

**BDM Projects Ltd**  
January 2024



# **HERITAGE STATEMENT** **BELL FARM, WICKFORD**

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# Quality Assurance

<b>Site name:</b>	Bell Farm 207 London Road Wickford Essex SS12 0LG
<b>Client name:</b>	BDM Projects Ltd
<b>Type of report:</b>	Heritage Statement
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<b>Date</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> January 2024
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<b>Date</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> January 2024



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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Bidwells on behalf of BDM Projects Ltd to support applications for Listed Building Consent and Full Planning relating to alterations to Bell Farm, Wickford, hereafter called 'the site'.
- 1.2 The site is situated along the London Road, opposite the junction of Sugden Avenue, within approximately three quarters of a mile of Wickford town. Bell Farmhouse is a Grade II listed building.



Figure 1 - Aerial demonstrating the location of the site encircled in red (Google Earth)

- 1.3 This Heritage Statement includes a Significance Assessment which identifies the relative heritage value of the identified heritage assets and an Impact Assessment which considers the potential impact of the proposed development on the significance of the heritage assets identified, including the contribution made by setting. This approach to impact-assessment is required in order to satisfy the provisions of Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) where the impact of development on a heritage asset is being considered (Paragraphs 200-214).

### Authorship

- 1.4 This document has been prepared by Daniele Haynes MSc BA (Hons), Associate Heritage Consultant and reviewed by Sarah Burdis MSc, MA, BSc (Hons), Principal Heritage Consultant.



## 2.0 Methodology

### Heritage Assets

- 2.1 A heritage asset is defined within the National Planning Policy Framework as “a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing)” (NPPF Annex 2: Glossary).
- 2.2 ‘Designated’ assets have been identified under the relevant legislation and policy including, but not limited to: World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, and Conservation Areas. ‘Non-designated’ heritage assets are assets which fall below the national criteria for designation.
- 2.3 The absence of a national designation should not be taken to mean that an asset does not hold any heritage interest. The Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) states that “*non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets.*” (Paragraph: 039 Reference ID: 18a-039-20190723)
- 2.4 However, the PPG goes on to clarify that “a substantial majority of buildings have little or no heritage significance and thus do not constitute heritage assets. Only a minority have enough heritage significance to merit identification as non-designated heritage assets.”

### Meaning of Significance

- 2.5 The concept of significance was first expressed within the 1979 Burra Charter (Australia ICOMOS, 1979). This charter has periodically been updated to reflect the development of the theory and practice of cultural heritage management, with the current version having been adopted in 2013. It defines cultural significance as the “*aesthetic, historic, scientific, social or spiritual value for past, present or future generations. Cultural significance is embodied in the place itself, its fabric, setting, use, associations, meanings, records, related places and related objects. Places may have a range of values for different individuals or groups*” (Page 2, Article 1.2)
- 2.6 The NPPF (Annex 2: Glossary) also defines significance as “the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.”
- 2.7 The British Standards BS7913 (2013) notes that “the attributes that combine to define the significance of a historic building can relate to its physical properties or to its context. There are many different ways in which heritage values can be assessed.”
- 2.8 Significance can therefore be considered to be formed by a collection of values.

### Assessment of Significance

- 2.9 It is important to be proportionate in assessing significance as required in both national policy and guidance as set out in paragraph 200 of the NPPF.

- 2.10 The Historic England document ‘Conservation Principles’ states that “understanding a place and assessing its significance demands the application of a systematic and consistent process, which is appropriate and proportionate in scope and depth to the decision to be made, or the purpose of the assessment.”
- 2.11 The document goes on to set out a process for assessment of significance, but it does note that not all of the stages highlighted are applicable to all places/ assets.
- Understanding the fabric and evolution of the asset;
  - Identify who values the asset, and why they do so;
  - Relate identified heritage values to the fabric of the asset;
  - Consider the relative importance of those identified values;
  - Consider the contribution of associated objects and collections;
  - Consider the contribution made by setting and context;
  - Compare the place with other assets sharing similar values;
  - Articulate the significance of the asset.
- 2.12 At the core of this assessment is an understanding of the value/significance of a place. There have been numerous attempts to categorise the range of heritage values which contribute to an asset’s significance. Historic England’s ‘*Conservation Principles*’ sets out a grouping of values as follows:
- Evidential value** – *‘derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity...Physical remains of past human activity are the primary source of evidence about the substance and evolution of places, and of the people and cultures that made them...The ability to understand and interpret the evidence tends to be diminished in proportion to the extent of its removal or replacement.’* (Page 28)
- Aesthetic Value** – *‘Aesthetic values can be the result of the conscious design of a place, including artistic endeavour. Equally, they can be the seemingly fortuitous outcome of the way in which a place has evolved and been used over time. Many places combine these two aspects... Aesthetic values tend to be specific to a time cultural context and appreciation of them is not culturally exclusive’.* (Pages 30-31)
- Historic Value** – *‘derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be illustrative or associative... Association with a notable family, person, event, or movement gives historical value a particular resonance...The historical value of places depends upon both sound identification and direct experience of fabric or landscape that has survived from the past, but is not as easily diminished by change or partial replacement as evidential value. The authenticity of a place indeed often lies in visible evidence of change as a result of people responding to changing circumstances. Historical values are harmed only to the extent that adaptation has obliterated or concealed them, although completeness does tend to strengthen illustrative value’.* (Pages 28-30)
- Communal Value** – *“Commemorative and symbolic values reflect the meanings of a place for those who draw part of their identity from it, or have emotional links to it... Social value is associated with places that people perceive as a source of identity, distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence. Some may be comparatively modest, acquiring communal significance through the passage of time as a result of a collective memory of stories linked to them...They may relate to an activity that is associated with the place, rather than with its physical fabric...Spiritual value is*

*often associated with places sanctified by longstanding veneration or worship, or wild places with few obvious signs of modern life. Their value is generally dependent on the perceived survival of the historic fabric or character of the place, and can be extremely sensitive to modest changes to that character, particularly to the activities that happen there".* (Pages 31-32)

- 2.13 Historic England advice Note 12 notes that 'interest may be archeological, architectural, artistic or historic.
- 2.14 The British Standards set out a simpler approach which '*is to think of a historic building's significance as comprising individual heritage values*'. These could include townscape characteristics, artistic value, educational value and identity or belonging amongst others.
- 2.15 It is therefore clear that value-based assessment should be flexible in its application. It is important not to oversimplify an assessment and to acknowledge when an asset has a multi-layered value base, which is likely to reinforce its significance.

### **Contribution of setting/context to significance**

- 2.16 In addition to the above values, the setting of a heritage asset can also be a fundamental contributor to its significance - although it should be noted that 'setting' itself is not a designation. The value of setting lies in its contribution to the significance of an asset. For example, there may be instances where setting does not contribute to the significance of an asset at all.
- 2.17 Historic England's Conservation Principles defines setting as "an established concept that relates to the surroundings in which a place is experienced, its local context, embracing present and past relationships to the adjacent landscape."
- 2.18 It goes on to state that "context embraces any relationship between a place and other places. It can be, for example, cultural, intellectual, spatial or functional, so any one place can have a multi-layered context. The range of contextual relationships of a place will normally emerge from an understanding of its origins and evolution. Understanding context is particularly relevant to assessing whether a place has greater value for being part of a larger entity, or sharing characteristics with other places" (page 39).
- 2.19 In order to understand the role of setting and context to decision-making, it is important to have an understanding of the origins and evolution of an asset, to the extent that this understanding gives rise to significance in the present. Assessment of these values is not based solely on visual considerations but may lie in a deeper understanding of historic use, ownership, change or other cultural influence – all or any of which may have given rise to current circumstances and may hold a greater or lesser extent of significance.
- 2.20 The importance of setting depends entirely on the contribution it makes to the significance of the heritage asset or its appreciation. It is important to note that impacts that may arise to the setting of an asset do not, necessarily, result in direct or equivalent impacts to the significance of that asset(s).

### **Assessing Impact**

- 2.21 It is evident that the significance/value of any heritage asset(s) requires clear assessment to provide a context for, and to determine the impact of, development proposals. Impact on that value or significance is determined by first considering the sensitivity of the receptors identified which is best expressed by using a hierarchy of value levels.

- 2.22 There are a range of hierarchical systems for presenting the level of significance in use; however, the method chosen for this project is based on the established ‘James Semple Kerr method’ which has been adopted by Historic England, in combination with the impact assessment methodology for heritage assets within the *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges* (DMRB: HA208/13) published by the Highways Agency, Transport Scotland, the Welsh Assembly Government and the department for Regional Development Northern Ireland. This ‘value hierarchy’ has been subject to scrutiny in the UK planning system, including Inquiries, and is the only hierarchy to be published by a government department.
- 2.23 The first stage of our approach is to carry out a thoroughly-researched assessment of the significance of the heritage asset, in order to understand its value:

*Table 1 Assessment of Significance*

<b>SIGNIFICANCE</b>	<b>EXAMPLES</b>
<b>Very High</b>	World Heritage Sites, Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Conservation Areas of outstanding quality, or built assets of acknowledged exceptional or international importance, or assets which can contribute to international research objectives.  Registered Parks & Gardens, historic landscapes and townscapes of international sensitivity.
<b>High</b>	World Heritage Sites, Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas and built assets of high quality, or assets which can contribute to international and national research objectives.  Registered Parks & Gardens, historic landscapes and townscapes which are highly preserved with excellent coherence, integrity, time-depth, or other critical factor(s).
<b>Good</b>	Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas and built assets (including locally listed buildings and non-designated assets) with a strong character and integrity which can be shown to have good qualities in their fabric or historical association, or assets which can contribute to national research objectives.  Registered Parks & Gardens, historic landscapes and townscapes of good level of interest, quality and importance, or well preserved and exhibiting considerable coherence, integrity time-depth or other critical factor(s).
<b>Medium/ Moderate</b>	Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas and built assets (including locally listed buildings and non-designated assets) that can be shown to have moderate qualities in their fabric or historical association.  Registered Parks & Gardens, historic landscapes and townscapes with reasonable coherence, integrity, time-depth or other critical factor(s).
<b>Low</b>	Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and built assets (including locally listed buildings and non-designated assets) compromised by poor preservation integrity and/or low original level of quality of low survival of contextual associations but with potential to contribute to local research objectives.  Registered Parks & Gardens, historic landscapes and townscapes with modest sensitivity or whose sensitivity is limited by poor preservation, historic integrity and/or poor survival of contextual associations.
<b>Negligible</b>	Assets which are of such limited quality in their fabric or historical association that this is not appreciable.  Historic landscapes and townscapes of limited sensitivity, historic integrity and/or limited survival of contextual associations.
<b>Neutral/ None</b>	Assets with no surviving cultural heritage interest. Buildings of no architectural or historical note.



	Landscapes and townscape with no surviving legibility and/or contextual associations, or with no historic interest.
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2.24 Once the value/significance of an asset has been assessed, the next stage is to determine the assets 'sensitivity to change'. Table 2 sets out the levels of sensitivity to change, which is based upon the vulnerability of the asset, in part or as a whole, to loss of value through change. Sensitivity to change can be applied to individual elements of a building, or its setting, and may differ across the asset.

2.25 An asset's sensitivity level also relates to its capacity to absorb change, either change affecting the asset itself or change within its setting (remembering that, according to Historic England The Setting of Heritage Assets – Planning Note 3, 'change' does not in itself imply harm, and can be neutral, positive or negative in effect).

2.26 Some assets are more robust than others and have a greater capacity for change and therefore, even though substantial changes are proposed, their sensitivity to change or capacity to absorb change may still be assessed as low.

*Table 2 Assessment of Sensitivity*

SENSITIVITY	EXPLANATION OF SENSITIVITY
<b>High</b>	High Sensitivity to change occurs where a change may pose a major threat to a specific heritage value of the asset which would lead to substantial or total loss of heritage value.
<b>Moderate</b>	Moderate sensitivity to change occurs where a change may diminish the heritage value of an asset, or the ability to appreciate the heritage value of an asset.
<b>Low</b>	Low sensitivity to change occurs where a change may pose no appreciable threat to the heritage value of an asset.

2.27 Once there is an understanding of the sensitivity an asset holds, the next stage is to assess the 'magnitude' of the impact that any proposed works may have. Impacts may be considered to be adverse, beneficial or neutral in effect and can relate to direct physical impacts, impacts on its setting, or both. Impact on setting is measured in terms of the effect that the impact has on the significance of the asset itself – rather than setting itself being considered as the asset.

*Table 3 Assessment of Impact*

MAGNITUDE OF IMPACT	TYPICAL CRITERIA DESCRIPTORS
<b>Very High</b>	<p><b>Adverse:</b> Impacts will destroy cultural heritage assets resulting in their total loss or almost complete destruction.</p> <p><b>Beneficial:</b> The proposals would remove or successfully mitigate existing and significant damaging and discordant impacts on assets; allow for the substantial restoration or enhancement of characteristic features.</p>
<b>High</b>	<p><b>Adverse:</b> Impacts will damage cultural heritage assets; result in the loss of the asset's quality and integrity; cause severe damage to key characteristic features or elements; almost complete loss of setting and/or context of the asset. The assets integrity or setting is almost wholly destroyed or is severely compromised, such that the resource can no longer be appreciated or understood.</p> <p><b>Beneficial:</b> The proposals would remove or successfully mitigate existing damaging and discordant impacts on assets; allow for the restoration or enhancement of characteristic features; allow the substantial re-establishment of the integrity,</p>

	understanding and setting for an area or group of features; halt rapid degradation and/or erosion of the heritage resource, safeguarding substantial elements of the heritage resource.
<b>Medium</b>	<p><b>Adverse:</b> Moderate impact on the asset, but only partially affecting the integrity; partial loss of, or damage to, key characteristics, features or elements; substantially intrusive into the setting and/or would adversely impact upon the context of the asset; loss of the asset for community appreciation. The assets integrity or setting is damaged but not destroyed so understanding and appreciation is compromised.</p> <p><b>Beneficial:</b> Benefit to, or partial restoration of, key characteristics, features or elements; improvement of asset quality; degradation of the asset would be halted; the setting and/or context of the asset would be enhanced and understanding and appreciation is substantially improved; the asset would be brought into community use.</p>
<b>Minor/Low</b>	<p><b>Adverse:</b> Some measurable change in assets quality or vulnerability; minor loss of or alteration to, one (or maybe more) key characteristics, features or elements; change to the setting would not be overly intrusive or overly diminish the context; community use or understanding would be reduced. The assets integrity or setting is damaged but understanding and appreciation would only be diminished not compromised.</p> <p><b>Beneficial:</b> Minor benefit to, or partial restoration of, one (maybe more) key characteristics, features or elements; some beneficial impact on asset or a stabilisation of negative impacts; slight improvements to the context or setting of the site; community use or understanding and appreciation would be enhanced.</p>
<b>Negligible</b>	Barely discernible effect on baseline conditions but a slight adverse or beneficial impact.
<b>Neutral</b>	A change or effect which is neither adverse nor beneficial in impact.
<b>Nil</b>	No change in baseline conditions.

### Summary of Assessment

- 2.28 Overall, it is a balanced understanding of the foreseeable likely effect of proposals on significance as a result of predicted impacts which is being sought through undertaking this process. It should be clearly understood that the level of detail provided within these assessments is *“proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance”* as set out in Paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

### Research Methodology

- 2.29 This Heritage Statement is the result of a robust process which assesses relevant documentary research (including HER records, maps, drawings and reports, as well as, archive material where relevant) and professional judgment.



## 3.0 Historic Context

- 3.1 Historically, Wickford was a small agricultural community with few residents. Although there were two large estates in the area; the Manor of Wickford Hall, and the manor of Stilemans, the built form was predominantly modest farmhouses and cottages.
- 3.2 In 1832, the population was noted as only being 402; however, by the 20th century, particularly after WW2, the population increased rapidly to 50,000 as a result of homeless Londoners migrating to the countryside. Today, Wickford is largely a commuter community although it does retain elements of its historic plan form, particularly along the High Street.
- 3.3 Wickford appears to have been a linear settlement focused around the area of St Catherine's Church. The opening of the railway from London to Southend in 1889 brought about a shift of Wickford's population from the high ground near the Church to the lower ground around the High Street and the river. At this time, development started to move away from the High Street into the surrounding countryside and along the lanes and roads.

- 3.4 Development along London Road was predominantly occupied by dispersed farmhouses and associated buildings until the early 20th century when temporary prefabs started to be built after WW2. Today, development along London Road is a mixture of historic farmsteads and modern detached/semi-detached properties.



Figure 2 - Pre-fabricated properties in Wickford

### Historic development of Bell Farm

- 3.5 This section includes a review of available historic maps, planning history, archival documents and aerial images. An assessment of a selection of available historic maps has been undertaken to assist in the understanding of the site's growth and development. Although such information cannot be considered definitive, experience shows that the mapping is often relatively accurate and reliable, particularly the later Ordnance Survey maps, and can help to refine the history of the site when considered alongside written archival data and the physical evidence.

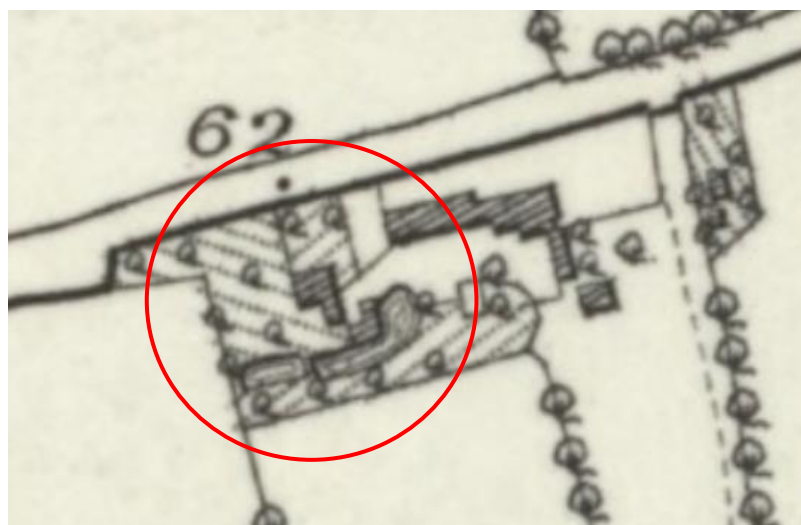


Figure 3 (approx. location of site highlighted in red) 1880 Ordnance Survey Six Inch Map - Bell Farmhouse to the west and a large complex of associated out-buildings to the east. There appears to be a division between the formal land to the front of the house and separate enclosure.



Figure 4 approx. location of site highlighted in red) 1898 Six Inch Ordnance Survey Map - Note the properties along London Road are predominantly dispersed farmsteads. The centre of Wickford is to the east.

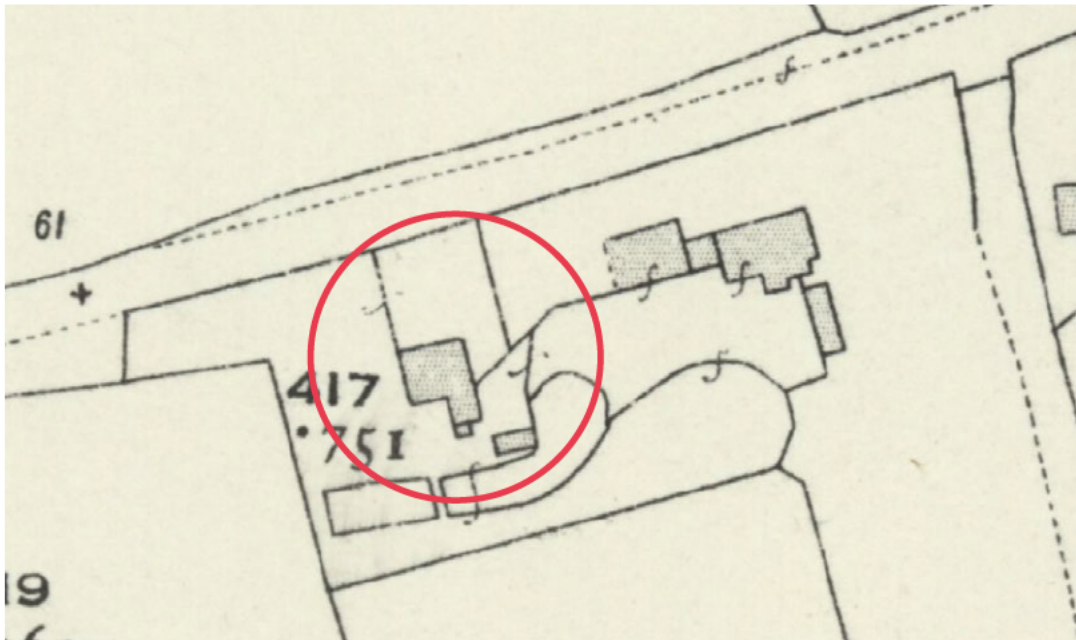


Figure 5 (approx. location of site highlighted in red) 1922 Six Inch Ordnance Survey map- the plot division has remained much the same however the western range of the outbuildings appears to have been demolished.

- 3.6 In 1924 Bell Farm was advertised for sale. The plan from the 1924 sales particulars shows the 'freehold building sites, Bell Farm Estate, Wickford, Essex'. This shows the house and agricultural buildings in the same layout as the 1922 OS map. It also shows the land to the east of the farm laid out for residential development, with 113 housing plots laid out to the south of London Road.



Figure 6 - (approx. location of site highlighted in red) 1939 25 Inch Ordnance Survey map- Again, the plot division has remained much the same however a large building has been erected in the far east of the farm site with its own rear enclosure. More development has taken place in the surrounding area.

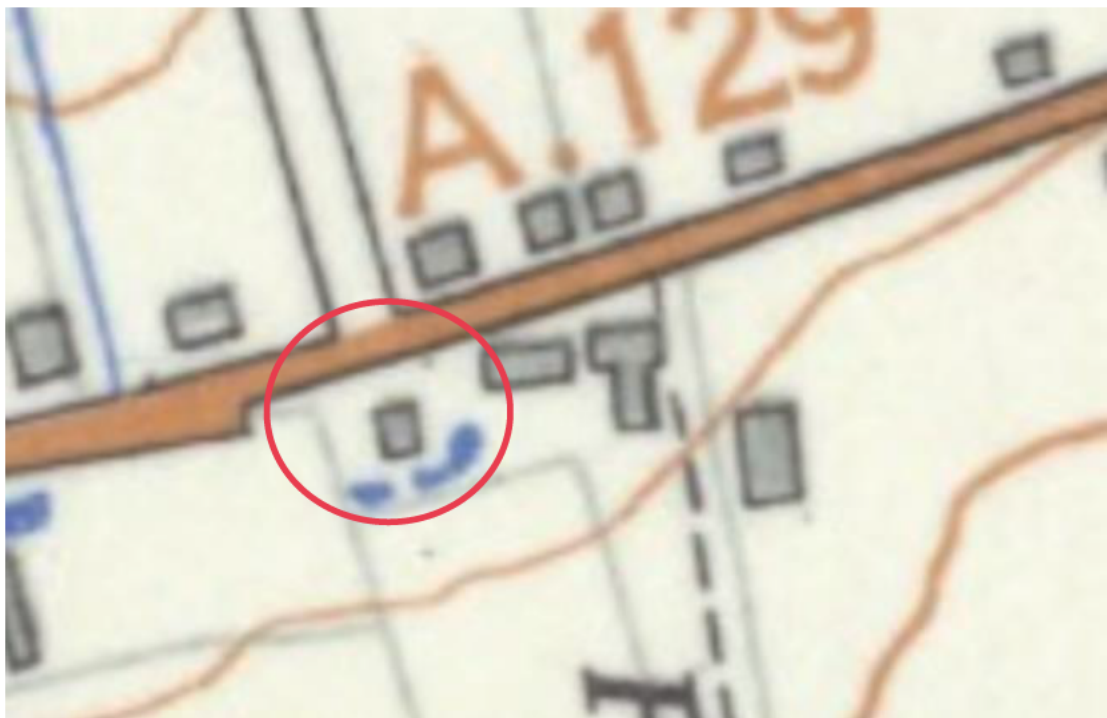


Figure 7 - (approx. location of site highlighted in red) 1946 OS 1:25,000 Map, published 1947. Much has remained the same however it appears the building to the far east of the plot has been extended to the rear. The extension to the rear of the house is no longer shown, this may be due to demolition or the small scale of the map not showing sufficient detail.



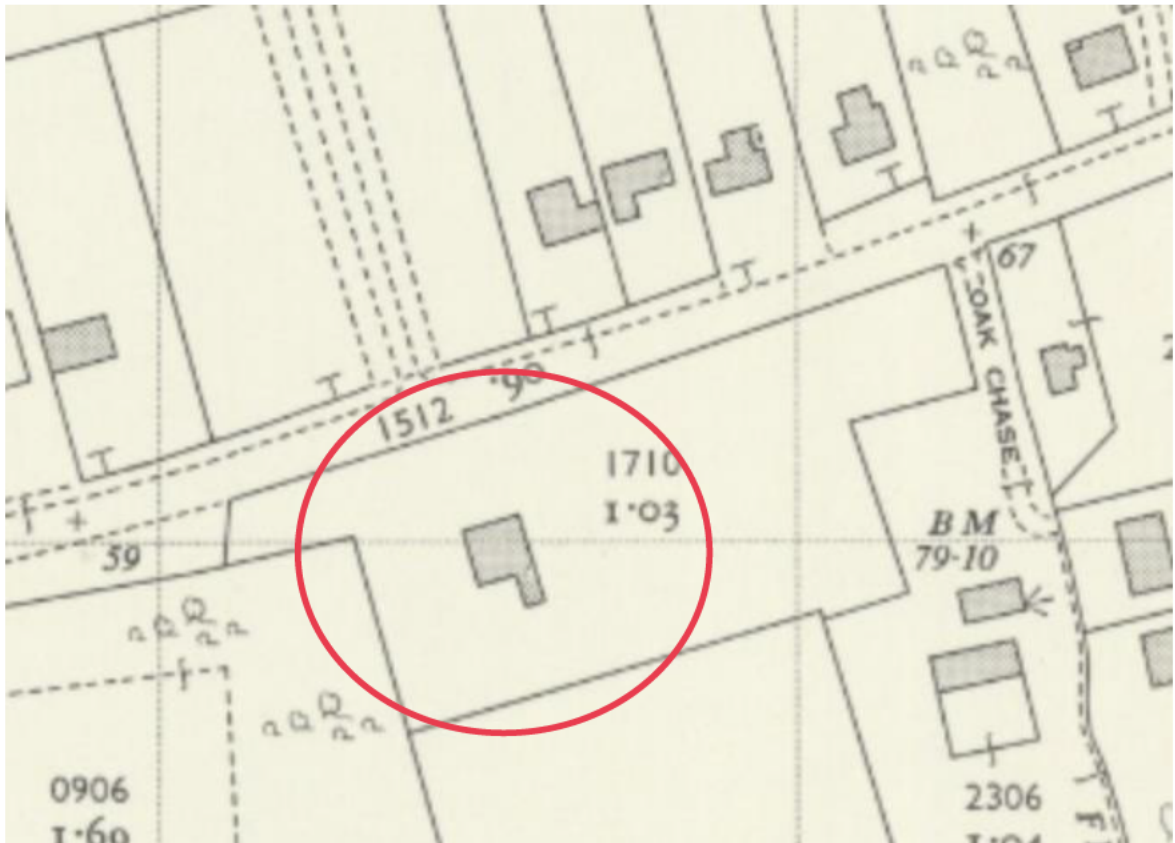


Figure 8 - 1944-1969 1:2,500 OS Map, surveyed 1957 (approx. site location highlighted in red). The rear extension is now shown. The outbuildings to the east have been demolished.



Figure 9 - 1999 aerial image. The roof form of the principal house is visible before the first-floor extension was constructed. The garage to the south east of the principal house is also evident. Source: Google Earth Pro.

- 3.7 Bell Farm was again advertised for sale in 1986. The sales particulars show the Bell Farmhouse plot as the size as it is today and describes the property as:

*“an attractive Grade II listed farmhouse, constructed of a timber frame under an asbestos slate roof, with rendered or plastered elevations relieved by both horizontal and vertical sliding sash windows. The house is set in partially wooded garden of approximately 0.6 Acres which surround the house and are well screened from London Road, but which do now require rehabilitating. Bell Farm itself offers well proportioned and spacious accommodation. It benefits from full gas-fired central heating but does now require works of repair and modernisation to be carried out.*

### **Ground floor**

*A slate-roofed open porch with quarry tiled floor and panelled front door leads into the:-*

*Entrance Hall with wide easy-rising staircase to the first floor, meter cupboard, telephone point and doors to :-*

*Sitting Room (N&E) 14'3" x 12'6" with open brick fireplace having shelves to one side, three wall light points, exposed beams.*

*Morning Room (N) 13'3" x 11'0" with cast-iron Victorian fireplace having display alcoves either side with cupboards under, exposed beam, and wall light point.*

*Dining Room (S&E) 16'3" x 8'9" with fireplace having all-night stove, tiled surround and timber mantelpiece, with china cupboards to either side. From the dining room further doors lead to:-*

*The Old Dairy (W) about 14'9" x 11'9" overall, now divided into two rooms and having the gas-fired boiler supplying central heating and hot water, and stone butler sink.*

*Kitchen (W&E) 10'6" with back door, French door to garden, walk-in larder, double drainer stainless steel sink unit, gas point, high and low-level cupboards, hatch to roof space, and oil-fired 4-oven Aga.*

### **First floor**

*The Galleried Landing has doors leading to:-*

*Bedroom 1 (N&E) 14'6" x 12'6".*

*Bedroom 2 (N) 14'6" x 10'9" with exposed beam.*

*Bedroom 3 (W) 12'0" x 11'9" with airing cupboard housing the copper hot water cylinder.*

*Bathroom with panelled bath, pedestal ash-basin and low-level WC.*

*Bedroom 4 (E) 12'9" x 11'6"*

### **Outside**

*The short driveway leads to a Double Garage 23'0" x 15'6" approximately, with personnel door and double sliding vehicle doors, constructed of rendered blockwork under an asbestos slate roof.*

*The gardens surround the property on all sides and feature areas of lawn with many mature trees, including Yew, Willow, Cypress, Cherry and a prolific Pear tree."*





*Figure 10 - 2020 aerial mapping (google earth). Since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the village has seen a number of infill developments and changes to the historic buildings. The plot of Bell Farmhouse has been reduced in size and the historic outbuildings to the east of the principal house have been demolished. The second-floor extension is now also visible to the rear of the building.*



*Figure 11 - Recent aerial image of Bell Farmhouse which shows the rear extension in more detail.*



## 4.0 Heritage Assets

4.1 This section identifies heritage assets which relate to the site. In the case of this application submission, the following heritage assets are local to the proposed development and have been identified as they may be affected by the current proposals. The identification of these assets is consistent with 'Step 1' of the GPA3 The Setting of Heritage Assets.

4.2 Although there are other built heritage assets within the local surrounding area, the location and significance of many of them results in them having no perceptible relationship with the proposed development site. For this reason, only the built heritage assets which may be considered to be affected by the proposals have been identified.

4.3 In the case of this application, the following built heritage assets are located within the vicinity of the site. Due to their location, positioning and significance, they have the potential to be affected by the proposed development:

1. Bell Farmhouse – Grade II



Figure 12: Aerial demonstrating the location of Bell Farmhouse

4.4 All relevant Statutory List descriptions can be found in **Appendix 2**. Any buildings or structures considered to fall within the curtilage of the above listed buildings would be considered to form part of the listed building and impacts would be assessed accordingly.

## 5.0 Significance Assessment

5.1 The below evaluation of significance and subsequent conclusions have been assessed in line with the methodology outlined in Appendix 2 and consider the following:

- The relevant planning legislation as well as the policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and objectives of the Planning Practice Guidance;
- Historic England ‘Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance’;
- British Standard 7913 (2013) Guide to the ‘Conservation of Historic Buildings’;
- Guidance set out in Historic England advice notes.

### Bell Farmhouse – Grade II Listed



Figure 13 - Front (north) elevation of Bell Farmhouse.

5.2 Bell Farmhouse is located to the west of Wickford town centre, on the south side of London Road. It was added to the Statutory List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, at Grade II, on 6th January 1975.

5.3 It was constructed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The principal building is square in plan. It is a rendered, timber-framed house with a shallow hipped roof covered in composition tiles. It is two storeys in height, 3 bays wide, with mostly double hung sash windows with glazing bars. The property also has a twentieth century central gabled porch on the front. To the rear and side are non-original casement windows.

5.4 To the rear is a two-storey extension running southwards. Historic maps indicate there has been a rear extension in this location since at least the 1860s. This extension was single storey and looks to have been replaced following permission for a replacement kitchen in the 1960s (prior to the

building being added to the statutory list) and is now constructed in breeze block which has been rendered.

- 5.5 In 2004, Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent were granted for a ‘first floor rear extension’ (refs: 04/00798/LBBAS and 04/00799/FULL). Although the documents for this application are not available (having been lost during a Council document management system transfer), aerial images show that a first floor was added to the rear between 1999 and 2006.



Figure 14 - Pargetting on the front elevation.



Figure 15 - Rear of Bell Farmhouse viewed from the south west.



5.6 Internally, there is a central stair compartment which is accessed through the front door with rooms to either side. This is a typical arrangement of this type of building.

5.7 Within each front room, there is an open, exposed brick, chimney breast. To the dining room chimney cement mortar has been added historically which is causing the brick to deteriorate. Within the main sitting room, the chimney breast shows evidence of damp. The flooring and skirting within all spaces have been replaced and the plaster to the walls and ceiling appears to be modern. As a result, these rooms are considered to hold a moderate level of value. This value is found in the retained plan form and retained chimney breasts.



Figure 16 - Chimney stack at ground floor within the rear part of the house. Timber framing is visible in the internal wall behind.

5.8 To the rear, the space is more open in plan and includes the rebuilt rear extension and a modern WC in the southwest corner. A brick chimney breast is also seen within this area although this has been altered. The floor in this area is modern. Due to the level of alteration this rear element of the building is considered to hold a low level of value. The rear projecting element is considered to hold no heritage value as it appears to have been rebuilt in the 1960s.



Figure 17 – Exposed breeze blocks within the kitchen extension. The first shows the eastern wall and the second the western wall.

5.9 Works appear to have been undertaken to the stair including the addition of breeze block to the underside. The stair itself appears to have been altered with the lower two steps being shorter in height than the remaining steps. Although it is not clear why this is, it is evident that it has been altered. The upper floor spindles and balustrade are currently not stable and likely require work to ensure they are safe.



Figure 18 Staircase in central hallway.

- 5.10 On the first floor, there is a central hallway with staircase and rooms to either side. A corridor through the southeast room gives access to the first-floor rear extension (consented in 2004). A bulkhead is seen within this space. The plan form appears to be, on the whole, retained at this level however, due to the loss of a number of historic and / or original features, the spaces are considered to retain a moderate to moderate/low value.
- 5.11 The bathroom has been fully modernised, with a new window installed along with a bulkhead through the space. This results in the space holding a low level of value. The adjacent bedroom has been subdivided to provide access through to the rear extension. This space due to the loss of plan form is considered to hold a low level of value. The new extension is considered to hold no value.



Figure 19 – Bulk heads at first floor

- 5.12 The roof has been felted, likely when the tiles were replaced. The structure itself is a combination of new and old timbers. Due to these alterations the significance of this space is limited.



*Figure 20 - Roof structure*

#### Significance

- 5.13 Modest farmhouses formed part of the wider countryside around Wickford and were dispersed until the 20<sup>th</sup> century when cottages and modern infill were developed along London Road creating a series of independent lanes and closes. Bell Farmhouse is a later example of one of these former farmhouses within the area.
- 5.14 The surviving historic fabric, appearance and plan form of Bell Farmhouse are of interest. Externally, the features of interest are the square plan of the principal house, its symmetrical front elevation with sliding sash windows, render including areas of pargetting, and shallow pitched roof with two chimney stacks. These features retain the most historic, evidential and aesthetic value as they provide evidence of local or regional architectural style and building materials in the eighteenth century.
- 5.15 The porch is a recent addition and is covered in modern tiles. To the rear, there is an extension at the east end of the principal building which extends to the south. This appears to have been rebuilt in the 1960s. The first floor was added following permission in 2004. These external elements are therefore of little or no interest.
- 5.16 Internally, the central hallway and staircase, with rooms to either side, are considered to be of moderate evidential and historic value. There are two brick chimney stacks in the centre of the floor plate, between the front and rear rooms. There are also some internal walls where timber framing is apparent. These elements of internal fabric and floorplan provide evidence of the historic layout of the interior of the house and make a moderate contribution to the significance of the listed building.



- 5.17 Overall Bell Farmhouse is considered to hold a **moderate** level of significance due primarily to its retained form and historic fabric.

Setting

- 5.18 Bell Farmhouse is set back from the south side of London Road, within its garden plot, to the west of Wickford town centre. The historic farmyard buildings to the east of the principal house were demolished in the mid-twentieth century and the plot was reduced in size. In the late-twentieth century, a large, single-storey garage was built to the south east of the principal house, this garage is of no heritage value.
- 5.19 The immediate setting of the listed building includes its lawns to the east and west, private drive the north, and garden and garage to the south. The entrance is to the north east of the house. It is formed by soft red brick walls and gatepiers. The plot is delineated through a mixture of mature trees and hedgerows.
- 5.20 The extended setting of Bell Farmhouse includes the wider surrounding development along London Road. In the nineteenth century, there were a number of dispersed farmsteads along London Road proving the building with a more isolated setting. However, during the twentieth century, further residential infill development took place and now includes various styles of houses to the north, east and west of Bell Farmhouse. To the south is agricultural land which has remained much the same as is evident from the historic maps. Nevertheless, the wider setting of Bell Farmhouse exhibits significant evolution through the reduction in the agrarian character of its setting.
- 5.21 Therefore, it is considered that the immediate setting makes a **moderate/good beneficial** contribution to the significance of the building whilst the extended setting makes a **moderate beneficial** contribution to its significance.



*Figure 21- Rear elevation and rear garage elevation of Bell Farmhouse, viewed from the south east of the plot.*

## 6.0 Significance Plans

6.1 Presented below are a number of illustrative plans which indicate the residual significance of each room/rooms on each floor level of the building. The significance of each room is considered to be formed by a combination of its evidential, aesthetic, historic and communal values, and its place within the overall plan-form or hierarchy of the building.

6.2 The purpose of this exercise is to ensure that there is a baseline understanding of the architectural and historic value of the listed building, and also any other relevant aspects which constitute significance. The significance levels follow current best practice methodology in terms of signifying differences in residual architectural and historic interest between individual rooms. The notation of a room as being above or below the level of another does not infer that it does not form an intrinsic part of the asset overall but that the levels of individual merit within the spaces differ, and that rooms with a lower level of significance may be more capable of accepting adaptation than others. In each case, specific consideration should be given to the individual character of each room and space and how it sits within the hierarchy of the building, how it fulfils a function within the building and how residual levels of interest may help to explain that.

- **Good** – Rooms/spaces which retain their intended planform and a number of features of interest, retaining a good level of heritage value;
- **Moderate** – Rooms/spaces which retain their intended plan form and some features of interest and therefore hold a moderate level of heritage significance;
- **Low** – Rooms/spaces which have had their original plan form altered and/or have lost features of interest, retaining only a low level of heritage significance;
- **None** – rooms/spaces of no heritage value and are modern insertions.

6.3 It is important to note that amongst areas of lower significance, there may still be opportunities for beneficial improvement of these spaces or adaptation to render them more supportive of the building's historic interest.



Figure 22 - Ground and First Floor Significance Plans

## 7.0 Relevant Planning History

7.1 Below is a list of the relevant planning applications relating to the site.

- In 1967, permission was refused for the demolition and replacement of the house (ref: T/BAS/224/67). In the same year, permission was granted for the construction of a garage (ref: T/BAS/762/67). The present garage is visible in the 1999 aerial image.
- In 1968, permission was granted for the ‘replacement of kitchen’ (ref: T/BAS/682/68). As the building was not yet listed, it is likely this meant replacing the rear extension which housed the kitchen. The planning history for Bell Farm has been requested from the local planning authority which should provide more information on this.
- In 1998 and 2000, permission was granted for the ‘replacement of damaged cement render with lime mix render’ (refs: 00/00403/LBBASS, 98/00429/LB).
- In 2004, permission was granted for a first-floor rear extension (refs: 04/00798/LBBAS, 04/00799/FULL). There is also a building control application for the start of building works for the rear extension (ref: 04/02499/FP).
- In 2018, Listed Building Consent was refused for the demolition of the existing rear extension and construction of a larger rear extension (refs: 18/01686/LBBAS and 18/01685/FULL).



Figure 23 - 2018 existing (top) and proposed (bottom) elevations. KJL Designs, November 2018.

7.2 Place Services, the historic buildings consultant acting for the local planning authority, objected to the proposed development, saying:

*“Bell Farmhouse is Grade II Listed (Listed Entry: 1305927). Paragraph 189 of the NPPF requires an applicant to understand/describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by the proposal. The submitted Heritage Statement is not sufficient in understanding the significance of the listed building and the impact of the proposal. The proposed extension is harmful to the significance of the designated heritage asset. The extension is inappropriate in terms of mass, scale, form and materiality. It is not subservient to the host dwelling and would detract from the evidential and aesthetic value of the principal pile. The proposal will cause considerable “less than substantial harm” to a designated heritage asset as such paragraph 196 of the NPPF is relevant.”*

## 8.0 Previous Application

### Pre-application

- 8.1 A pre-application was undertaken in September 2020, with a formal written response received in April 2021 following additional information being provided.

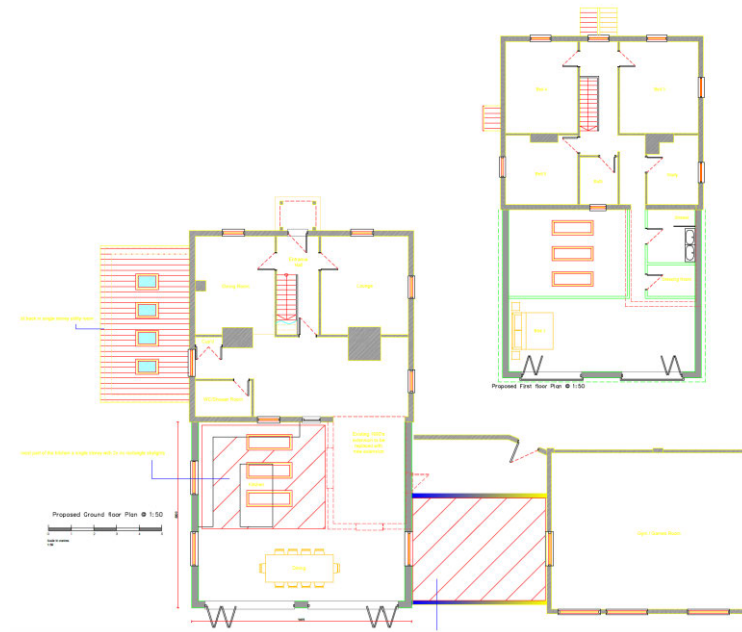


Figure 24 - Proposed pre-application layout

- 8.2 The pre-application scheme sought a wrap-around, two-storey extension with a central single-storey extension, with a link structure to the adjacent existing outbuilding. Following a site visit, the proposals were amended to reduce the wrap-around two-storey element and removal of the link structure.
- 8.3 The following comments were received:
- *As discussed on site, there may be potential for removal and rebuilding of the existing rear range. This would only be supported, in principle, once the significance of the fabric has been further informed by investigations.*
  - *The ground floor extension to the rear is not supported. The footprint is too large, probably because the proposed rear range extends too far back. Discussions on site also suggested that a lightweight extensions/garden room may be possible here, this is not realised in this design, especially the west wall.*
  - *Subject to details there is potential for this extension, I recommend the roof lights are removed*

### Applications 23/00300/FULL & 23/00301/LBBAS

- 8.4 Following the responses above, the design was revised and an application for Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent was submitted in March 2023. Applications 23/00300/FULL & 23/00301/LBBAS sought the removal of the later addition to the building and its

replacement with a part one and part two storey extension to the rear and single extension to the side.

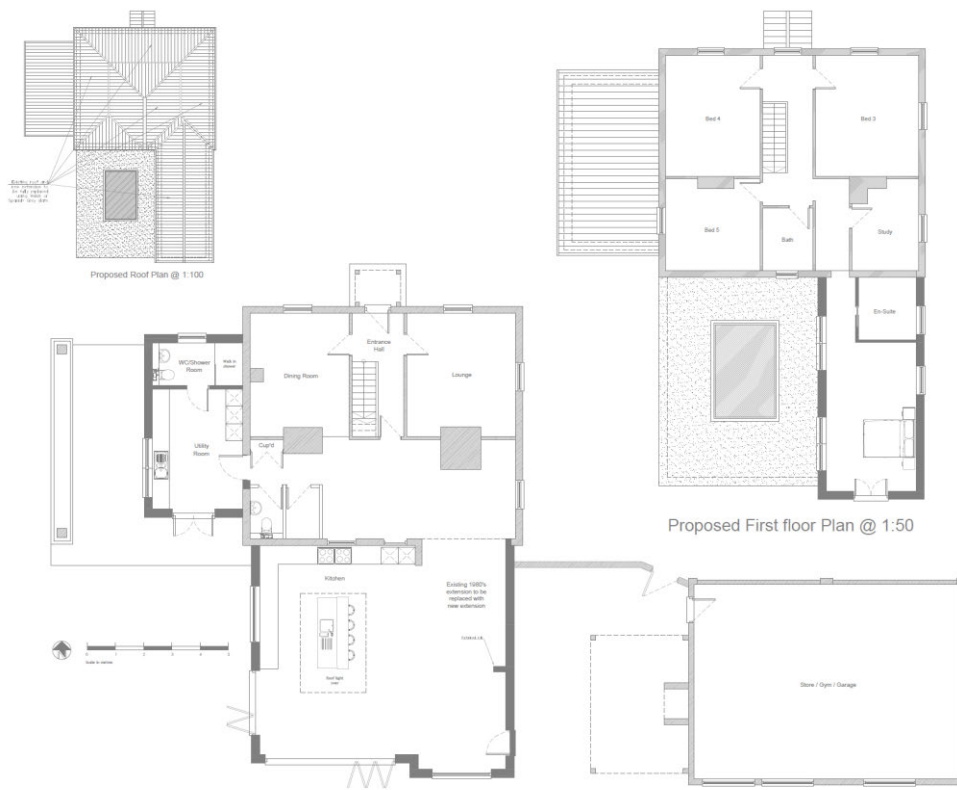


Figure 25 - Proposed floor and roof plans



Figure 26 - Proposed elevations



- 8.5 The applications were refused in May 2023. Within the Officer's Report the following comments were made in relation to built heritage and design:
- *The proposed footprint to the rear range is too large and would extend further than the existing. This is considered to detract from the architectural interest of the host dwelling. Whilst the design is traditional, the mass is incongruous.*
  - *The ground floor extension to the rear is not supported. The proposed structure is not lightweight, and its footprint would be too large, because the proposed depth of the extension is excessive. A smaller and more lightweight structure was previously advised as it would not detract from views or appreciation of the rear elevation.*
  - *The rooflights proposed at pre application stage have been omitted. Therefore the side extension is considered acceptable. However, when considered cumulatively alongside the other extensions the result would be that the additions as a whole are out of scale with the original dwelling and would represent an over development of the site.*
  - *The setting downward and inward would better reveal the historic roof form of the farmhouse, though the visual change would be relatively minor.*
  - *The replacement of plastic rainwater goods with matching metal equivalents, and the removal of the internal bulkheads would also have a very minor beneficial effect.*



## 9.0 Proposed Scheme

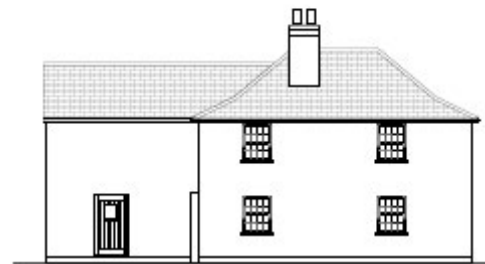
- 9.1 The proposals seek to remove the existing walled garden enclosure and lean-to located to the west of the house and construct a single storey side extension in its place. The extension would create a new kitchen and dining room.
- 9.2 The extension would be finished in red brick and would be linked with the main building by a glass link. The front elevation of the side extension will be designed to appear as a garden wall, with no windows except for the glass link structure. Planting is also proposed along the frontage. The rear and side elevations of the extension will be of a contemporary design to form a subtle and ancillary contrast to the main house. These elevations will be detailed with large panes of glass and an overhanging roof. The extension would have a flat roof with a rooflight.



5 Existing Front Elevation  
Scale: 1:100



Existing Side Elevation  
Scale: 1:100



6 Existing Side Elevation  
Scale: 1:100



4 Existing Rear Elevation  
Scale: 1:100

Figure 27 - Existing elevations



Figure 28 - Proposed elevations with the outline of the existing structure to be removed shown in red

- 9.3 Internally the scheme would convert the existing kitchen/living room into a day room with the existing shower room and cupboard adjacent to the chimney breast both removed. The doorway next to the chimney breast leading to the existing dining room would also be removed and the opening blocked. New partitions would be installed within the rear range creating a WC and boot room. The access into the new side extension would utilise an existing doorway within the wall of the main house.

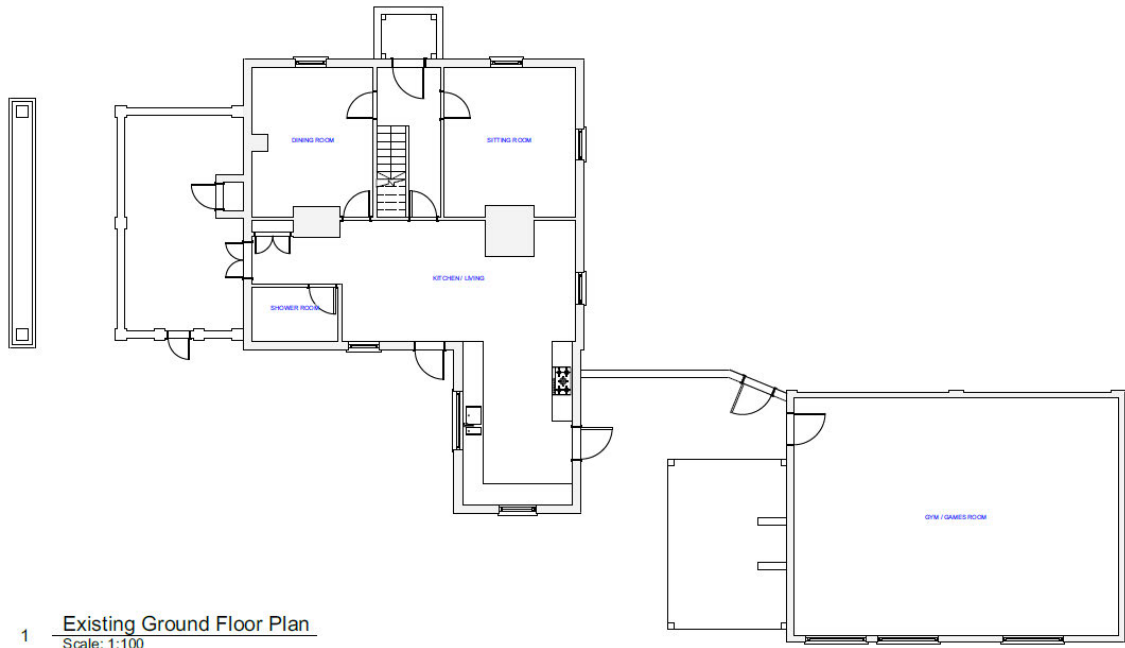


Figure 29 - Existing ground floor plan

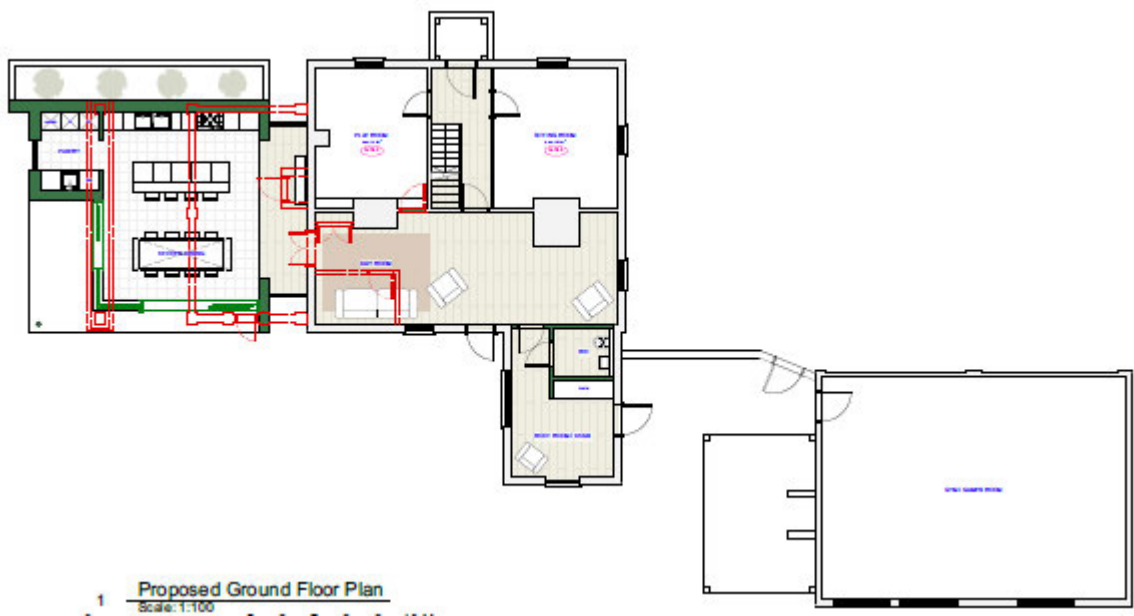
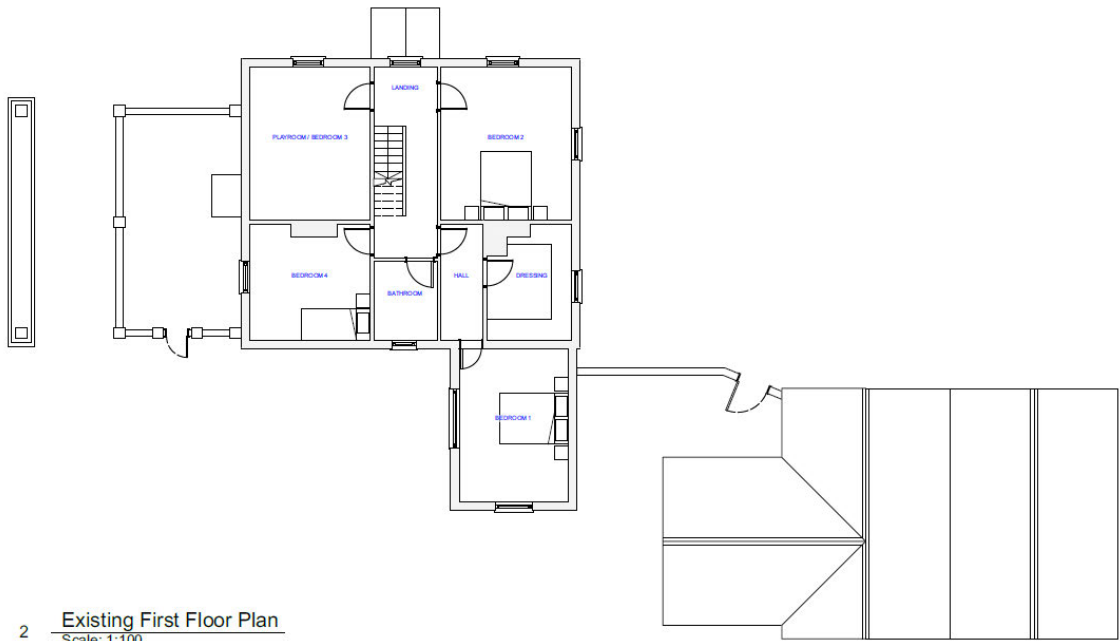
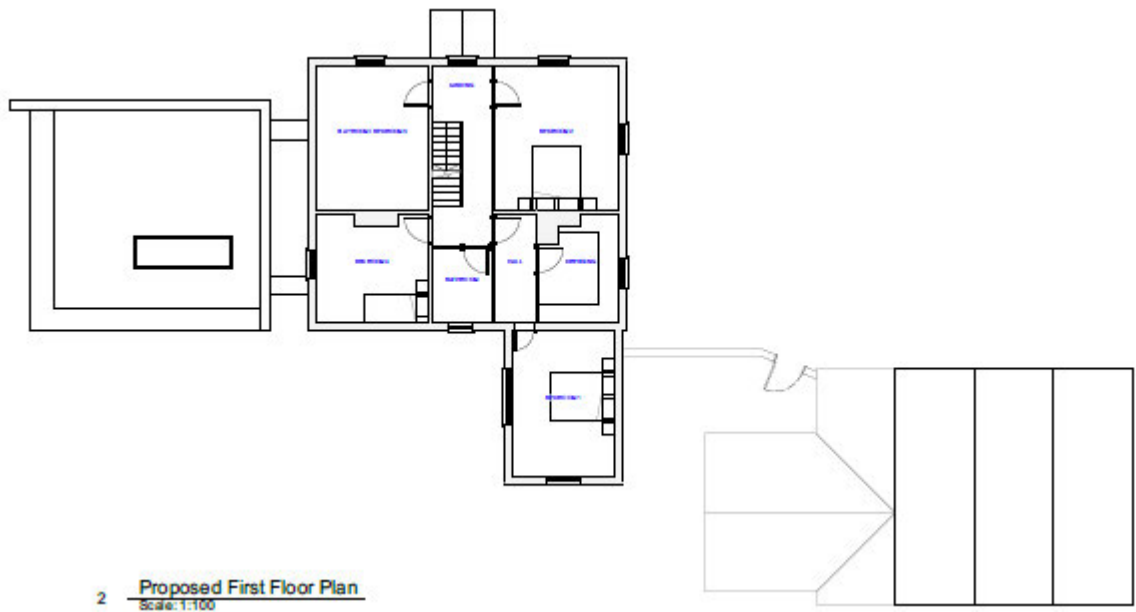


Figure 30 - Proposed ground floor plan with the proposed fabric to be removed shown in red



2 Existing First Floor Plan  
Scale: 1:100

Figure 31 - Existing first floor plan



2 Proposed First Floor Plan  
Scale: 1:100

Figure 32 - Proposed first floor plan



## 10.0 Impact Assessment

- 10.1 In order to assess the suitability of the site for the proposed development, it is necessary to determine the *nature* and *extent* of any impacts resulting from the proposal on heritage assets and/or their settings.
- 10.2 When assessing the impact of a proposed development on individual or groups of heritage assets, it is important to assess both the potential, direct physical impacts of the development scheme as well as the potential impacts on their settings and where effects on setting would result in harm to the significance of the asset. It is equally important to identify benefits to settings, where they result from proposals.
- 10.3 The proposed development is considered below in terms of its impact on the significance of the heritage assets, and the contribution which setting makes to their significance. Assessment of impact levels are made with reference to Table 2 in Section 3 and satisfy ‘**Step 3**’ of Historic England’s GPA 3.

### **Bell Farmhouse – Grade II**

- 10.4 As outlined in section 5 of this report, Bell Farmhouse is considered to hold a **moderate** level of significance overall in heritage terms.

#### Demolition

- 10.5 The existing walled garden and lean-to structures are modern, poor quality additions to the building which are not considered to add to the significance of the listed farm house. As such, their loss is considered to have a **minor beneficial** on the special interest of the building.

#### New Side Extension

- 10.6 In the Council’s comments relating to the previous preapplication submission as well as the previous application, the principal of an extension to the side of the main house was considered to be acceptable. The proposed side extension will be larger than the side extension designed in the previous application. However, in line with the council’s comments, the proposals, as a whole, have been substantially reduced from those submitted under applications 23/00300/FULL & 23/00301/LBBAS.
- 10.7 The new side extension would be legibly ancillary to the main house by warrant of its proposed scale and detailed design. The inclusion of a flat roof in the extensions design ensures it will be of a lower overall height than both the main house and the existing garage, maintaining the existing hierarchy of built form in the plot. The placement of the extension back behind the primary building line adds to its ancillary character and also ensures that the extension would not obstruct views of the front and rear elevations of the main house. In addition, the connection of the extension to the main house via glazed link the design provides a visual separation between the two structures adding to the prominence of the main house. Such a design approach also ensures a clear and appropriate legibility of phasing is achieved here.
- 10.8 The proposed material palette and detailed design of the extension will reduce its perceived massing in views of the house. The design of the front elevation as a blank brick wall façade behind a planting bed, maintains the character presented by the existing walled garden whilst also ensuring that the extension does not draw attention away from the principal elevation of the house. The design of the rear and side elevations of the structure is more detailed and would clearly

present the extension as a modern addition in views from the south and west. The extension is intended for use a kitchen and dining room, as such although there will be some elements of solidity. However, the inclusion of large areas of glazing in the design of the side and rear elevations also ensures that the extension would have a lightweight appearance in these views which contrasts from the solidity of the primary building. The proposed new side extension would be a high quality addition to the structure and will have a **negligible/minor beneficial** impact.

#### Internal Changes

- 10.9 Internally the alterations to the building will be minimal. The removal of the walls within the existing kitchen are not historic and as such their removal would have a **neutral** impact on the building's significance. Equally, the new partitions proposed at ground floor level within the rear range will be inserted within a modern addition to the building, they will also lightweight and removable. As such, the new partitions would have a **neutral** impact. The removal of the existing modern cupboard and access to the dining room will reinstate the proportions of the chimney breast in the kitchen and reinstate the historic circulatory routes around the ground floor of the building, having a **minor beneficial** impact. The accesses into the new extension will utilise an existing opening and will not affect historic fabric as such the alteration would have a **neutral** impact on the building's special interest.

#### Summary

- 10.10 Overall, the alterations are proposed to be of a high design quality. The proposed extension has been carefully designed to form subtle and appreciably ancillary additions to the house. Internally the works will maintain the historic layout of the building with no original fabric impacted as a result of the proposals. In addition, the proposals are easily reversible and will not have an impact on the principal façades. It is therefore considered that the proposals would have a **negligible/minor beneficial** overall impact on the significance of Bell Farmhouse, particularly where it is demonstrable that implementation would facilitate the better practical functioning and therefore optimum viable use of the property for current and future users.

## 11.0 Conclusions

- 11.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Bidwells on behalf of BDM Projects Ltd to support applications for Listed Building Consent and Full Planning relating to alterations to Bell Farm. The proposals seek to remove the existing walled garden enclosure and lean-to located to the west of the house and construct a single storey side extension in its place.
- 11.2 This report considers the impact of the proposed scheme on the significance of Bell Farmhouse (Grade II), including the contribution made by its settings. This approach to impact-assessment is required in order to satisfy the provisions of Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act of 1990 in relation to listed buildings and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) where the impact of development on heritage assets or their settings is being considered (Paragraphs 200-212).
- 11.3 As a result of our assessments on site, it is considered that the proposed scheme would result in a negligible/minor beneficial impact overall on the significance of Bell Farmhouse.
- 11.4 We therefore find that the proposed alterations to have had special regard for the desirable objective of preserving the special interest of the listed buildings and their settings in accordance with Section 16(2), 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act. In addition to satisfying these provisions of the Act, the NPPF Paragraphs 200-212 are also satisfied.

# APPENDIX 1

## HERITAGE LEGISLATION, POLICY AND GUIDANCE SUMMARY

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### Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990

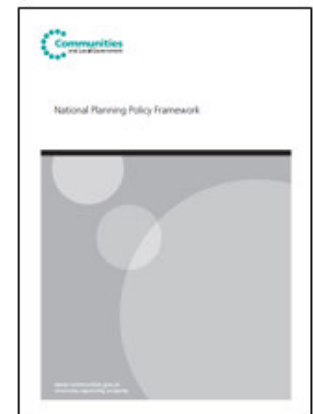
The primary legislation relating to Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

- Section 16(2) states “*In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.*”
- Section 66(1) reads: “*In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.*”
- In relation to development on land within Conservation Areas, Section 72(1) reads: “*Special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.*”

As the site is not located within a Conservation Area Section 72(1) does not apply in this instance.

### National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was revised in December 2023. With regard to the historic environment, the overarching aim of the policy remains in line with philosophy of the 2012 framework, namely that “our historic environments... can better be cherished if their spirit of place thrives, rather than withers.” The relevant policy is outlined within chapter 16, ‘Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment’.



This chapter reasserts that heritage assets can range from sites and buildings of local interest to World Heritage Sites considered to have an Outstanding Universal Value. The NPPF subsequently requires these assets to be conserved in a “*manner appropriate to their significance*” (Paragraph 195).

NPPF directs local planning authorities to require an applicant to “*describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting*” and the level of detailed assessment should be “proportionate to the assets’ importance” (Paragraph 200).

Paragraph 201 states that the significance any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal should be identified and assessed. This includes any assets affected by development within their



settings. This Significance Assessment should be taken into account when considering the impact of a proposal, *“to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal”*. This paragraph therefore results in the need for an analysis of the impact of a proposed development on the asset’s relative significance, in the form of a Heritage Impact Assessment.

Paragraph 204 states that local planning authorities should have regard to the importance of the retention *‘in-situ’* of a historic statue, plaque, memorial or monument irrespective of its designation. The paragraph goes on to suggest an explanation of historic or social context should be given rather than removal.

Paragraph 205 requires 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.”*

It is then clarified that any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, either through alteration, destruction or development within its setting, should require, *“clear and convincing justification”* (Paragraph 206). This paragraph outlines that substantial harm to grade II listed heritage assets should be exceptional, rising to ‘wholly exceptional’ for those assets of the highest significance such as scheduled monuments, Grade I and grade II\* listed buildings or registered parks and gardens as well as World Heritage Sites.

In relation to harmful impacts or the loss of significance resulting from a development proposal, Paragraph 207 states the following:

*“Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:*

- a. the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- b. no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- c. conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d. the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.”*

The NPPF therefore requires a balance to be applied in the context of heritage assets, including the recognition of potential benefits accruing from a development. In the case of proposals which would result in *“less than substantial harm”*, paragraph 208 provides the following:

*“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.”*

It is also possible for proposals, where suitably designed, to result in no harm to the significance of heritage assets.

In the case of non-designated heritage assets, Paragraph 209 requires a Local Planning Authority to make a “*balanced judgement*” having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

The NPPF therefore recognises the need to clearly identify relative significance at an early stage and then to judge the impact of development proposals in that context.

With regard to Conservation Areas and the settings of heritage assets, paragraph 212 requires Local Planning Authorities to look for opportunities for new development, enhancing or better revealing their significance. Whilst it is noted that not all elements of a Conservation Area will necessarily contribute to its significance, this paragraph states that “*proposals that preserve those elements of a setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.*”

Broader design guidance is given in Chapter 12, ‘Achieving well-designed places’. The 2021 NPPF introduced the requirement for local authorities to prepare design guides or codes, consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code Documents. These should reflect ‘local character’ in order to create ‘*beautiful and distinctive places*’ (paragraph 133).

Paragraph 139 states that significant weight should be given to development which reflects local design polices, and/or outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability or help raise the ‘standard of design’ providing they conform to the ‘overall form and layout of their surroundings.

### **Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (2019)**

The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was updated on 23 July 2019 and is a companion to the NPPF, replacing a large number of foregoing Circulars and other supplementary guidance.

In respect of heritage decision-making, the PPG stresses the importance of determining applications on the basis of significance and explains how the tests of harm and impact within the NPPF are to be interpreted.

In particular, the PPG notes the following in relation to the evaluation of harm: “*in determining whether works to a listed building 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 harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting.*” (Ref ID: 18a-018-20190723).

This guidance therefore provides assistance in defining where levels of harm should be set, tending to emphasise substantial harm as a “high test”.

In relation to non-designated heritage assets, the NPPG explains the following:

*“Non-designated heritage assets are buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance meriting*

*consideration in planning decisions, but which do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets.”*

It goes on to clarify that: “A substantial majority of buildings have little or no heritage significance and thus do not constitute heritage assets. Only a minority have enough heritage significance to merit identification as non-designated heritage assets.”

This statement explains the need to be judicious in the identification of value and the extent to which this should be applied as a material consideration and in accordance with Paragraph 197.

### **Historic England Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance 2008**

Historic England sets out in this document a logical approach to making decisions and offering guidance about all aspects of the historic environment, including changes affecting significant places. It states that:

*“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; d. the long-term consequences of the proposals can, from experience, be demonstrated to be benign, or the proposals are designed not to prejudice alternative solutions in the future” (page 59).*



### **Historic England Making Changes to Heritage Assets Advice Note 2 (February 2016)**

This advice note provides information on repair, restoration, addition and alteration works to heritage assets. It advises that "*The main issues to consider in proposals for additions to heritage assets, including new development in conservation areas, aside from NPPF requirements such as social and economic activity and sustainability, are proportion, height, massing, bulk, use of materials, durability and adaptability, use, enclosure, relationship with adjacent assets and definition of spaces and streets, alignment, active frontages, permeability and treatment of setting.*" (page 10)

**Historic England Managing Significance in Decision Taking in the Historic Environment Historic Environment Good Practice Advice (GPA) in Planning Note 2 (March 2015)**

This advice note sets out clear information to assist all relevant stake holders in implementing historic environment policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the related guidance given in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). These include: “*assessing the significance of heritage assets, using appropriate expertise, historic environment records, recording and furthering understanding, neglect and unauthorised works, marketing and design and distinctiveness.*” (page 1)

**Historic England The Setting of Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice (GPA) in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition) (December 2017)**

This document presents guidance on managing change within the settings of heritage assets, including archaeological remains and historic buildings, sites, areas and landscapes. Page 6, entitled: ‘*A staged approach to proportionate decision taking*’ provides detailed advice on assessing the implications of development proposals and recommends the following broad approach to assessment, undertaken as a series of steps that apply equally to complex or more straightforward cases:

Step 1: Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected

Step 2: Assess the degree to which these settings and views make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated

Step 3: Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on the significance or on the ability to appreciate it

Step 4: Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm

Step 5: Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes

**Historic England Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets Advice Note 12 (October 2019)**

This document provides guidance on the NPPF requirement for applicants to describe heritage significance in order to aid local planning authorities’ decision making. It reiterates the importance of understanding the significance of heritage assets, in advance of developing proposals. This advice note outlines a staged approach to decision-making in which assessing significance precedes the design and also describes the relationship with archaeological desk-based assessments and field evaluations, as well as with Design and Access Statements.

The advice in this document, in accordance with the NPPF, emphasises that the level of detail in support of applications for planning permission and listed building consent should be no more than is necessary to reach an informed decision, and that activities to conserve the asset(s) need to be proportionate to the significance of the heritage asset(s) affected and the impact on that significance. This advice also addresses how an analysis of heritage significance could be set out before discussing suggested structures for a statement of heritage significance.



## Local Policy

### Basildon Local Plan Saved Policies 2007

- 11.5 Basildon Local Plan was approved by the Secretary of State via a Direction issued on 20 September 2007. Originally, they were part of the Basildon District Local Plan, adopted in March 1998 with Alterations in September 1999.
- 11.6 The Saved Policies represent the local planning policies currently applied by the Council to inform the determination of planning applications in the Borough and enforce planning control. The Saved Policies have been reviewed against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in July 2018 to assess the level of compliance each policy has with the NPPF and the findings are set out with the Compliance Review of the Saved 1998 Local Plan Policies with the Revised National Planning Policy Framework report. The saved policies which are relevant to this application are as follows:

#### **Policy BAS BE12**

- *Planning permission for new residential development, and for the alteration and extension of existing dwellings, will be refused if it causes material harm in any of the following ways:-*
  - *i. Harm to the character of the surrounding area, including the street scene;*
  - *ii. Overlooking;*
  - *iii. Noise or disturbance to the occupants of neighbouring dwellings;*
  - *iv. Overshadowing or over-dominance;*
  - *and v. Traffic danger or congestion.*

#### **Policy BAS GB4- Extensions to dwelling in Green Belt**

- *In the green belt dwellings will be allowed to extend to 90 square metres or by 35 square metres over and above the original floor areas of the dwelling (or the area as at July 1948), whichever is the greater, subject to the following: -*
  - *(i) the extension should not be within 2.5 metres from any boundary;*
  - *(ii) all dimensions are taken to include external walls, except in the case of accommodation in the roofspace, where internal dimensions will apply;*
  - *(iii) attached garages, conservatories, porches and living accommodation in the roof will be included in the calculation of existing and proposed floorspace;*
  - *(iv) relevant permitted development rights, as set out in schedule two of the general permitted development order 1995 may be removed by condition on the planning permission, where it is considered that the implementation of permitted development rights could cause material harm to the green belt; and*
  - *(v) the criteria set out in policy BAS GB5 and BAS BE12.*

### Emerging Local Plan

The Basildon Borough Publication Local Plan 2014-2034, was approved by Full Council on 18 October 2018, for consultation under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, and submission to the Secretary of State under Regulation 22 of the same regulations.

Some limited weight can be given to the relevant policies in the emerging local plan as they have been developed having regard to current evidence and national policy. However full weight cannot be given as it has not been subject to independent examination, to ensure that it fulfils the tests of soundness set out in the NPPF.

In this case, policies GB5 (Extensions and alterations to buildings in the Green Belt), HE1 (Strategy for conserving and enhancing the historic environment), HE3 (Listed Buildings), DES1 (Achieving Good Design) and DES4 (High Quality Buildings) are relevant and likewise seek to meet the objectives already mentioned.

### **South Essex Joint Strategic Plan- 2050**

The South Essex councils of Basildon, Brentwood, Castle Point, Rochford, Southend-On-Sea and Thurrock and Essex County Council are working together to publish a Joint Strategy.

In July 2020 the Association of South Essex Local Authorities (ASELA) set out its intention to engage with central Government regarding the agenda for the South Essex region, how it can deliver, new jobs and better jobs, new transport infrastructure and accelerate the delivery new homes that are essential to support a growing economy.

The core purpose of ASELA is to provide place leadership for South Essex and deliver a vision for South Essex up to 2050, promoting healthy growth for our communities.

### **Basildon Core Strategy- 2007-2014**

The relevant preferred Local Plan Core Strategy Options from the Report in 2014 are as follows:

#### Core Policy 12 Conserving the Historic Environment

- *A) All development proposals must conserve or enhance the Borough's historic environment, including the preservation of historic field boundaries and hedgerows where appropriate, to maintain and where possible improve the quality and distinctiveness of the local environment;*
- *B) Significant weight will be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, such as Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Areas and areas of archaeological importance. However development should also have regard to the conservation of local landmarks and features which are without statutory designation but contribute to local identity.*
- *C) Development proposals should be sensitively designed to a high quality and should not cause harm to the historic environment. Development that could cause substantial harm to a designated historic asset or impact on its significance will not be permitted, except in exceptional circumstances where it can be justified that significant public benefit resulting from the proposal outweighs the adverse impact on the asset. In such circumstances effort should be made to minimise any identified harm or loss to the historic asset through mitigation.*

#### Core Policy 13 Design and the Built Environment

- *The Council will protect and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of the Borough's built environment through high quality and inclusive design by:*

- *A) Ensuring that new development is appropriate in scale, appearance and function to the local context, including the historic and natural environment, whilst encouraging innovative designs;*
- *B) Ensuring development accords with the 'Lifetime Homes' standard, in line with Core Policy 4;*
- *C) Requiring development to respond positively to the public realm, taking advantage of opportunities to improve the character and quality of the wider area and promoting the enhancement and protection of important local landmarks and gateways into the built environment;*
- *D) Establishing the principle that density should be appropriate to the character of the area, but higher densities will be acceptable where they complement the design of a development or area based regeneration schemes in or close to town centres;*
- *E) Ensuring development uses design solutions that create safe environments, reduce the likelihood of and peoples' fear to crime and anti-social behaviour, and encourage community cohesion in new and existing developments;*
- *F) Ensuring that development meets sustainable construction standards in compliance with Core Policy 15.*
- *G) Requiring development to support local facilities and incorporate mixed uses where viable, including the provision and integration of Green Infrastructure, in line with Core Policy 10;*
- *H) Ensuring a high level of accessibility and ease of use for all users with development being adaptable to changing requirements;*
- *I) Promoting sustainable modes of travel whilst also effectively managing the demands from traffic and integrating appropriate parking provision within developments;*
- *and J) Supporting development that is in accordance with national standards, relevant area-based Master Plans, Area Action Plans or regeneration strategies, together with any design guidance adopted by the Council.*

#### Basildon Borough Planning Obligations Strategy SPD

On Friday 14<sup>th</sup> August 2015 Basildon Borough Council formally adopted the Planning Obligations Strategy as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The SPD is now a material consideration in the determination of relevant planning applications within the Basildon Borough.

The purpose of the Planning Obligations Strategy is to provide updated guidance to industry professionals, landowners, developers and residents as to the type and level of planning obligations (financial and non-financial) the Council could seek as part of applications for planning permission.

# APPENDIX 2

## STATUTORY LIST DESCRIPTION

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# BELL FARMHOUSE

## Official list entry

Heritage Category: **Listed Building**

Grade: **II**

List Entry Number: **1305927**

Date first listed: **06-Jan-1975**

Statutory Address 1: **BELL FARMHOUSE, LONDON ROAD**

This List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest.

Unless the List entry states otherwise, it includes both the structure itself and any object or structure fixed to it (whether inside or outside) as well as any object or structure within the curtilage of the building.

For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure must have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.

**Understanding list entries** (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/understanding-list-entries/>)

**Corrections and minor amendments** (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/minor-amendments/>)

## Location

Statutory Address: **BELL FARMHOUSE, LONDON ROAD**

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

County: **Essex**

District: **Basildon (District Authority)**

Parish: **Non Civil Parish**

National Grid Reference: **TQ 73153 93099**

## Details

### 1. 5209 LONDON ROAD RAMSDEN BELLHOUSE

Bell Farmhouse TQ 79 SW 3/100

II

2. A C18 timber-framed and plastered farmhouse. 2 storeys. 3 window range, double-hung sashes with glazing bars. A central gabled porch projects on the front. Roof C20 composition tiles, hipped.

Listing NGR: TQ7315393099

## Legacy

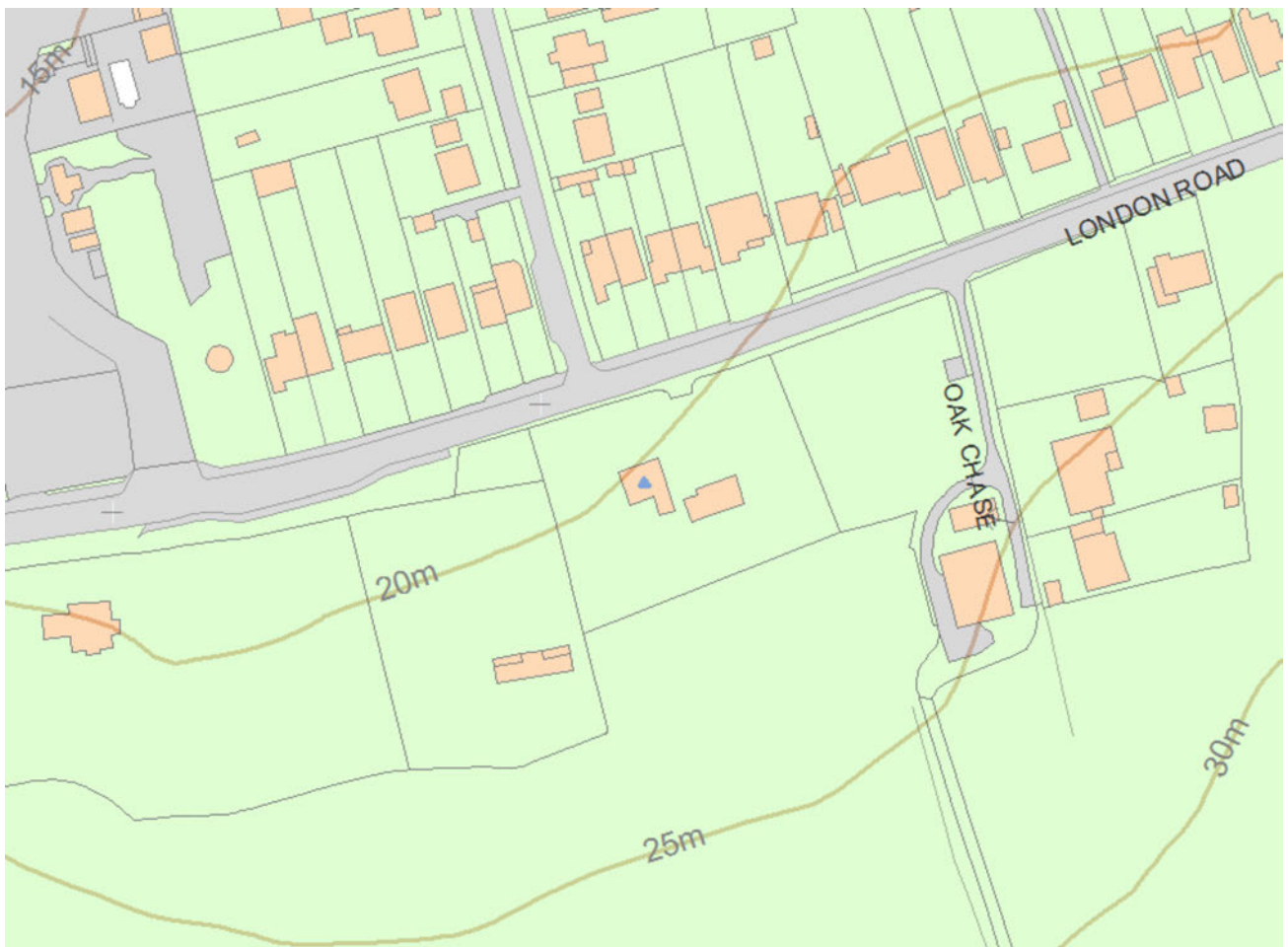
The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number: **112363**

Legacy System: **LBS**

## Legal

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.



## Map

This map is for quick reference purposes only and may not be to scale.  
This copy shows the entry on 23-Jan-2023 at 11:46:35.

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End of official list entry



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