rubble wall with stone gate piers and a pair of modern wrought iron gates opening into an inner service yard containing an ornamental fountain and ornamental planting enclosed by box hedges. The west side of this inner yard is occupied by single storey extensions to the main house, whilst to the east is a small section of the historic stable and coach house ranges which remains in the same ownership as the house and has now been converted to provide ancillary accommodation and a gym.



Fig.13. The much altered historic stable building and modern greenhouse with the separately owned converted coach house and stable block just visible behind the hedge on the left.

To the south between this converted range and the churchyard boundary wall is a small paved courtyard, whilst to the north a small modern greenhouse and a flower bed occupy the rest of the east side of this yard.

Beyond the small courtyard is a historic boundary extending between the corner of the churchyard and the main house and this contains an impressive arched opening beneath a dentilled entablature with an unusual moulding comprising alternate raised oval and rectangular blocks capped by a central



Fig. 14. The small paved courtyard adjacent to the churchyard with the converted stables on the left and the swimming pool building on the right. The ornate gateway with a reused stable door opens into the garden.



Fig. 15. The ornate gateway into the gardens may be that shown by Kip opening into the churchyard.

pinnacle supported on an anthemion. Within the arched opening is what appears to be a reused section of one of the coach house doors. This gateway opens onto a terrace along the south front of the building with the gardens beyond.

Detailed description of Ampney Park.

The mansion house at Ampney Park comprises a principal early 17th century range which is of two storeys with attics and a basement, and is rectangular in plan with the principal rooms to the south and ancillary spaces, including the west facing entrance hall in the northern half of the range. A double piled early 19th century range is attached to the north of the 17th century range, which contains west-facing reception rooms and east-facing service rooms; and with additional smaller ranges attached to its double gabled north elevation. There are later two storey 19th century extensions and further single storey (late 19th and early 20th century) additions attached to the east elevation of the 17th century range. The house is constructed in coursed dressed rubblestone (rangework) with ashlar dressings, to the door and window openings, the quoins, string courses and chimney stacks which have tall diagonally positioned shafts.

The principal range has stone tiled roofs which are largely concealed behind parapet gutters, with natural slated roofs to the later extensions and outbuildings. Most of the windows within the 17th century range are detailed with mullions and transoms and have ovolo mouldings. The windows in the later extensions are similar but have cavetto mouldings. The windows on the 17th century elevations have exposed rubblestone relieving arches to the west front.



Fig. 16. The west front with the taller early 17th century principal range on the right and the early 19th century north range on the left. A single storey 19th century parapeted lean-to range is just visible to the left.

On the principal south-facing elevation, overlooking formal gardens and the lakes along the course of the Ampney Brook, the 17th century range is one room wide. The roof has a central gable with small parapets to either side; with moulded urns to the corners and as a finial to the central gable.



Fig. 17. The south elevation of the 17th century principal range is only one room wide, with its early 19th century east extension replacing the earlier extension shown set further back on the 1712 Kip drawing.

To the right (east) of this range, and set back slightly behind it, is an early 19th century two storey extension, with a matching pair of two-light mullion and transom ground floor openings, containing French doors at ground floor level, above which are a pair of two-light first floor windows. Beyond this is a single storey early 20th century extension with a hipped roof set behind a coped parapet which was built as a ballroom but is now an indoor swimming pool.

Set back behind this elevation at its eastern end is the stone rubble wall with the ornate arched entrance, that extends as far as the churchyard boundary wall and separates this principal polite elevation from the west service yard and its associated ancillary ranges. On this south elevation the arch has ashlar quoins decorated with raised rectangular moulded blocks terminating in a narrow moulded keystone with the same oval and rectangular raised mouldings to the entablature. Blank raised shields decorate the spandrels of the arch and the finial has the same anthemion decoration to this south face.



Fig. 18. The more ornate south face of the garden entrance gate. This may be the arched entrance shown on the Kip drawing at the entrance to the churchyard, which now has a simple gate set in the wall. The repair of this entrance gate has recently been granted listed building consent

Seen from the north the mansion presents itself as a series of hipped and gabled roofed 19th c service ranges terminating in a simple single storey lean-to that faces onto the south side of the modern stable courtyard.

A modern raised paved terrace occupies the space between the east (rear) elevation of the two storey ranges a late 19th century billiard room extension and the early 20th century former ballroom which was subsequently converted to a swimming pool in the later 20th century. This has been carefully upgraded and repaired as part of the recently approved scheme for the comprehensive refurbishment of the main house which has been required following years of limited maintenance .



Fig. 19. The mansion seen from the north service yard with the early 20th century former ball room now a swimming pool on the left separated by a narrow courtyard from the early 19th century extension with the later 19th century hipped and parapeted cross wing at the north (righthand) end. The substantial late 19th century stone mullioned window lighting the billiard room can just be seen across the raised terrace and to the right of the house is an arched opening leading to the west front of the house.

Interior of the mansion:

The house is described in detail in the heritage statements accompanying the 2021 applications for repair of the main house and this information is not repeated here. In summary however the house contains a number of fine 17th, 18th and 19th century interiors with 20th century alterations.

The other buildings within the grounds and surrounding parkland:

1) The former workshop, stable and garage:

A narrow yard (enclosed on its west side by a stone wall with central gate) surfaced with stable setts separates the single storey section of the north range from a parallel long single storey outbuilding



Fig. 20. The former workshop and garage range separating the modern stable courtyard from the main house which was converted to staff accommodation in the later 20th century.

which encloses the south side of the new stable courtyard. It has a stone tiled roof with coped gables and a modern off-centre stack and is predominantly rubblestone with ashlar quoins and brick to the east gable. The south elevation has a series of six modern rendered panels separated by modern stone piers and containing two doors and two windows, all with poor quality modern joinery.

The north (stable yard facing) elevation has a centrally-positioned four-light screen with French doors, to the east and west of which are a 3-light window and a door with two light window respectively. Internally this range retains the principal elements of its 19th century king post roof, however no other historic detailing survived its late 20th century conversion to a staff flat.



Fig.21. The former workshop, stable and garage immediately to the north of the main house and forming the south side of the modern stable yard. This was converted to residential use in the late 20th century.

Attached to the east gable there is a later extension providing a store, with a hipped slate roof; and wrought iron metal gates attached to the north side and east gables of this extension open from a car park area into the stable yard and the east service yard.

West entrance gate and wing walls

The west entrance drive through the park was created at the beginning of the 20th century and the drive is shown partly complete on the 1902 Ordnance Survey map. The new entrance to the park has ornate wrought iron gates set beneath an overthrow with acanthus leaf decoration set between tall ashlar gate piers with decorative stone bands and ball finials. The gate together with its attached ashlar walls are set at right angles to the road. Both wing walls have moulded copings and incorporate curves in their length. The south ashlar wing wall terminates at an identical ashlar pier with a ball finial, to which is attached a rubblestone boundary wall running eastwards along the road. The north wing wall contains a wrought iron pedestrian gate beneath a moulded drip, and curves to run westwards; this length is pierced by a pair of arched clairvoyees with wrought iron grilles.



Fig. 22 The early 20th century (erected between 1902 - 1920) west entrance to the park with its asymmetrical form and stone rubble extension to the north wing wall (shown prior to repair of the collapsed section). The north wall continues westwards as a tall coursed rubble wall enclosing the open ground adjacent to the entrance, and limiting views towards woodland and pasture. A section of this wall has recently been rebuilt following vehicle impact damage. At the west end, the wall is separated from the road by a field gate opening onto a wooded track.



Fig. 23. Detail of the north wing wall showing the rebuilt section at its northern end adjacent to the private gated access to land outside the ownership of Ampney Park.

Entrance drive:

Beyond the entrance gates the driveway runs eastwards through a narrow strip of wooded parkland to an ornamental bridge across the Ampney Brook before winding through the parkland through to the gravelled entrance forecourt in front of the west wing of the house.



Fig. 24. During the summer months the mature trees within the western end of the park screen views of the entrance gates from within the park, seen here from the bridge over Ampney Brook.

Bridge:

Carrying the west drive across the Ampney Brook is a carefully detailed bridge constructed in rangework with ashlar dressings. The bridge has three arches with hood moulds below rangework panels rising to road. The parapets incorporate pierced moulded openings beneath a flat stone coped balustrade set between full-height raked triangular buttresses. To either end the balustrade drops down to form curved wing walls terminated in drum piers.

The Ampney Brook runs from north to south along the west side of the park through a belt of open woodland containing a series of small channels with sluices and reservoirs that combine to form a single stream to the north of the bridge. This stream then meanders eastwards through a series of 20th century lakes parallel to the London Road before leaving the park at the Ampney mill.



Fig. 25. The c.1902 bridge carrying the west drive over the Ampney Brook. The bridge is screened from views to the house by the parkland planting to either side of the brook and the intervening rising ground. This wooded area is accessed from the Park across a timber clapper bridge. It comprises an area of marshland enclosed within the open woodland and contains a series of interconnected ponds and sluices, connected by narrow paths with stone clapper bridges and timber boarding over the sluices.



Fig. 26. The late 19th century west pump house with the sluices and reservoirs controlling the flow of water through the park in the foreground.



Fig. 27. The late 19th century pump house with its later brick lean-to extension and in the foreground the early 20th century pump house containing the engine bed mounting almost certainly for an electric pump.

The listed pump houses

There are two now largely derelict small grade II listed pumping houses which historically formed part of the management of the water flow which supplied Ampney Park.

Both the buildings are in very poor and deteriorating condition, and are constructed in coursed rubblestone with stone tiled roof coverings. The smaller west pumping house probably dates from the mid-19th century and is built across a leet between two ponds. It is single storey and constructed in



Fig. 28. The rear (east) elevation of the north double piled service range. The door replaced a window when the raised terrace was added in the 1980's. In the distance is the flat roofed two storey extension.

coursed rubblestone with stone tiled roof coverings, with later brickwork to the south side elevation; and a has a small dressed stone arched opening in its south gable elevation through which the wheel and associated machinery can be seen.



Fig. 29. The raised courtyard added when the ballroom on the left became a swimming pool, and French doors were introduced. The large window lights the billiard room and the steps lead down to the basement .

A later stone and brick lean-to extension is attached to its north gable elevation, covering the door opening into the pumping house; and map regression indicates this was built between 1875-82 to 1901, the dates of survey of the 1st and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey maps.

The building to the east is also constructed in stone with some brickwork internally. Most of its roof structure and part of the east wall (which incorporates remnants of a stack) is now missing. Its west gable elevation has a boarded door and a small centrally positioned window in the apex of the roof; with a matching small window opening on the east gable.



Fig. 30. The east pump house has a raised block for an early electrically driven engine doubtless used for pumping water up to the main house,. The absence of other fuel sources



Fig. 31. The interior of the east pump house with the raised engine base and an associated water pipe.

n its south elevation it has a centrally-positioned three-light casement window, and is assumed to have had a matching window in the north elevation. Internally it has a centrally positioned raised base for the pump but no other machinery survives and it is unclear how it was powered. This building was constructed between the 1903 and 1920 (the dates of the 2nd and 3rd edition O.S.maps).

Cut into rising ground to the east of the Ampney Brook is a modern gardeners yard which is cut down into the ground on the site of former quarrying, and enclosed behind evergreen hedgerows. . This hard surfaced area contains an L-shaped group of late 20th century flat roofed garages, stores and workshops as well as composting and potting up areas. None of these functional structures have any architectural merit but the yard is largely screened from view within the park by hedges and other planting.



Fig. 32. The gardeners yard, located in a former quarry and cut into the sloping hillside with the pump houses just visible on the lower ground to the left.

To the south side of the house are terraced gardens stepping down towards the lakes. The upper terrace was added in the 1920's however the lower terraces and the loggia overlooking the croquet lawn were constructed as part of the re-landscaping of the park undertaken between 1974 -1977 when the lakes and formal gardens were created on the south side of the house. These lower terraces and the loggia are not therefore curtilage listed.



Fig. 33. View from the upper terrace over the lower terrace which extends to the loggia and the formal gardens laid out to the south of the house when the lakes were formed between 1974-77.



Fig. 34. The lower terrace and loggia wraps round the south side of the churchyard, seen in the context of the main house.

Development of the site:

Prior to the dissolution of the monasteries, the manor at Ampney Crucis belonged to the Abbey of Tewkesbury. In January 1562 it was purchased by John Pleydell, and the property remained in the family's ownership until 1724.

Surviving evidence within the principal range suggests that it incorporates elements of 16th century fabric from the original house within the south end of the principal range which is believed to have been remodelled *c.*1628. This date is consistent with the detailing appearance of the decorative scheme within the Grand Hall. Evidence for its earlier origin comes from the adjacent ranges seen in the first illustration of the house in the Kip drawing published in 1712, unfortunately none of these adjacent ranges have survived

Throughout the time that the Pleydell family owned the house enhancements were undertaken to both the house and its estate. These included the introduction of the entrance lodges and extensive service ranges as well as the substantial walled garden. Those within the immediate vicinity of the house are recorded on the fine 18th century engraving of the property entitled "*Amney, The Seat of Robt Pleydell Esq*" by Johannes Kip, first published in the *The Ancient and Present State of Glostershire* first published in 1712. The accompanying text describes "...a large house near the church with pleasant gardens and a delightful park adjoining..".



Fig. 35. The house as recorded by Kip (first published 1712) with the 17th century range clearly visible. The adjacent extensions to the north and east are clearly different but the stable and coach house range are clearly shown in their earlier form. The walled garden can be seen in the distance.

Kip was renowned for the accuracy of his depiction (although in this engraving it shows sash windows on the south elevation of the house). This shows the tall surviving 17th century range with attached two storey and single storey wings (now replaced), to the east which extend to the church yard wall, and ancillary buildings arranged around a large courtyard to the north of the churchyard; these appear to include the now-converted coach house, which has not been inspected but is dated early 18th century in the list description.

Beyond these service yards is the substantial walled garden (now in separate ownership) with its associated buildings. The house is set within formal gardens which are laid out to each side of the principal range and which extend southwards to Ampney Brook and eastwards to the lane in front of the churchyard. An avenue runs northwards and this survived into the early 20th century.

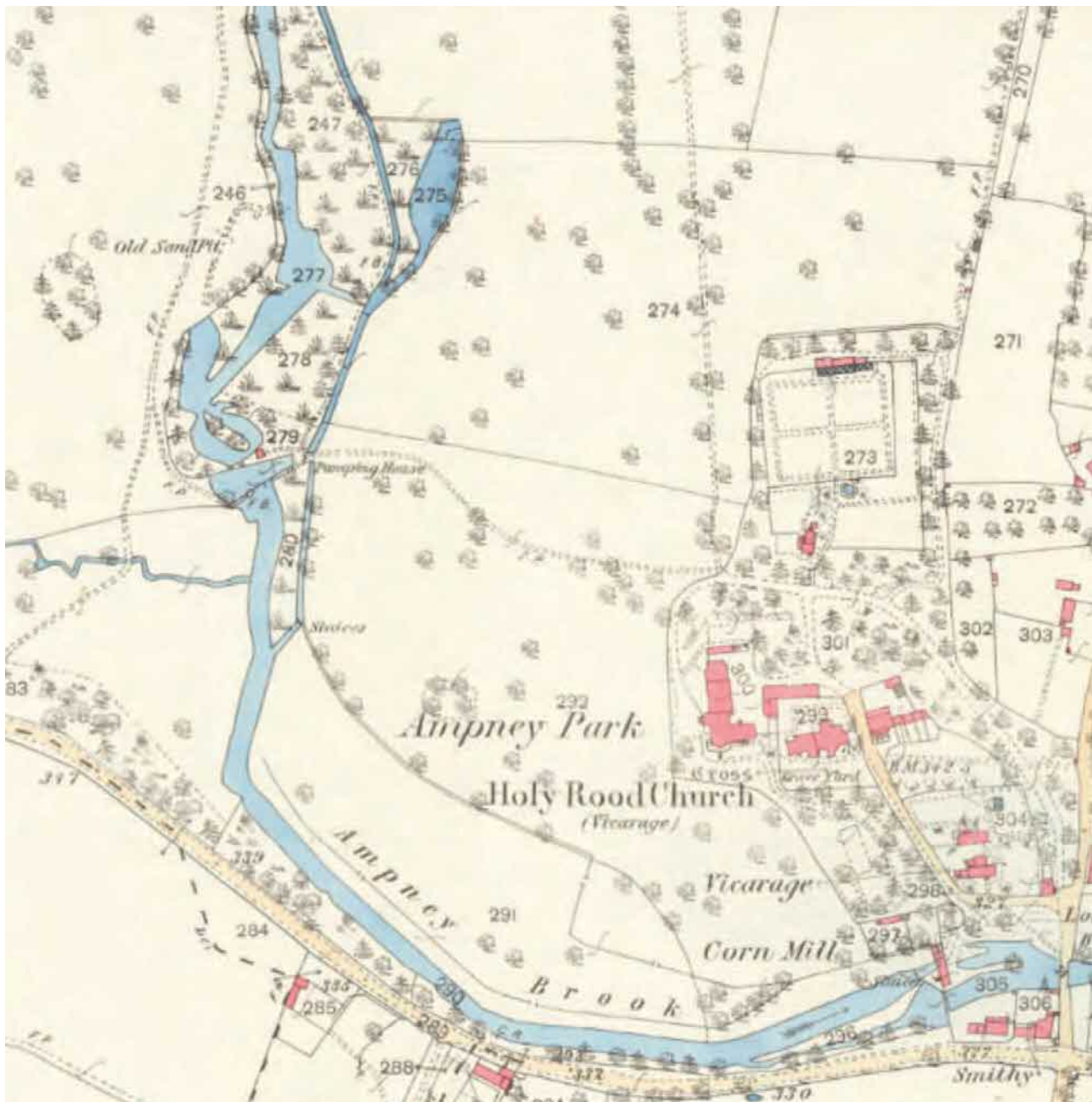


Fig. 36. The site as surveyed between 1875 and 1882. The west porch and bay window have been added as has the library /smoking room. The current drive runs through parkland whilst the now blocked service access appears to be the more important access to the house and service ranges.

Although the list description indicates that the double pile north ranges (which would have replaced the earlier service buildings ranges shown by Kip) are of 18th century date, its king post roof structure as well as the joinery to the back staircase and the sash windows all suggest these were early 19th century additions. The two storey east wing would have been erected by the mid 19th century.

The interior of the house was comprehensively remodelled during the early 1980's when it was converted into a hotel. This work included the removal of the 18th century principal staircase and the whole of the first floor at the north end of the 17th century range, in order to create a more imposing double height entrance and stair hall.

It is assumed that the 19th century alterations occurred when the two-storey corridor lean-to was added, which at this level would have provided separate access into bedrooms within the 17th century range. This lean-to appears to have been added between 1875 and 1901 when it is shown on the 2nd edition large scale Ordnance Survey map.

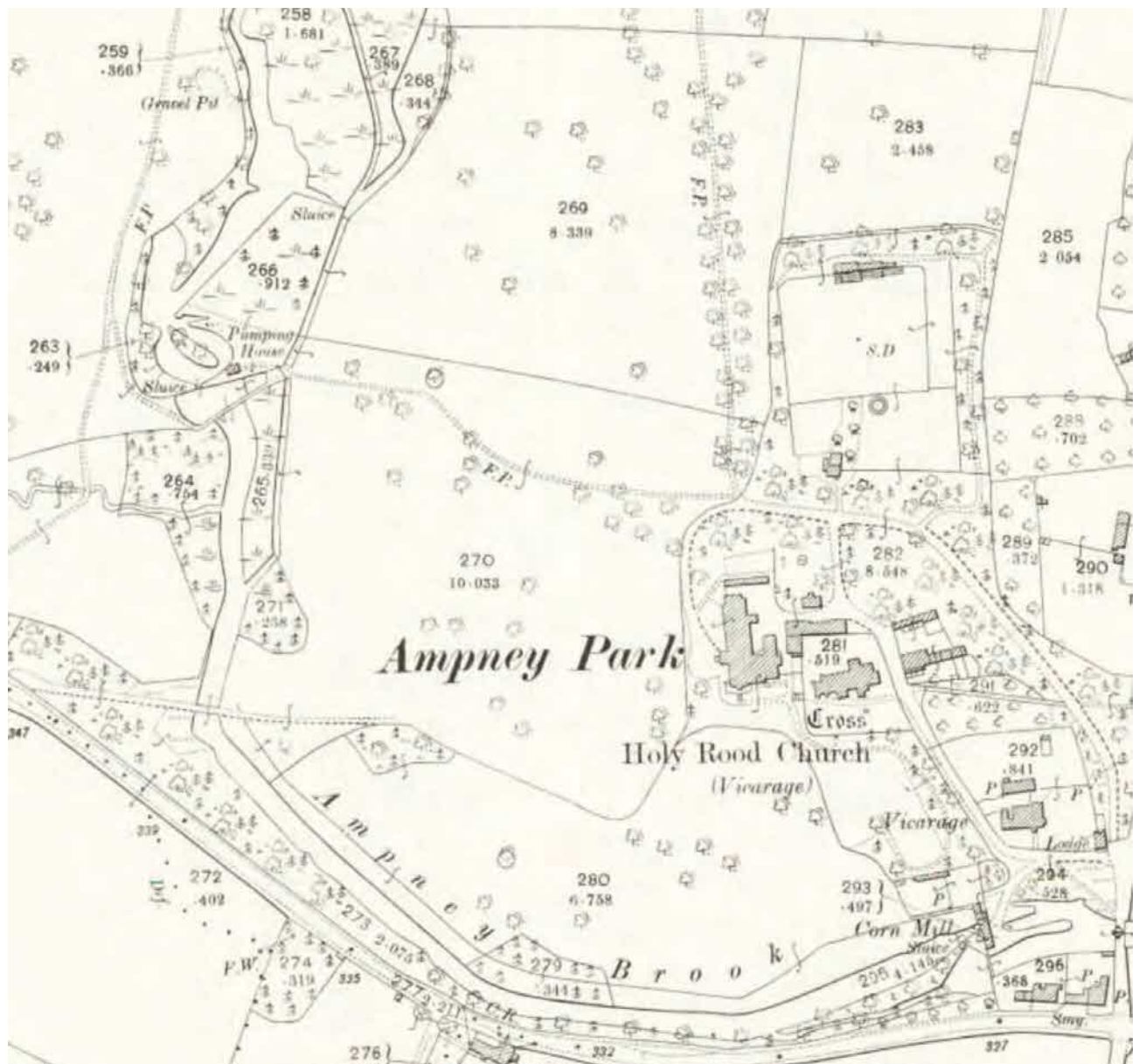


Fig. 37. The Park in 1901 before the west drive had been completed, although the bridge had been built. The second pump house had not been built but the billiard room and the ballroom (swimming pool) extension had been added. The west forecourt and ha-ha have not yet been remodelled.

The addition of the entrance porch on the west front, the bay window on the south front and the single storey library / smoking room extension to the east are all shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map but are considered to be of later 19th century date. Within the grounds the well detailed ornate archway shown in the Kip engraving would have been repositioned when the library extension was built and now separates the service yard from the gardens whilst a modest timber gate occupies its previous position in the churchyard wall.

In 1891 the estate was purchased by Edmond Cripps, and it remained in the family's ownership until 1959. The two storey east lean-to corridor range providing separate access round the main stair hall together with the billiard room and the former ballroom (swimming pool) extension to the east were completed before 1901 (the date of survey of the 2nd edition O.S. map).

This phase of works also included the introduction of the west entrance drive although it was only partly completed when the survey was undertaken, so that the bridge over the brook had been completed but not the entrance gates or the link through to the main house. The second pump house had not yet been built, the south terrace had not been extended and steps led up to the gateway into the churchyard from the park land.

Between the 2nd edition 1901 and the third edition of 1920 the turning area outside the west front becomes a larger rectangular area and the ha-ha appears to be realigned to accommodate this and

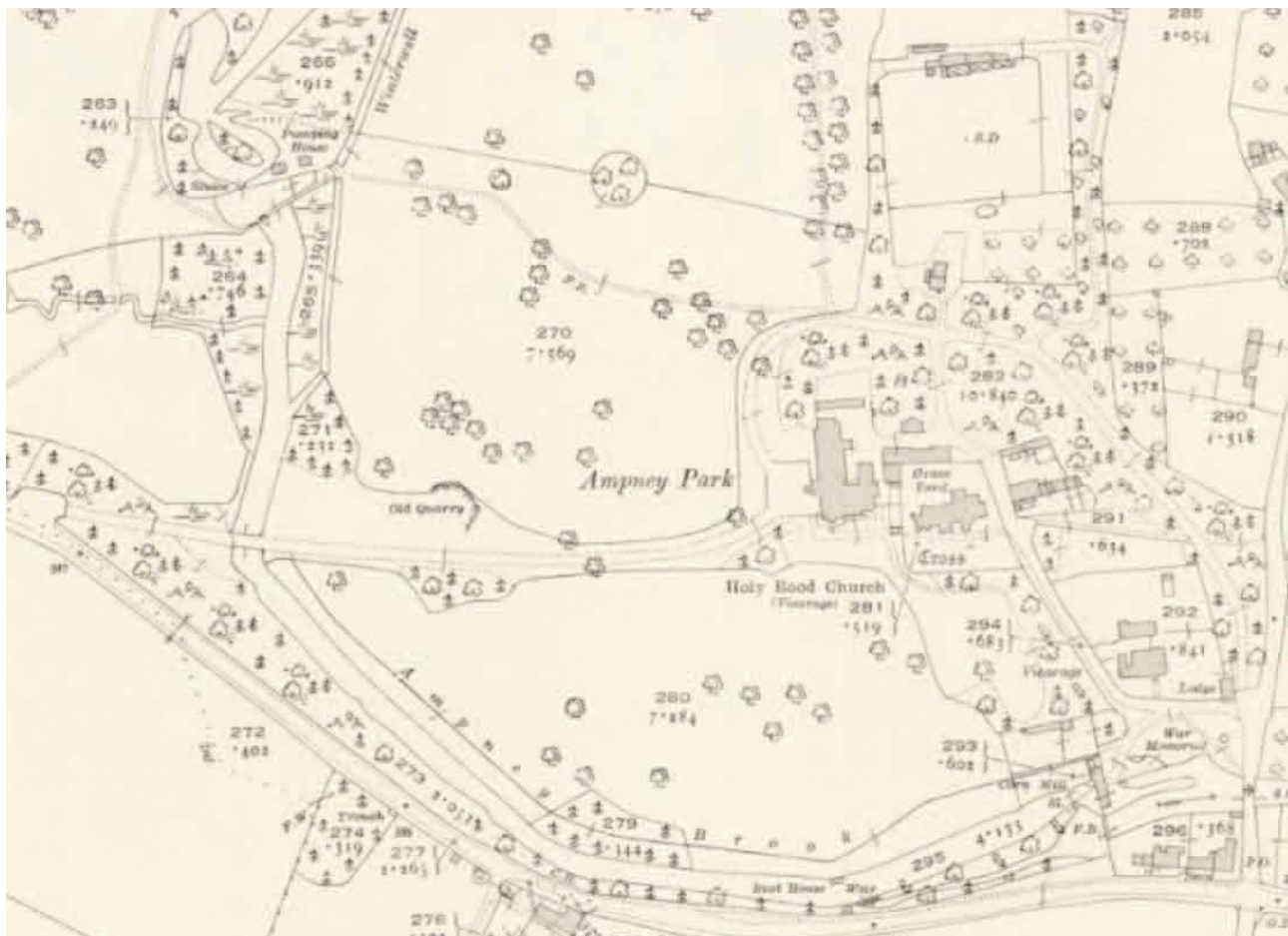


Fig. 38. The 1920 3rd edition map shows the west access drive has been completed and its shape indicates that the entrance gates and wing walls enclosing the entrance area had also been completed adjacent to the main road. Outside the main house the entrance forecourt has been expanded and the ha-ha realigned, whilst the south terrace has been extended in front of the east wing, and in the park the second pump house has been constructed.

the second pump house was constructed. The north avenue still remains even though the change in ground levels would have made it impossible to see from the house, because there are no first floor windows looking northwards at first or second floor level.

The later cartographic evidence shows that much of the remaining parkland was remodelled between 1974 and 1977, most notably by the creation of the formal terracing to the south of the house and the introduction of the lakes in the southwest side of the park. By 1977 a new dwelling (Ash House) is shown within the historic walled garden, with other development and enlargement of adjacent residential curtilages of properties to each side of the east access driveway, indicating that these areas had been sold off into separate ownership and developed by that date.

The extent of the reduced curtilage can be seen on a 1982 site plan which formed part of an application (CT2512F) for change of use to a residential country club with associated facilities. At that date, the ownership boundary starts at the gates and runs alongside the north side of the access driveway. All the land in the northwest part of the current ownership site (including the rubblestone wall attached to the entrance gates and the pump houses and associated water features) was in separate ownership. This remained the case in 1986 when the entrance gates were first listed, and the land ownership remained unaltered on subsequent planning application site plans until after 1994. The pump houses and associated watercourses were purchased in 2021 and brought back into the same ownership as the rest of Ampney Park.



Fig. 39. The land ownership recorded in 1982 included the entrance gates at the west of the drive but not the wall beyond, or the pump houses and the Ampney Brook to the west. A small former quarry is shown on the site of the current gardeners yard.

Relevant Planning History:

The planning history files make reference to change of use of the Mansion to hotel use in 1982

90.00911 and **90.000912** *Extension: Service building for deer fodder, logs, oil tank and switchgear. Conversion of store to tractor shed and study for staff cottage. Arched gateway and linked wall.* approved 26/11/1990

90.01082 *Dwelling for manager of hotel and sporting club application* refused 27/11/1990

91.01819 *Retention of car park.* Approved

91.01820 *Retention of imitation slates on part of the roof at Ampney Park and barn conversion.* Application refused

94.00107 *Change of use to guest house/hotel* Application withdrawn 12.01.1994

94.00880 *Removal of existing window and provision of replacement glazed doors* Approved 26/06/1994

94.00882 *Removal of existing of new staircase and associated internal re-arrangement. Replacing existing fire surround with period Georgian timber fire surround.* approved 23/06/1994

94.00916 and **94.00881** *Raising level of existing boundary wall to approximate 7' overall height* approved 22/09/1994

94.02003 *Raise existing boundary wall to approx 7' overall height between points C and D on plan. Raise existing boundary wall to approx 9' overall height between points E and F on plan. Amend window to pool house.* Approved 02/03/1995

98.00776 *Change of use from two covered tennis courts to horse exercise yard* Approved 10/06/1998

99.00792 *Erection of range of stabling and garages (Amended scheme)* Approved 25/06/1999 This amended an earlier scheme approved in 1998

05/01606/FUL *Attic conversion over garages to form stable-hand flat (re-submission) This relates to formation of a studio flat above the garages (previously refused in 2002)* approved 25/08/2005

02/00458/FUL *Private all-weather riding arena* Approved 05/04/2002

13/02325/FUL *Alterations to existing outbuildings/structures and erection of glasshouse* Approved 28/06/2013 This relates to the semi-sunken garden service area in the northwest corner of the site

16/05249/FUL and **16/05250/LBC** *Replace gate in London Road boundary wall; replace gate in Church Lane boundary wall (retrospective)* Approved 30/06/2017

21/02001/LBC *External repairs and replacement windows, upgrades, and regulation required modernisation to mechanical and electrical services. Some internal modifications that reverse some 1980's interventions* Approved 23/09/2021

21/03750/COMPLY *Compliance with condition 3 (rooflight, bat access vents and two new internal doors) re permission 21/02001/LBC - External repairs and replacement windows, upgrades and regulation required modernisation to mechanical and electrical services. Some internal modifications that reverse some 1980's interventions* Approved 09/12/2021

22/00798/LBC *Ground floor pool refurbishment and Basement alterations to form a designated bat roost with access* Approved 27/05/2022

22/02260/COMPLY *Compliance with condition 2 (Details - rooflights and metal doors) of consent 22/00798/LBC - Ground floor pool refurbishment and Basement alterations to form a designated bat roost with access* Approved 19/08/2022

23/00336/LBC *External and internal refurbishment, repairs and alterations* Approved 04/004/2023 This relates to the ancillary residential accommodation within the part of the separately listed historic coach house and stable range (now known as Stone barn); but it includes repairs to the historic garden gate shown on Fig.18.

The significance of Ampney Park:

As a Grade II listed building, Ampney Park is considered to have medium significance. Although extensively altered internally, the exterior of the house provides clear evidence for the development of the different phases of the main house from the 17th century onwards and the associated service buildings and parkland structures clearly demonstrate the changing importance and function of the ancillary buildings as the park was adapted to the changing needs and tastes of the owners. The 17th century range has greatest significance, because of the surviving historic fabric and the way in which the architectural detailing reflects the hierarchy between the principal and ancillary spaces both vertically and horizontally throughout the house. Externally this hierarchy is expressed through the symmetrical arrangement of the openings and their detailing; and here, the west and south elevations contribute most to the significance of the house. Both elevations are considered to be equally significant.

Whilst the west elevation may not originally have been the front of the house, functionally and visually it now reads as such, with the later porch and symmetrical arrangement of the detailing providing emphasis to what otherwise reads as the subservient element of this principal range. There is a dichotomy between the inherent architectural and historic subservience of the two storey northern half of the elevation and the scale and form of the windows to the taller three storey west elevation of the 17th century range containing the principal ground and first floor rooms. It is considered that the large well-detailed ground floor window makes a particularly valuable contribution to the significance of this elevation. Interestingly there is only one upper level window in the north elevation of the principal range and although now blocked this may have provided views of the north avenue which would have been otherwise concealed by the rising ground.

The tall and austere north elevation of the cross wing at the end of the double pile range has low significance and the ground floor lean-to has been carefully screened by a parapet and a length of wall from views of the west elevation. The lean-to is however carefully detailed and scaled to respond both to the small scale of the free-standing workshop range opposite and to the much taller two storey range to which it relates both functionally and visually.

The symmetrically-detailed south elevation of the 17th century range, that rightly dominates the Kip drawing is seen in the context of its raised terrace is clearly the historic principal range, and contributes most to the significance of the house. The relationship between this elevation, seen in the context of the terraced formal gardens stepping down to the parkland below, and the adjacent parish church and wider parkland setting adds to the significance of this elevation and makes an important contribution to the significance of the house as a whole. At the end of the terrace (and although almost certainly repositioned), the architectural quality of the well-detailed arch separating the polite garden from the service area to the north also makes a particularly valuable contribution to significance.

Significance of other listed and curtilage listed buildings:

Although separately listed, the much altered remaining section of the former coach house range is considered to have low significance, although its historic front (west-facing elevation) makes a small positive contribution to its immediate service yard setting. The small converted and much altered former workshop outbuilding immediately to the north of the house, facing onto the late 20th century stable courtyard is considered to have low significance whilst the remaining modern stable buildings and garages forming this courtyard have caused some harm because of their scale, location and poor quality detailing.

The Grade II listed entrance gates and piers with their adjacent wing walls marking the early 20th century west entrance to the park are considered to have medium significance, arising from the architectural quality of its design and from their relationship to the parkland and stone boundary walls that make a statement about the importance of the park and its owners to those passing by the site.

Similarly, whilst the contemporary bridge across Ampney Brook is only curtilage listed, and only visible within the park, the quality of its design and its relationship to the carefully managed Ampney Brook and the parkland landscape that provides its context, it is considered to have medium significance and to make an important contribution to the significance of its parkland setting.

The Grade II listed 19th century pump house is considered to have medium significance, and the surviving internal equipment, together with the position of the building in relation to the historic network of sluices controlling the water flow adds to its significance and to the significance of this part of the park because of its contribution to our understanding of the industrial archaeology of these two pump houses and the historic management measures adopted by wealthy estates in order to provide a constant supply of water to the main house and service buildings in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The later east pump engine house no longer retains its equipment and combined with the extensive fabric loss it is considered to have low significance.

Significance of setting:

The historic position of the house at Ampney Park adjacent to the church, with its ancillary ranges enclosing part of the churchyard. and set in its surrounding parkland clearly identifies it as the most important house within this settlement. Its status is reinforced by the historic private gate between the churchyard and the curtilage of the house. There are reciprocal views between the churchyard and the parkland and gardens to the house although the change in ground levels means that views from the churchyard are limited by the boundary wall. The views from the south and west across the parkland make a particularly strong contribution to the setting of the house with the church being a prominent element within the parkland setting of Ampney Park and a reminder of the close relationship between the historic church and the main house.

Seen from the north side of the churchyard, the views of the more utilitarian rear elevations of the house and its historic service buildings from and across the north side of the churchyard have a neutral impact on the significance of the setting of the Grade 1 listed church, although the overbearing impact of the particularly dominant conversion of the adjacent former coach house that is now in separate ownership has caused harm to the setting of the church and this part of the churchyard.

Within its wider parkland setting, the west entrance gates to the park and the former gatehouse and Garden Cottage on the historic entrance drives make a positive contribution to the significance of the park and to the main house because they indicate the presence of a substantial and (at least locally) important historic estate concealed from view within the park beyond. Although the new landscaping of terraces, formal gardens and lakes within the southern part of the remaining park dates from the latter half of the 20th century, it has been carefully designed to respond to the two principal phases of development of the house, with the formal 17th century arrangement to the south informed by the Kip engraving, and the “picturesque park land” to the west relating to the west elevation which is now the principal elevation. This carefully blended relationship between the formal and informal parkland complements and enhances the significance of the house and its parkland setting.

The west access driveway bisects the park in two, with the working areas and equestrian facilities concentrated to the north side of the access drive. The gardeners yard is cut into rising ground, lo-

cated within a former quarry so that apart from the entrance to the yard it is largely hidden from view; and makes a negligible impact on the significance of the house and its parkland setting. To the north of this area, are various equestrian facilities (the manège, and small timber clad stable buildings as well as paddocks enclosed by timber fencing) that are located alongside the north boundary to the parkland. A combination of the slight change in levels and the mature tree planting along the boundary have helped to reduce their wider landscape impact.

This by now mature planting fails to screen the large equestrian exercise building located immediately to the north of the modern stable yard in views across the park from the south and west as well as from the adjacent service to the main house. Because of its location, scale and design it causes considerable harm to the setting of the service yard and when seen in the context of the other modern timber stable buildings timber fenced paddocks and the manège, it severs the historic relationship between the house and its former walled garden and the historic area of park land to the north.

Also located at the main east entrance into Ampney Park site, is the prominently located 1980's new stable yard which is now disused and is poorly designed and built in poor quality materials. Although only single storey the prominent entrance feature gives this stable yard greater prominence and it causes harm to both the setting of the principal mansion and the park. Fortunately direct views are limited because of intervening buildings and mature planting nevertheless this poorly detailed building causes moderate harm to the setting of the mansion and character of the park.

The large equestrian exercise building that dominates the north side of the service yard causes substantial harm within the landscape setting of the main house, and this was recognized by the exclusion of this northern part of the park from the Conservation Area. Within the park however the mature trees within the park provide some screening such that in views from the west drive and the parkland to the south of the drive, and more importantly from the area of park land and hard surfaced entrance courtyard immediately to the west of the house it is seen in the context of mature trees, and this partial screening reduces its overall impact within the landscape. Similarly the other equestrian facilities (manège and paddocks which are set along the north boundary of the formal parkland are largely obscured by landscape screening that reduces their impact in views from the parkland, however they still cause some harm to the landscape setting of the main house.

THE PROPOSED WORKS AND THEIR IMPACT ON SIGNIFICANCE:

Although Ampney Park is currently in C3 residential use, it has had a variety of commercial uses since the early 1980's, including as a residential country club with associated leisure activities in its park. The current proposal seeks planning permission and listed building consent for alterations to allow Ampney Park to be used as a venue for events with accommodation and associated facilities. This proposal has been the subject of pre-application proposals, and has been amended to take into account the Council's consultation response. The scheme includes demolition of the large and unsightly late 20th century equestrian buildings with their associated manège and stables within the parkland and their replacement with new event buildings set within a carefully re-landscaped parkland setting.

The late 20th century L-shaped ranges forming the stable courtyard to the east of the main house will be replaced, and together with the converted curtilage listed outbuilding forming the south side of this yard will provide additional guest accommodation.

Listed building consent has recently been granted for the remodelling and upgrading of the existing accommodation within the mansion and the section of the converted historic stable range remaining within its ownership, and this will also be used if required during events.

The scheme also provides improved vehicular access via the west entrance into the park as well as associated enhancements to vehicle and pedestrian routes and parking arrangements within the site. In addition it is also proposed to restore and reuse the derelict pump houses and associated water-courses that regulate the flow of Ampney Brook now that these have been bought back into the same ownership.

1.Change of use from residential to part commercial use:

The mansion is currently considered to have reverted to residential use and a change of use is therefore required in order to allow parts of the building to be used to provide accommodation during events. The recently approved alterations and repairs to the house have been largely completed and these included minor alterations to the internal layout as well as refurbishment of the indoor swimming pool. In addition to reception and service rooms at ground floor level the main house currently provides 10 bedroom suites, and no further alterations are required for the proposed change of use.

As outlined above listed building consent has recently been granted for minor internal and external alterations to the separately-listed historic former stable range and coach house to the east of the main house. This is now known as Stone Barn, and will provide a treatment room and an additional generously proportioned guest suite ancillary to the main house. No additional changes to this building are required for the new use.

Impacts:

The change of use will not require additional alterations to the listed and curtilage listed buildings and it is considered that this element of the works will have a neutral impact on the significance of the Grade II listed main house, and the adjacent curtilage listed outbuildings including the historic stable and coach house to the east. Whilst there will be changes within the parkland setting of the mansion these are considered in more detail below. Overall it is considered that these changes will have a neutral impact upon the contribution made by the park to the significance of the principal listed house and its adjacent stable and coach house and other curtilage listed buildings.

2.Alterations to the west vehicular access:

The early 20th century west entrance is described above (pp.14-16), and the sequence of later 20th century changes to the land ownership is summarised on p.27. These changes demonstrate that although the rubblestone wing wall to the north of the entrance gates is attached to it, it cannot be considered to be curtilage listed because it was in separate ownership at the time of listing. It is however recognized that it makes a positive contribution to the setting of the listed gates and gate piers and to the character of this part of the Conservation Area.

The original narrow and awkward east vehicular access enters Ampney Park from the narrow road junction adjacent to the Ampney Brook. A small but picturesque lodge marks the narrow entrance drive that winds through mature planting although unfortunately this has poor visibility and although it is owned by Ampney Park, it also serves a small number of neighbouring properties. A separate equally narrow access leading to the historic stable and coach house was closed off when a substantial part of these buildings were converted to residential use and sold into separate ownership in the later 20th century. Although the west access was added in the early 20th century in order to overcome these difficulties, this has both height and width restrictions and at present only the inadequate eastern access drive can be used by larger vehicles.

The proposal retains the east drive in its current use for the main house. All the traffic associated with the new use will use the remodelled west entrance that opens directly off the London Road (A417).

Currently the historic west entrance is not wide enough for two vehicles to pass, and its ornate wrought iron overthrow and associated frieze are too low to allow taller commercial vehicles to use it. It is therefore proposed to limit the use of this gateway to smaller vehicles leaving the site. A new 5m wide access will be formed through the recently rebuilt rubblestone section of the unlisted north wing wall and this will be used by all vehicles entering the site, and by taller commercial vehicles leaving Ampney Park.

The new opening will be formed as far to the west as possible whilst allowing vehicles to have adequate visibility to safely join the main road. It requires the demolition of a section of the recently rebuilt wall and its 5m width is the minimum necessary to allow larger vehicles to safely turn into and out of the site. Within the site, a new curved driveway will link to the existing drive through the park and it will incorporate a lay-by for larger vehicles leaving the site to wait in order to allow incoming vehicles to pass into the site. Signage will give priority to vehicles entering the site. Beyond the lay-by the driveway will reduce to 3m wide and will sweep round to meet the existing drive approximately 30m to the east of the entrance gates. Additional passing places will be incorporated as required along the length of this drive through the park.

Impacts:

Currently, the restricted headroom through the west entrance means that large vehicles have to use the narrow winding east driveway (shown in fig.2). This new access arrangement will reduce risks to those using the east drive, by providing an alternative access for large vehicles.

It is acknowledged that the formation of a new opening through the rubblestone continuation of the listed wing wall to the north of the listed park entrance gates will cause harm to its significance as a non-designated heritage asset whilst the new access route and lay-by will also cause harm to the setting of the adjacent listed curved wing wall, gate piers and gates. The section of rubblestone wall proposed for demolition is largely modern, having been rebuilt as part of recent repairs, although a small loss of historic fabric will occur. The level of harm to the setting and significance of the listed gates and gate piers is considered to be less than substantial and after exhaustive investigation of alternatives it is considered to be the minimum necessary to provide improved access into the site.

The pre-application submission proposed to take all the vehicles through a new 10m wide opening through this rubblestone wall, however in the light of the Council's concerns at pre-application stage, these access requirements have been carefully reconsidered in order to minimise the adverse impacts that had already been identified and acknowledged. Alternative approaches that were investigated including raising the height of the listed gate piers and gates and its historic metal overthrow to provide additional headroom.

The heritage assessment has identified that although historic, the gates and overthrow have been adapted for reuse here, and relocating them using more carefully detailed fixings would not result in harm. This solution had previously been dismissed because raising the overthrow and associated frieze above the gates would require alterations not just to the fixings but also the introduction of a new band of masonry in order to raise the height of the two gate piers. Raising the overthrow would also leave an awkward gap between the gates and the overthrow, or below the gates if they are raised as well.

In the absence of other solutions this approach was re-examined and it was again concluded that whilst raising the overthrow remains technically feasible, it would change the relationship between the gates and overthrow and also affect the proportions of the two gate piers and their relationship

to the wing walls. It was concluded that on balance, this change would result in greater harm to the listed gates and gate piers than the formation of a reduced new opening through the rebuilt section of unlisted wing wall.

The proposed solution of reducing the width of the new opening to 5m and relocating it further from the listed gates, is considered to have reduced the level of harm to the setting and significance of both the listed wing wall and listed entrance gates and gate piers. Whilst an even narrower opening could in theory be provided, this would require larger vehicles to approach the entrance at right-angles which would necessitate a wider curve for the new access drive extending it further into the adjacent sloping wooded ground. Not only would this increase the scale of the necessary engineering work, but it would also increase the loss of trees within the site compared to the current proposal. Furthermore, the new opening would have to be repositioned closer to the listed wall, gates and gate piers which would increase the harm to their setting.

Between the entrance gates and the Ampney Brook woodland planting currently encloses views and draws the eye along the historic drive. The current proposal includes additional tree planting so that the immediate woodland setting to each side of the new drive is maintained ensuring that the new entrance is screened from views from within the formal parkland beyond the Ampney Brook.

In views from within the park, the new section of entrance drive will only be seen in its woodland setting and provided the proposed carefully designed landscaping and planting is fully implemented it is considered that the new entrance will have only a small adverse impact upon the immediate setting of the listed gate piers, gates and curved wing wall and a neutral impact on the wider parkland.

In views eastwards towards the park along the main road, the deep setback of the entrance behind the road edge means that the listed gates and gate piers and the wing walls read as separate elements from the more informal rubblestone wall to the west. In contrast when travelling westwards, only the existing field gate and western end of the rubblestone wall is briefly visible. Whilst the new entrance opening will be clearly but briefly visible to road users, it will have a surprisingly limited impact within these views because it is set so far behind the verge.

There are no footpaths along this section of the A41, and the grass verges to each side of the road are enclosed by mature trees and hedgerows. Some pedestrians do walk along the roadside verge and they will see the new opening in the context of the listed gates and wooded park beyond. Within the context of these limited public views there will be very minor harm to the significance of this part of the Conservation Area, although the new landscaping will largely mitigate the harm.

In summary whilst the new access and driveway will be visible from within the setting of the listed curved wing wall, gates and gate piers, their impact will be limited and it is considered that the harm arising from this alteration will be at the lower end of the less than substantial scale, such that paragraph 202 of the NPPF applies. It is argued that this very minor harm will be off-set by the public benefits, including from the reduction in traffic through the village and along the narrow east drive.

3. The proposed demolitions and new development within the sociated hard and soft landscaping:

Most of the later 20th century development associated with the previous commercial and equestrian uses is prominently located along the north side of the park, and it is all of poor quality both architecturally and visually. The harm that has resulted is acknowledged by its exclusion from the Conservation Area, which only includes the western part of the park to the south of the west drive.

The current proposal removes this extensive swathe of unsightly equestrian clutter including the manège and its adjacent parallel rows of wooden stables, as well as the hard surfaced tennis court, the very substantial modern equestrian building, the associated hard surfaced areas and the timber post and rail fencing which divides this part of the park into a series of paddocks. Further to the west, the L-shaped arrangement of single storey workshops, garages and stores within the Gardener's Yard, and its enclosing inappropriate laurel hedging set within former areas of quarrying and the adjacent modern kitchen garden will also be removed, whilst the more traditional holly hedging will be relocated.

The demolition and removal of these later 20th century structures and their associated hard surfaced areas will substantially enhance the character of the parkland setting of Ampney Park, and also the setting of the Conservation Area. Following these clearance works, it is proposed to construct a new Venue building which will be located on the north east part of the cleared site, together with associated car parking. An open air informal Ceremony Space defined by a pergola will be provided for seasonal use on the site of the current Gardeners' Yard; and the new development will be carefully landscaped to ensure integration into its landscape setting and to soften their impact within views across the parkland.

A new Grounds building will be discreetly positioned at the northern edge of the current park adjacent to the now separately owned historic walled garden. This will be accessed from the existing small service yard. A final element of the proposals is the replacement on the same footprint of the later 20th century former stable courtyard on the north side of the main house.

As well as carefully detailing the immediate landscape setting of the new buildings, it is proposed to open up the existing belt of mature planting along the current north boundary of the park by the selective removal of poorer quality planting whilst retaining the mature specimen trees. Additional new planting will then be undertaken to extend the parkland planting further to the north, in order to incorporate this development into the enlarged park land as part of a comprehensive new landscaping scheme to enhance the existing character of the park and its contribution to the setting and significance of the listed buildings both within and adjacent to the park boundary.

The Venue Building:

The Venue has a roughly Y-shaped plan comprising a taller principal range containing the main event room and entrance foyer with two projecting parallel wings at its east end. The north wing will contain ancillary accommodation (kitchen, storage, W.C.s etc) whilst the south wing and a small link range has a bar, lounge and dancing areas, with a store at its east end. The building has a contemporary design whilst making reference to the materials and detailing of the mansion and the surrounding historic buildings. The gables to the principal range will be predominantly glazed, with a brise-soleil above eaves height on its west elevation. In contrast the north service wing will have a simple boarded finish. The remaining elevations will be predominantly natural stone, and all three ranges will have steeply pitched roofs matching the pitch to the stone slated roofs on the mansion.

The taller central roof will be traditionally thatched so that it reads in the landscape as a large barn, and the adjacent parallel lower roofed ranges to the north and south ranges will have green finished metal roofs. Whilst the use of thatch will increase the overall height, the ridge height of the principal central range will be only slightly (1.5m) higher than the current indoor riding building that it replaces, because the new building is to be cut into the sloping hillside in order to reduce its perceived scale. A series of rooflights within these roofs will help to break up their mass, as will the substantial stack rising above the south wing.

The new building will be set within a carefully designed landscape setting which retains the existing healthy mature parkland trees but removes the hedgerow belt to the north of the site in order to allow the trees within the remaining north “buffer zone’ to be integrated into an enlarged area of park which now extends further into the adjacent meadow to the north.

Stone walls enclose the new service yard to the north of the Venue Building and form part of the more formal gardens introduced within its immediate curtilage. They include timber trellises enclosed by hedges and topiary to the east and west of the main building, and topiary and avenues of trees leading to a new car park on the site of the demolished indoor equestrian building. In addition, the car park will have a carefully designed acoustic fence, clad in planting to soften its appearance, along its north and east sides in order to protect the amenity of the nearest dwelling which is located within the adjacent walled garden.

The formal landscaping and additional planting will ensure that the Venue building is largely screened within more distant views across the park. In addition, a network of informal paths through the park land to the west of the Venue connect it to the new outdoor ceremony space further to the west, as well as to the Mansion and the main car park and to the rebuilt stable courtyard which will be remodelled as a cloister garden.

Impacts:

The Venue building is a substantial one which will be visible on the rising ground on the north side of the park in views from the east end of west drive and the forecourt in front of the mansion. However, the retained mature trees within the park and the additional planting will ensure that the building is largely screened from direct views from the mansion. There will also be more distant views across the park from the west drive and across the lake to the south, although these will be softened by the parkland planting.

Its location was chosen in consultation with the Council at pre-application stage and is considered to provide an appropriate balance between the need for a large events space together with its associated service areas and car parking to be located together and the need to preserve both the setting of the mansion within its surrounding park land and the adjacent Conservation Area.

Whilst it is accepted that the introduction of this complex of buildings within the park land setting of Ampney Park has the potential to cause harm, the careful design, landscaping, lighting, and noise control will ensure that harm is minimized. It is argued that any identified harmful impacts are offset by the enhancements resulting from the removal of the extensive spread of unsightly equestrian buildings and facilities which currently blight the northern part of the park.

The outdoor ceremony space:

This will occupy approximately half of the area within the former Gardeners Yard, which is located within an area of historic quarrying adjacent to the water meadows and overlooking the listed pump houses. Here the Ampney Brook divides to create a series of inter-connected ponds and sluices prior to flowing under the bridge and onto the lake and mill race beyond the park. The landscape at this edge of the park is an attractive one and the proposed open ceremony space will be a simple but elegantly detailed area complementing its setting at the border between the parkland and the woodland and meadows along the stream. There will be a simple pergola detailed to match the new garden structures associated with the Venue Building set on a hard surfaced (Pennant stone or similar) terrace. This feature will be set amidst an area of formal landscaping that manages the transition between the formal ceremony area and the surrounding landscape.

A length of coursed rubblestone retaining wall will be erected against the historic face of the former quarry on the southeast side of the formal area whilst paths at each end will follow the contours of the scarp slope into the surrounding parkland. At the south end the path will be a hard-surfaced footpath to be known as the Winterwell Walk that will provide an all-weather pedestrian route through the park. At the north end, a more informal grass path will connect to a new informal network of paths which run through the water meadows and back into the adjacent parkland.

Impacts:

This outdoor ceremony space and pergola will read as a discrete, but discreetly-respectful landscape feature which references the new development whilst remaining a subservient element within its carefully landscaped riparian setting. Additional carefully considered parkland planting between the ceremony space and the west access drive will largely screen the site from view from the park to the south. Its position overlooking the Ampney Brook means that there will be direct views towards and from the listed pump houses however the change to their setting is not considered to cause any harm to their significance.

The land rises steeply uphill behind the site, and then gently rises towards the site of the proposed Venue Building which is located towards the north-east end of the parkland; and the pergola will be barely visible from the Venue Building because of the screening provided by the existing mature trees on the sloping hillside and proposed landscaping.

Proposed Car Parking, service track and Grounds Building:

A new main car park is to be located on the site of the former indoor riding stable and is accessed via the existing driveway which also connects to the front entrance forecourt and the west entrance drive beyond. A new narrow service drive will continue eastwards from this car park to the small rear service yard tucked into the rising ground to the rear of the north service wing of the Venue Building.

Vehicles entering the site along the west drive will continue to pass through the current front entrance forecourt which also could function as an occasional overspill parking area, although this is not anticipated to be required. Additional guest parking closer to the main house will be provided to the east of the modern stable range, with staff parking alongside an existing north service track. This currently stops at a gate leading into the meadow to the north of the parkland, but will now continue slightly further northwards to a small replacement Grounds Building located adjacent to the historic walled garden.

The demolition of the unsightly Gardeners Yard buildings means that there is a need for replacement workshops and storage facilities for the grounds staff managing the park and gardens. It is therefore proposed to erect a replacement building to the north of the service road to the main car park. It will read as a two adjacent simply detailed vertically boarded garden buildings with profiled metal roofs set adjacent to the tall enclosing wall of the historic walled garden. Because of the height of the wall these buildings will not be visible from within the walled garden whilst their simple design and modest scale ensures that they read as entirely appropriate buildings in the context of the adjacent walled garden. In addition, their location at some distance from the mansion also ensures that these buildings do not harm the setting of the mansion or the park.

Impacts:

None of the later 20th century buildings and associated hard-standings and other equestrian paraphernalia has any significance, and together they cause considerable if not substantial harm to the

character and significance of this part of the parkland setting of the mansion. Their removal provides an opportunity for enhancement of the parkland setting of the mansion and the new buildings have been designed and located with particular care to ensure that visual impacts from the mansion are minimized and that where the buildings are visible within the access drive and the wider park to the south, they sit comfortably within the established parkland setting.

The associated planting has also been carefully designed to maintain the character of the park whilst the small adjustments to the associated service roads are low key additions that read as parkland drives and paths. Areas of formal gardens and features between the Venue building round the new car park have been designed to reference the lost formal gardens visible on the 17th century Kyp print whilst at the same time providing a more intimate landscape setting within this part of the site.

It is considered that, if the associated routes and paths through the park and adjacent meadow are carefully detailed and low key and are associated with carefully considered additional planting, the new buildings and their associated access and service areas will transform this area of the park from its existing character as a poorly detailed equestrian and exercise area into one that complements and enhances this part of the park.

The simple restrained nature of the new Grounds Building and its location adjacent to the walled garden and set well away from the mansion ensures that it will not harm the setting of the mansion or the park. Although closer to the walled garden it is not considered that it will harm its setting as a curtilage listed structure.

In addition to the Venue Masterplan showing the landscape proposals, the application is supported with a set of perspective views that accurately show the proposed development within the park in the context of the existing and proposed landscape planting allowing impacts to be accurately assessed. The use of high quality detailing, materials and hard and soft landscaping, is recognized as essential if harm is to be avoided, although it is acknowledged that the proposed use will introduce additional movement and activity within the park. It is considered that overall these potentially adverse but temporary impacts will be outweighed by the long term benefit arising from the enhancement of the parkland setting to the main house and the listed and curtilage listed structures.

4. Replacement and conversion of the east stable yard building moderation and associated amenities:

The current application proposes the demolition and replacement of the north and east ranges of the modern former stables and groom's accommodation, by a new L-shaped range providing five additional units of guest accommodation, with a large centrally-positioned plant room in the northeast corner. Each guest unit will have a sitting area, kitchenette, bathroom, and bedroom. One of the units will be DDA-compliant with all its accommodation on the ground floor, whilst the other four units will have a bedroom in a mezzanine formed within the roof space.

The new building will replicate the original form of the stable ranges, except that the existing north east splayed entrance will be replaced by a small extension which links the two wings, with a hipped roof to the new right-angled corner; and the existing hipped roof on the west side elevation of the north range will be altered to form a gable, with a pair of windows to each side of an external gable stack. The new building will be contemporary in appearance, and constructed in natural stone although some short lengths of wall will be clad in vertical natural oak boarding, with oak joinery to large-paned windows and doors. The existing slates will be salvaged and reused, with painted metal rainwater goods.

The roof slopes will contain symmetrically positioned rooflights in relation to the window and door openings on the main elevations. In addition, metal flues will be carefully located on the outer roof slopes to serve wood burning stoves within each guest apartment. The outer and inner elevations to both ranges are similar but 'handed'. Externally, they are detailed with narrow oak-framed windows which rise to eave level, with a plinth beneath the windows to accommodate changes in ground levels; and with vertical oak boarding between windows. The new accommodation will be accessed from within the former stable yard, and the regularly-spaced full-height door openings are detailed with large glazed panes with boarding beneath their lock rails.

The curtilage-listed south range was converted to accommodation for a hotel manager and staff in 1983 (application CT.2312/N) and originally this range had three open bays on the south elevation separated by posts. The current workshop and store attached to the east side of the range replaced an earlier building here which was demolished as part of the 1983 alterations.

This altered but historic range is being retained but will be converted to provide a combined breakfast room and buffet area with an associated small kitchen and W.C. serving the new guest accommodation. This will involve the removal of modern partitions which were introduced as part of the 1980's residential conversion, and will involve no loss of historic fabric.

Externally, on the front (south elevation) the alterations to the historic outbuilding range will comprise replacing the modern infill between the piers with small-paned glazed windows and French doors, with boarding below the lock-rails and replacement of the existing joinery within the three modern openings on the rear elevation to match the detail on the front, with the windows at each end of the range altered to form full height openings.

The existing externally-accessed workshop in the later 20th century east extension to this south range will be rearranged to form a laundry room. Externally, the roof will be raised to line through with the rest of the south range and its existing slates replaced with stone tiles to match those on the adjacent historic range. The two front windows will be altered slightly to accommodate traditional casements, and the windows in the rear elevation will be altered to match the new proposed joinery detail to the historic range. Generally, external stonework to this south range will be carefully repaired where required using lime mortars; and the rainwater goods replaced in painted metal. The central courtyard will be replanted with formal planting to form a peaceful "cloister" garden.

Impacts:

The 20th century stable ranges and corner "gatehouse" between the north and east ranges of this modern former stable yard are set on rising ground on the north side of the mansion and its historic service yard. They are prominently located opposite the historic east drive as it enters into the site and dominate the view towards the mansion and the park beyond. They are however largely concealed from direct view from the mansion because of the intervening service buildings and planting. Although constructed in traditional materials, these are of poor quality and poorly detailed utilitarian buildings that are prosaic in appearance. Additional harm arises from the poor quality of the conversion of the south east range to garaging with a flat above and by the poorly detailed splayed corner entrance between the east and north stable ranges that appears to be a later alteration.

It is felt that the replacement of these nondescript stable ranges with a more carefully designed and constructed building of similar scale and proportions will make a more positive contribution to the wider setting of the house; whilst its more contemporary design elements will both respect and provide a visual link between the historic buildings and the new development on the site.

The external alterations to the much-altered historic south range will result in minor harm arising from additional loss of historic fabric to its rear (north) elevation arising from the introduction of new door and window openings. It is argued that this harm is offset by the enhancement to the front (south) elevation arising from the opening up of the blocked openings facing the main house. The internal alterations including the removal of modern partitions will also have a small positive impact on significance as will the alterations to the modern workshop at the east end of this range.

5. Proposed repairs and alterations to the listed pump houses and associated features:

The course of the Ampney Brook was altered in association with the construction of the two pump houses and their associated channels water courses and sluices in the early 20th century. Currently, the watercourses are silted up and partly overgrown and all the structures are in a poor and deteriorating state of repair (see above pp18-20). The pump houses are both on the west side of the Ampney Brook, and are accessed by small somewhat decayed stone clapper bridges and timber walkways.

Structural advice on the condition of these buildings has been sought, and will continue to inform the careful repair of the buildings in accordance with best conservation practice. In addition to the annotations on the drawings, a preliminary schedule of proposed works. has been provided

The earlier (late 19th century) pump house to the west is identified on the plans as *Water Wheel House*; and it is proposed to carefully restore this building and its associated lean-to storeroom. Following the removal of the vegetation which partially obscures the elevations, the defective areas of brick and stone masonry will be carefully repaired and repointed using lime mortar. The existing boarded door and window joinery will all be replaced to match the existing detail, but with fixed lights to the windows.

Although in poor condition, the main building retains its stone-tiled roof as well as some of its historic equipment including its water wheel. The works will include removal of the stone tiles and the careful repair of the underlying roof structure, retaining as much historic fabric as possible. The stone tiles will be relaid with any deficiency made up with matching new stone tiles; and with a completely new stone ridge. On the later lean-to range, the existing asbestos cement roof covering will be replaced with new corrugated Corten steel.

Internally a new stone flagged flooring will be laid on a permeable sub-base. The proposals include the assessment and repair of the water wheel and associated equipment by specialists, with repairs being undertaken in accordance with the specialist consultants' advice. At a minimum, the first phase of this work will include any necessary temporary structural works identified by the specialist consultant and structural engineer, (for example to the timbers supporting the wheels), required to stabilise the fabric and prevent any further deterioration in the short-medium term.

The later (early 20th century) pump house to the east is in worse condition, having lost its roof structure. It is proposed to consolidate the surviving masonry as a ruin rather than re-roof it, as this will potentially allow retention of more historic fabric. In addition to repairs and repointing the masonry, this will include the introduction of new stone copings to the two gables and tops of the surviving walls; as this will be a more durable solution than a simple mortar flaunching. The floor in this building will also be relaid in stone on a new permeable sub-base whilst retaining the traces of historic fixings etc for machinery *in-situ*.

The surviving channels and watercourses serving these two buildings will be carefully de-silted and repaired and the stone clapper bridges and timber boarded walkways restored. The feasibility of util-

ising the Ampney Brook for hydro-electric power generation has been explored, but unfortunately this does not appear to be viable at the moment, as a primary water course has been infilled. The landscaping within this low-lying more marshy area has a different character to the more open parkland beyond and is focussed on environmental and ecological regeneration. Finally, it is proposed to introduce interpretation boards for the benefit of guests covering the industrial archaeology and the ecology of this part of the park.

Impacts:

These long neglected pump houses are currently in a parlous condition and are clearly Buildings at Risk. Without urgent intervention these modest but nationally important structures will be lost and it is considered that their restoration and consolidation together with the adjacent watercourses as part of the wider development will not only secure their long term future but will also make a substantial contribution to both the ecology and special character of this part of the park.

It is argued that the restoration and consolidation of these modest buildings and their riparian setting will make a substantial contribution to the significance of both buildings and to the significance of the park and the Ampney Crucis Conservation Area which extends northwards to include them. Their repair represents a significant public benefit, arising from the preservation of the Grade II listed and “at-risk” pump houses and their settings and significance, as well as their contribution to our understanding of the industrial archaeology of the site, and their functional relationship to the mansion house and its 19th century estate.

Conclusion:

It is considered that this carefully considered scheme of replacement high quality buildings and parkland enhancement, together with the proposed sensitive alteration of the existing buildings, will enhance rather than detract from the significance of the much altered parkland setting to Ampney Park and overall it will have a positive impact upon the character and setting both of the main house and the associated listed and curtilage listed buildings and structures within the park.

This assessment has identified some harm to significance arising from the alterations to the west vehicular access. This harm is however less than substantial such that paragraph 202 of the NPPF applies and the design has been developed to minimise the harm to the significance of the affected heritage assets and their settings.

In the context of the current safety concerns associated with the use of the historic east entrance drive, the remodelled west entrance drive provides a safer access for larger vehicles entering and leaving the site directly from the main London Road (A417). The removal of these large vehicles from using the narrow road through the village and narrow and awkward east drive provides a small public benefit to the users of the mansion and the neighbouring dwellings sharing the east access. More importantly, however it is considered that the proposed repair works to the currently “at risk” Grade II listed pump houses will prevent their otherwise-inevitable loss and secure their long-term preservation. This provides a significant public benefit which it is argued will more than offset any identified harm arising from the necessary alterations to enhance the west vehicular access.

JME Conservation Ltd.

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