



WOOTTON PLACE WOOTTON OXFORDSHIRE

HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT
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WORLLEDGE ASSOCIATES

Worledge Associates is an Oxford-based heritage consultancy, committed to the effective management of the historic environment. Established in 2014 by Nicholas and Alison Worledge, Nicholas came to private practice with over 35 years' experience working in heritage management for local authorities. This intimate knowledge and understanding of council processes, and planning policy and practice, helps us to work collaboratively with owners and decision-makers to manage change to the historic environment.

Our team of dedicated researchers and specialists believe in the capacity of the historic environment to contribute to society's collective economic, social, and cultural well-being. We aim to identify what is significant about places and spaces in order to support their effective management and sustain their heritage value. We have worked with a wide range of property-owners and developers including universities and colleges, museums and libraries, large country estates, manor house, farmsteads, cottages, town houses and new housing sites.



INTRODUCTION

The intelligent management of change is a key principle to sustaining and conserving the historic environment. Historic England and successive government agencies have published policy and advice that extends our understanding of the historic environment and develops our competency in making decisions about its management.

Paragraphs 4-10 of Historic England's Good Practice Advice Note 2 (Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment) explains that applications (for planning permission and listed building consent) have a greater likelihood of success and better decisions will be made when applicants and local planning authorities assess and understand the particular significance of an asset, the extent of the asset's fabric to which the significance relates, and the relative importance of that significance.

The National Planning Policy Framework, in paragraphs 194 and 195, expects that both applicant and local planning authority take responsibility for understanding the significance of a heritage asset and the impact of a development proposal. Local authorities should, the NPPF explains, consider the significance of the asset in order to 'minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal'.

It has never been the intention of government to prevent change or freeze-frame local communities. Current policy and good practice show that change, if managed intelligently, can be successfully accommodated within the historic environment. This not only sustains significance but can add to the way we experience and understand historic places.

This report has been prepared to accompany a planning and listed building consent application for proposed works at Wootton Place, Wootton, which is included in the National Heritage List for England, grade II, and lies within the Wootton Conservation Area. It includes a brief history of Wootton, and the history and development of the rectory site and present house. Following a description of Wootton Place an assessment is provided of its heritage significance in accordance with recognised heritage guidelines, including a statement of significance.



Gough's Map of Great Britain – showing the approximate location of Woodstock. Wootton is likely denoted by the small single building to the NNW

BRIEF HISTORY OF WOOTTON

Wootton lies about 9 miles north west of Oxford and 2 miles from Woodstock on the river Glyme. It was historically the main settlement between the rivers Glyme and Dom which flowed into Blenheim park. The village has been in existence since 950 AD. It was the centre of an Anglo-Saxon royal estate and evolved gradually over time through a process of reclamation of land from the forest, growing from a small settlement to a village and parish that was at one point encompassed what is now Woodstock.

The village name meaning tun (settlement or enclosure) by the wood, has passed through various changes over the centuries. It was first mentioned by the name Wudetune in 958 AD when the Saxon King Edgar gave 20 hides to the Thane Etheric. Other iterations have included Oitone and Optone (1086); Wotton (1216 -1307); Wotthone

(1270) and Wuttun (1274-9). It was also referred to as Wootton without Woodstock (1464) and Wootton Whitechurch (1842). Today the village is sometimes referred to as Wootton by Woodstock to distinguish it from other Oxfordshire villages of the same name.

The 'unusual shape' of the ancient parish was most likely an outcome of several early changes. Maps show it to be a long straggling parish stretching from Ludwell in the north to Hesington in the south and from east to west from Tackley to Stonefield. It was historically bounded by the parishes of Glympton, Tackley, Hesington, Woodstock, Blenheim Park, Coombe and Stonsfield. Old Woodstock also formerly formed part of Wootton parish before becoming a separate parish in 1894.



Extract from Thomas Jeffreys Map of Oxfordshire 1769 showing Charlbury in relation to Ditchley Park the adjoining estate of the Earls of Lichfield

The population – at its peak reaching 1250 in 1851 – has fluctuated reflecting the various socio-economic conditions. Beginning with a small population of 45 at the time of the Domesday Survey (1086), the population rose steadily over the 12th and 13th century before a heavy depopulation in the 14th century - presumably following the plague. It recovered steadily throughout the 17th century before sharply rising in the 18th century on account of the flourishing gloving trade in Woodstock. Changing economic fortunes however would see it decline again from the mid 19th and early 20th centuries. These changes would have an impact on the built development of the village.

Its earliest significant development (C11th century) was Grim's Dyke at Woodley's and Akeman Street, the old Roman road from Fenny Stratford to Bath. The village would next appear on the map at the time of the Domesday Survey as Oitone and Optone when it recorded as comprised of 10 hide – 5 of which were in the hands of the king and 5 as part of lands held by the Bishop of Coutances. The parish was inclosed c1770, a process that saw the re-alignment of many minor roads in the village and the establishment of others along the

western end of the parish (c1804). Most building work however likely occurred at times of the village's prosperity in the 17th and 18th centuries. Records from the 17th century onwards - ranging from vestry books to church warden accounts and inclosure and tithe awards – tell a tale of Wootton's gradual development.

VILLAGE CHARACTER

The village is largely characterised by its narrow streets, stone cottages with stone roofs as is typical of the Cotswold area. The prominence of the limestone used in the construction of its church is thought to have given rise to the name Wootton Whitechurch – used to describe the village in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The village's sense of distinction within the wider region owes much to its riverside location and elevated position. Much of the parish lies on high ground. From the bridge over the river Glyme, streets rise sharply up the hill towards the centre of the village. The latter occupies the north slope with houses lining the rectangle of streets below the church and former rectory house at Wootton Place.



Photograph of Wootton taken from Ponsonby 1968 showing stone rubble houses and retaining walls and stone slate roofs



First edition Ordnance Survey Map for Wootton 1833

Older houses such as the Horseshoes Inn, the Mill and Home Farm are situated lower down the slope. These were predominantly built of limestone rubble with stone slate roofs. Most of these- with the exception of Wootton Place and Manor Farm – are relatively small holdings. Many cottages dating to the 18th and 19th centuries reflect the historic open character of the village comprised as it was of small tenant farmers and labours engaged in a range of cottage industries.



View Horseshoe Lane showing stone rubble walls and stone slate roof with diminish courses.



Wootton from the West End (Ponsonby: 1968).

The earliest detailed plan of the village of 1833 shows it to have comprised or relatively the same distribution of houses with some realignment occurring along Horseshoe Lane c1840 when the bridge was built. Other changes at this time included the realignment of the lane leading to Milford Bridge where the route was moved further south of the rectory house in order to create a carriage drive.

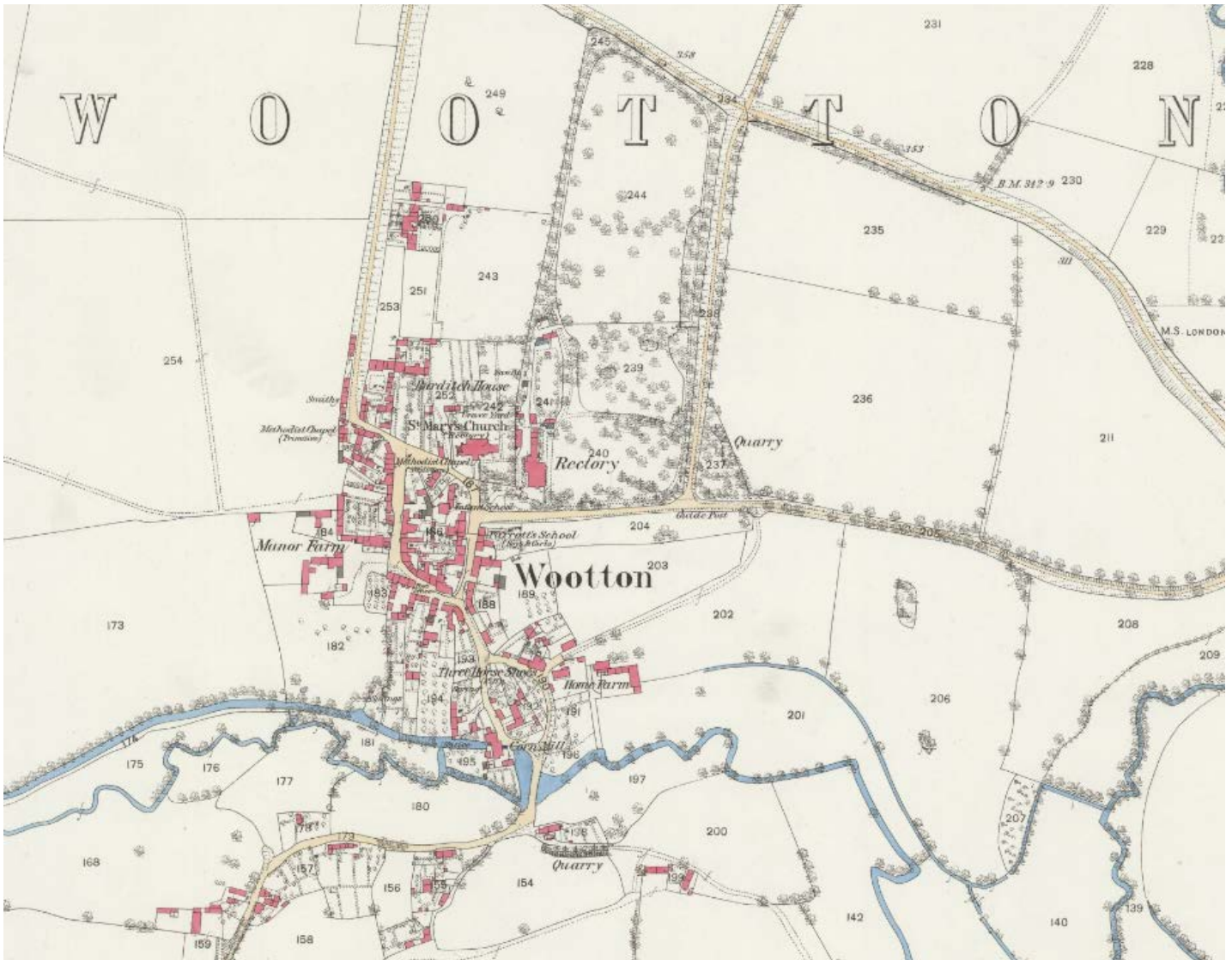
The Wootton West End is comprised of a large group of houses aligned along the southern slope of the village. These were most likely associated with the pre-inclosure fields on the west end. The farm at the southern entrance of the village came to be referred to as West End Farm after inclosure. Most houses on this southern slope bear the initials of their 18th century owners. A number of traces of house plots has led some to believe that there were probably more houses in this area.



Wootton's West End (Ponsonby:1968).

The most significant developments came in the 20th century as technological advancements changed traditional modes of framing. These changes would also have a lasting impact on the character of the village itself. Electricity for instance was introduced in 1937 and many houses were slowly improved to respond to new ways of living. At this time however, many of the village's buildings were in quite a bad state of repair. In 1945 alone 22 houses were condemned by the local authority as uninhabitable with a public meeting of the rural district council in 1950 identifying a further 95 as in need of urgent repair and drainage.

Concurrent with this physical decline, the Post War period would attract a significant number of commuters to the village - a development that would lead to much building work. Up to the war there had only been 8 council houses in the village. The 1960s would see a rush of investment into the village prompting much private rebuilding and restoration. 1960 alone for instance saw 26 new houses built on allotments now called Milford Place. There was also some significant infilling of village streets with private houses. There was private building along Castle Road, Burditch Bank and Manor Court (in the late 1970s). These new buildings were in a variety of styles and materials.



25" Ordnance Survey Map for Wootton, 1881 - Marked here as 'Rectory', Wootton Place is located directly to the east of St Mary's church, at the north-east corner of the village.

BRIEF HISTORY OF WOOTTON PLACE

Wootton Place, the former Wootton Rectory, lies immediately to the east and shares a boundary with St Mary's church Wootton.

The following information is substantially drawn from the Victoria Country History for the Parish – A History of the County of Oxfordshire, Volume 11, Wootton Hundred. (A P Baggs, Christina Colvin, H M Colvin, Janet Cooper, C J Day, Nesta Selwyn and A Tomkinson, 'Parishes: Wootton', in A History of the County of Oxford: Volume 11, Wootton Hundred (Northern Part), ed. Alan Crossley (London, 1983), pp. 259-285. British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/oxon/vol11/pp259-285>)

Known as 'Wootton Place' only since its sale in the mid-20th century, the rectory house of Wootton has played an unusually dominant role in the small village. While the house today is almost exclusively from two phases in the late-18th and mid-19th centuries, the character of Wootton's rectory is defined by much earlier factors. The relationship

of the living to the crown and nearby Woodstock park allowed the advowson to become disproportionately wealthy – among the richest in the country in the late 13th century – while the lack of powerful secular influence or manor house in the village meant that the rectory was prominent. The role of the house itself declined in the later medieval period, but regained stability under the control of New College, Oxford, who maintained the property until 1943.

The earliest known presentation to Wootton came under Eleanor de Vitri, Countess of Salisbury, in 1218. Following Eleanor's death in 1233, the advowson escheated to the crown, and from this date the relationship of the rectory to the surrounding Wychwood Forest and Woodstock Park becomes firmer. Andrew de Vitri, a relative of Eleanor's, appears to have fallen foul of this and was fined heavily by Henry III for forest offences in 1247. The early appointees of the crown, however, thrived on the royal ties of the site and were granted special privileges and grazing rights within the royal forest.



The rectors of the later 13th century, such as Artald de Sancto Romano who served as keeper of the king's wardrobe, were mostly members of the royal household. In 1256, the rector was issued a royal grant including 25 oaks from the king's woods for the building of a house or hall, and such a large bequest suggests this original rectory house to have been unusually grand. The oldest parts of St Mary's church date from the 13th century as well, and royal involvement at Wootton is again shown with a grant of 10 oaks for the construction of the church tower in 1237.

In 1277, Edward I donated the church and its living to the hospice of Mont Cenis, which controlled an important pass across the Alps. Following the death of the incumbent rector, Mont Cenis appropriated the living of Wootton, and instituted a vicarage, with a separate house constructed by the church. This new vicarage was valued at £13 gross, and the rectory at over £32, among the richest in England, and a detailed survey survives from this time. The appropriated living of the rectory comprised a house, the rents and works of 4 tenants and 146 acres of arable land, meadows and pasture worth around 50s. The vicarage, with its own cottage and curtilage, was paid rents

worth 35s. 10d., with other payments worth around 53s. Tithes were to be split between the two, with the hay tithes to the rectory, and mills and fisheries to the new vicarage.

The alien possession of priories was banned in England in the fourteenth century, although Mont Cenis was initially allowed to retain the living in commemoration of Edward's gift, and the rectory and advowson of the vicarage were let by the abbey to local farmers at a rent of £8 a year until 1425.

In 1440, Henry VI granted the church to nearby Bruern Abbey for this same rent, and it is most likely Wootton had eventually been confiscated from Mont Cenis by the crown after a period of exception. Bruern's influence was short-lived, however, as the crown waived rent in 1445 when neither the Pope nor Bishop would permit Wootton's appropriation. Bruern did present a vicar to St Mary's in 1458 but lost the rights to the church under legislation revoking royal grants in 1461, and following a lost appeal against this in 1464, the church remained in royal control until the later 16th century.



Following nearly two centuries of foreign control, the position of Wootton's rector had declined considerably from that of the 13th century courtiers. The crown continued to lease the rectory to farmers, with the rent in 1526 set at £16 a year, and appointed curates to the church. In the later 16th century, however, the rectory was once again an aristocratic property, granted first to Robert Keyleway in 1560 and, after a succession of noble owners, the advowson was acquired by Sir Henry Lee of Ditchley in 1591.

The house and land under Lee is recorded in detail for the first time since the early Middle Ages. The rectory house was described as a little house in a small courtyard opposite the church, which was most likely the successor to the vicarage built under the control of Mont Cenis rather than the earlier large hall. The glebe was said to include a close of around 1 acre containing the foundations of a former parsonage house 'near the water side', decayed for a century and a half.

This site 'a bow shot from the church' is likely to have been the 13th century rectory house, set below the present Home Farm. The glebe itself comprised of 4 yardlands, several barns, paddocks and closes, and 95 acres of arable land, meadows and leys. The rectory remained in the Lee family after Sir Henry's death in 1611, and the living was valued at £150 in 1630.

There was some dispute over the advowson of Wootton in the mid-17th century, as the crown attempted to present to Wootton in 1638 at the same time as William Hall, who claimed to have been assigned the right by Sir Henry Lee the younger.

In 1639, Sir Henry Francis Lee sold the advowson to 'Sir Edward Verney and others', implying the success of Hall's claim. This party then sold the rectory to Dr. Robert Pinck, warden of New College, Oxford, for £500 in 1642. The advowson passed by will to the college on Pinck's death in 1647, and the rectory house remained under the control of New College until its sale in the 20th century.



The rectors appointed by New College appear to mostly have been fellows, who served long incumbencies and were almost all resident at Wootton throughout. While Wootton did form part of the grant of Woodstock to John Churchill in 1705 (and remains in the Spencer-Churchill family), this does not appear to have had much impact on the use or status of the rectory.

The house is not well documented before its rebuilding in the later 18th century, but the Rector Thomas Jones was living in a house with at least 11 rooms, excluding larder and dairy, in 1638, and in 1665 the rectory was assessed for tax, described as a large house of 10 hearths. While nothing of the 17th century house exists today above ground, it is possible that some detailing survives in the cellar.

In 1756, John Cary was appointed rector, constructing the earliest parts of the present Wootton Place during his 8 year incumbency, the 'garden front' to the east of the house. At the time of inclosure in 1770, the rector was awarded 93 acres, of which 9 acres were to be exchanged for other land, in exchange for 3 yardlands.

The rectory was also recorded as receiving 498 acres for tithes. Following inclosure, the value of the living rose dramatically, and was worth over £800 gross for much of the 19th century. In 1806, St Mary's church was repaired 'at great cost', but no further details are recorded.

The rectory passed to Lancelot Charles Lee in 1825 who, along with his nephew and successor to the rectory, William Blackstone Lee, was responsible for the vast majority of works to the house and gardens seen today at Wootton Place.

At the time of Lee's appointment, the rectory was valued at £801 15s,

including the main house, 3 farms of around 580 acres, 3 cottages, 6 gardens and a meadow at Steeple Aston. Lee incorporated 'Walnut Tree close' into the lawns east of the rectory house, an area of around an acre which had been purchased by New College in 1824.

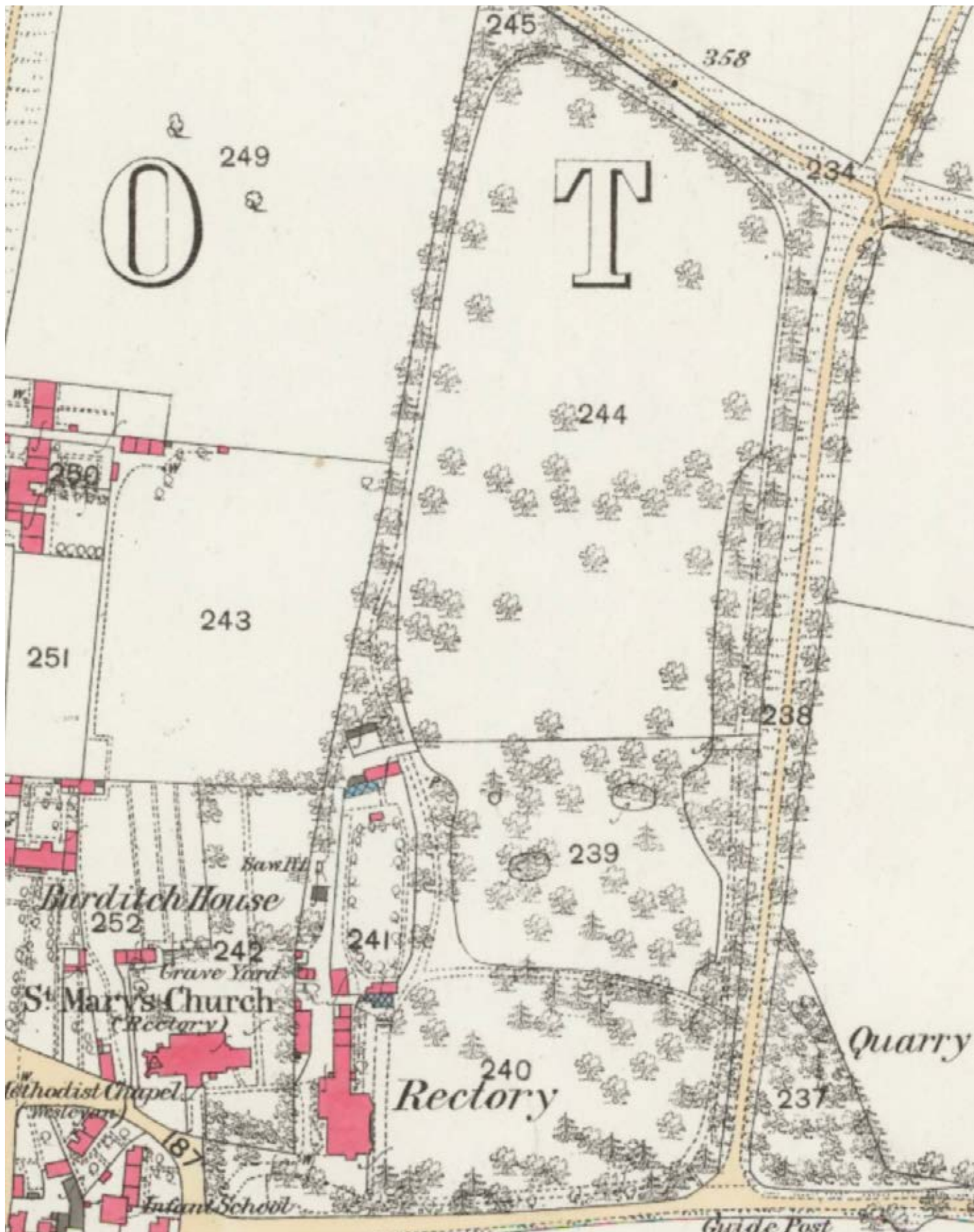
W. B. Lee succeeded his uncle as rector in 1836 and continued the process of laying out Wootton Place's gardens. Today's large kitchen garden was built by Lee to replace an earlier walled garden further to the south.

In 1841, Lee realigned the lane from St Mary's to Milford bridge, which had previously passed close to the house door, further to the south. This involved the purchase of several pieces of land and removal of cottages, but resulted in a further enlarged garden and provided space for the house's present driveway.

In 1842, Lee began the process of rebuilding the house itself. The work seems to have been motivated by Lee's requirements for a family house, following a succession of bachelor rectors, and was dramatic in scale.

The west side of the house was rebuilt, and a large extension added to the north with a new staircase. The canted bay window to the south end of the garden front was also inserted at this time to match that of the new north side.

In 1845, the work was condemned by the Bishop of Oxford for being too large, but Lee continued to live at Wootton until his death in 1875. The only alteration to the rectory in this time, following the major works of Lee's early incumbency, appears to have been the exchange in 1864 of the Steeple Aston meadow for one at Wootton.



25" Ordnance Survey Map 1881 – Site Detail



25-inch OS map 1919 showing an orchard to the north-east of the house

Lee's time as rector appears to have been the high point of Wootton Place's modern grandeur. Following a succession of shorter incumbencies in the late 19th century, Frank Ransome Marriott was appointed rector in 1900, and lived at Wootton until his death in 1945.

In the course of the 20th century, the three farms of the rectory were sold: Little Worth in 1919, Home Farm in 1944 and Wootton Downs in 1949. The house itself was sold to Marriott's daughter, Mrs. Elizabeth Clutterbuck, in 1943, and was renamed Wootton Place at this time.

While this marked the first time since the mid-17th century that the rectory house had passed out of the ownership of New College, the college retains the living of Wootton to the present day, and in 1954 commissioned a new rectory house at the junction of the Glympton and Barton roads.



Aerial image of Wootton Place 1961 (POXO451316)



South elevation

DESCRIPTION OF WOOTTON PLACE

Wootton Place, an outbuilding in the grounds, garden wall and stables are included in the National Heritage list for England, grade II.

The entries provide a physical description of Wootton Place, as follows:

WOOTTON PLACE

Vicarage, now house. 1756-64 for John Cary; remodelled and extended c.1842. Coursed limestone rubble, with ashlar front. Multiple-gabled stone slate roof; end, ridge and rear lateral stacks of stone ashlar, rebuilt in late C19 engineering brick to left. Double-pile plan, with left side entry.

Front in mid Georgian style. 2 storeys and attic; symmetrical 4-window range front with 2-storey canted bay windows to outer bays. Six-pane sashes, and central full-height sash; early C19 conservatory with glazing-bar lights across centre of front. Raised storey band; moulded cornice; hipped roof dormers to left.

Left side wall has 6-pane and tripartite sashes, and late C18 three-bay Tuscan porch; French doors, with flanking glazing-bar lights. 6-pane sashes to rear.

C18 service range to right of limestone rubble with gabled old tile roof and stone end stack; similar early C19 range to rear, of 3-window range, has stone ridge stack, tripartite sash and 3-light casements with glazing bars.

Interior: stone-flagged floors, old plank doors in service range and panelled doors in panelled reveals; late C18 chimney pieces, including fine c.1800 example with Egyptian-style carved heads in room to right. Rooms to left and right have late C19 Morris and Co. green and rose coloured wallpaper. Long hall runs laterally across house, from entry on left, to fine dog-leg staircase with turned balusters and ramped balusters with fluted newels and first-floor balcony balustrade with dog-gate.



OUTBUILDING.

Former traphouse, saddler's room and bier house. Datestone 1830 in gable end. Coursed limestone rubble; gabled stone slate roof. One storey. Timber lintels over 2 plank doors and 2-light leaded casement; C20 garage doors placed to front of former 2-bay open-fronted traphouse on right. Interior: butt-purlin roof. Included for group value.

GARDEN WALLS AND ATTACHED STABLE

Early C19. Coursed limestone rubble. Tall wall with stone coping to west and north and lower wall with tile ridge to stone slate coping to east: C19 panelled door in south wall facing house. Enclose area approximately 25 x 75 metres. Subsidiary features: stable of c.1830 to left, of coursed limestone rubble with gabled Welsh slate roof: timber lintels over 2 plank stable doors and left door; 2-bay stalls with mangers inside.



South elevation, 1840s, as seen from 1841 expanded driveway



East elevation; John Cary's mid-18th century 'garden front'



View of east elevation with conservatory and service range; St Mary's church behind



View west across lake to 19th century walled garden; St Mary's church behind



Rear courtyard, view south towards house



2007 drive, view east across grounds

RECTORIES

Rectory buildings are a unique feature of ecclesiastical history whose physical development is contemporaneous with that of the church. As part of a group of buildings designed to serve a particular purpose – that of housing the clergy – they are key to articulating the evolution of English parochial system. Collectively, they encompass a great deal of social-cultural and economic history. Rectories, as the architect Robbie Kerr (Adam Architecture) has observed, were social markers, capturing “in elegantly built poetry the position of many wealthy individuals.” (Kier Robbie 2017 (March). Quoted in Doughty Eleanor “Dearly beloved, the parsonage appeal never falters.” Country Life March 2017) The parsons who built them were the product of a particular culture. They were often educated gentlemen who saw their purpose as bringing some enlightenment, order, and social cohesion to the rural societies in which they were part of.

Though many of these buildings hold architectural, evidential, and historic value, their particular significance arguably lies in their special designed relationship as part of the church complex and their siting near the church and often at the centre of the village. Breaking way from this conventional layout, the Old Rectory in Brightwell Baldwin contributes to our understanding of evolution of the church and parsonage during the Georgian period. Both in architectural style and setting, it helps illustrate the changing status of the Georgian parson, capturing the wealth and social ambitions of its ‘rector-builder.’

TERMINOLOGY

The term ‘parsonage’ is used here generically to refer to both rectories and vicarages. These categories do not refer in a strict sense to physical property but rather denote an estate conferring certain rights and responsibilities. A ‘rectory’ was not a physical object but a package of duties, land, endowments, income, and rights, that had a certain value. (Jennings Anthony 2009. *The Old Rectory: The Story of The English Parsonage*. Continuum International Publishing Group. London; New York. p. 44) The distinction between rectories and vicarages connoted the differing status of the rector and the vicar.

Historically, there was a sharp divide between various classes of clergy. The rector, as the embodiment of the rectory, owned the house and held the freehold. The latter gave him the flexibility to administer the parish with relative freedom. He did not have to carry out his parish duties nor indeed reside within the parish in which case he appointed a substitute - the vicar. The vicarius was in this strict sense, someone who was appointed to carry out the duties of others. His parsonage, referred to as a ‘vicarage’, was funded through a mere stipend from the rector. Over time, some vicars acquired their own freehold, giving them security of tenure and enabling them to appoint their own curates to run the parish. By the nineteenth century, the vicars’ status had improved considerably such that some were even wealthier than the rectors. (Ibid. p 44-45)

These distinctions consequently ceased to be of great importance. Their spatial articulation as rectories and vicarages however remains key to our understanding of the social stratification of church hierarchy. The buildings in many ways embodied both the status of the clergyman and that of the benefice he held. Although there was

no firm principle that the rectory building needed be grander than that of the vicarage, private wealth - historically more often available to rectors than vicars – generally meant that the former were housed in more comfortable surroundings.

THE PAROCHIAL SYSTEM AND EMERGENCE OF THE PARSON'S HOUSE

The emergence of the parsonage as a distinct element in our built environment is coexistent with that of the English parochial system. Parsonage buildings were a consequence of the need to house the resident ministers for the new ecclesiastical parishes that were created from the seventh century onwards.

Beginning with only a few country churches in the seventh century, the non- monastic church would steadily grow into large institution, requiring among other things, a significant body of architectural representation. Early parish priests were initially lodged in a room over the church porch but over time “the provision of priests’ house came to be regarded as axiomatic.” (Savdidge Alan 1964. *The Parsonage in England: It’s History and Architecture*. S.P.C.K; London. P. 13 These were at first private buildings founded by a local lord for whom their construction was seen as both an exercise in piety as well a symbol of prestige and power. The church and its associated buildings were regarded as property, with the priest virtually the employee of the lord.

The early parsonage buildings were often simple oblong halls constructed of readily available materials (such as timber and wattle and daub) and built-in close proximity to the church – a special designed relationship that would remain unchanged until the eighteenth century. As social economic conditions improved however, clergy buildings became more substantial.

This development is one that reflected changes in the patronage relationship. As the appointment and spiritual oversight of the persona ecclesiae, the parson, came to be regarded as the domain of his spiritual superiors, the lord evolved into a patron. With this came significant changes to the status of various classes of the clergy and concomitantly to those of their dwellings. “The parson became synonymous with the rector, and for his ‘living’ he had the ‘great’ tithes on the parish land....and also some glebe.” (Ibid p.8) The latter was often supplied by the lord while the tithes were supplied by the parish.

Such was the importance that came to be placed in these provisions that Canon law would later regard it as fundamental. It was deemed proper that every church be attributed a house intact and free from any service (mansus integer absque ullo servitio). Bishop Gibson in his eighteenth-century Codex would go even further to argue that “every church of common right (was) entitled to house and glebe and (that) the assigning of these at first was of such absolute necessity that without them no church could be regularly consecrated” (Ibid p.8-9)

Since it was the rectors who enjoyed these revenues directly and in full, distinctions began to appear between their parsonages and those of their vicars. Rectory buildings came to be more architectural distinguished, a feature that reached its zenith in the eighteenth century.

THE GEORGIAN PARSONAGE: ARCHITECTURE AND SETTING

While Medieval and Victorian parsonages can more readily be discerned as ecclesiastical buildings given the emphasis placed in both cases on aligning the built form with intended function – often achieved by making use of the physical characteristics of the church – the Georgian rectory, as Pevsner would remark, “could be any Georgian gentleman’s house.” (Jennings 2009, p.191-2)

The parsonage buildings of the eighteenth century overall reflected the spirit of the age – ‘classical balanced and civilised.’ Both in the interior and exterior planning, “the generality of Georgian parsonages followed modestly in the wake of changing fashion.” This was the golden age of domestic architecture, in which “the architect as we know him made his arrival.” (Jennings, 2009, p. 88-108) A great deal of work however was carried out by amateurs, from Lord Burlington downwards, who had been enlightened by a classical education. In the Low Countries, much of this work was carried out by local builders and craftsmen aided by guides and copy books. In the parishes, rectories were often built by amateur ‘rector architects.’

There was, however, nothing ecclesiastical about these contributions. The buildings aspired to the grandeur of the time. Early Georgian features, where they first began to appear, included a hipped roof; sash windows often painted white and a classical porch (sometimes up a few steps). By the middle of the century parsonages had reached the characteristic Georgian rectangular form with the balanced façade featuring a main block generally accommodated on the ground floor; a central entrance and staircase hall with the staircase in or of it; dining or drawing rooms; the parson’s study; and kitchens – sometimes in a separate wing. Situated on the first floor were often the bedrooms (whose number varied according to ambitions). There were also often basements for the storage of wine.

This secular appearance, as Jennings (2009) observes, is one that was arguably more “appropriate to the Georgian clergyman in an age of enlightenment.” (p.192) The religious and political troubles that had characterised the Civil War period had given way to a period of stability based upon the Protestant succession with the House of Hanover and Anglican supremacy. Christianity in this Anglican form was now “the religion of all reasonable men.” (Savidge (1964), pp. 78-79) This changed political situation not only assured the parsons’ prominent position in society but also saw a significant improvement to their economic situation. The great advances in agriculture during this period were reflected in the considerable rise in incomes from tithes and glebe land. More than a religious calling, being a parson was now also a respectable way to make a good living and their dwellings therefore needed to reflect this.

As the eighteenth century progressed, parsonage design came to be influenced by the increasing tendency for the wealthy patrons to fill them from their own families. This had a particularly marked effect on the ‘traditional layout’ and setting of parsonage buildings. While Medieval - and later Victorian - parsonages were situated close to the church and at the heart of the communities in which they served, Georgian parsonages as the ‘seats’ of learned gentlemen, placed

greater emphasis on an adherence to polite sentiments than they did to ecclesiastical order.

Prior to their re-alignment in the Georgian period, parsonage settings had traditionally been defined by their relationship to ‘the whole.’ The church and parson’s house were often imagined as part of a wider ‘complex’ - that included the schoolhouse and other parish buildings – whose relationship was emphasised by the stylistic harmony and subtle interrelationship of the structures. It is a relationship that would once again be reiterated in the Victorian period.

Georgian parsonage settings reflected the new elevated status of the clergy. Unlike the ‘shepherds’ of the Victorian era, Georgian parsons were learned gentlemen whose buildings as such stood apart from the rest. In town setting, the Georgian rectory was often “built on a street of the business or official class” or when in the country, stood isolated in its own extensive grounds “not necessarily near the church or even in the village.” (Jennings (2009) p. 90)

English Heritage (now Historic England) Listing Guides do not specifically address the Parsonage House as a ‘type’.

The Listing Guide No. 3, on the Suburban and Country House, notes:

In the later eighteenth century, many existing parsonages (the very name conjuring up Parson Woodforde’s Diary and the excesses and failings of the Georgian church) were old, incommensurate, and sometimes strongly vernacular in character. Especially where livings were wealthy, these were sometimes replaced in the Regency period by detached houses of polite character.

Far more rectories and vicarages were rebuilt in the 1840s and later under the influence of the reforming Oxford Movement, which placed great emphasis on the dignity of worship and of the clergy. These, typically with gothic detailing inside and out, were designed not only to provide living accommodation of a suitable standard for someone who, with the squire, provided parishioners with a moral and theological figurehead, but also a place of work. Examples include those by William Butterfield at Coalpit Heath, Gloucestershire (listed Grade II*) and Baldersby St. James, North Yorkshire (listed Grade II*).

Most, like their predecessors, stood close to the church, but in some wealthy livings the opportunity was taken to build on a new and more private site. In such cases the incumbent’s new house was typically a generous detached house set in pleasure grounds and serviced by a coach house, stables, and sometimes a walled garden, producing a country estate in miniature.

Wherever their location, such houses were normally orientated so that visitors approaching up the drive were met by an imposing façade. Those who were allowed entry on business would probably gain access only to a study immediately beyond the front door. Otherwise, the planning and decoration of these houses resembled those of the laity.



WOOTTON PLACE

The present Wootton Place is a parsonage building shaped by different historical factors from several centuries. The wealthy medieval rectory of Wootton had enabled the building of both a grand rectory hall and a vicarage – the latter in close proximity to St Mary’s church, reading as part of the same ‘complex’. The ownership of the rectory by local nobles, and then New College, Oxford, meant that a larger house befitting the rector’s status was then built on the site of this old vicarage in the early-modern period.

The surviving Wootton Place, however, denotes two periods whereby the incumbent rector rebuilt the rectory house in a more grand, fashionable style. The first of these, in the mid-18th century, is

shown in today’s ‘garden front’ – a secular building with no direct architectural relationship to St Mary’s church. The second phase, completed in the mid-19th century, also saw the house rebuilt and enlarged according to modern fashions. The status of Wootton Place was reaffirmed with a more impressive driveway entrance to the south, and the parklike grounds were laid out, modelled on a larger country estate. During this time, the walled garden and service buildings were constructed to serve the house, but the building of a bier house (and the ease of access of these buildings to the churchyard) could show a renewed importance of the rectory’s relationship to St Mary’s, typical of the era.



Fishing Pavilion, Kedleston Hall

LAKES AND BOATHOUSES

Historic boathouses served both as a recreational space, and as an aesthetic feature in the designed landscape. The origins of such garden buildings are found in the parkland of great country houses of the 18th century, inextricably linked with the development of water as a landscape feature. In the 19th century, boathouses remained a popular garden feature, with an increased practical use as a summerhouse, alongside their aesthetic function.

The mid-18th century movement towards 'irregular' cultivated parkland over formal gardens (spearheaded by Capability Brown (1716-83) saw the use of water as an important tool in landscape design. Brown used water, wherever possible, in the middle distance as a primarily aesthetic feature to be looked across. This was achieved in two main ways – the damming and enlargement of small streams to create the impression of a much larger river flowing through the park, or, where this was not possible, the creation of an entirely new artificial lake. The first development of irregular water features in the landscape were the two lakes of Stowe, remodeled in a 'naturalistic' shape while Brown served as head gardener from 1741-51.

In this period, the use of architecture around designed water in the landscape also held a primarily aesthetic function, rather than a practical one. In 1744, a Palladian bridge was added at Stowe to

complement the new form of the lake. Not only did the architecture contrast with the naturalistic shapes of water features, but the addition of a bridge could help the illusion that a stream, already dammed and expanded, was a great river. Perhaps the most famous example of such a feature is the sham bridge at Kenwood House, built by Robert Adam (1728-92) in 1767.

While in the later 18th century the design principles instigated by Brown were maintained, there arose a new emphasis on recreational as well as aesthetic enjoyment of water in the landscape. Architecturally, two main buildings can be associated with water features of the time: the fishing pavilion and the boathouse.

The finest surviving example of a fishing pavilion was designed by Robert Adam, in the form of a classical temple, for Kedleston Hall in 1770. The primary function was to serve as a space from which to enjoy the surrounding landscape – a departure from previous ideals of water features as a part of the middle distance – and was centred on a large dining space with views across the lake, and onto the parkland and house. The pavilion did provide facilities for fishing, a cold plunge bath, and two integral boathouses, showing that there was some appetite for recreation on the created lake, as well as aesthetic enjoyment from it.



Temple Pool, Enville Hall

The boathouse, by contrast, can broadly be seen as the next development of the use of designed water features. Here, the emphasis was placed more on the recreational enjoyment of the lake itself, rather than aesthetics either of or from a pavilion adjacent to the lake. Views of the water were still important (as was the Brownian placement of the water feature in the middle distance), but a boat in use on a functioning lake could also make an ornamental contribution. The architect and landscape designer most responsible for this movement towards the recreational use of water, and accompanying construction of boathouses, was Humphry Repton (1752-1818).

Repton, succeeded by his sons John Adey Repton and George Stanley Repton, built boathouses of a variety of forms and practicalities throughout the country. The most impressive early boathouse examples follow a similar pattern to Adam's Fishing Pavilion, with the Temple Pool boathouse at Enville Hall – likely by Sanderson Miller (c. 1769) – a good example of the joint use of these functional spaces as follies and ornaments. In a watercolour view across Temple Pool, looking on to Enville behind, a relatively large boat takes up much of the small artificial lake, anchored by the boathouse in the corner. In a marked change from the earliest designed water features under Brown, here the recreational use of the water itself has become almost as important as its position in the landscape.

Repton's boathouses also followed the tradition of grand (largely stone) buildings, either in a Classical or Gothic style, shown in his grand plans for Hooton Park (1802), with a large building combining boating and bathing to rival Adam's Fishing Pavilion. Repton's designed lakes and accompanying recreational buildings were adaptable, however, and a fishing cottage at Holkham, Norfolk was suggested to resemble traditional fishing huts of the banks of the Severn, while his boathouse for Sarsden Park (near Wootton), for which he also designed the lake, was constructed in the Classical style, but from wood, not stone.

In the 19th century, architects and landscape designers drew on both the principles of Brown and Repton when incorporating water into gardens or parkland. Water features were fundamentally part of the naturalised landscape but could be emphasised with a folly or eyecatcher. In the case of Keeper's Farm, Moreton Cum Alcumlow, a lake was added in the 19th century around an 18th century folly created with remnants of the destroyed hall (and a boathouse converted too). Increasingly however, the recreational potential of water features became important, to the extent that the design of boathouses shifted from their grander 18th century origins, exemplified by Adam's Pavilion, towards less eye-catching forms, often very small.



Middle Pond Boathouse, Woodchester Park

The 19th century boathouse at Woodchester Park, Gloucestershire – possibly designed by John Aday Repton – provides a good example of a this less grand form of architecture. Situated on the corner of ‘Middle Pond’, part of a series of three relatively small, designed lakes, the cottage-like structure is decorated, but simple. The boathouse has room for one boat at water level, with a single first floor room with fireplace, from which to enjoy the lake, above. The ponds of Woodchester still played an important role in the designed landscape, but the recreational architecture of the boathouse had evolved to become more discrete. The boathouse, in a variety of forms, evolved in the 19th century into a more practical summerhouse as much as an aesthetic folly, and similar examples can be found into the 20th century.

WOOTTON PLACE

In the case of Wootton Place, the large artificial water feature does not feature in historic maps but is in character with the landscape

work completed under W.B. Lee c. 1840. The current form, somewhere between a pond and a river, was likely designed to be read across the small parkland as a body of water in the middle distance. It would not have been unusual in the 19th century to further expand this into a boating lake, both to make the body of water itself more legible in the landscape, and for the purpose of recreation. The small size of the lake would not have been problematic for recreational use and fits with the greater Victorian principle of the rectory house as a miniature country estate.

The building of a boathouse from which to enjoy the water and views outwards would not have been unusual either, and the architectural principles of the structure – whether to contrast and highlight the body of water in the park as a grand folly, or to sit more discretely as a summer house, would have varied without fundamentally altering the nature of the designed water feature itself and its role in the landscape.



HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Significance is defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) as:

‘The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting’.

Placing the asset in its historical context and describing its characteristics and appearance is an important component of the evidence gathering exercise. This both informs our understanding of a site’s significance and the contribution of its setting to this significance.

As Historic England explains in ‘Conservation Principles’ (2008), understanding how a place has evolved and how different phases add to or detract from its significance is a part of that exercise. Heritage significance can be defined as using Evidential, Historical, Aesthetic and Communal Values.

- Evidential value (evidence of past human activity)
- Historical value (the association of the place with past people or events)
- Aesthetic value (sensory appreciation that may be designed or fortuitous)
- Communal value (meaning of a place for people who relate to it, this may well extend beyond the current users/owners).

To provide a broader context to assessing the heritage significance of Wootton Place, until 1948 Wootton Rectory, a brief history is provided of Rectories, their evolution and development. A brief history is also provided of lakes and ponds as landscape elements.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Wootton Place, the former Rectory House, through its location adjacent to St Mary's church, history, and architectural character embodies a range of values which are summarized in a statement of significance.

EVIDENTIAL:

The present Wootton Place, the former Rectory, provides significant evidence to help understand the economic and social considerations which influenced the development of house and site; a material record of the status of the historic living of Wootton as one of the richest in the country. The house today was constructed almost entirely in the 18th and 19th centuries, replacing a 17th century building on the site of the historic vicarage, rather than the original grand medieval rectory house, and as such incorporates no medieval fabric.

Instead, the economic and social status of the original owners, builders and occupiers: the fellows of New College, Oxford, are demonstrated in the two main phases of construction, and the laying out of park-like grounds, contributing to the present character as a large country residence. This new role was confirmed in 1943 when the property was eventually sold as a private dwelling, ending the site's centuries long relationship to the living of Wootton and St Mary's church.

Within the village of Wootton, the relative importance of the rectory house is materially evident in the northern driveway entrance, made possible by the purchase of land and removal of cottages with the help of New College in 1841, along with the realignment of the lane within Wootton from St Mary's church to Milford bridge.

HISTORICAL:

Wootton Place is historically significant as the site of Wootton's evolving rectory house. While most likely built directly on the site of a vicarage house built after 1277, adjacent to the church of St Mary, an earlier grand rectory hall had been built further south, below the present Home Farm (land which remained a part of the rectory until 1944) but had become dilapidated by the early 17th century. The present house replaced a more modest 17th century rectory and was built in two main phases: the eastern garden front in the mid-18th century, and the remainder of the house and impressive grounds in the 19th century. This historical continuum illustrates the social and economic life and changing circumstances of the succession of Wootton's rectors who occupied the site, extending and adapting the rectory house to reflect the wealth and status of the living.

Wootton Place's association with the wealthy living of Wootton is in itself historically significant. Following the purchase of the advowson by Dr. Robert Pinck of New College, Oxford in 1642, the rectory had an extended association with the college, also of historical significance. Fellows were appointed as rectors to the village, and were incumbent at Wootton Place, until the house's sale as a private dwelling in 1943.

ARCHITECTURAL/AESTHETIC:

As an architecturally significant example of a stone Cotswold former Rectory house of the mid-18th and 19th centuries, two storey with attics. The exterior of Wootton Place, including the large walled garden to the north and park-like grounds, appears today largely preserved from W. B. Lee's alterations in the mid-19th century; an aesthetically pleasing example of a large Victorian country Rectory house with clear Georgian foundations.

The garden front to the east, built by John Cary in 1756-64, is the oldest surviving material on site, unaltered by Lee, although the south front was rebuilt as the house was extended west, and the conservatory to the north end added after his building program began in 1842. While the resulting house is externally coherent, the internal main hall was widened in the 20th century, and historic internal detailing and mouldings have not been well preserved.

The walled garden north of the house is aesthetically significant in its own right and for its contribution to the setting of the house. Built by W. B. Lee to replace an earlier example, is in good condition. The remainder of the grounds, laid out by Lee and his predecessor – his uncle Lancelot Charles Lee – are deliberately designed as parkland in the style of Capability Brown, intended to contrast with the large walled garden and house. The large driveway, approaching the house through these grounds – curating long views across the park – was rerouted in 2007 to run through the centre of the parkland.

Within the park, the cricket pitch and pavilion are modern additions, and the artificial lake does not appear on maps of the grounds in the 19th century. The latter, however, has been designed to fit with the Brownian ideal of a water feature in the middle-distance; a feature to be looked across between grand house and park, and works well within Lee's vision for Wootton Place as a country house in cultivated parkland.

The house, wall and grounds make a significant aesthetic contribution to the Wootton Conservation Area, even while the house itself is removed from public view by walls and trees. From within the grounds, there is a visual relationship between the house and the adjoining St Mary's church, visible above the northern walled garden from the main east lawn and lake.

COMMUNAL:

The positioning of Wootton Place, adjacent to St Mary's church, clearly indicates the historic role the site played (as both vicarage and rectory) as a religious residence of high status in the village. Significantly, this position held particular importance at Wootton – one of the wealthiest livings in the country in the medieval period – and the rectory house has traditionally been the most significant secular property of Wootton as well. The large house today instils a sense of identity as a grand country Rectory house, as built by the wealth of the living, but integral to the village as the historic rectory house.

NATIONAL AND LOCAL HERITAGE POLICIES, GUIDANCE AND ADVICE

Wootton Place and attached wall and stable are included in the National Heritage List for England, grade II, and lies within the Wootton Conservation Area, and accordingly is a 'heritage asset'. The following policies, guidelines, and advice are relevant.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Conservation principles, policy and practice seek to preserve and enhance the value of heritage assets. With the issuing of the National Planning Policy Framework, the Government has re-affirmed its aim that the historic environment and its heritage assets should be conserved and enjoyed for the quality of life they bring to this and future generations.

In relation to development affecting a designated heritage asset the NPPF states in paragraphs 199 and 200 that:

'When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.'

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

THE PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE (PPG)

This seeks to provide further advice on assessing the impact of proposals explaining that what matters in assessing the level of harm (if any) is the degree of impact on the significance of the asset. It states:

'In determining whether works to a listed building (or its setting) constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed.'

The NPPF explains in paragraphs 201 and 202 the differences between 'substantial' harm and 'less than substantial' harm, advising that any harm should be justified by the public benefit of a proposal.

In cases where there is less than substantial harm, paragraph 202 states:

'Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.'

The PPG also seeks to provide a clearer understanding of what constitutes 'public benefit', as it is the public benefit that flows from a development that can justify harm. In weighing the public benefits against potential harm, considerable weight and importance should be given to the desirability to preserve the setting of listed buildings.

Public benefits can flow from a variety of developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social, or environmental progress as described in the NPPF, paragraph 8.

They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and should not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits. It explains that public benefits can include heritage benefits, such as:

- Sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting.
- Reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset;
- Securing the optimum viable use for a heritage asset.

HISTORIC ENGLAND 'CONSERVATION PRINCIPLES' (2008)

Works of alteration, extension, or demolition need not involve any harmful impact and may be necessary to ensure a building has a viable future. Historic England explains its approach to managing the historic environment and how we experience places stating in its 'Conservation Principles' (April 2008) paragraph 88:

'Very few significant places can be maintained at either public or private expense unless they are capable of some beneficial use; nor would it be desirable, even if it were practical, for most places that people value to become solely memorials of the past'.

It also points out in paragraph 92:

'Retaining the authenticity of a place is not always achieved by retaining as much of the existing fabric as is technically possible'.

It also comments in paragraph 86:

'Keeping a significant place in use is likely to require continual adaptation and change; but provided such interventions respect the values of the place, they will tend to benefit public (heritage) as well as private interests in it. Many places now valued as part of the historic environment exist because of past patronage and private investment, and the work of successive generations often contributes to their significance. Owners and managers of significant places should not be discouraged from adding further layers of potential future interest and value, provided that recognised heritage values are not eroded or compromised in the process'.

Further, in relation to new works and alterations in paragraph 138 states:

New work or alteration to a significant place should normally be acceptable if:

- a. there is sufficient information comprehensively to understand the impacts of the proposal on the significance of the place.
- b. the proposal would not materially harm the values of the place, which, where appropriate, would be reinforced or further revealed.
- c. the proposals aspire to a quality of design and execution which may be valued now and in the future.

Amongst the Government's planning objectives for the historic environment is that conservation decisions are properly informed.

HISTORIC ENGLAND'S 'GOOD PRACTICE ADVICE NOTES 3: THE SETTING OF HERITAGE ASSETS'

Paragraph 19, of this practice note, explains that 'amongst the Government's planning policies for the historic environment is that conservation decisions are based on a proportionate assessment of the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal, including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset'.

From this summary of the national heritage management policy framework, it is clear that there is a complex assessment decision-making process to navigate when considering change within the historic environment.

Central to any decision is the recognition that history is not a static thing, and that the significance of our historic environment derives from a history of change.

S66 AND S72 PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS AND CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990

Section 66 of the Act requires local planning authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 72 of the Act requires that local planning authorities 'In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, [...] special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.'

There have been a number of Court of Appeal decisions which have provided interpretations of the requirements of these sections.

In the Court of Appeal, *Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Ltd v East Northants District Council*, English Heritage and National Trust,

[2015] 1 W.L.R. 45, Sullivan L J made clear that to discharge this responsibility means that decision makers must give considerable importance and weight to the desirability of preserving the setting of listed buildings when carrying out the balancing exercise (of judging harm against other planning considerations).

In *Jones v Mordue & Anor* [2016] 1 W.L.R. 2682 the Court of Appeal explains how decision makers can ensure this duty can be fulfilled: that by working through paragraphs 131 -134 of the NPPF, in accordance with their terms a decision maker will have complied with the duty under sections 16, 66(1) and 72. This report follows this advice to ensure consistency with the duty to preserve or enhance.

In the Court of Appeal [*Catesby Estates v Steer and SSCLG*, 2018] the concept of setting was explored. In paragraph 15 of the judgement Justice Lindblom rehearses the Planning Inspector's considerations, commenting that the Inspector found it difficult to disassociate landscape impact from heritage impact. The focus of the judgement

is to determine the extent to which visual and historical relationships between places contribute to define the extent of setting. Three general conclusions are made:

- a) The decision maker needs to understand the setting of a designated heritage asset, even if it cannot be delineated exactly;
- b) There is no one prescriptive way to define an asset's setting
 - a balanced judgement needs to be made concentrating on the surroundings in which an asset is experienced and keeping in mind that those surroundings may change over time;
- c) The effect of a development on the setting of a heritage asset and whether that effect harms significance.

WEST OXFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN 2031

The following heritage policies in the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 are relevant.

POLICY EH9: Historic environment

All development proposals should conserve and/or enhance the special character, appearance and distinctiveness of West Oxfordshire's historic environment, including the significance of the District's heritage assets, in a manner appropriate to their historic character and significance and in a viable use that is consistent with their conservation, in accordance with national legislation, policy and guidance for the historic environment. In determining applications, great weight and importance will be given to conserving and/or enhancing the significance of designated heritage assets, including:

- the outstanding universal values for which Blenheim Palace and Park is inscribed as a World Heritage Site (WHS), as guided by its WHS Management Plan (see also Policy EW9);

- the special architectural and historic interest of Listed Buildings, with regard to their character, fabric and their settings;
- the special architectural and historic interest, character and/or appearance of the District's Conservation Areas and their settings, including the contribution their surroundings make to their physical, visual and historic significance;
- the special archaeological and historic interest of nationally important monuments (whether Scheduled or not), both with regard to their fabric and their settings;
- the special cultural, architectural and historic interest of Registered Parks and Gardens, including the contribution their surroundings make to their physical, visual and historical significance.

Significant weight will also be given to the local and regional value of non-designated heritage assets, including non-listed vernacular buildings (such as traditional agricultural buildings, chapels and mills), together with archaeological monuments that make a significant contribution to the District's historic environment.

All applications which affect, or have the potential to affect, heritage assets will be expected to:

- a) use appropriate expertise to describe the significance of the assets, their setting and historic landscape context of the application site, at a level of detail proportionate to the historic significance of the asset or area, using recognised methodologies and, if necessary, original survey. This shall be sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on the asset's historic, architectural and archaeological features, significance and character;
- b) demonstrate that the proposal would, in order of preference:
 - avoid adverse impacts on the significance of the asset(s) (including those arising from changes to their settings) and, wherever possible, enhance or better reveal the significance of the asset(s);
 - minimise any unavoidable and justified (by the public benefits that would accrue from the proposed development – see below) adverse impacts and mitigate those impacts in a manner proportionate to the significance of the asset(s) and the nature and level of the impact, investigate and record changes to or loss of physical fabric, features, objects or other remains and make the results publicly available.
- c) demonstrate that any new development that would result in the unavoidable and justified loss of all or part of a heritage asset would proceed within a reasonable and agreed timetable that makes allowance for all necessary safeguarding and recording of fabric and other remains, including contingencies for unexpected discoveries.

DESIGNATED ASSETS

Proposals which would harm the significance of a designated asset will not be approved, unless there is a clear and convincing justification in the form of substantive tangible public benefits that clearly and convincingly outweigh the harm, using the balancing principles set out in national policy and guidance.

Non-designated heritage assets

When considering proposals that affect, directly or indirectly, the significance of non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be made having regard to:

- the scale of any harm or loss;
- the significance of the heritage asset; and
- the public benefits of the development. If it is determined through the relevant evidence that currently non-designated buildings, structures, historic landscapes or archaeology are of national significance, those elements of this policy for designated heritage assets will apply.

RECORD AND ADVANCE UNDERSTANDING

Where development that would result in substantial harm to or loss of the significance of a heritage asset is permitted, developers will be required to record and advance understanding of the significance of that asset, in a manner appropriate to the nature of the asset, its importance and the impact, and publish that evidence and make it publicly accessible. *

*(For the avoidance of doubt, the ability to mitigate loss of significance through investigation and recording will not contribute to the balancing judgement of whether such a loss is justifiable under this policy.)

POLICY EH10: Conservation areas

Proposals for development in a Conservation Area or affecting the setting of a Conservation Area will be permitted where it can be shown to conserve or enhance the special interest, character, appearance and setting, specifically provided that:

- the location, form, scale, massing, density, height, layout, landscaping, use, alignment and external appearance of the development conserves or enhances the special historic or architectural interest, character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
- the development conserves or enhances the setting of the Conservation Area and is not detrimental to views within, into or out of the Area;



- the proposals are sympathetic to the original curtilage and pattern of development and to important green spaces, such as paddocks, greens and gardens, and other gaps or spaces between buildings and the historic street pattern which make a positive contribution to the character in the Conservation Area;
- the wider social and environmental effects generated by the development are compatible with the existing character and appearance of the Conservation Area; and
- there would be no loss of, or harm to, any feature that makes a positive contribution to the special interest, character or appearance of the Conservation Area, unless the development would make an equal or greater contribution.

Applications for the demolition of a building in a Conservation Area will only be permitted where it has been demonstrated that:

- the building detracts from or does not make a positive contribution to the special interest, character or appearance of the Conservation Area; or
- the building is of no historic or architectural interest or is wholly beyond repair and is not capable of beneficial use; and
- any proposed replacement building makes an equal or greater contribution to the special interest, character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

Wherever possible the sympathetic restoration and re-use of buildings that make a positive contribution to the special interest, character and appearance of a Conservation Area will be encouraged, thereby preventing harm through the cumulative loss of features which are an asset to the Conservation Area.

POLICY EH11: Listed buildings

Proposals for additions or alterations to, or change of use of, a Listed Building (including partial demolition) or for development within the curtilage of, or affecting the setting of, a Listed Building, will be permitted where it can be shown to:

- conserve or enhance the special architectural or historic interest of the building's fabric, detailed features, appearance or character and setting;
- respect the building's historic curtilage or context or its value within a group and/or its setting, including its historic landscape or townscape context; and
- retain the special interest that justifies its designation through appropriate design that is sympathetic both to the Listed Building and its setting and that of any adjacent heritage assets in terms of siting, size, scale, height, alignment, materials and finishes (including colour and texture), design and form.



PROPOSALS

The proposals for Wootton Place from the Design and Access Statement produced by Michaelis Boyd comprise:

- Various internal alterations over three floors;
- The lowering of existing window openings on the west side of the house and installation of new glazed doors;
- The demolition and replacement of the 'Garden Room' extension to the north;
- The conversion of the stable block with new Crittall windows and doors installed;
- The demolition of the large modern Pool House within the Walled Garden, and construction of a new Treatment Room and Pool House;
- The conversion of the modern Cricket Pavilion to a kids club, involving the removal of the viewing terrace and WC extensions, and addition of a car port to the rear;
- The enlarging of the existing lake and addition of a single-storey boathouse.

Following pre-application consultation with the WODC Conservation Officer, amendments were made to the proposals in order to minimise or eliminate any harm to historic fabric or Wootton Place's heritage significance. The following gazetteer has been produced to show the areas of the house and outbuildings affected by the proposals, accompanied by an explanation of the most significant alterations, and detail of how the proposals have been adapted in response to the Conservation Officer's advice.



PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

Following consultation with West Oxfordshire District Council at a pre-application stage, the following comments and advice on the proposals were provided:

The proposed alterations to the main house appeared acceptable, with the primary affected areas either plain or modern fabric. In the case of the back hall space adjacent to the garden room, it was advised to retain a section of historic wall and openings previously proposed to be removed, and the proposals were altered accordingly.

The proposed new garden room was considered very contemporary, although clean in form, and it was advised to inset the room from the main elevation of the house. Following advice which recommended the omission of a balcony at first floor, the proposals were amended and considered acceptable.

The proposed new pool house would appear less prominent and more vernacular in form than the large existing pool house, and while the roof would be just visible over the garden wall, this would be

mitigated by its setting back a little from the wall, and use of natural stone tiles, and would therefore be considered supportable. The new treatment room, of a modest height below the garden wall, would also be supportable.

The existing cricket pavilion was considered untidy in form, and the proposals to strip back the existing roof and wings and add a garage wing would be supported, with the increase in volume mitigated by the improvements in quality and form.

The proposed boathouse was considered contemporary in form, although clean, and was advised to be kept low lying. The amended proposal was considered acceptable, and the footprint of the new building accommodated by the large site.

The proposals detailed further below address the concerns raised during the pre-application process, and have been guided by the advice of the WODC Conservation officer, with the officers broadly satisfied with the amended proposals.

PHOTOGRAPHIC GAZETTEER

The gazetteer below provides an assessment of the impact of the proposals on the site's significance, explaining where the nature of the fabric holds significance or not.

Throughout the house, it is proposed to replace non-historical existing fireplaces with period appropriate examples. It is also proposed to apply new timber floor finishes (with herringbone timber flooring in the main rooms and planks to match in the secondary rooms) to replace the current modern timber floors. In both cases it is not considered that the proposals affect the heritage significance of Wootton Place.

GROUND FLOOR

1. Morning Room



North wall of morning room adjoining kitchen, non-historic partition

Proposal:

To remove modern joinery and widen the opening between the kitchen and morning room.

Impact:

The way the ground floor is laid out and operates has changed over time and the designed segregation between service and principal rooms no longer exists. Historic buildings need to adapt to meet changing needs and what is proposed is a reflection of the way the building has evolved. The layout of the two rooms has already changed and the introduction of a doorway through the central arch is a logical approach that responds to the architecture of the front room and the changed role of the room behind. Furthermore, the existing arrangement of doors is clumsy and undermines the architecture of the room. This will be resolved as a part of this element of the scheme.



South wall of kitchen adjoining morning room, non-historic partition. The flue from the aga diverts through the wall, and no fireplace or chimney would be affected by the partition's removal



Non-historic fireplace in north wall

Proposal:

New period appropriate fireplace to replace non-historical existing fireplace

Impact:

None

GROUND FLOOR

2. Kitchen



East-facing windows to terrace



External view of terrace and west-side kitchen windows

Proposal:

To lower the existing window openings and to install new glazed wood panelled doors to provide access to the terrace.

Impact:

Planning records at WODC show that one of these openings was historically a doorway, which has been altered to form a window to match the adjacent one. In both cases, the historic window fabric has been replaced by modern joinery, installed after the post-1990 works.

This elevation has changed as the use of the space within has changed. Making sure that optimal use of the whole building is ensured and reflecting how the house is currently used and connects

with the external space informs this element of the proposals. The room is no longer a 'service room'. It will be part of the principal living spaces. In the same way that the sash windows on the east side are low to connect with the garden so is this proposal a reflection of that connection. The significance of this elevation is in illustrating how the use of the building has changed, evidenced in the external alterations made. The proposals would continue that theme, but working within the constraints of the existing openings so that the evidence of former openings is not lost. It is not a principal elevation and has no deliberate symmetry that would be affected by the proposals. Any harm that this may involve can be mitigated by record.

GROUND FLOOR

2. kitchen



Single door to back hall

Proposal:

Existing single door to be relocated and enlarged

Impact:

The proposal involves an alteration to a modern partition wall and as such is not considered to impact on significance.

3. Back Kitchen



Current back kitchen

Proposal:

Existing non-historical built-in kitchen units to be removed and fireplace reinstated to historical location behind oven

Impact:

None

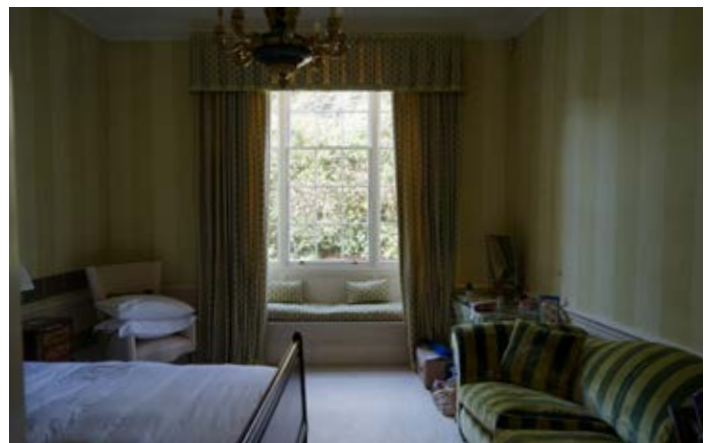
Proposal:

New single door opening to back hall

Impact:

This wall has historically been altered to incorporate kitchen units, with the 1990 plans showing an opening here. The new opening would therefore not impact on historic fabric or significance.

4. Bedroom



East-facing bedroom on ground floor

Proposal:

New back of house kitchen units to be installed

Impact:

None

GROUND FLOOR

5. Sitting Room



Non-historic fireplace in south wall

Proposal:

New period appropriate fireplace to replace non-historical existing fireplace

Impact:

None

6. Dining Room



Non-historic fireplace in north wall

Proposal:

New period appropriate fireplace to replace non-historical existing fireplace

Impact:

None



Non-historic fireplace in north wall

Proposal:

New period appropriate fireplace to replace non-historical existing fireplace

Impact:

None



West wall of dining room

Proposal:

New kitchen joinery to be installed

Impact:

None

GROUND FLOOR

6. Dining Room



North wall of dining room

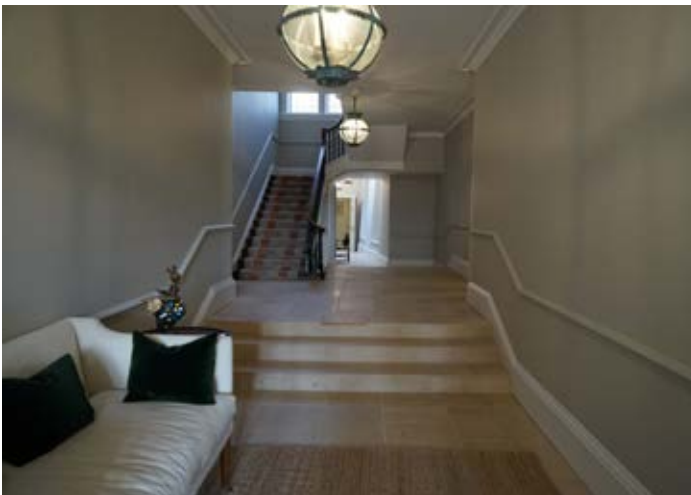
Proposal:

New timber floor finishes throughout to main rooms

Impact:

None

7. Hall



Modern central hallway

Proposal:

New stone floor finishes, comprising grey and white marbles in a checkerboard pattern

Impact:

None

8. Back Hall Space



West door of garden room leading to back hall (right-hand side), and door to boiler room (left-hand side)

Proposal:

New stone floor finishes, comprising grey and white marbles in a checkerboard pattern.

Impact:

None

Proposal:

To reconfigure the central area of the house behind the single storey extension

Impact:

Following consultation with the WODC Conservation Officer, concerns were raised over the loss of historic fabric on the ground floor where the new garden room extends back into the house. In response, proposals have been altered to retain this historic wall.

This is a remnant of a former range, for which consent was granted to remove all but this spine wall. It represents surviving historic fabric but interpretation of it (and thus its level of significance) is compromised by previous alterations. In any event concern of WODC is addressed by retention of evidence of the wall.

GROUND FLOOR

9. Garden Room Extension



Internal view of 2007 garden room extension

10. Stable Block



North wall of converted stable block sitting room



External east elevation showing 2007 garden room extension



Proposed new opening in north dividing wall of converted stable block sitting room



External north elevation showing 2007 garden room extension

Proposal:

For a new contemporary garden room extension.

Impact:

Following consultation with the WODC Conservation Officer, the proposals for the new garden room have been altered. Concern about the visual intrusion of the balustrade and associated roof structure to serve as an external space has been resolved by removing that element of the proposals, creating a cleaner roof profile.

Proposal:

New openings to stable block dividing wall

Impact:

The proposed openings in the stable block dividing walls affect plain walling, and would not impact on the legibility of the converted stable block, therefore the impact on significance would be minimal.

GROUND FLOOR

10. Stable Block



External view of stable block east wall

Proposal:

New Crittall door opening beneath pictured wooden lintels

Impact:

On inspection with the WODC Conservation Officer, the wall fabric here appears already disturbed, and the proposed insertion of a door opening would have a minimal impact on significance.

Proposal:

Existing timber window (to the right-hand side of picture, obscured by foliage) to be replaced with Crittall window

Impact:

None

Internal alteration to central two stable spaces:**Proposal:**

New steps and raised floor area to address change in level to Rill Garden

Impact:

None

11. Alteration to Courtyard Front



View of service yard to the north-west of the main house, stable range to the left-hand side, cottage to the right

Proposal:

New Crittall door to be installed behind existing shutters

Impact:

None

Alteration to adjoining unconverted stable:**Proposal:**

Existing stables to be made good and new bedroom and ensuite carefully installed

Impact:

None

12. Cottage

Larder:**Proposal:**

Existing non-historical kitchen units to be removed. New gym and WC to be installed. New floor finish

Bedroom:**Proposal:**

Existing guest accommodation to be refurbished. New floor finish

FIRST FLOOR

13. Northern East-facing Bedroom



Non-historic partition, with door to hallway on left-hand side

Proposal:

Existing door to hallway to be relocated within existing opening in wall, following removal of partition

Impact:

The proposal affects a modern alteration to the original scheme, and as such does not impact on significance, this is discussed further below.



Non-historic ensuite behind modern partition

Proposal:

Existing non-historical ensuite to be removed

Impact:

None

Proposal:

To alter the plan form and partition walls of the first floor hall and bedrooms

Impact:

Following consultation with the WODC Conservation Officer, assurances were sought that the existing first floor walls proposed to be altered were not historic, or plaster and lathe. The plan form of the building at ground and upper levels has been changed (See Appendix). This reflects changing patterns of use and changing needs of contemporary society. The main hallway has been foreshortened by the insertion of a partition wall. There would be a benefit to remove this and to reinstate a greater sense of scale to the hallway. To deliver this benefit requires adaptation to the existing ensuite, which is modern. It is considered that the hallway would have been open to the window at the end with the two end rooms accessed off that hallway.



South wall of bedroom, featuring a non-historic fireplace

Proposal:

New period appropriate fireplace to replace non-historical existing fireplace

Impact:

None

Proposal:

New timber floor finishes throughout to main rooms

Impact:

None

Proposal:

New door opening in wall to access new ensuite (behind left-hand wardrobe)

Impact:

The proposed opening here would be through plain fabric, considered an acceptable impact on significance.

FIRST FLOOR

14. Central East-facing Room (Master Living Room)



North wall of current master living room

Proposal:

Room to become new ensuite with new partitions and fittings

Impact:

None

Further Proposals:

Western wall of room (adjoining hallway):

Proposal:

New partition and infilling of doorways, alterations to dressing room and hallway behind

Proposal:

Existing non-historical dressing room to be demolished and new door installed (from enlarged hall)

Impact:

As above this is an altered part of the first floor. However, it is likely that the existing doorway to the ensuite is in an original position. The proposed alteration is desirable as it facilitates the other changes which would improve the spatial qualities of the hall.

Non-historic southern partition:**Proposal:**

New door opening in partition (providing access to new dressing room/current master bedroom)

Impact:

None

15. Current Master Bedroom



West wall of current master bedroom with ensuite behind

Proposal:

Existing bathroom reconfigured and new access and dressing area created. Existing doorway to bathroom infilled, alcove behind bed opened to create new doorway to 'Snore Room'

Impact:

The reconfigurations to the existing bathroom are considered to have no impact on significance. In the case of the proposed new doorway, this would be created through an existing alcove, itself shown to have been a doorway on the 1990 plans, as such it would also have no impact on significance.



South wall featuring non-historic fireplace

Proposal:

New period appropriate fireplace to replace non-historical existing fireplace

Impact:

None

FIRST FLOOR

16. South-west Bedroom



East wall of southern west-side bedroom

Proposal:

New opening in wall to access reconfigured bathroom to east

Impact:

The proposed opening here would be through plain fabric, considered an acceptable impact on significance.

17. Dressing Room



South wall featuring doorway to bedroom

Proposal:

Doorway to bedroom to be blocked

Impact:

None



West wall featuring non-historic fireplace

Proposal:

New period appropriate fireplace to replace non-historical existing fireplace

Impact:

None



Non-historic fireplace in south-west corner of dressing room

Proposal:

New period appropriate fireplace to replace non-historical existing fireplace

Impact:

None

FIRST FLOOR

18. North-western Bedroom/Hall



Recessed doorway to northern west-side bedroom

Proposal:

New partition across hall and door to hallway

Proposal:

Existing door opening and steps to be relocated more centrally in wall. New built-in joinery to bedroom

Impact:

This section was inspected with the WODC Conservation Officer, who was satisfied that the joinery of the existing door was modern, and the new wall opening would be through plain walling. Together with the proposed new partition across the corridor, the proposals are considered to have a minimal impact on significance.

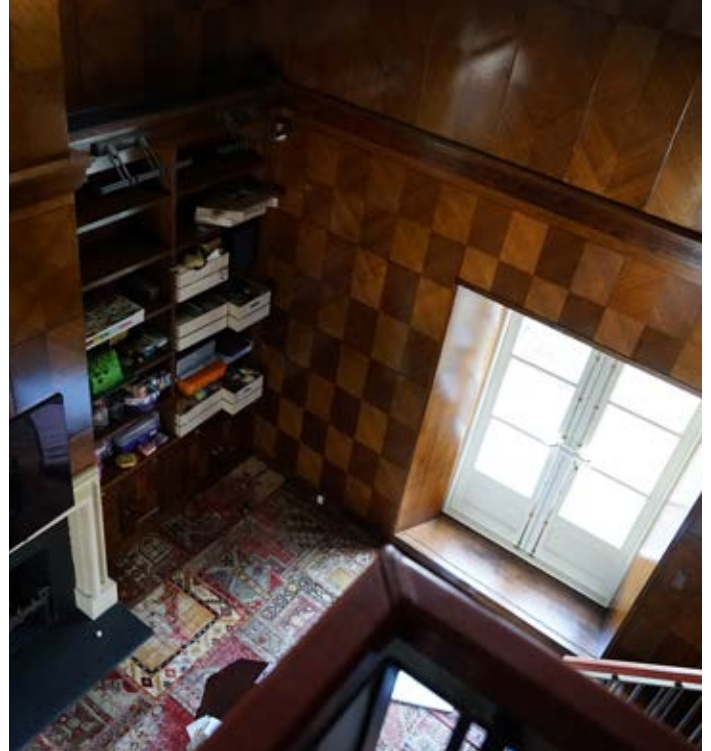
Further Proposal to new Suite:**Proposal:**

Existing bathroom to be refurbished

Impact:

None

19. Mezzanine above converted Stable-Block



View into converted stable-block sitting room from mezzanine level

Proposal:

Existing mezzanine level to be removed and access from hallway to be infilled

Impact:

The mezzanine level and opening are non-historic and their removal would not impact on significance.

20. Lift Core

Proposal:

New WC within existing lift core

Impact:

None

SECOND FLOOR

21. East Bedroom



Eastern wall adjoining corridor with built-in wardrobe

Proposal:

Existing non-historical joinery to be removed and new built-in wardrobe installed

Impact:

None

Proposal:

Door to bedroom to be relocated (to behind wardrobe)

Impact:

The proposal involves an alteration to a modern partition wall and as such is not considered to impact on significance.

22. Central Sitting Room/Bedroom



Central sitting room with adjoining bedroom behind, and door to ensuite to the right-hand side

Proposal:

Existing partition to be relocated and existing ensuite to be enlarged

Proposal: New built-in wardrobe to be installed

Impact:

The proposal involves an alteration to a modern partition wall and as such is not considered to impact on significance.

Proposal:

New built-in wardrobe to be installed

Impact:

None

Further Proposals to North-side Rooms:**Proposal:**

Existing shower room to be refurbished

Impact:

None

Proposal:

Existing built-in joinery to be removed (in both bedroom and sitting room)

Impact:

None

23. Landing

Proposal:

Existing flat section of ceiling to be removed and ceiling to be formed to follow roof pitch throughout at this level

Impact:

The proposal involves an alteration to a modern ceiling and is not considered to impact on significance.



Current doorway to hall (left-hand side) and doorway to ensuite

Proposal:

Existing ensuite to be enlarged and entrance door relocated

Impact:

The proposal involves an alteration to a modern partition wall and as such is not considered to impact on significance.

OUTBUILDINGS

24. Pool House and Walled Garden



View of walled garden to the north with indoor pool showing above



View of Indoor Pool to the south across Walled Garden

Proposal:

New outdoor pool and landscaping within walled garden

Impact:

None



South elevation of indoor pool, with pool house to left-hand side



View of internal south side of walled garden

Proposal:

New pool house with basement level plant room (on internal south side of walled garden)

Impact:

Following a consultation with the WODC Conservation Officer, it was suggested that the new pool house was pulled a little further away from the existing garden wall. It was agreed that this could be achieved with a larger box gutter detail, and this was incorporated into the proposals.

Historically, within and outside the productive walled garden it would be expected to find buildings that rely on the garden wall as a structural component. The language of the proposed new buildings follows this historic precedent and is given a deep box gutter to give definition to the junction and to emphasise the phases of change. Any view of the roof profile from farther afield would be entirely consistent with the cluster of buildings that currently sit to this rear 'service' area. The benefit of removing the existing swimming pool will enhance the view of the church tower in the background (and thus its setting).



East elevation of pool house, to north side of walled garden

Proposal:

Existing pool house and indoor pool to be demolished

Impact:

None

Proposal:

New single storey 'Treatment Room' (on same, west sided site as current pool house)

Impact:

The treatment room would be low-lying, considerably lower than the height of the walled garden, and would represent an improvement on the existing large modern buildings.

OUTBUILDINGS

24. Pool House and Walled Garden



External view of east side of walled garden

Proposal:

New opening and metal gates to garden wall (on east side)

Impact:

The creation of new access to the walled garden is necessary for connection to the garden, and considered an acceptable impact on significance.

25. Proposed Boathouse



View across lake towards church and walled garden from proposed boathouse site

Proposal:

Single storey boathouse with timber cladding

Impact:

Following consultation with the WODC Conservation Officer, who expressed a desire to reduce the size of the proposed boathouse, the proposed footprint of the boathouse has been reduced.

The heritage report discusses the nature and role of lakes and boathouses. The opportunity to provide a point of interest in the landscaped gardens – with the juxtaposition of water and building – is an exciting opportunity to add to the setting of the house. The building has been reduced in size so that it appears as a subsidiary element, rather than a dominant one.

26. Cricket Pavilion and Proposed Car Port



Rear (south) view of WC extension to cricket pavilion and approach from proposed driveway

Proposal:

New timber clad car port and storage rooms. Walls to storage rooms to be constructed with yellow bricks

26. Cricket Pavilion and Proposed Car Port



Front (north) view of cricket pavilion

Proposal:

Existing WC extension to be removed and cricket pavilion to be re-clad in contemporary styled timber cladding. Hipped roof to be updated to pitched roof with gable ends

Proposal:

To repurpose the cricket pavilion as kids club and car port

Impact:

Though the cricket pavilion was a relatively recent permitted development it is desirable to explore ways to reduce its volume and to group it with the proposed open fronted parking sheds. This helps to improve the appearance and setting of the group and ensures that the required parking area is successfully screened and absorbed within the landscaping structure of the gardens.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

Works of alteration, extension, or demolition need not involve any harmful impact and may be necessary to ensure a building has a viable future. Historic England explains its approach to managing the historic environment and how we experience places stating in 'Conservation Principles' (April 2008) paragraph 88:

'Very few significant places can be maintained at either public or private expense unless they are capable of some beneficial use; nor would it be desirable, even if it were practical, for most places that people value to become solely memorials of the past'.

It also comments in paragraph 86:

'Keeping a significant place in use is likely to **require continual adaptation and change; but provided such interventions respect the values of the place, they will tend to benefit public (heritage) as well as private interests in it.** Many places now valued as part of the historic environment exist because of past patronage and private investment, and the work of successive generations often contributes to their significance. **Owners and managers of significant places should not be discouraged from adding further layers of potential future interest and value, provided that recognised heritage values are not eroded or compromised in the process**'.

It is not considered that the proposed works of internal alterations, demolition and replacement of the modern garden room and pool house, conversion of the cricket pavilion and stable block, and addition of a single-storey boathouse harm the heritage significance of this grade II listed building.

If, however, the decision maker forms the view that aspects of the proposal will result in a less than substantial harm, then under the requirements of paragraphs 201 and 202 of the NPPF 'any harm has to be justified by the public benefit of a proposal'.

Public benefits can flow from a variety of developments and could be anything that delivers on the economic, social, and environmental objectives as described in the NPPF, paragraph 8.

They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and should not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public to be genuine public benefits. It explains that public benefits can include heritage benefits, such as:

- Sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting.
- Reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset.
- Securing the optimum viable use for a heritage asset.

JUSTIFICATION

The heritage significance of Wootton Place can be associated with the historic role of the house as the rectory of Wootton – one of the richest in the country – enabling the rectors of the 18th and 19th centuries, in association with New College, Oxford, to construct the current grand country Rectory house and park-like gardens. The site has held a relationship with the neighbouring church of St Mary since the early Middle Ages as the historical site of both vicarage and rectory, and this relationship is maintained today with views of the church from the house and gardens. Accordingly, the above proposed works represent a public benefit for their long-term investment in the preservation of Wootton Place as a heritage asset with strong connections to the surrounding village and Conservation Area of Wootton, upgrading the building so as to meet reasonable levels of comfort and amenity in order to sustain its future as a private residence.

Furthermore, direct heritage, and public, benefits will be made by the proposals in the following areas:

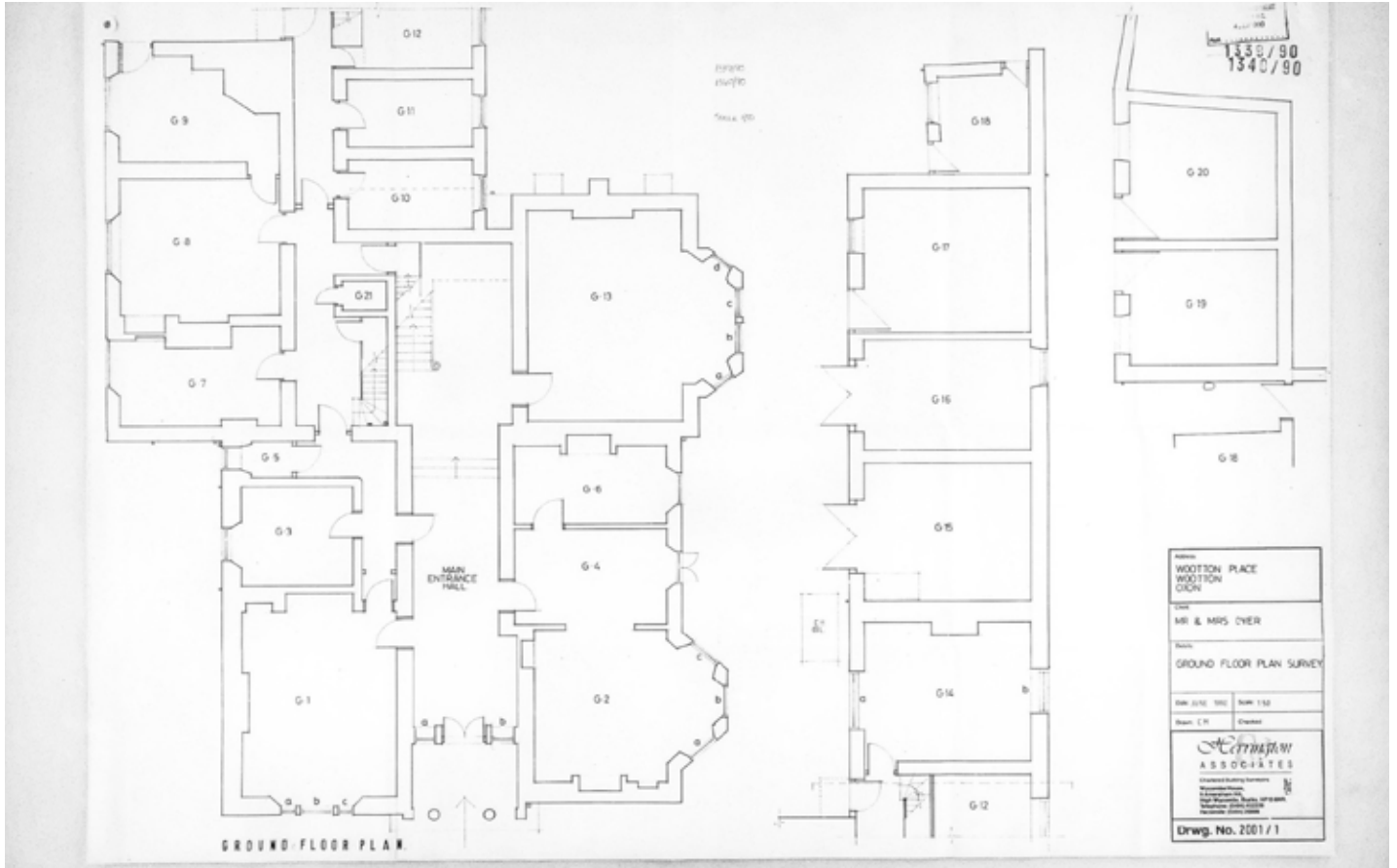
- The improved relationship with and views to St Mary's church from the house and gardens enabled by the removal of the modern indoor pool and pool house
- The improved spatial quality of the historic kitchen garden following the above buildings' removal
- The mitigation of aesthetic impact on the grounds caused by the modern cricket pavilion through its reduction in volume and conversion
- The addition of a low-lying boathouse, while modern, would contribute a point of interest in the grounds consistent with the original 19th century gardens, as explored in the above Heritage Report, and would provide a further position from which to enjoy views of the house and church together



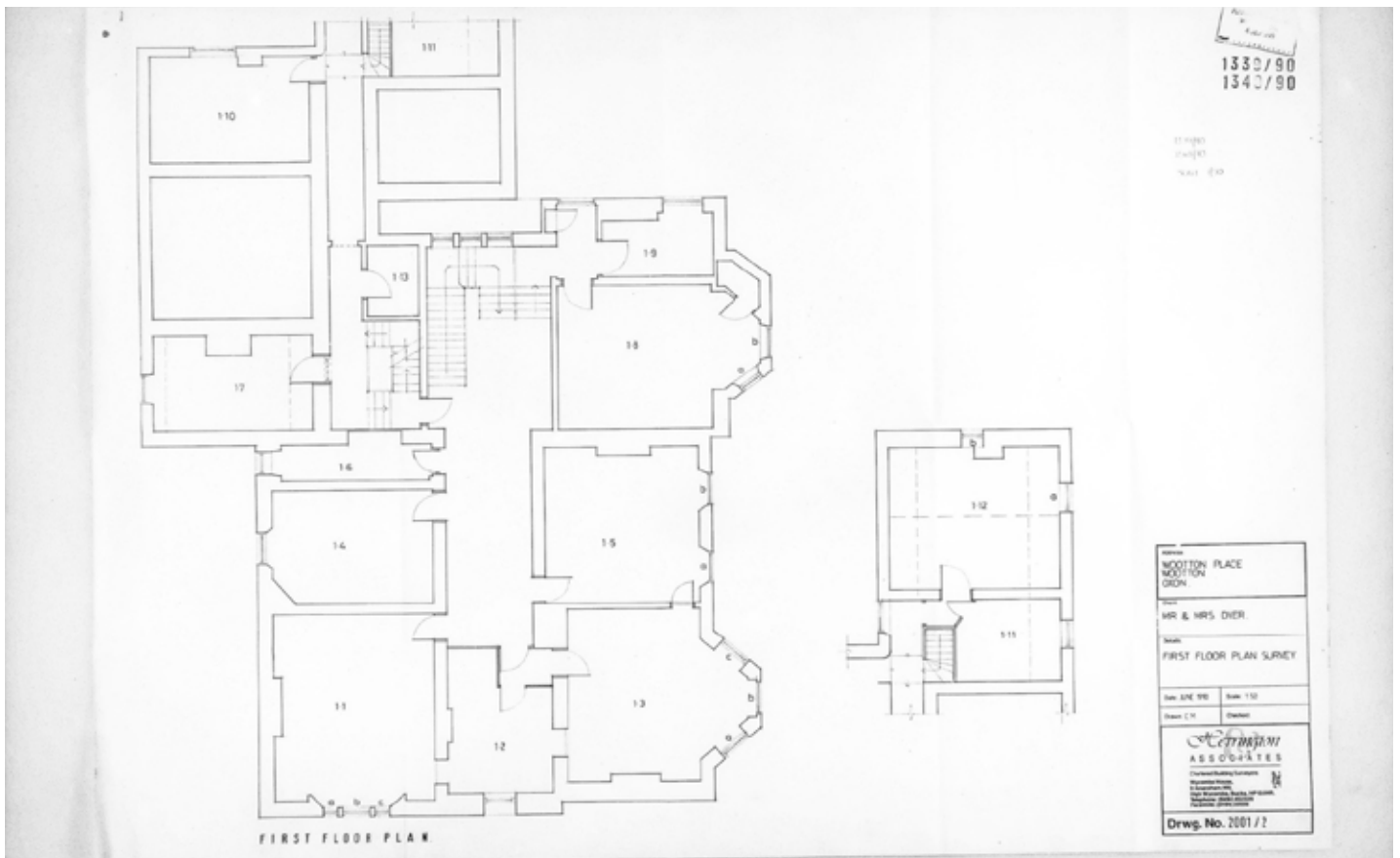
CONCLUSION

The proposal represents a holistic scheme that will upgrade the house and grounds of Wootton Place for modern family life. The evolution of the country house, constructed almost entirely in two phases of the 18th and 19th centuries, will remain clearly legible, and the evidential value of Wootton Place, as a material record of the wealthy historic living of Wootton, will be protected. The scheme will offer heritage and public benefits, removing poor modern interventions within the house, as well as modern outbuildings, and improving the visual relationship between the site and St Mary's church. Ultimately, the proposals represent an investment in the long term future of Wootton Place, securing a viable future for the property as a family home.

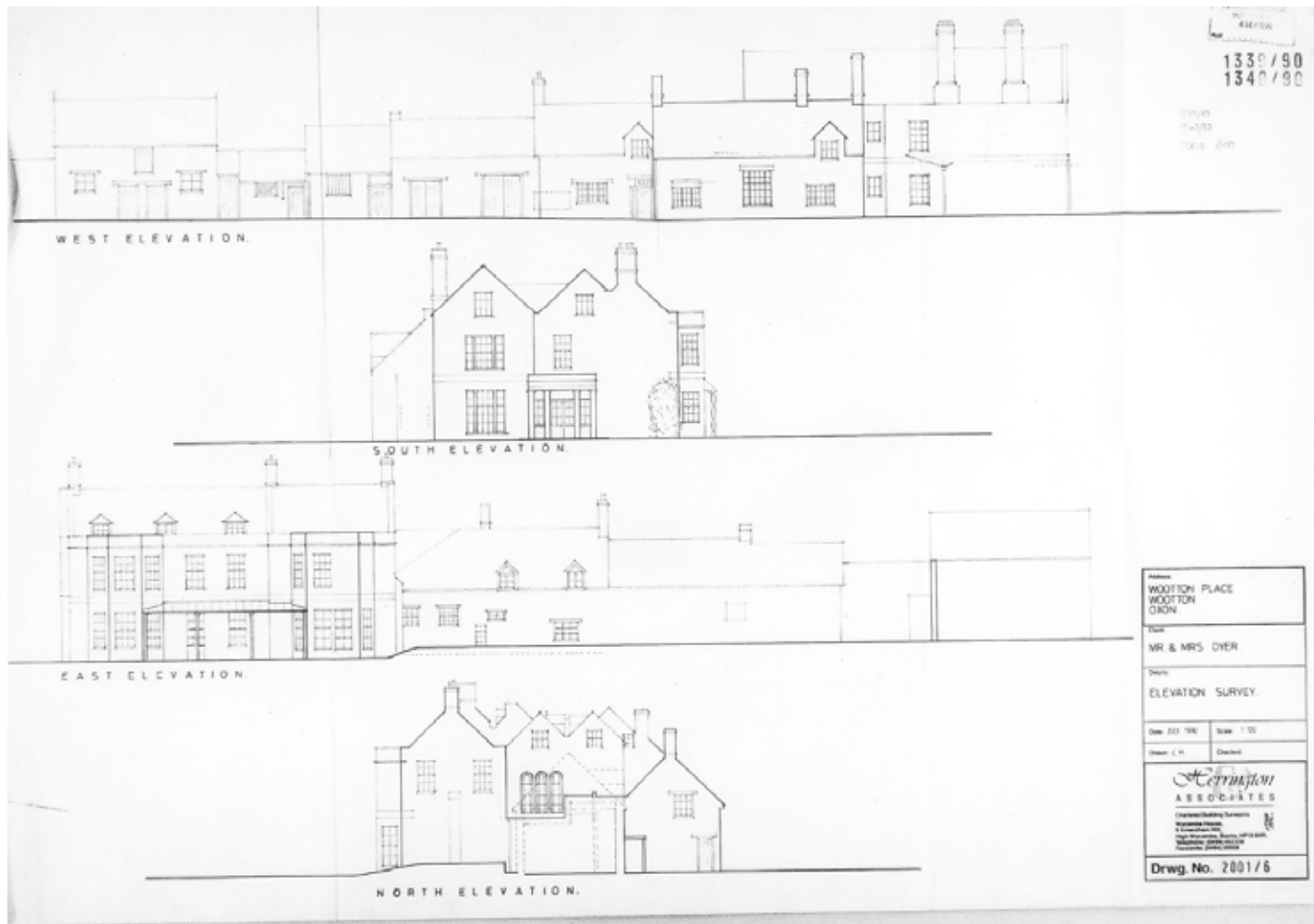
APPENDIX 1: 1990 EXISTING SURVEY PLANS PRE-ALTERATIONS



Ground Floor Plan Survey, 1990



First Floor Plan Survey, 1990



Elevations Survey, 1990