

FORMER BRITISH LEGION CLUB, BISHOPS STORTFORD

Statement of Significance and Heritage Assessment

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Former British Legion Club
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Statement of Significance and Heritage Assessment has been prepared by RPS on behalf of Tom Carroll in order to assess the impact of proposed improvements and restorations of the listed 28 Windhill, former British Legion Club, Bishops Stortford.

The now redundant British Legion Club was originally probably a late 17th or early 18th century house built on agricultural land north of Windhill. The house has seen several episodes of improvements. The earliest was probably in the late 18th century with further improvements in the 19th century. The principal enhancement took place during the 19th century when extensions were built to the rear, the roof probably raised and stabling and a coach house built to the rear. During the 20th century the house was sold to the British Legion at which point it was institutionalised. A bar was constructed on the ground floor and rooms enlarged or converted from domestic or club use to provide games areas, settling rooms, kitchens and function rooms. The cellar was used to store alcoholic drinks including beer kegs and much of the pipework still remains in situ. The first floor was turned into office space with its own range of kitchen and service facilities. Some domestic features were retained on both the ground and 1st floors, in particular the panelling in rooms to the right of the central entrance lobby.

This report has presented an analysis of the historical development of 28 Windhill in the context of the development of Bishops Stortford and Windhill and has appraised the architecture and setting of the former Club. Finally, this report has assessed the significance of the historic buildings in terms set out by the NPPF and Historic England.

The significance of a heritage asset is defined in NPPF 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”. The significance of the former Club is considered to lie primarily in its surviving architecture, group value and architectural interest. Its significance lies in its historic association with the 19th century development of Bishops Stortford, the rise of the malting trade and development following the arrival of the turnpike system, canal and railways.

There are three aspects to the proposed restoration including (1) revitalisation of the interior to a standard commensurate with a modern, though historic, dwelling, (2) the addition of a pool house in the rear garden and (3) the re-opening of an access to the west to provide a driveway and carparking in keeping with the restored home.

The proposal for a new access comprises the re-creation of an earlier access on the west side of the former Club and is the most evident modification visible from the public realm. It involves the removal of a short stretch of boundary wall and a planked gateway, the creation of a metalled surface. In common with the works to the house and pool house the new access will be formed using material in keeping with the character of the Conservation Area.

The limited scale of the proposed modifications and the improvements due to the new access have been assessed in the context of the features set out in section 3.58 which encapsulate the heritage significance of the former British Legion Club. These focus attention on the late 19th and early 20th century character of the house, despite its earlier origins and set the scene for design and detailed improvements which reflect the Edwardian period, approximately 1880-1914.

The character of the works, the substantial retention of historic fabric, wherever encountered, and the sympathetic character of the design illustrated by the architect in three pages of views (see above 114920 – 141-143) indicate the level of visual impact on the listed building and demonstrate

that the design is both in keeping with the heritage significance of the house and that they represent an enhancement of its current condition. The character of the works and the limited impact on significant historic fabric of the former Club suggest that the proposed development will not be harmful for the purposes of the NPPF.

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1 INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF STUDY

- 1.1 This Statement of Significance and Heritage Assessment has been prepared by Michael Dawson of RPS on behalf of Tom Carroll Esq owner of 28 Windhill in support of proposals to restore the former British Legion Club, to a dwelling house. The building lies within the Bishops Stortford Conservation Area north of Windhill.

Scope of Study

- 1.2 The former British Legion Club is located to the north of Windhill, Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire (Fig. 1). The former Club is a townhouse Grade II Listed (Figs. 1-26), fronting onto Windhill, one of the historic routes from the west into Bishops Stortford. To the rear is a large garden, though today much reduced from its 18th century original. The house includes a range of extensions and modifications added during the 19th century and during the 20th century. Many of the latter are institutional changes brought by the British Legion Club.
- 1.3 This Statement of Significance and Heritage Assessment is intended to provide an overview of the significance of the house, including any contribution from its setting, and to provide an assessment of the effect of the proposed restoration on its historic character.
- 1.4 The significance of a heritage asset is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 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'*.
- 1.5 This report makes reference to the relevant legislation including the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and both national and local planning policy. In addition, relevant Historic England guidance has been consulted to inform the judgements made. Relevant information, including the listing citation has also been consulted in preparing this assessment. The conclusions reached in this report are the result of detailed historical research, a survey of the property carried out on 10th October 2019 and on 23rd February 2021, historical map studies and the application of professional judgement.
- 1.6 The findings of this report are based on the known conditions at the time of writing and all findings and conclusions are time limited to no more than 3 years from the date of this report. Evidence has been examined at archive sources including the Hertfordshire County Records Office for the proposed development area. Records from the National Heritage List have also been examined together with published and other material. The evidence from these sources has been interpreted to determine the pattern of historic development of the landscape and to establish the baseline from which to assess the visual and perceived impact of the proposed development.
- 1.7 The site boundary is shown below and the proposed site location is centered on TL 48456 21328.

2 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT PLAN FRAMEWORK

- 2.1 National legislation regarding historic buildings is contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and policy guidance is provided by the NPPF.
- 2.2 In March 2012, the government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and it was last updated in February 2019. The NPPF is supported by the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), which was published online 6th March 2014, with the guidance on Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment last updated 23 July 2019. (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>).
- 2.3 The NPPF and NPPG are additionally supported by three Good Practice Advice (GPA) documents published by Historic England: GPA 1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans; GPA 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (both published March 2015). The second edition of GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets was published in December 2017.

National Legislation

- 2.4 Legislation regarding buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest is contained in the Planning (Listed buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the 1990 Act).
- 2.5 Section 1 of the Act states that a listed building means ‘*a building which is for the time being included in a list compiled or approved by the Secretary of State*’. It also states that ‘*any object or structure fixed to the building*’ and ‘*any object or structure within the curtilage of the building which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1st July 1948*’ shall be treated as part of the building.
- 2.6 Section 7 of the 1990 Act which states that “*no person shall execute or cause to be executed any works for the demolition of a listed building or for its alteration or extension in any manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest, unless the works are authorised*”.
- 2.7 Furthermore, Section 16 of the 1990 Act states that in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works to a listed building “*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 that it possesses*”.
- 2.8 Section 66 of the 1990 Act requires that:

(1) 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.
- 2.9 Sec 72 of the 1990 Act requires that:

(1) In the exercise, with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, of any powers under any of the provisions mentioned in subsection (2), special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Principles of Selection for Listed Buildings (DCMS)

- 2.10 In order to add a building to the statutory list it is necessary to demonstrate that the building meets the listing criteria. The Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) published the Principles of Selection for Listed Buildings in November 2018. This document sets out the general principles applied by the Secretary of State when deciding whether a building is of special architectural or

historic interest and should be added to the list of buildings which are compiled under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

- 2.11 The statutory criteria for listing a building are architectural interest and historic interest. In terms of the architectural interest of a building it must be shown that the building has *'importance in its design, decoration or craftsmanship. Special interest may also apply to particularly significant examples of building types or techniques (e.g. buildings displaying technological innovation or virtuosity) and significant plan forms. Engineering and technological interest can be an important consideration for some buildings'*.
- 2.12 In terms of the historic interest of a building it must be shown that the building illustrates *'important aspects of the nation's history and / or have closely substantiated historical associations with nationally important individuals, groups or events; and the building itself in its current form will afford a strong connection with the valued aspect of history'*.
- 2.13 Apart from these two statutory criteria, the Secretary of State may also take into account group value, which is defined as *'the extent to which the exterior of the building contributes to the architectural or historic interest of any group of buildings of which it forms part'*. The Secretary of State will take this into account particularly *'where buildings comprise an important architectural or historic unity or a fine example of planning (e.g. squares, terraces or model villages) or where there is a historical functional relationship between the buildings'*.
- 2.14 In the application of the two statutory criteria there are further general principles that are used to assess the degree of importance in order to reach a conclusion about the value of a building in historic or architectural terms.
- 2.15 The first principle is age and rarity which broadly means that the older the building, and therefore rarer, the more likely it is to be added to the list. There are broad guidelines set out which group buildings into categories of age.
- before 1700, all buildings that retain a significant proportion of their original fabric are likely to be regarded of special interest;
 - from 1700 to 1850, most buildings that retain a significant proportion of their original fabric are likely to be regarded of special interest, though some selection is necessary;
 - from 1850 to 1945, because of the greatly increased number of buildings erected and the much larger numbers that have survived, progressively greater selection is necessary;
 - careful selection is required for buildings from the period after 1945, another watershed for architecture.
- Buildings less than 30 years old: such buildings are not normally considered to be of special architectural or historic interest because they have yet to stand the test of time. It may nevertheless be appropriate to list some modern buildings despite their relatively recent construction – for example, if they demonstrate outstanding quality (generally interpreted as being equivalent to Grade I or II*).
- 2.16 The aesthetic merits of a building is often a key consideration in listing. However the special interest of a building is not always be reflected in obvious external visual quality. The quality of a building and buildings that are selected because they illustrate some kind of technical innovation for example, may have very little aesthetic interest. Selectivity is an important part of the process of listing and occasionally building are listed because they represent a particular historical type and they are included on the list to ensure that the best examples of that type survive.
- 2.17 National interest is another consideration. Distinctive regional buildings that may illustrate important local traditions or a nationally important but localised industry such as shoe manufacture in Northamptonshire or the potteries in Stoke would be considered for listing.

- 2.18 The state of repair of a building is not a consideration in the selection of buildings for inclusion on the statutory list.

Selection Guidelines for Specific Building Types

- 2.19 *Historic England also publishes a series of guides to the selection of buildings for listing for a range of building types. Houses in situations like that at Windhill are included in guidance which relates to domestic housing: Domestic 1: Vernacular Houses (2017) Domestic 2: Town Houses (2017).*
- 2.20 These two documents emphasise the important elements which make up the dwelling, House plans and their development, materials and construction, roofs heating, fixtures and fitting decoration as well as design, date, levels of survival, alteration, specialist use and plan form. Historical associations are very important whilst the criteria for town houses sees greater emphasis placed on urban plan form, terracing, mews, group value and architectural interest.

National Planning Policy

- 2.21 Section 16 of the NPPF, entitled Conserving and enhancing the historic environment provides guidance for planning authorities, property owners, developers and others on the conservation and investigation of heritage assets. Overall, the objectives of Section 16 of the NPPF can be summarised as seeking the:
- Delivery of sustainable development;
 - Understanding the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits brought by the conservation of the historic environment;
 - Conservation of England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance; and
 - Recognition that heritage makes to our knowledge and understanding of the past.
- 2.22 Section 16 of the NPPF recognises that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. Paragraph 189 states that planning decisions should be based on the significance of the heritage asset and that level of detail supplied by an applicant should be proportionate to the importance of the asset and should be no more than sufficient to review the potential impact of the proposal upon the significance of that asset.
- 2.23 *Heritage Assets* are defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as: a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape positively identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions. They include designated heritage assets (as defined in the NPPF) and assets identified by the local planning authority during the process of decision-making or through the plan-making process.
- 2.24 Annex 2 also defines *Archaeological Interest* as a heritage asset which holds or potentially could hold evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
- 2.25 A *Nationally Important Designated Heritage Asset* comprises a: World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area.
- 2.26 *Significance* is defined as: The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.
- 2.27 *Setting* is defined as: The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

- 2.28 In short, government policy provides a framework which:
- Protects nationally important designated Heritage Assets;
 - Protects the settings of such designations;
 - In appropriate circumstances seeks adequate information (from desk-based assessment and field evaluation where necessary) to enable informed decisions;
 - Provides for the excavation and investigation of sites not significant enough to merit *in-situ* preservation.
- 2.29 The NPPG reiterates that the conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is a core planning principle, requiring a flexible and thoughtful approach. Furthermore, it highlights that neglect and decay of heritage assets is best addressed through ensuring they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation. Importantly, the guidance states that if complete, or partial loss of a heritage asset is justified, the aim should then be to capture and record the evidence of the asset's significance and make the interpretation publicly available.
- 2.30 Key elements of the guidance relate to assessing harm. An important consideration should be whether the proposed works adversely affect a key element of the heritage asset's special architectural or historic interest. Additionally, it is the degree of harm, rather than the scale of development, that is to be assessed. The level of 'substantial harm' is considered to be a high bar that may not arise in many cases. Essentially, whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision taker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the NPPF. Importantly, harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting. Setting is defined as the surroundings in which an asset is experienced and may be more extensive than the curtilage. A thorough assessment of the impact of proposals upon setting needs to take into account, and be proportionate to, the significance of the heritage asset and the degree to which proposed changes enhance or detract from that significance and the ability to appreciate it.
- 2.31 In considering any planning application for development, the planning authority will be mindful of the framework set by government policy, in this instance the NPPF, by current Development Plan Policy and by other material considerations.

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (MHCLG)

- 2.32 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) has been published in order to aid the application of the NPPF. It reiterates that conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is a core planning principle.
- 2.33 It states that in legislation and designation criteria, the terms 'special architectural or historic interest' of a listed building is used to describe all or part of the identified heritage asset's significance.
- 2.34 It also states that the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport is responsible for the identification and designation of listed buildings. It defines a listed building as a building which has been designated because of its special architectural or historic interest and (unless the list entry indicates otherwise) includes not only the building itself but also:
- any object or structure fixed to the building.
 - any object or structure within the curtilage of the building which, although not fixed to the building, forms part of the land and has done so since before 1 July 1948.

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning

- 2.35 In March 2015, PPS5 Practice Guide was withdrawn and Historic England replaced it with Good Practice Advice in Planning Notes (GPAs). These include:
- GPA1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans (March 2015);

GPA2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (March 2015);
and

GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (December 2017).

2.36 These GPAs provide supporting guidance relating to good conservation practice. The documents particularly focus on how good practice can be achieved through the principles included within national policy and guidance. As such, the GPAs provide information on good practice to assist LPAs, planning and other consultants, owners, applicants and other interested parties when implementing policy found within the NPPF and PPG relating to the historic environment.

GPA2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (March 2015)

2.37 This document provides advice on numerous ways in which decision making in the historic environment could be undertaken, emphasising that the first step for all applicants is to understand the significance of any affected heritage asset and the contribution of its setting to that significance. In line with the NPPF and PPG, the document states that early engagement and expert advice in considering and assessing the significance of heritage assets is encouraged. The advice suggests a structured, staged approach to the assembly and analysis of relevant information:

- 1) Understand the significance of the affected assets;
- 2) Understand the impact of the proposal on that significance;
- 3) Avoid, minimise and mitigate impact in a way that meets the objectives of the NPPF;
- 4) Look for opportunities to better reveal or enhance significance;
- 5) Justify any harmful impacts in terms of the sustainable development objective of conserving significance balanced with the need for change; and
- 6) Offset negative impacts to significance by enhancing others through recording, disseminating and archiving archaeological and historical interest of the important elements of the heritage assets affected.

GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Second Edition, December 2017)

2.38 This advice note focuses on the management of change within the setting of heritage assets. This document replaces GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (March 2017) and Seeing History in the View (English Heritage, 2011) in order to aid practitioners with the implementation of national legislation, policies and guidance relating to the setting of heritage assets found in the 1990 Act, the NPPF and PPG. The guidance is largely a continuation of the philosophy and approach of the 2011 and 2015 documents and does not present a divergence in either the definition of setting or the way in which it should be assessed.

2.39 As with the NPPF the document defines setting as ‘the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve’. Setting is also described as being a separate term to curtilage, character and context. The guidance emphasises that setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, and that its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset, or the ability to appreciate that significance. It also states that elements of setting may make a positive, negative or neutral contribution to the significance of the heritage asset.

2.40 While setting is largely a visual term, with views considered to be an important consideration in any assessment of the contribution that setting makes to the significance of an asset, and thus the way in which an asset is experienced, setting also encompasses other environmental factors including noise, vibration and odour. Historical and cultural associations may also form part of the asset’s setting, which can inform or enhance the significance of a heritage asset.

- 2.41 This document provides guidance on practical and proportionate decision making with regards to the management of change within the setting of heritage assets. It is stated that the protection of the setting of a heritage asset need not prevent change and that decisions relating to such issues need to be based on the nature, extent and level of the significance of a heritage asset, further weighing up the potential public benefits associated with the proposals. It is further stated that changes within the setting of a heritage asset may have positive or neutral effects.
- 2.42 The document also states that the contribution made to the significance of heritage assets by their settings will vary depending on the nature of the heritage asset and its setting, and that different heritage assets may have different abilities to accommodate change without harming their significance. Setting should, therefore, be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- 2.43 Historic England recommends using a series of detailed steps in order to assess the potential effects of a proposed development on significance of a heritage asset. The 5-step process is as follows:
- 1) Identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected;
 - 2) Assess the degree to which these settings and views make a contribution to the significance of a heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated;
 - 3) Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on the significance or on the ability to appreciate it;
 - 4) Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm; and
 - 5) Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

Historic England Advice Notes in Planning

- 2.44 In addition to the above documentation, Historic England has published eleven core Historic England Advice Notes (HEANs) that provide detailed and practical advice on how national policy and guidance is implemented.
- 2.45 The documents relevant to the Site include:
- HEAN2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets (February 2016); and
 - HEAN9: The Adaptive Reuse of Traditional Farm Buildings (October 2017).
- HEAN2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets (February 2016)
- 2.46 The purpose of this document is to provide information in respect of the repair, restoration and alterations to heritage assets. It promotes guidance for both LPAs, consultants, owners, applicants and other interested parties in order to promote well-informed and collaborative conservation.
- 2.47 The best way to conserve a building is to keep it in use, or to find an appropriate new use. This document states that ‘an unreasonable, inflexible approach will prevent action that could give a building new life...A reasonable proportionate approach to owners’ needs is therefore essential’.
- 2.48 Whilst this is the case, the limits imposed by the significance of individual elements are an important consideration, especially when considering an asset’s compatibility with Building Regulations and the Equality Act. As such, it is good practice for LPAs to consider imaginative ways of avoiding such conflict.
- 2.49 This document provides information relating to proposed change to a heritage asset, which are characterised as:
- Repair;
 - restoration;
 - addition and alteration, either singly or in combination; and,

works for research alone.

Local Planning Policy

East Herts District Plan 2018

2.50 The District Plan sets out the planning framework for the District for the period of 2011-2033 and contains Development Management policies that will be used to determine planning applications. Relevant to heritage is:

Policy HA1 Designated Heritage Assets

I. Development proposals should preserve and where appropriate enhance the historic environment of East Herts.

II. Development proposals that would lead to substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss. Less than substantial harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

III. Where there is evidence of neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset will not be taken into account in any decision.

IV. The Council will, as part of a positive strategy, pursue opportunities for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment recognising its role and contribution in achieving sustainable development.

Policy HA2 Non-Designated Heritage Assets

I. The Council will engage with key stakeholders and local communities to identify non-designated heritage assets that contribute to local distinctiveness and refer to existing information in the historic environment record.

II. Where a proposal would adversely affect a non-designated heritage asset, regard will be had to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Bishops Stortford Conservation Area

Bishops Stortford Conservation was adopted in 2014. It includes several management policies amongst which are proposals to extend the Conservation Area and improve the application of 'saved' planning policies are contained in the East Herts. Local Plan Second Review adopted in April 2007.

3 SITE ASSESSMENT, HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL APPRIASAL

Introduction

- 3.1 The section which follows is divided into two parts. In the first part a brief site appraisal provides a description of the location and the layout of the former Club and its rear gardens. The second part is an historical and architectural appraisal of the building placing it in its historic and architectural context and describing its setting. The significance of the listed building is based on data from the Hertfordshire County Records Office and site inspection. This is based on the criteria on the NPPF and published by Historic England in Conservation Principals. The impact of the proposed restoration is assessed in Section 4.

28 Windhill, former British Legion Club, Bishops Stortford (II)

- 3.2 **Site Assessment:** 28 Windhill, the former Bishops Stortford British Legion Club is situated on higher ground west of the River Stort. It lies west of the historic core of Bishop's Stortford focussed today on the High Street, the former Cornmarket and the crossing over the River Stort. The house fronts directly onto Windhill and has a substantial garden to the rear. The house on Windhill, abbreviated from Windmill Hill, lies west of the Saxon settlement which grew up around a chapel and a ford over the River Stort. In the medieval period the river crossing was protected by a castle which stood above the east bank.
- 3.3 In the 17th century when Charles II built a new road through Hockerill to ease his journey to Newmarket the town developed quickly as a coaching centre and in the 18th century the Turnpike Trusts and the River Stort Navigation were instrumental in the development of the malting and brewing industries.
- 3.4 The house at 28 Windhill probably originated as a town house in the late 17th or early 18th century, possibly as a result of the increasing prosperity brought by the King's new road and nascent malting and brewing trades.
- 3.5 The house is a substantial dwelling on Windhill and in its 19th century heyday included a large garden to the rear which may have reflected an earlier medieval close. This following section of this report will focus on providing a statement of significance for the house.

Historical Appraisal

- 3.6 The house at 28 Windhill almost certainly originates in the late 17th or early 18th century when a small town-house of two bays was built on land to the north of Windhill. The house fronted onto Windhill and occupied a rectangular plot probably originally a medieval close. The house is accessed from Windhill and its principal elevation looks south over the road.
- 3.7 The house is described by the list entry as "*18th century refaced in mid-19th century. Painted stucco, slate mansard roof. Two and a half storeys, 5 windows. Modern central Doric porch. Two-storey canted sash bays to ends of elevation with architrave window surrounds. Original sashes in central south windows. Three open pedimented dormers. Included for group value.*" It was listed on the 11th July 1983.
- 3.8 3.8 Windhill, the location of the house, is one of the principal routes into the town from the west. The earliest specific evidence for the road has been gathered by Cooper whose map of land boundaries shows the location of the house was farmland in the 14th century. By the 17th century there were some 34 houses in Wyndhill according to a list drawn up by the Church Wardens in 1642. At this time the town had expanded little beyond its medieval core and remained focussed

on the river crossing. Maps of 1587 and 1617 show the limited extent of the town with the location of 28 Windhill still farm land. By the end of the 17th century a malt house had been established on the high ground south of 28 Windhill and houses were beginning to be built flanking the roadway. In the 18th century a windmill was recorded on Windhill by which time the town had become an established centre for malting. Malt houses clustered along Windhill, Water Lane and South Street and by the end of the 18th century the town was a monopoly supplier to the porter brewers of London.

- 3.9 Windhill continued to develop. The town's grammar school, established in the 17th century, which been particularly successful under Dr Thomas Tookes, was relocated to Windhill at the start of the 18th century, though the town remained largely clustered around the medieval core.
- 3.10 The 18th and 19th century saw considerable expansion as the town grew with the advent of the turnpikes, the River Stort Navigation and the railway. Maps of the 19th century show the extent of the development along Windhill.
- 3.11 The first possible documentary reference to 28 Windhill is on the Enclosure Award and map of 1826 (CRO E82). A small dwelling is outlined in a location which appears to be west of 28 Windhill and in the Award text describes how a cottage on Windhill was exchanged by the vicar of Bishop's Stortford with Joseph Taylor for a cottage in Apted Field. The vicar's cottage had comprised two perches of land bounded on the north and east by the garden and buildings of Joseph Taylor and to the south the street called Windhill. It is possible that 28 Windhill was the building and garden belonging to Joseph Taylor.
- 3.12 The Ordnance Survey series from 1876 onwards shows 28 Windhill as a substantial house on Windhill. By 1876 the house is labelled *Windhill Villa* by the OS though the name had gone by 1896. In the early 20th century the house was owned by Philip Rust who during the Second World War he had lost three sons and in 1948 when the British Legion was searching for new premises he offered it to the association for some £3,000. The house became the British Legion Club on 11th October 1948.
- 3.13 The Stortford History website describes the acquisition of 28 Windhill.¹

"Secretary Jack Gallimore then wasted no time in contacting Jack Tissiman (former owner of Tissimans in the High Street), Bernard Sparrow (who owned a hardware shop in North Street) and Colonel Grant who managed the Match factory at Hockerill. Without hesitation these three men gave £3,000 to purchase the premises, which was completed on 11 October 1948. Extra costs, including the 'necessary' inclusion of a bar in the premises, came out of the proceeds of their Social Centre Fund and voluntary donations. An invitation for a member of the Royal family to attend the grand opening was turned down, as was a request to war-time entertainer Bing Crosby, but the ceremony was finally attended by three film stars of the day – Dereck de Marney, Rosalind Johns and Meg Jenkins".

- 3.14 The web site goes on to describe how:

"When the house was bought by the British Legion it had a substantial plot of land to the rear that stretched northwards as far as Hadham Road. The original boundary wall is still in place, as are the two small entrance gates that gave access to the grounds, but in 1957 the Legion sold the land to property developers for £2,000. Now, where there was once a rose garden and two bowling greens is a housing development named Regency Close. The club had a branch membership of

¹ <http://www.stortfordhistory.co.uk/guide4/british-legion/> accessed 4/10/19

950 at its peak in 1958 when the property was used by the Legion the second floor was rented out as office space”.

3.15 On the

“ground floor [were] displays [and] historical exhibits along with many fine watercolours of local scenes painted in the early 1900s by a former Legion member, John Blake. There also hangs here a photograph of Allied warship K134 – otherwise known as HMS Clover – given to the town in 1993 by a former crew member. Launched on 30 January 1941 the warship was a formidable U-Boat hunter of the Second World War, used extensively in the North Atlantic to protect Britain’s vital supply routes. It was also the first corvette to reach the Normandy beaches on D-Day and subsequently made 20 trips to the French shore.”

3.16 In September 2017 confronted by spiralling maintenance and repair costs the British Legion was obliged to put 28 Windhill up for sale. It was sold by estate agent Knight Frank. The British Legion is now based at the New Apton Centre and the former Club is in private hands.

Architectural Appraisal

3.17 **Designation:** The former British Legion Club, 28 Windhill was listed grade II on 11th July 1983. It is located within the Bishops Stortford Conservation Area and is one of several 18th and 19th century houses still prominent in the town, though the house is not referred to in the Conservation Area appraisal.² Pevsner describes it as on the north side of Windhill *“the British Legion Club is a good early 19th century: two canted bay-widows, Greek Doric porch.”*³

3.18 **Description:** The former British Legion Club comprises a substantial town house which originated in the late 17th or early 18th century. The principal elevation of the house is the south front overlooking Windhill. It is largely 19th century painted stucco. A near central front door beneath a modern Doric porch is flanked by canted bays rising through two storeys. To right and left of the porch are single 2 over 4 sliding sash sidelights. To far left is a planked doorway to the rear yard. At first floor are two a symmetrical lights, 3 over 4, above the porch. The flanking bays are capped by shallow pitched slate roofs. The upper storey is characterised by three prominent dormers rising through the lower mansard roof plane. There is a single ridge stack rising above the upper roof and the whole is hipped to left and right. A further end stack rises from the left (west) gable.

3.19 The rear elevation is characterised by three extensions or rear ranges each of differ character. To left is a broad brick-built bay of two storeys. Rectangular in plan the rear elevation comprises a canted bay with a central French window giving access to the garden terrace. The central French window is flanked by tall casement lights with modern frames. At first floor two sliding sash windows are separated by a central, now blocked window aperture. A shallow hipped slate roof fans out over the rear bay. Between the extension and principal range a single chimney stack rises above ridge height.

3.20 The second extension, to the right, is a smaller version. Rectangular in plan it too rises through two storeys and has central French windows which also provide access to the garden terrace. At first floor there is a 3 over 4 sliding sash window beneath a shallow pitched, hipped slate roof. A single brick chimney stack rises from the west elevation through the pitched and gabled roof which covers both of the central extensions.

3.21 The third extension is a combination of a flat roofed, rectangular service wing or boiler house with substantial chimneys. It has no windows to the rear and the tall brick chimney stack rising to full

² East Herts Council *Bishop's Stortford Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan* (adopted December 2014)

³ Pevsner N, Cherry 2002, 103

height above the ridge level of the main house roof. The three visible flues and substantial character of the stack suggests it may be associated with an earlier laundry and boiler room. Wrapped around this element is a further service area with a half hipped slate roof which comprises the lavatory area of the former club. The interior is entirely modern and the exterior painted brickwork suggests it was almost certainly built after the mid-20th century. The modern window frames also suggest a mid- to late- 20th century date.

- 3.22 **Ground Floor:** The ground floor (Figs 9-11) comprises four elements: the principal range of two rooms and lobby entrance onto Windhill and to the rear three perpendicular ranges extending the house to the north. To right at the junction of the extension and principal range is a small service corridor and rear club room with canted bay providing access to the rear garden. In the centre is a smaller room with fireplace and canted bay also providing access onto the rear garden terrace. To left is an offset suite of service (boiler room and lavatories) and games rooms separated from the principal range by a narrow service stairway to the 1st and second floors.
- 3.23 The ground floor interior is characterised by bar areas, settling or games room, function rooms lavatories and kitchen facilities. Entering through the front door a single flight staircase rises to first floor on the right of the hall or lobby. The stairs are probably 19th century in date with mahogany handrail, open strings with simple rectangular section banisters. The staircase is to the right of the hall. To the left is a through passage leading to a large bar area to the left. Spanning the hall is a three centred arch running the length of the hall. To the right is a rectangular panelled room with bay window. This room probably represents the earliest element of the house. It has two lateral ceiling beams, now encased in panelling, and there are two panelled doors with L shaped hinges as well as the painted chess board panelling which covers all four walls. The age of this rooms derives from the ceiling beam and dimensions rather than the panelling and doors. The house seems to have been significantly improved in the late 19th century and the panelling may be a revival decorative feature.⁴
- 3.24 To left of the hallway/lobby entrance is a large open bar area. This is a modern space with a single bay window. The supporting beam and column suggests this room has been created from a smaller spaces and that earlier dividing walls have been removed. The small brick arch fireplace is a modern creation. There is nothing of historic interest in this space.
- 3.25 To the rear of the bar area and club room are three extensions to the north with rooms leading to the garden terrace. In the right extension some 19th century panelling survives as window shutters together with two door surrounds. The rear window and door frames may include some late 19th century timber. In the central extension the smaller rectangular room retains its ceiling moulding, fireplace and deep skirting probably of mid-late 19th century date, though the rear French door is later 20th century in date.
- 3.26 The service area of lavatories, boiler room, games room and boiler room is a collection of utilitarian spaces of no historic or architectural merit. The rear toilet block appears to have been made from re-used brick with a mono-pitched extension and late 20th century timber window frames. The club room has a tall ceiling and has probably been created from an earlier 2-storey structure. The roofline is suggested by the chamfered offset above the present roof height (see figs 8.1-8.2).
- 3.27 **Cellars:** Beneath the rear extensions lie several areas of cellarage (Fig 13) . The cellars are accessed by a narrow dog leg stairway to the rear of the bar area. The cellars are brick lined with brick plinths and niches. The brickwork which is painted throughout suggests that there were two phases of cellars. To the right the smaller storage areas appear to be the earlier range with the larger rectangular space, subdivided by a brick dividing wall beneath the games room

⁴ Long H 1993 *The Edwardian House*, Fig 2.8

contemporary with the room above. Beneath the centre rear extension is a further rectangular cellar with a brick three centered arch.

- 3.28 **First Floor:** The first floor comprises a T shaped plan (Fig 15-17). Across the principal front the range has been sub-divided on the left of the staircase into 2 rooms whilst to the right the rectangular room reflects the ground floor arrangements. In common with the room below this room is also panelled throughout. Immediately to the rear of the principal rooms is a complex of smaller spaces which occupy the core of the house with two rooms to the rear in the rearward extension. Both have canted bay windows overlooking the rear garden.
- 3.29 The first-floor panelled room to the right is the probably the earliest part of the building. It is panelled throughout and has twin lateral ceiling beams. To the rear is a small fireplace which may be original. The door which provides access to the central landing is 18th century in style as is the now blocked doorway to the small room above the front door. The rooms to the left of the staircase are modern creations. The access door is a modern cavity door and the stopped-up fireplace has a late 20th century gas fire. The woodwork in this is crude with simple planking serving as skirting. The room to the far left is small rectangular space. A stopped-up fireplace is evident in the west gable and there is a single 19th century panelled door with possibly surviving 19th century surrounds. A low canted bay provides light.
- 3.30 To the rear left a smaller subdivided space comprises cupboards and service space before the narrow stairwell of the service stairs to the rear.
- 3.31 The central rear extension is small rectangular room accessed by a short flight of three stairs from the central landing through a narrow doorway. It retains its 19th skirting, has a low modern ceiling and the stopped-up fireplace, flanked by shelves, has a modern gas fire. A canted bay provides light. To the right is the larger of the extensions. The rear rooms have been subdivided. The main room retains its 19th century skirting, but the fireplace has been stopped up and is now occupied by an electric fire. A single panelled 19th century door provides access from a small modern lobby entrance. The lobby is one space amongst three service areas which have been created out of the once much larger space in the rear extension.
- 3.32 **Second Floor:** The second floor represents the servant's accommodation of the 19th century house (Fig 18-20). It comprises three rooms across the principal range with a small extension to the rear. Access is by a narrow, two flight rear stairway which opens onto a small rectangular landing. This area has been substantially remodelled to provide 20th century accommodation almost certainly during the tenure of the British Legion. The surfaces have been variously painted, wallpapered and plastered in a variety of colours and finishes. Some possibly original deep plank skirting survives, though stretches of 1970s skirting indicates the date of conversion together with cavity doors some with door lights and safety glass.
- 3.33 **The roof:** Only a small area of the main roof was accessible through a trapdoor (Fig 20) located above the 2nd floor landing. It revealed a conventional 19th century machine saw frame supporting the low-pitched central section of the mansard roof. Principal rafters, supported by single purlins made of machine cut pine, support the slate tiles. The frame has been boarded and slate laid above, in a form which confirms its 19th century date.



No 28 Windhill shown as Windhill Villa (OS 1st Ed 1874 publ 1879)

- 3.34 **Setting:** The former British Legion Club is situated at the west end of Windhill, today a modern tree lined thoroughfare. The principal aspect of the house is its south facing elevation which overlooks the road and the maltings at 15b and 13 Windhill, now converted, to the south. The former club is flanked to the west by a modern house (Fig 23) and to the east by a 19th century villa (Fig 23). During the summer and early autumn the house is obscured by the trees flanking Windhill. The general aspect of Windhill which provides the wider setting is that of a modern road, lined by parked cars though flanked by older houses. The area is described as Area 5 in the Conservation Area Appraisal, *“General Overview. Mapping from the 19th century shows the tightly knit layout of the historic core centred on the junction of High Street, North Street, Bridge Street and Market Street. The south west quadrant of Area 5 was more open and dominated by dwellings in extensive treed grounds such as Elmhurst, Windhill House and Windhill Lodge...”* While individual listed buildings in Windhill area described no 28 is not mentioned.



Map showing neighbouring properties and listed buildings (Δ). (©Heritage Gateway)

- 3.35 To the rear of 28 Windhill is a now overgrown garden. During the 19th century this was much larger. The 1st edition OS of 1874 (above) shows an approximately rectangular area of garden extending to the north. Along the west side is a driveway leading to several rectangular buildings which almost certainly represent a coach house and stabling, typical characteristics of houses of this stature in the 19th century. ‘Villa Cottages’ on Bells Hill may have been associated with 28 Windhill in the last quarter of the 19th century when it was known as Windhill Villa.
- 3.36 To the north is modern development along Regency Close. This area was developed after 1958 and the houses of this development can be seen, despite the foliage, from the rear of the 28 Windhill. The rear brick-built boundary wall of the garden can still be seen along the A1250 Hadham Road together with a small postern gate. To the west is 30 Windhill, a modern in-fill building set back slightly from the road frontage and to the east is a 19th villa, 26 Windhill “Vyse Court” (II).⁵ The boundary between these two house still remains though somewhat eroded amongst the modern development flanking the A1250.
- 3.37 To the west the garden is partially bounded by a brick wall in which a portal gate provides access to the rear of 26a Windhill from the rear of a modern timber garden shed. This is now disused, though now disused,.

Statement of significance

- 3.38 **Introduction:** The Department of Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) published the Principles of Selection for Listed Buildings in Nov 2018. This document sets out the general principles applied

⁵ 26 Windhill, Vyse Court, c.1830. Stucco, slate roof. Two storeys, 3 windows to street with bracketed gable. East side has central porte cochere at right angles to elevation, consoles supporting open roof. Pedestals with urns flank door. Rear elevation to garden has 2-storey Tuscan pilasters with full entablature. Projecting square ground floor window bay on east, beneath pedimented first floor with bracketed cornice over window. Modern ground floor French window on west. Other windows sash.

by the Secretary of State when deciding whether a building is of special architectural or historic interest and should be added to the list of buildings which are compiled under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

- 3.39 The statutory criteria for listing a building are architectural interest and historic interest. In terms of the architectural interest of a building it must be shown that the building is *'of importance in its architectural design, decoration or craftsmanship; special interest may also apply to nationally important examples of particular building types and techniques (e.g. buildings displaying technological innovation or virtuosity) and significant plan forms'*.
- 3.40 In terms of the historic interest of a building it must be shown that the building demonstrates *'important aspects of the nation's social, economic, cultural, or military history and/or have close historical associations with nationally important people. There should normally be some quality of interest in the physical fabric of the building itself to justify the statutory protection afforded by listing'*.
- 3.41 The significance of the former British Legion Club is assessed using these two statutory criteria. Group value is also taken into account as the list description specifically notes that the Club was *'included for group value'*.
- 3.42 As discussed in Section 2, Historic England provides further advice that builds on the legally defined selection guidelines within its own detailed selection guidance that provides a framework for assessment of significance for a range of building types. The assessment of the former Club is considered against the Historic England Designation Listing Selection Guide that deals with residential buildings published as *Domestic 2 Town Houses* (April 2017). This considers the development of fashionable town houses especially in London. It focusses on the transition from medieval tenements and merchant houses to town houses and the way architects designed buildings for the increasingly limited space in town centres. Much of the guidance focusses on the specific house types. However, the former British Legion Club whilst evidently a town house of 18th century date is also characteristic of the late Georgian and Victorian villa assessed in *Domestic 3: Suburban and Country Houses* (Listing Selection Guide 2017). The selection guide notes how *"At the end of the eighteenth century, the building of the new turnpike roads set off a fresh bout of linear suburban development. In London this can best be seen in Kennington, Lambeth and Southwark along the new main roads leading south from the Thames, where numbers of large semi-detached houses and terraces built in yellow London stock brick still survive. Road improvements elsewhere in the country produced similar developments, often on the edge of quite minor towns. Many of the new urban-style houses were substantial and intended for prosperous occupants who could afford to keep a horse and carriage, often in a detached coach house or stable building."*
- 3.43 Apart from the typical characteristics that define this building types the selection guidelines include more details about the specific considerations that should be taken into account as part of an assessment of significance. The relevant specific considerations in this case include the following architectural quality⁶ and regional variation, group value and historic associations.
- 3.44 **Architectural Quality, Survival and Group Value:** The designation guide notes that *"Most houses which pre-date 1850 that are unaltered and of interest will be listable. Because much housing from the middle years of the nineteenth century became more standardised and because there is so much of it, critical faculties can sometimes be numbed: but this is just where greater judgment is required. It is thus important to give the assessment of individual buildings particular care and*

⁶ Described under aesthetics in the *Domestic 3*, page 13

attention. Quality of elevational design, interest of planning, quality and survival of decorative elements, innovation rather than imitation: these considerations will be important.”

- 3.45 At the same time Group Value is described by the DCMS guidance as “*The extent to which the exterior of the building contributes to the architectural or historic interest of any group of buildings of which it forms part, generally known as group value.particularly where buildings comprise an important architectural or historic unity or a fine example of planning (e.g. squares, terraces or model villages) or where there is a historical functional relationship between the buildings. Sometimes group value will be achieved through a co-location of diverse buildings of different types and dates.*”
- 3.46 **Historic Associations:** In relation to historic associations the designation guide notes “*Well-documented historic associations of national importance may increase the case for listing but normally a building should be of some architectural merit in itself or it should be preserved in a form that directly illustrates and confirms its historic associations. In designating the residences of famous persons, a view needs to be reached which balances their historical significance with the interest of the house: degree of survival, and the legibility of the connection between occupant and house..*”
- 3.47 The effect of the development will be the creation of rooms within the existing spaces retaining the character and appearance of the existing ranges.

Assessment of Significance

- 3.48 Based on the criteria set out in Principles of Selection, the significance of the former British Legion Club is considered to lie primarily in its visual presence on Windhill, its group value amongst other historic buildings on Windhill, its architectural interest and its setting.
- 3.49 **Special Architectural and Historic Interest:** Surprisingly, despite searches in national and regional archives no documentary evidence has been recovered which illuminates the early history of 28 Windhill. Preliminary visual and photograph survey indicates that the house probably originated in the late 18th century, possibly as a two or three bay town house. It was probably built as Bishops Stortford expanded from its medieval core with the development of malting and brewing. The earliest fabric of the house probably lies hidden beneath later panelling and plasterwork but is evident in the thickness of the walls in the range to the right (east) of the front door (Figs 9 & 24). A small proportion of the west gable of this early house may survive in the west gable of the present building. At some stage possibly during the later 18th century the house was improved and panelling added to ground floor and first floor rooms probably in revivalist style in the late 19th century. Today the panelling survives together with 18th century style panelled doors on ground and first floor (Figs 10 & 16).
- 3.50 At some stage in the late 18th or possibly early 19th century the house may have been improved with the creation of an entrance lobby and an elegant staircase. A cellar may have been added to the rear.
- 3.51 During the 19th century, possibly as late as the 1880s, the house was re-fronted with flanking bays constructed either side of the front door and later a Doric porch added. Also probably as late as the 1880s when bay windows became popular the rear extensions may have been added. The increasing scale of the house during the 19th century also provides the context for re-roofing and the addition of servant’s quarters together with the service stairway behind the present bar area. The higher ceilings and short stair way on the 1st floor providing access to the extensions as well as the surviving joinery support the late 19th century date for these improvements.
- 3.52 The 19th century house can be seen as a substantial town house with parlour and drawing room on the ground floor, garden rooms to the rear with cellars to store coal and foodstuffs. The first floor provided bedroom accommodation, dressing rooms, WCs and nursery with servant’s access to their accommodation provided by the stairs rising from the present games room to the 2nd floor

roof space. The games room, although lacking any surviving features, was almost certainly the 19th century kitchen with the scullery now re-formed as part of the lavatories and boiler room.

- 3.53 The changes to the roof design probably took place in the mid-19th century. The construction of the roof frame in machine cut timber suggest at least a mid-century date. The Mansard style of roofing was popular in the mid-19th century especially when pierced with dormers which provided a spacious and economical attic storey.
- 3.54 The final additions to the house took place in the late 20th century with the addition of the lavatory block to the rear and a series of minor embellishments by the British Legion including fire-escape ladders, service areas, office space and interior subdivisions and the creation of a bar area.
- 3.55 **Group Value:** The history of Windhill is well known from the work of Cooper 2005. The earliest documentary evidence established the upper part of the road was agricultural land beyond the medieval town in the 14th century. It was not until the late 17th century that a windmill and malting was established at the top of Windmill Hill. During the 18th century malt houses proliferated but the town still 'hugged', in the words of Cooper, the medieval core. The 19th century expansion due to improvements in transport culminating with the railways led to further expansion of the town and the arrival of new industries. This provides the context for the improvements at 28 Windhill and the development of housing along Windhill. Several houses including No 6, 48, 50-56 Windhill were built during the 19th century adding to several probably early houses such as 7-9 and 15 Windhill. These houses give Windhill its present day 'historic' character. Such early houses provide the context for the 'group value' of 28 Windhill which forms part of the street scape valued by the Conservation Area Appraisal as part of Area 5.
- 3.56 **Setting Contribution:** The house at 28 Windhill has a substantial presence as part of the street frontage and streetscape at the west end of Windhill. It is somewhat hidden by foliage during the late spring, summer and early autumn but during the winter has a strong presence between the modern house at 26 Windhill and Vyse House both of which are set back from the street frontage. Whilst the prominence of the building is affected by the seasonal changes to the trees lining the road this does not materially detract from the important contribution the south elevation and porch make to the street. Flanking the house the low wall and pedestrian gate (Fig 21) to the west somewhat detracts from the house and makes no contribution to its significance. The grounds to the rear of the pedestrian gate comprise an enclosed area formerly used as storage for bar-room and cellar equipment. This is a redundant service area created from the access visible on the 1874 (1879) OS map above.
- 3.57 The gardens to the rear of the former British Legion Club are today somewhat over grown. They provide frame for the rear elevation of the house which has the typical characteristics of its re-use as a club. Lavatory extension, steel fire-escape stairs and flat roof extensions with some modern joinery and a modern rear terrace. The image is degraded and corporate in its current form. The garden setting serves only to remind the viewer of the former status of the house.

Summary of Significance

- 3.58 The lists below and the phase plans at Figs 24-26 provide a summary of the historic features and architectural elements that are considered to have a high, medium, low or negative contribution to the significance of the former British Legion Club. Those features that provide a high contribution to significance should be repaired and kept, while those features with a lower contribution to significance have a higher tolerance for change. Those architectural features that detract from the historic and architectural interest of the farm buildings, and hence provide a negative contribution to significance, provide an opportunity for enhancement.

28 Windhill, former British Legion Club

High Contribution to Significance

- The principal south front and general southern profile; form of window framing and dormers.
- The panelling and joinery of the ground floor room to right, ceiling beams and plasterwork ceiling.
- The central staircase and lobby space including ceiling arch.
- The Doric Porch.
- The 19th century joinery and fireplaces on the ground floor in the rear extensions.
- The 2nd floor room to right. Panelling, 18th century style doors, ceiling beams together with ceiling plasterwork mouldings.
- The 2nd floor central extension room ceiling moulding and rear extension joinery and window where surviving historic window frames.
- Three tread staircase to rear extension.
- Re-used doors to left.
- Rear service stairway to cellar.
- Rear servants/staff stairway.
- Second Floor rear servant's stairway and stairwell.
- Cellar retained brickwork.
- Overall roof structure.

Low Contribution to Significance

- Rear elevation and garden terrace
- Modern corporate joinery on ground floor and in-service areas
- Internal fittings to games room, lavatories and boiler room
- 1st floor modern glazed partitions, cavity doors, electric and gas fires and modern surrounds, studding partition and plasterboard walls.
- Modern picture rails, skirting and poor quality of finish to fireplaces
- 2nd floor modern kitchen fittings and stud work internal walls.
- 1st floor pipework evident on central; landing
- The small blocked window in the rear elevation.

Negative Contribution to Significance

- Cellars modern pipework related to beer storage and British Legion Club facilities.
- Ground Floor bar construction, modern fireplace to left.
- Modern lavatory block.
- Bar area and modern cupboard to left of fireplace.
- Games room, modern false-panelled ceiling, modern side door, pipework and conduits, modern cavity doors.
- 1st floor modern service fittings to kitchen (rear right).

Fire-escape stairs.

Rear extension rooms, plastic secondary glazing, institutional heating pipes and radiators.

Modern 2nd floor wall finishes and cavity doors.

20th century TV aerials.

Capped chimney stacks.

Central Rear extension joinery (French Windows).

Bishops Stortford Conservation Area

- 3.59 The former British Legion is situated in Area 5 of the Bishops Stortford Conservation Area which comprises: the remainder of the town including the main historic core centred on the Market Square. Within this area the main streets are Windhill, High Street, King Street, Basbow Lane, North Street, Water Lane, Church Street, Market Street and Bridge Street.
- 3.60 Windhill is a continuation of the High Street as it climbs westwards away from the River Stort crossing. The tight knit layout of the historic core centred on the junction of High Street, North Street, Bridge Street and Market Street gives way to a more open area dominated by dwellings some with extensive treed grounds such as Elmhurst, Windhill House and Windhill Lodge.
- 3.61 Today the south west quadrant beyond Bells Hill and the B1004, the Conservation Area is dominated by schools and large buildings such as Priory Court. Close to the house Windhill is flanked on the north side by closely spaced trees and a narrow pavement. The single carriage way road has perpendicular parking bays along the south side in front of parking a row of historic buildings, 3, 9, 11, 13 and 15 Windhill.
- 3.62 A Link Road now connects The Causeway with Hadham Road thus bypassing the historic core and containing large shopping complexes in the broad location of land formerly subject to flooding and the old alignment of the River Stort.

6.290. In brief summary in Area 5 this Appraisal has identified numbers of unlisted properties worthy of retention and some being suitable candidates for additional protection. Walls of good quality make a considerable contribution and enhance the quality of the street scene in a number of locations.

4 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Proposed Works

- 4.1 The proposed works at the former British Legion comprise the restoration of the now redundant club premises to re-establish 28 Windhill as a family dwelling and substantial town house contributing once again to the vibrant historic environment of Bishops Stortford . There are three aspects to the restoration including (1) revitalisation of the interior to a standard commensurate with a modern, though historic, dwelling, (2) the addition of a pool house in the rear garden and (3) the re-opening of an access to the west to provide a driveway and carparking in keeping with the restored home.
- 4.2 The details of the proposed restoration of the interior, the addition of a swimming pool and the access arrangements are illustrated in a series of detailed design plans by Ian Abrams Architect Ltd. In addition to the design plans 12 views of the proposed restoration have been provided which not only demonstrate the improvements to the house, but provide an indication of how the proposed works will complement and enhance the Conservation Area with designs in keeping with the character of the Area.
- 4.3 The objective of the proposals is to recreate a family residence of 28 Windhill, returning a rather tired later 20th century club premises, evidently repaired and modified on a budget and with little concern for the aesthetics of late 19th century architecture, once more into a graceful townhouse . The architect's plans seek to make the best possible use of existing spaces whilst removing much of the largely insubstantial accretions introduced by the British Legion. Cavity doors, studding walls subdividing rooms and blocking off alcoves, will be removed to recreate spaces more in keeping with residential occupancy of an historic house while providing up to date amenities which will ensure the sustainability of the listed building. The improvements and additions are intended to enhance its return not only to residential use but to return the house to a significant residential dwelling in keeping with character of the Conservation Area. The return to residential use is seen as the best way of protecting what is most significant about the building while effecting the necessary repairs and adaptations necessary due to years of piecemeal modification.
- 4.4 The pool house represents an important addition to the rear garden and will provide an amenity of appropriate scale for a house of the status of 28 Windhill.
- 4.5 The proposed modern access comprises a linear driveway running along the west side of the house. It involves the removal of a wall fronting Windhill, two trees and a stretch of stock brick retaining wall of no historic or architectural merit.
- 4.6 The proposed changes will enhance the sustainability of the former club, contribute to its protection and have no material effect on the historic significance of the listed building.

Capacity for Change

- 4.7 This stage of historic building assessment addresses the capacity of the heritage asset for change in the context of the NPPF para 192. At the former British Legion, the capacity for change depends upon the interrelationship of the heritage value, or significance of the outbuilding, and the policy context provided by national statute, local plan policy and guidance.
- 4.8 The policy context has been outlined above in relation to buildings or structures which are both designated and non-designated.
- 4.9 In short, the buildings or structures have the capacity for change so long as it can be demonstrated that the historic character of the British Legion can be retained and its evolution can still be read or experienced. In this case the house has been developed from an early possible two bay building and today comprises several distinct ranges. The principal heritage values of the building lie in its architecture, in its historic evolution, and, although periodically modernised, in its

visual presence on Windhill. Today the character of 28 Windhill is that of an Edwardian Villa or town house with mansard roof, bayed frontage but with some earlier features. The panelled room to right on the ground floor may be an early survival but as the Edwardian period saw a preference for 17th and 18th century revival styles such as the Jacobean and a panelled room similar to this was illustrated by Waring and Gillow at the 1900 Ideal Home Exhibition, such decoration may not be an indication of an early date.⁷ The date of this part of the house derives from the ceiling beams and wall thickness.

- 4.10 The design principles and principle of development should be seen in the context of the impact of development on the special interest of the listed building, its heritage significance, and the character and appearance of the setting. Some indication of what constitutes a sensitive design is set out in the policies of the local authority. A further general indication of what constitutes appropriate design has been published by Historic England (as English Heritage) in 2008⁸ and by SPAB in 2017.⁹
- 4.11 The designs highlighted by Steve Bee in *Constructive Conservation* provide “20 exemplary schemes which demonstrate the results of constructive conservation”. The principles underpinning Historic England’s publication are those of Conservation Principles which are relevant in the context of the present works and can be summarised as (1) respecting the original design and structure whilst creating a new addition; (2) design which is in keeping with the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, which (3) celebrates the heritage value of both building and Conservation Area (5) whilst revitalising an existing building and (6) improving its viability. The report goes on to cite the maintenance of the spirit and integrity of the historic environment whilst retaining the existing relationship between the setting of nearby heritage assets and the subject building.
- 4.12 In the discussion which follows impact on the historic environment is considered with respect to the direct impact on the special interest and historic fabric of the former British Legion club and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

Impact Assessment

- 4.13 **Historic building, the main house:** The principal areas of improvement and restoration are set out in the table below based on the architects plans which accompany this application.

Room/Space	Removal of Recent Modifications	Replacement & Restoration
Ground Floor		
Entrance Hall G01	Studding wall and corporate swing doors	Replace stud wall to created proportionate hall space
Club Room G02	Removal Modern cavity doors	Restore as family room G02
Bar Area G03	Removal modern bar, window frames, external mid -late 20 th fire-door.	Restore as drawing room G03
Corridor G04	Remove modern cavity door to kitchen G05	Reform bar area as boot room G04

⁷ Long H 1993 *The Edwardian House*, Fig 2.8

⁸ Bee 2008

⁹ Hunt, Boyd 2017

Kitchen G05	Remove modern flat roofed extension	-
Lobby G06	Remove modern club related partitions and doors.	-
Club room G07	Remove modern doors and window framing	Restore as dining room G07
Club Room G08	Remove modern doors and window frames	Restore as garden/dining space G08
Club Room G09	Remove modern half glazed external door.	Reform club room as study and corridor G09 & G10
WC & Boiler Room G010-G015	Demolish	Replace with G11 Sitting room
Steel fire-escape	Remove	
Modern garden wall (access)	Remove	
Modern Steel Fence	Remove	

1st Floor

Landing F01	Modern doors & studding wall to be removed	Reform as landing F01-
Storage F02	-	Bathroom en-suite F03
F03 Room 02	Doorway to be unblocked	Redecorate as bedroom F02
F04 Storage	-	Landing F01
F05 Room 01	Modern cavity doors to be removed and stud wall relocated	Bedroom F10, dressing room F11, en-suite F12
F06 Room 02	Chimney breast to be restored (see F08)	Bedroom F10
WC F07	WC removed	Reform as bathroom F09
Space F08	Chimney breast to be restored (see F06)	Reform as bedroom F10
Landing F09	Doors and wall to be removed	Part of landing F01
WC F10	WC to be removed	Reform as F13 linen
Storage F11 & F12	Modern stud wall to be removed together with cavity doors	Reform as dressing room F06
Office F13	-	Reform en-suite F05
Office F14, 15 & F16	Remove studding wall between these two	Create Bedroom F04
Lobby F16	To be retained	
Add floor above G09		Create F07 bedroom and en-suite F08 over F09,

2nd Floor

L01 Landing	Removal modern doors	Recreated as storage and kitchen
L01 Bedroom	Removal club related stud walls	Recreated as storage and kitchen
L02 Hallway	Removal modern cavity doors	Decorated
L03 / L04 Bedrooms	Removal of modern stud partition	Decorated as bedroom
L05 Bedroom	-	Decorated as bedroom
L06 kitchen	-	Decorated as bedroom
L07 Bathroom	Remove WC etc	Decorated as bathroom

Roof

Roofs over L01 & L02; G09 and WC G10-G15	Remove roof over L01 & L02; G09 and WC G10-G15	Re-roof as specified slate over timber
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Institutional Adaptations: Removal and Restoration

- 4.14 The rather tired and careworn appearance of the former British Legion Club is evident from the illustrations provided with this assessment. Modern doors, replacement softwood window frames, institutional features such as the steel fire escape and studding wall subdivisions and flat roofed extension, characterise the interior. In the garden, sheds and storage area outside to the west and modern screen walling creating a terrace to the north typify the often necessary additions and repairs to repurposed historic buildings by institutions where economy and limited expenditure are every day concerns. In general no attempt has been made by the former Club to integrate room sub-divisions, the provision of extra WCs, storage and office space or garden features with the character of the building. The lavatory block, constructed from re-used brick, almost certainly recovered from garden walling, is typically utilitarian and starkly functional with neither historic nor architectural merit.
- 4.15 Removal of the rear lavatory range will mean the removal of some fabric, though the age of this is probably mid-late 20th century. The lavatory range is awkwardly off-set to the building line of 28 Windhill, it is a mid-20th century addition to the club and its character today is entirely modern. The Interior has no historic features and accommodates a range of lavatories and a heating boiler. The gauge work of the brickwork is poor and the window frames are modern and the structure as a whole has no evident historic features of value. The reduction of this range will have no appreciable effect on the heritage value of the former Clubhouse.
- 4.16 The removal of these features alone will represent a significant improvement to the historic building while the restoration of 28 Windhill to residential use as single family home will constitute a firm enhancement of its historic character and sense of place. When combined with the proposed improvements the architects proposals represent a clear means to retain the historic character of the building as a home while ensuring its sustainability into the mid-21st century.
- 4.17 The principle on which the restorations of doors, windows and associated carpentry is that mouldings, skirting and doors will be in keeping with their 19th century predecessors and surviving examples within the house. The design of the sitting room G11 is a contemporary interpretation of a rear range typical of 19th century villas and town houses. The outward face reflects the south front of the house, whilst the east elevation is a contemporary design of glazed panels providing access to a rear terrace. The roof, pitched and gabled, replaces the current confection of pitched and gabled plus monopitch lean-to extension (See architects plans 114920- 142).
- 4.18 **Conclusion:** The proposed changes to 28 Windmill mark both a reversal of the institutional modifications and additions by the British Legion, the removal of largely superficial features and the restoration of a substantial 19th and early 20th century villa to a style and form commensurate with its historic significance and captured by the list description. The proposed changes will in effect enhance the historic building and will cause no harm to its significance and support is sustainability into the 21st century.



Architect's View of the proposed sitting room G11

Swimming Pool and Garaging

- 4.19 **Design:** The pool building itself is far from a standard design and the extent to which the design echoes the timber ornamentation of Edwardian architecture is evident from illustrations provided by the architect (see 114920-143). One side of the swimming pool building occupies a corner of the existing red brick garden wall in a design which makes full use of the location and its situation set back from the rear of the house. In this location the pool house does not challenge, rather it compliments, the garden setting.
- 4.20 The emphasis of the design is to minimise any visual impact due to the development while providing an elegant solution to the challenge of space and access. The proposal is designed to reflect the scale of building which is appropriate to the restored house and which has no adverse bearing on the building's historical significance. As importantly the building has been designed to be in keeping with the character and appearance of the Conservation Area so that it not only does not harm the setting of the Listed Building but compliments the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. This indoor pool and garage is both a private leisure facility and a high-quality project that provides a pool hall, shower facility, changing areas and garaging.
- 4.21 The creation of the pool house and garage will involve the removal of the present section of brick garden walling which runs diagonally towards the boundary. This wall survives to its full height for a short section, but has been reduced and breached to provide access from the garden to service area. The map evidence suggests this is the remnant of an enclosing wall related to a now demolished, perhaps stable building, to the rear of the house. This wall may have been the source of brick for the lavatory block and as a 19th century remnant is of no significant historic value.
- 4.22 **Conclusion:** The design accommodates existing circulation, to and from the main house, provided by the current screen walled garden terrace as well as complimenting the scale and character of the listed building. To maintain this connection an open terrace is proposed at the rear of the new G11 sitting room. This link provides an opportunity to access the pool from the main house while providing an attractive element in the rear garden. The style, form and architectural design of the garage and pool building is designed to minimise impact on the listed building and to cause no harm to the significance of either the listed building or Conservation Area.



Proposed pool house and garage

Creation of New Access

- 4.23 **External Works:** The proposed driveway provides access to the rear of the former British Legion Club, re-opening an earlier driveway shown on the 1st edition OS, surveyed between 1874 and 1876 and published by 1884. The present boundary wall is shrouded in ivy and a pedestrian gate provides access to the what has been the service area of the British Legion Club.



Extract from the 1874 (1884) OS 1st edition showing the access to the west of the house. This seems to have been stopped up by 1896.

- 4.24 The access will involve the removal of a length of stock-brick walling adjacent to the modern toilet block at the rear of the house. The wall was part of the service area almost certainly built by the British Legion. It comprises a brick retaining wall surmounted by a panel fence. The design of the

new access is illustrated on 114920 143 View 8 (above). Restoring the access through the former service area and removing the section of wall and panel fence to the rear of the house and replacing it with a car parking area flanking the new G11 is a design solution which makes excellent use of the present and now redundant service area of the former Club. The new access will have no impact on the historic fabric of the house and no material effect on the heritage values of the former Club House.

- 4.25 The surfacing of this area and the driveway will be gravel metalled or similar treatment, in keeping with the character of the Conservation Area.
- 4.26 **Works within Conservation Area:** Three principal changes are proposed which will affect the Conservation Area, the removal of two trees, the re-location of a post box and the opening up of the former driveway. These will be dealt with as separate elements below with a summary dealing with the cumulative effect of the proposals.
- 4.27 *Removal of the boundary wall:* The present stock brick boundary wall is overgrown by ivy and the service gate is a modern planked gate set into a late 20th century wooden frame. These features do not contribute to the heritage value of the former clubhouse and their removal will have no material impact on its significance. The new access will, though, change the street frontage within the Conservation Area. This, however, is in keeping with the character of the north side of Windhill where several driveways and access routes lead to historic houses. To the west of the former Club is a modernised house and driveway where the boundary treatment comprises a hedge. It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that the creation of an access will not have an adverse effect on the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 4.28 *Removal of west retaining wall adjacent to the service range.* The service range is probably a mid-20th century addition and its character makes no significant addition to the Conservation Area. Its location means that it is subordinate to the south front of the house and there are no views, from either public or private locations, which are of value and to which this wrapped around extension a significant contribution. As noted above the reduction of the west retaining wall adjacent to this range and its replacement with a retaining wall along the northern boundary will have no appreciable effect on the heritage value of the former Clubhouse. Its effect on the Conservation Area will be similarly limited.
- 4.29 *Removal of the trees:* The trees are a recent planting and are not of heritage value. The removal of two trees to create the access may require an arboriculturist opinion. The change in location of the red pillar box to a nearby location is a small change. Its location was not noted in the conservation Area Appraisal and a change in position is unlikely to have a material impact of the character of the Conservation Area.
- 4.30 **Conclusion:** In conclusion the new access and the necessary removal of a short of boundary wall and the loss of the wall and fence adjacent to the 20th service wing, culminating in the creation of a new access will constitute a modernising effect to the setting of the former British Legion Club, but one that is both in keeping with the character of Windhill and one that draws on historic precedent. The plan form of the proposal suggest that for the purposes of the NPPF the changes proposed by this application will change both the setting of the former Club, and the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. However, such changes are of such a scale and character that the change will be minimal and not adversely affect the heritage values of either the listed building or the Conservation Area.



The proposed new access

5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 This Statement of Significance and Heritage Assessment has been prepared by RPS on behalf of Tom Carroll in order to assess the impact of proposed improvements and restorations of the listed 28 Windhill, former British Legion Club, Bishops Stortford.
- 5.2 The now redundant British Legion Club was originally probably a late 17th or early 18th century house built on agricultural land north of Windhill. The house has seen several episodes of improvements. The earliest was probably in the late 18th century with further improvements in the 19th century. The principal enhancement took place during the 19th century when extensions were built to the rear, the roof probably raised and stabling and a coach house built to the rear. During the 20th century the house was sold to the British Legion at which point it was institutionalised. A bar was constructed on the ground floor and rooms enlarged or converted from domestic or club use to provide games areas, settling rooms, kitchens and function rooms. The cellar was used to store alcoholic drinks including beer kegs and much of the pipework still remains in situ. The first floor was turned into office space with its own range of kitchen and service facilities. Some domestic features were retained on both the ground and 1st floors, in particular the panelling in rooms to the right of the central entrance lobby.
- 5.3 This report has presented an analysis of the historical development of 28 Windhill in the context of the development of Bishops Stortford and Windhill and has appraised the architecture and setting of the former Club. Finally, this report has assessed the significance of the historic buildings in terms set out by the NPPF and Historic England.
- 5.4 The significance of a heritage asset is defined in NPPF 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”*. The significance of the former Club is considered to lie primarily in its surviving architecture, group value and architectural interest. Its significance lies in its historic association with the 19th century development of Bishops Stortford, the rise of the malting trade and development following the arrival of the turnpike system, canal and railways.
- 5.5 There are three aspects to the proposed restoration including (1) revitalisation of the interior to a standard commensurate with a modern, though historic, dwelling, (2) the addition of a pool house in the rear garden and (3) the re-opening of an access to the west to provide a driveway and carparking in keeping with the restored home.
- 5.6 The proposal for a new access comprises the re-creation of an earlier access on the west side of the former Club and is the most evident modification visible from the public realm. It involves the removal of a short stretch of boundary wall and a planked gateway, the creation of a metalled surface. In common with the works to the house and pool house the new access will be formed using material in keeping with the character of the Conservation Area.

Conclusion

- 5.7 The limited scale of the proposed modifications and the improvements due to the new access have been assessed in the context of the features set out in section 3.58 which encapsulate the heritage significance of the former British Legion Club. These focus attention on the late 19th and early 20th century character of the house, despite its earlier origins and set the scene for design and detailed improvements which reflect the Edwardian period, approximately 1880-1914.
- 5.8 The character of the works, the substantial retention of historic fabric, wherever encountered, and the sympathetic character of the design illustrated by the architect in three pages of views (see above 114920 – 141-143) indicate the level of visual impact on the listed building and demonstrate that the design is both in keeping with the heritage significance of the house and that they represent an enhancement of its current condition. The character of the works and the limited

impact on significant historic fabric of the former Club suggest that the proposed development will not be harmful for the purposes of the NPPF.

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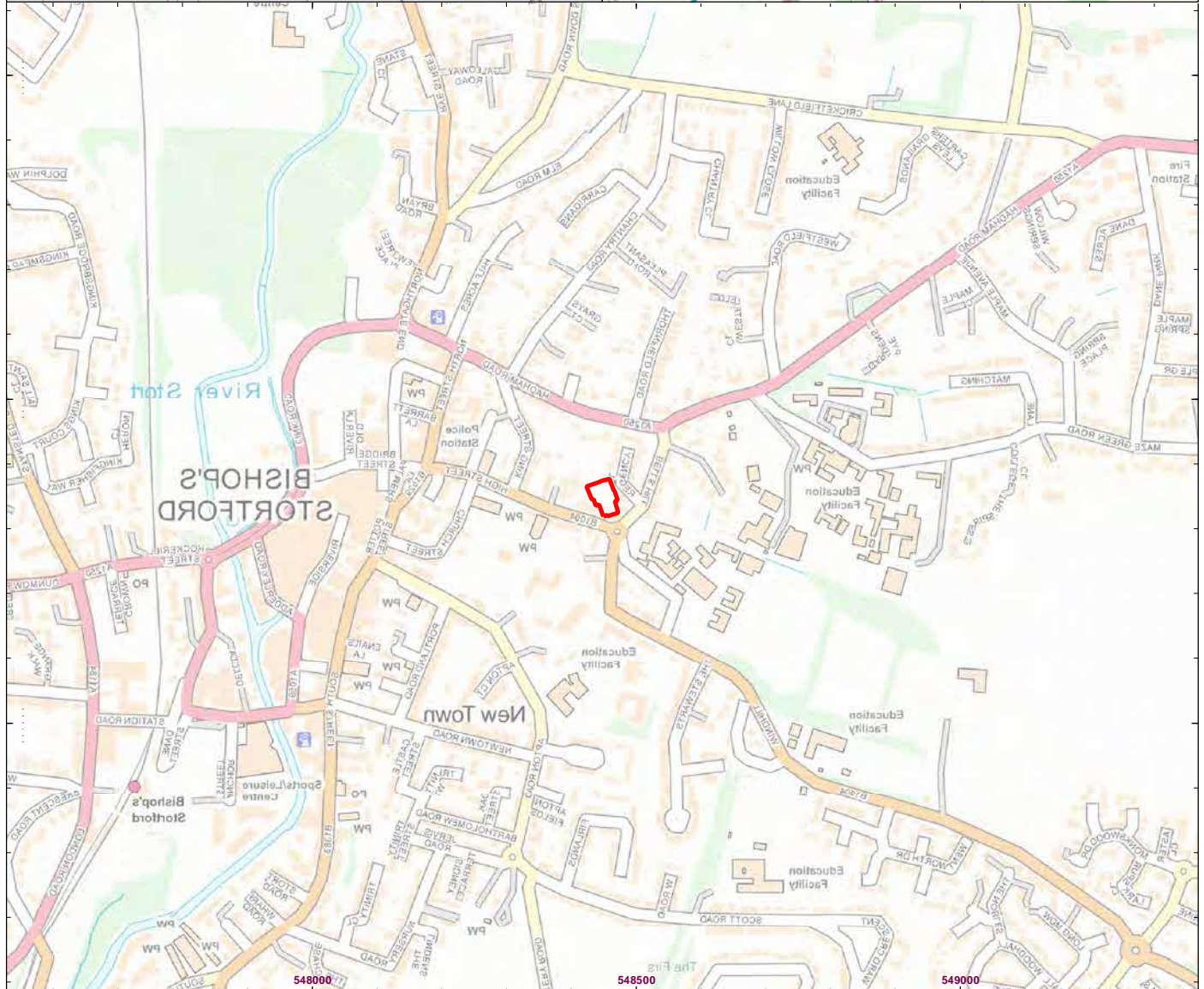
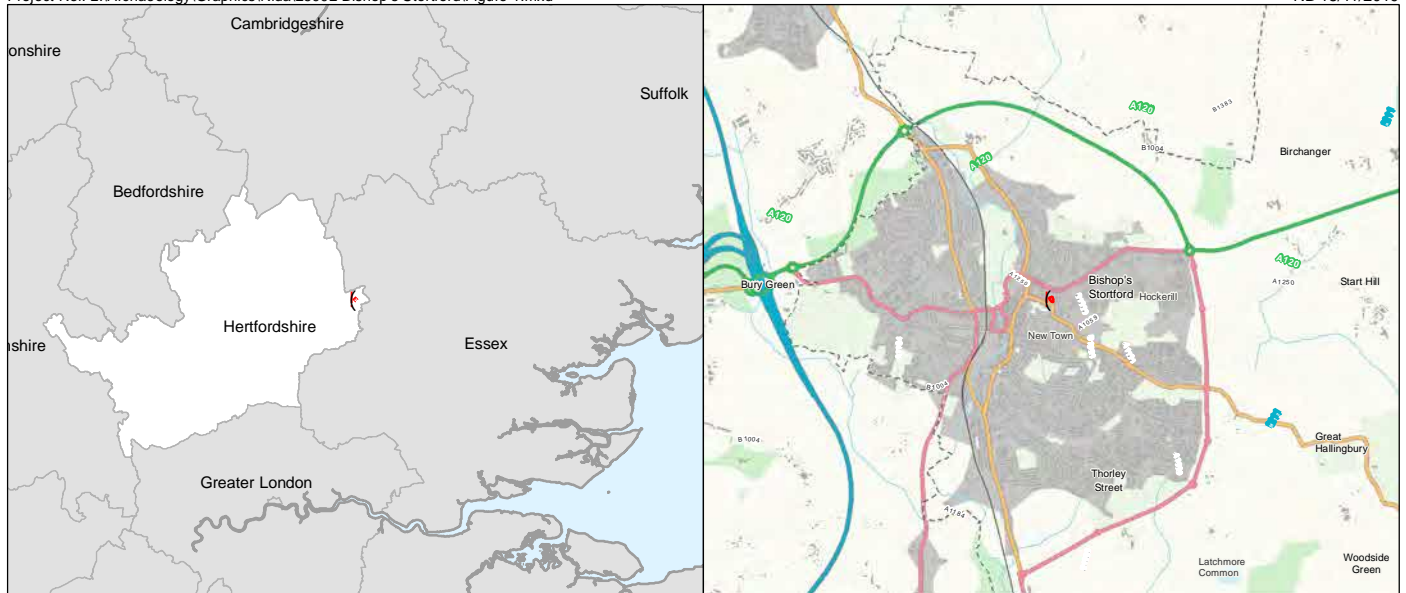
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Ralph Treswell Map of Bishopes Stafforde, 1587

Martin Llewellyn Map of Bishops Stortford (from Cooper J 2005, fig 38
OS 1874-9, 1901



 Site Boundary

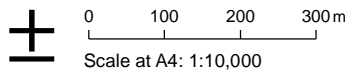


Figure 1
Site Location

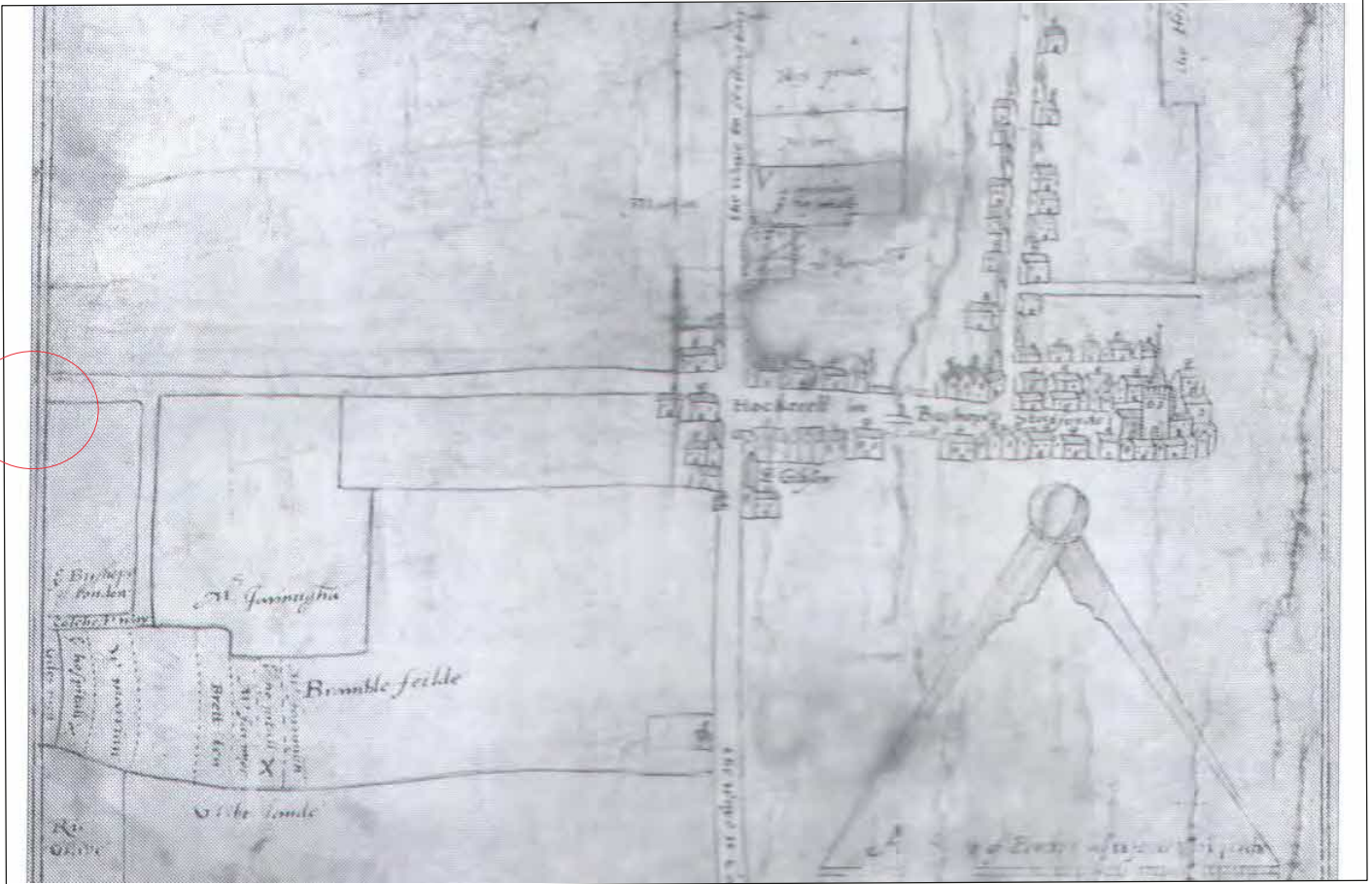


Fig 2 Upper - Bishops Stortford in 14th century (Cooper 2005, Fig 18)

Lower - Bishops Stortford in 1587 (R Treswell)

Approximate location of 28 Windhill

Windhill

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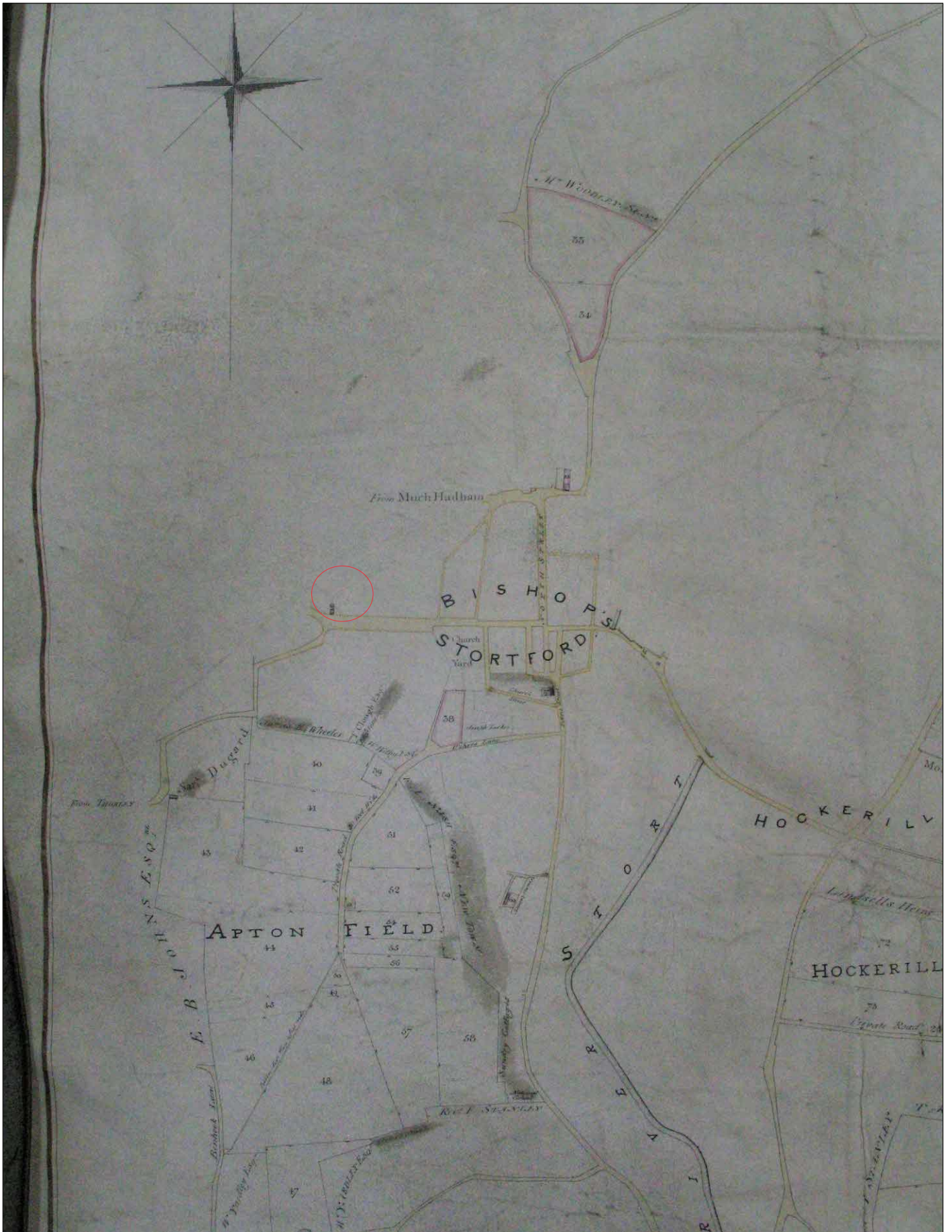


Fig 4 Bishop's Stortford in 1826 (Enclosure Award map)

Approximate location of 28 Windhill

Windhill

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Fig 5 Upper - Bishops Stortford in 1876 (OS 1st Ed)
 Lower - Bishops Stortford in 1896 (OS 2nd Ed)

Approximate location of 28 Windhill 

Windhill	
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Fig 6 Upper - Bishops Stortford in 1915 (OS 3rd Ed)
 Lower - Bishops Stortford in 1938 (OS 4th Ed)

Approximate location of 28 Windhill 

Windhill	
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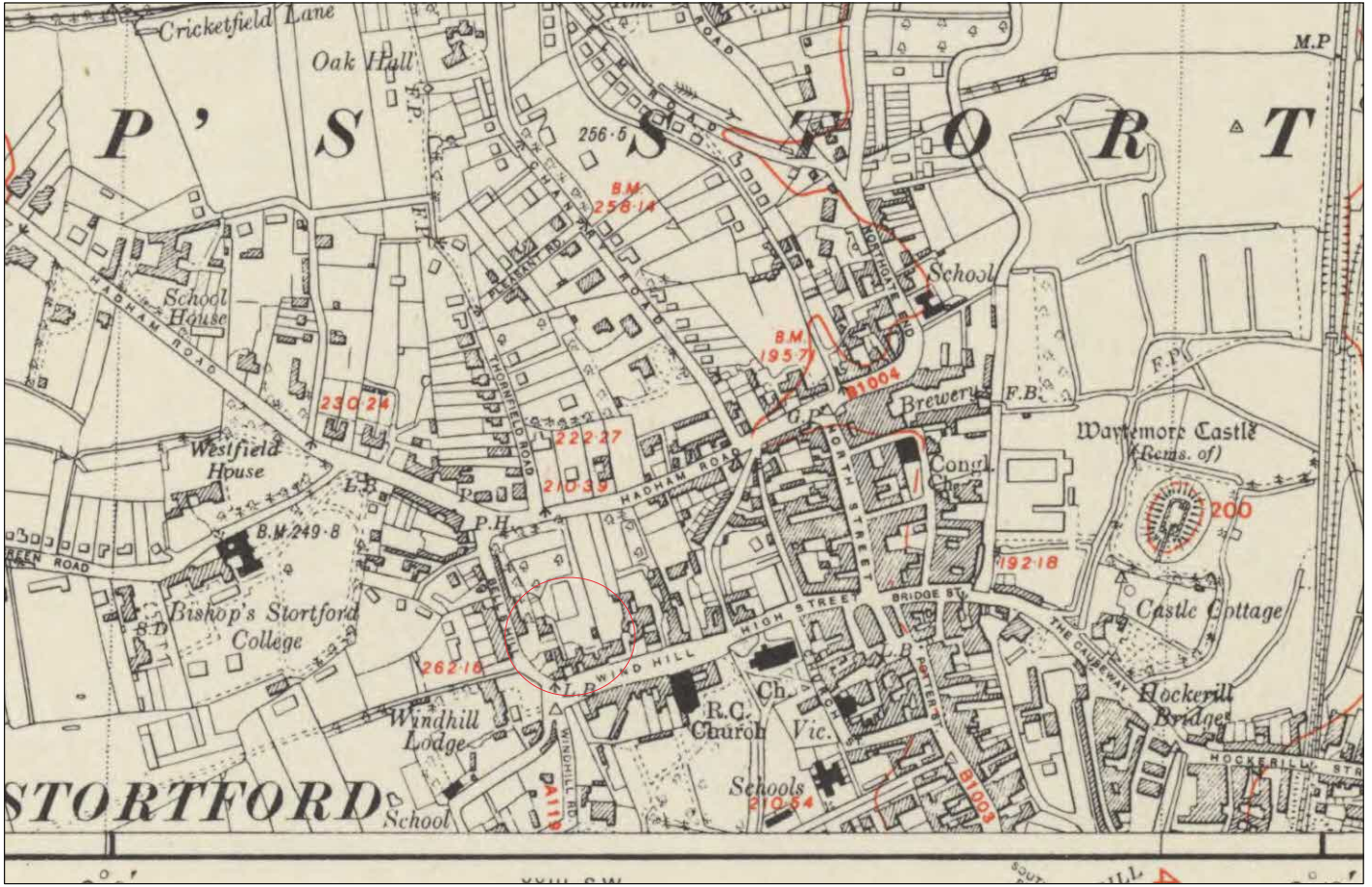


Fig 7 Upper - Bishops Stortford in 1946 (OS)
 Lower - 28 Winhill, 2018 (GoogleEarth)

Approximate location of 28 Windhill 

Windhill	
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Fig 8 Upper - 28 Winhill south front
Lower - 28 Winhill, rear elevation

Windhill

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Fig 8.1 Upper - 28 Winhill toilet block
 Lower - 28 Winhill, toilet block west elevation

Windhill

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Fig 8.1 Upper - 28 Winhill toilet block
 Lower - 28 Winhill, toilet block North elevation

Windhill

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Fig 8.2 Upper - 28 Winhill toilet block, east elevation
 Lower - 28 Winhill, location of proposed pool house

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Fig 10 Upper - Ground Floor Principal Stairway
Lower - Ground Floor Panelled Room to right

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Fig 11 Upper - Ground Floor left, bar area.
Lower - Ground Floor rear

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Fig 12 Upper - Rear service areas left (lavatories).
 Lower - Rear service area right, kitchens & club room

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Fig 14 Upper - Cellar area
Lower - Cellar Area right

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Fig 16 Upper - First Floor right.
Lower - First floor left.

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Fig 17 Upper - 1st Floor Rear service areas left and Upper room left.
Lower - Rear service area right, office space and access

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Fig 18 Upper - 2nd Floor accommodation.
Lower - Stairway and further accommodation.

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Fig 19 Upper - Roof frame.
Lower - 2nd floor Accommodation.

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Fig 21 Upper - Setting, the view from Winhill.
 Lower - View from the south west, compare this view with Fig 8.

Windhill	
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Fig 22 Upper - Setting, the view from the rear garden. See also Fig 8 (lower)
 Lower - View from 28 Winhill to the north.

Windhill	
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Fig 23 Upper - Setting, the modern house to the west.
 Lower - The 19th century villa to the east (obscured by trees).

Windhill	
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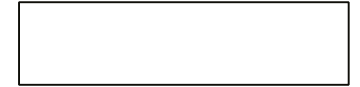
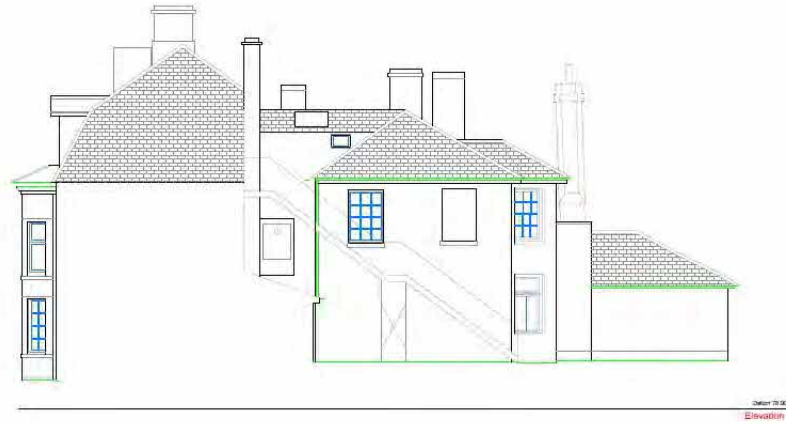



Figure 24:
Possible development
sequence of 28 Windhill

18th century



Windhill	
	
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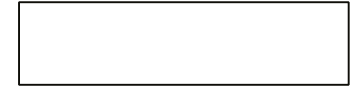



Figure 25:
Possible development
sequence of 28 Windhill

19th century



Windhill	
	
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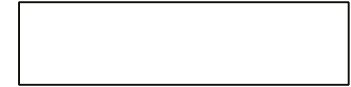
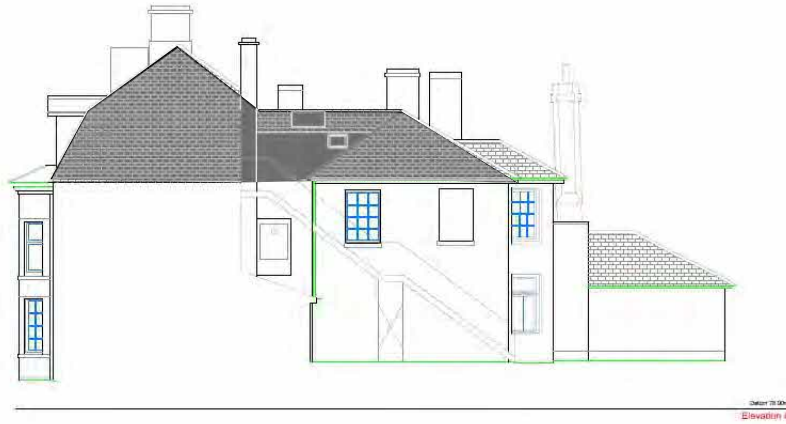



Figure 26:
Possible development
sequence of 28 Windhill

Mid 19th century



Windhill	
	
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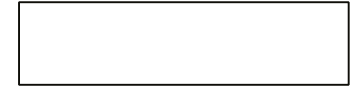



Figure 26:
Possible development
sequence of 28 Windhill

20th century



Windhill	
	
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