



Design, Access and Heritage Statement for

**Whitfield Court, Surrey –
Revised Repairs and Alterations following
Opening up**

XXth February 2024

Whitfield Court,
Littlewick Road,
Knaphill,
GU21 2JU

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Whitfield Court, Surrey – Revised Repairs and Alterations following Opening up

Contents

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Overview of this Design, Access and Heritage Statement
 - 1.2 A brief appraisal of the historical significance and context of Whitfield Court
 - 1.3 An overview of the approved scheme of works
 - 1.4 A high level appraisal of the proposed amendments to those works
-

2.0 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

- 2.1 Ground Floor in Detail
 - 2.2 First Floor in Detail
-

3.0 SUMMARY

- 3.1 Analysis of proposals' impact upon heritage values
- 3.2 Conclusion

1.1 Overview of this Design, Access and Heritage Statement

This document is a **Design, Access and Heritage Statement** for **Whitfield Court**, in Knaphill, Surrey, and relates to a series of amendments to the previously approved scheme of works (Planning ref. no. PLAN/2022/0405 and Listed Building Consent ref. no. PLAN/2022/0406). It has been prepared by Jonathan Cerowski RIBA SCA AABC EASA, of Cerowski Architects, East Grinstead, on behalf of the owners of the property.

The previous applications for the approved works were also developed by the author of this document whilst working for Cowan Architects, East Grinstead, and the previous application documents are referenced in part herein.

Largely the works proposed in this application remain materially similar to the approved scheme, though they do differ, principally in the following ways:

- The design of the proposed staircase, replacing a 1980's staircase to the centre of the principal range, has been amended to better improve head height for users.
- A range of repairs, more involved than previously envisaged, have been necessary to correct dangerous structural defects.

These works are set out fully in section 2 of this report, and are referenced to revised drawings, prepared by Curtis Leeves Technical Ltd (CLT), the Principal Design Consultant who has prepared and detailed the scheme beyond the Consent stage. CLT have numbered each element of work on their drawings which is an amendment or addition to those previously approved by the Local Authority, and a document setting out record photographs of each element of the work during the opening up stage (at which point the true extent of repair works necessary became clear) have been included in this submission.

1.2 A Brief Appraisal of the Historical Significance and Context of Whitfield Court

As part of the 2022 Planning and Listed Building Consent Application, a Heritage Statement was prepared by the historic building consultancy firm 'Built Heritage Consultancy' (see Appendix A). This document set out in detail the history and significance of the extant built fabric of Whitfield Court.

Following on from this, a Design Access and Heritage Statement was prepared by Cowan Architects which presented a more high-level appraisal of the historical significance and context of Whitfield Court, including a historic phasing plan, and references to historic watercolours which demonstrated the phased development of the house. The 'needs' of both the owners (alterations to allow for 21st family life, but proposing changes to the least historically significant portions of the built fabric), and the heritage asset (extensive repairs, and removal of faux-historic late-20th Century alterations) were set out in detail.

The 2022 Design, Access and Heritage Statement has been included in this submission as Appendix B, as the assessment of historic significance still stands, as do the general 'needs' of the applicant and historic building.

However, the most relevant significance and context, relating specifically to the amended proposals set out in this document are:

- Whitfield Court is a Grade II* listed house, set to the northern edge of Knaphill, in a complex of buildings including a Grade II listed barn, and a range of associated vernacular structures (former stabling) which may reasonably be considered as non-designated heritage assets.
- Whitfield Court proper was constructed in the 17th Century, with extensions in the 18th and 19th Centuries. It was substantially remodelled in the late-19th Century (evidenced by Edward Hassell's 1830's watercolours which show the property with an overtly Georgian appearance, now largely lost).
- In the late-20th Century a single storey rear range was constructed to the North of the building, and a central two storey portion heavily remodelled to form a central stair core.
- The most significant elements of Whitfield Court (as expanded upon in detail in the Heritage Statement) are the evidence of phased development present internally and externally, the brickwork and remaining Georgian sash windows externally, and the panelling and earlier timber framing internally.
- The least significant elements of the building, indeed, those which detract from the overall significance of the heritage asset are the 20th Century northern extension, the faux bread ovens and faux historic timber framing, and the 1980's style open tread staircase.

The removal of the elements which detract from the significance of Whitfield Court are still proposed, whilst the various repairs to the built fabric of the significant aspects are also still proposed.

1.3 An Overview of the Approved Scheme of Works

Figure 1 (to the right) is an extract of the approved Ground Floor Plan for the repairs and alterations to Whitfield Court.

The key works proposed at Ground Floor level were:

- Replacing the existing detrimental single storey rear (northern) kitchen range with a new pantry, detailed with brickwork to match the existing house.
- Removing the existing kitchen's cementitious floor and replacing it with a breathable limecrete slab with a natural stone finish, opening the area up to the adjacent dining room, and replacing the kitchen units.
- Repairing the chimney breast between dining room and lounge, removing faux bread ovens.
- Reinstating historic window openings, removing modern timber framing and faux brickwork infill and replastering with lime plaster.
- Repairing historic panelling and flooring throughout.
- Removing 1980's staircase and replacing with new staircase with shallower pitch, closed risers and timber balustrade (where none were previously present).

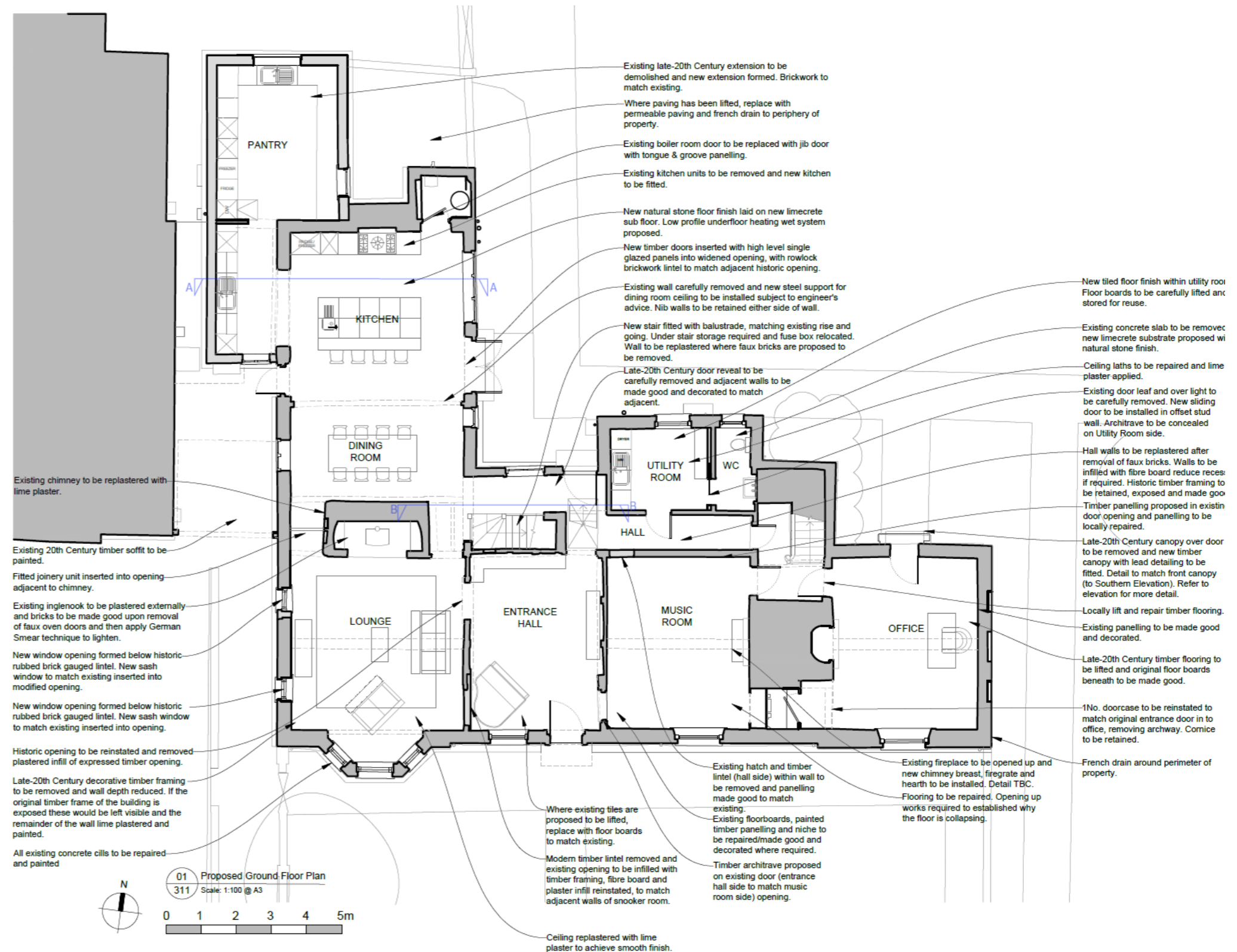


Figure 1 – Approved Ground Floor Plan (2022)

1.3 An Overview of the Approved Scheme of Works (cont.)

Figure 2 (to the right) is an extract of the approved First Floor Plan for the repairs and alterations to Whitfield Court.

The key works proposed at First Floor level were:

- Removing faux timber framing and repairing original timber framing to northern range (the previous and proposed master bedroom suite). Carrying out structural repairs to the floor in this area where particularly 'live', and rationalising the previously stepped floor levels.
- Removing the 20th Century stair hall landing and reconfiguring this area to form a lightwell.
- Removing coverings to historic floor finishes and structural timbers, and repairing substrates as necessary.
- General redecoration and reinstatement of missing sections of architraves and panelling where missing.

Generally, the approach previously proposed was one of conservative repair, with changes to the built fabric being led by a thorough understanding of the heritage asset and the significance of its various elements. Changes were limited to elements of the building which were either detrimental to the overall significance, or of neutral impact to the significance.

Repairs were proposed to almost every element of the building, though the final nature of those repairs was not possible to assess without removing modern (20th Century) elements of built fabric to allow proper assessment of the built substrate below.

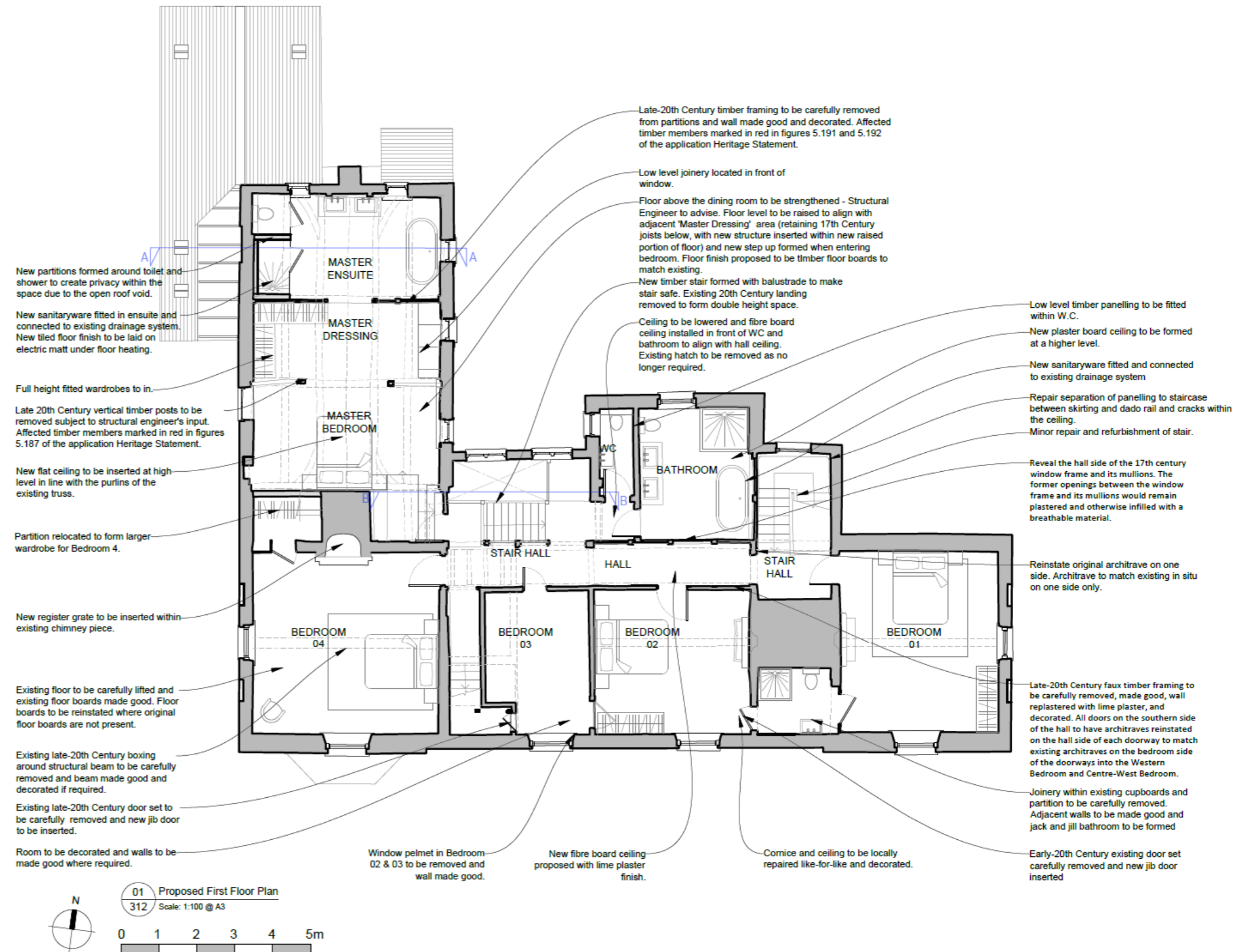


Figure 2 – Approved First Floor Plan (2022)

1.4 **A High Level Appraisal of the Proposed Amendments to Those Works**

Figure 3 (to the right) is an extract of the proposed revised Ground Floor Plan for the repairs and alterations to Whitfield Court.

The key changes to the works proposed at Ground Floor level are:

- Minor alterations to the proposed rear (northern) extension, setting it out to suit the brick bonding pattern and brickwork dimensions of the existing house.
- Amending the replacement staircase design to further improve the pitch of the staircase, and to ameliorate head height issues with the previously proposed design.
- Elaborating upon the previously proposed repairs, where exposing existing built fabric has allowed more detailed structural repairs to be developed.
- Extending the extent of repairs where the existing built fabric was found to be in poorer condition than originally anticipated (such as removing cementitious cills to the principal southern elevation, and replacing them with Portland stone to match existing profiles).

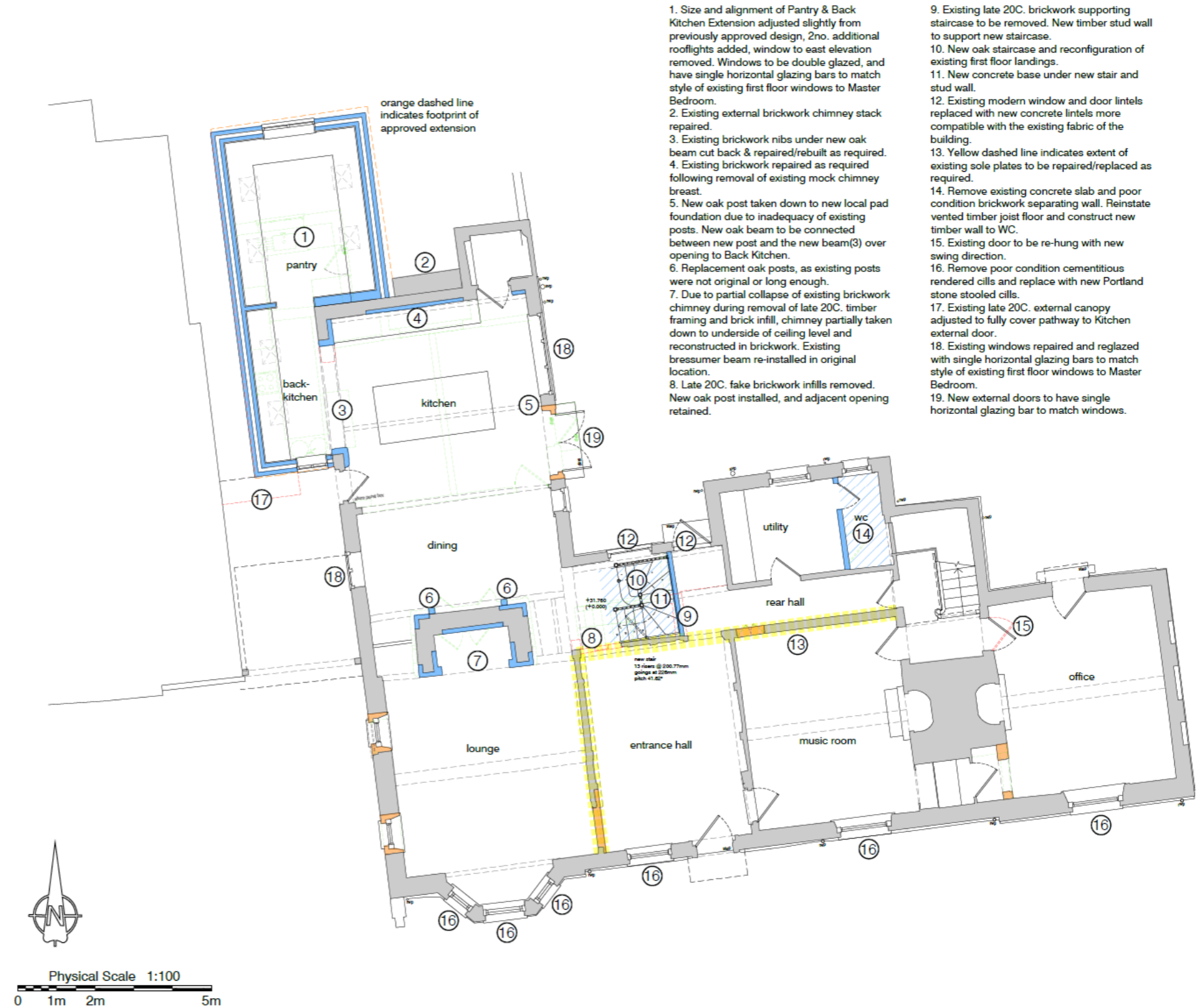


Figure 3 – Revised Ground Floor Plan (2024)

1.4 **A High Level Appraisal of the Proposed Amendments to Those Works (cont.)**

Figure 4 (to the right) is an extract of the proposed revised First Floor Plan for the repairs and alterations to Whitfield Court.

The key changes to the works proposed at First Floor level are:

- Brickwork structural repairs to northern range beyond those previously proposed.
- Rebuilding of floor structure to northern range, where existing structure was found not to be safe nor repairable.
- Amendments to staircase landing area to form safe balustrading, steps to account for level changes to northern range, and associated structural works.
- Amendments to door swing directions.
- Replacement of cementitious window cills with Portland stone to southern elevation, as at ground floor level.

As previously, the approach being taken to the works is one of conservative repair, however in some cases this has been necessarily extended beyond what was previously proposed, largely due to poor quality repairs carried out in the latter part of the 20th Century. The spirit however remains to conserve or consolidate sound built fabric where possible. In some instances this has not been possible due to the extent of deterioration, or structural concerns about consequential defects if issues discovered during opening up were not adequately addressed.

The alterations to the design of the proposals are largely limited to the final detailing of the replacement rear single storey range, and the staircase replacing the central 1980's element.

The following section of this document refers to the 31 numbered amendments to the scheme, with reference photographs to the opening up works where necessary, assessing each proposed amendment in turn.

20. Size and alignment of Pantry & Back Kitchen Extension adjusted slightly from previously approved design, 2no. additional rooflights added, window to east elevation removed.
21. Existing external brickwork chimney stack repaired.
22. Existing brickwork repaired as required following removal of existing mock chimney breast.
23. New joists and floorboards to achieve level floor throughout within Master Suite (joists to be under-boarded within Kitchen with new plasterboard and acoustic insulation fitted between).
24. 2no. new steps formed from new Landing floor level down to new floor level in Master Suite.
25. New timber stud wall and door constructed under existing frame, and infill sections of frame over.
26. New oak staircase and reconfiguration of existing first floor landings.
27. New half-height infills between existing post/rails to form guarding to stairwell.
28. Existing door to be re-hung with new swing direction.
29. New wall and door to base of staircase to loft space.
30. Existing door to be re-hung with new swing direction.
31. Remove poor condition cementitious rendered cills and replace with new Portland stone stooped cills.

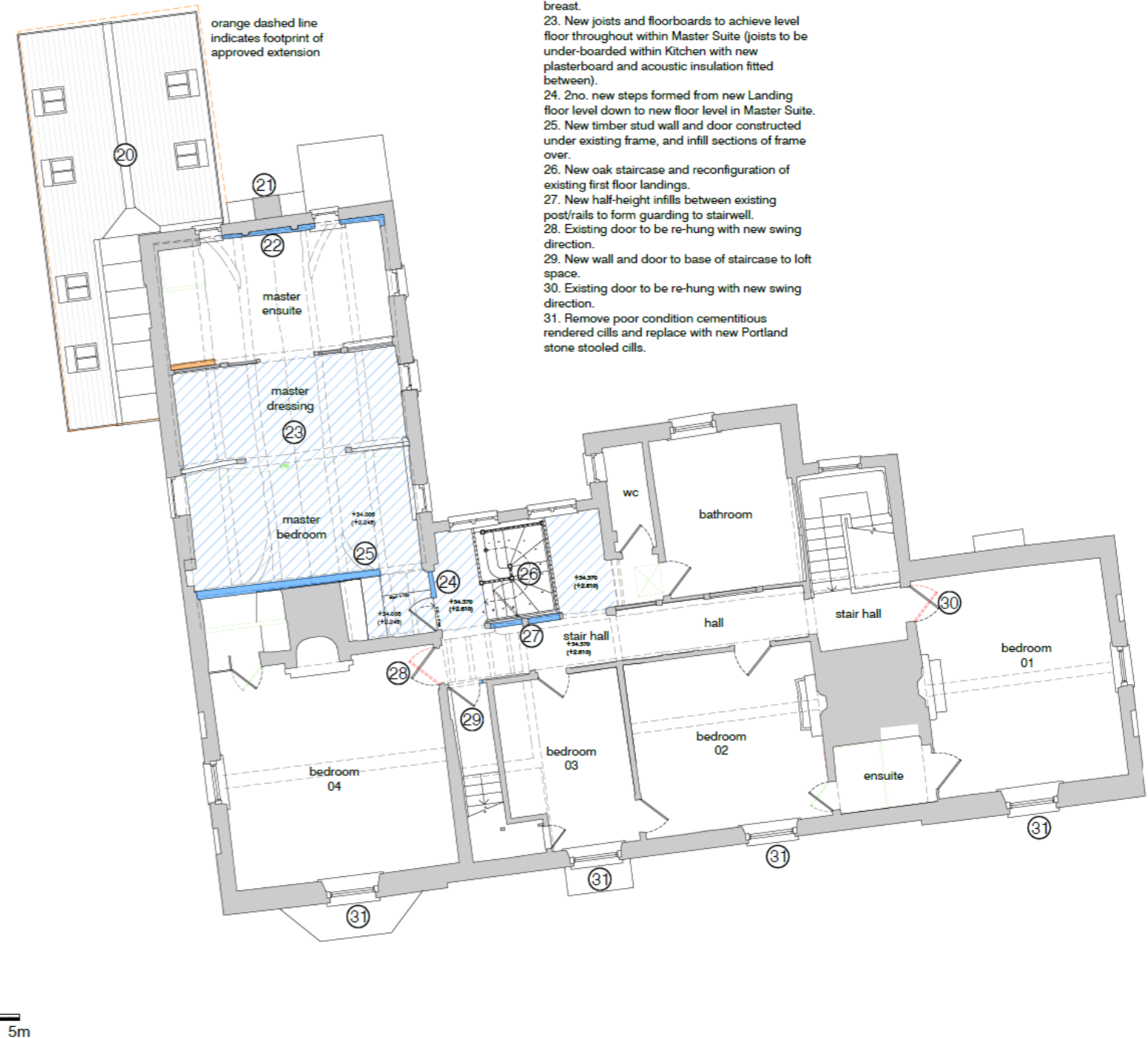
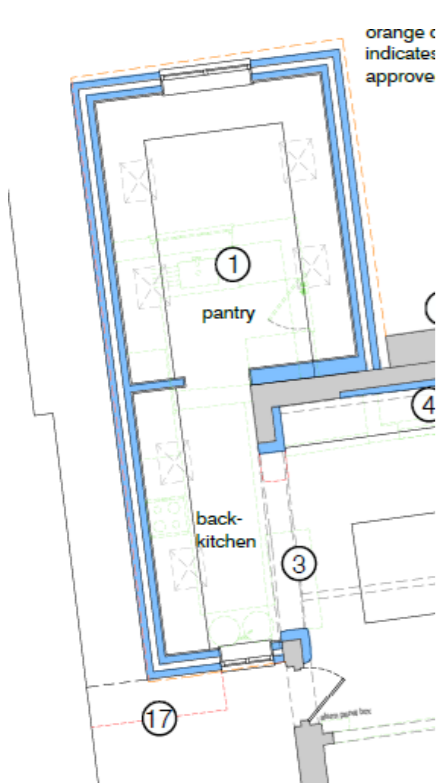



Figure 4 – Revised First Floor Plan (2024)


2.1 **Ground Floor in Detail**

The following table should be read with drawing 2314-P100-P1, which is the proposed revised Ground Floor plan of Whitfield Court, prepared by CLT. The floorplan helpfully numbers each of the proposed amendments to the previously consented scheme, which these comments are set against.

Item 1 – Adjustments to proposed single storey rear extension	
<p><u>Description</u> – Size and alignment of Pantry & Back Kitchen Extension adjusted slightly from previously approved design, 2No. additional rooflights added, window to east elevation removed. Windows to be double glazed, and have single horizontal glazing bars to match style of existing first floor windows to Master Bedroom.</p>	
	<p><u>Reference Image</u> – This extract of the ground floor plan shows the new proposed walls in blue, with the previously consented wall outline in dashed red beyond.</p>
<p><u>Discussion</u> – The previously submitted rear extension design had not been set out to a brick dimension which suits the brick bonding pattern proposed to the existing house. The revised extension footprint is as close as possible to the previously consented design (it is slightly shorter and narrower), but would not necessitate cutting the bonding pattern short. The rear extension is proposed to be a pantry/back kitchen, and so a further pair of 'conservation' style flush rooflights are proposed, to improve top lighting in this area, whilst a window previously proposed on the eastern elevation has been omitted to allow more space for cupboarding. The northern window is proposed to be double glazed, but to the match the astragal and detailing of the existing window joinery to this area of the house. These proposals are an evolution rather than a revolution to what was previously proposed. As with the previous assessment of the rear extension, these proposals have a positive impact upon the significance of the heritage asset, removing a poor quality flat roofed extension, and replacing it with a simple and deferential alternative.</p>	

Item 2 – Chimney repairs
<p><u>Description</u> – Existing external brickwork chimney stack repaired.</p>
<p><u>Discussion</u> – Upon closer inspection from high level, it was found that the brickwork of the northern chimney was in poor condition, and so heli-bar joint repairs, localised brick replacement, and repointing in soft lime mortar have been carried out.</p>

Item 3 – Brick pier repairs	
<p><u>Description</u> – Existing brickwork nibs under new oak beam cut back & repaired/rebuilt as required</p>	
	<p><u>Reference Image</u> – This photograph illustrates the condition of one of the wall nibs (here the southern side) supporting the existing opening between the previous single storey northern range, and the main kitchen.</p>
<p><u>Discussion</u> – Repairs to the lintel over this opening were previously proposed, however it was assumed that the masonry below was in reasonable condition. Upon opening up, it became apparent that this is not the case, and the brickwork had largely become friable, with an insufficient bearing capacity for the lintel and first floor above. New brickwork set on a new pad foundation has been spliced into the existing brickwork to either side of the opening.</p>	

Item 4 – Brickwork over bressummer repairs	
<p><u>Description</u> – Existing brickwork repaired as required following removal of existing mock chimney breast.</p>	
	<p><u>Reference Image</u> – This photograph illustrates the condition of the brickwork behind the mock chimney breast to the northern wall of the kitchen range internally.</p>
<p><u>Discussion</u> – 1980's brickwork was partially removed to expose a poorly constructed core, improperly bonded to the masonry skin internally. The brickwork has been rebuilt to the Structural Engineer's details.</p>	

Item 5 – New oak support posts	
<p><u>Description</u> – New oak post taken down to new local pad foundation due to inadequacy of existing posts. New oak beam to be connected between new post and the new beam over opening to Back Kitchen.</p>	
<p><u>Discussion</u> – A principal oak beam spanning between the eastern and western walls of the kitchen was found to require replacement. To the western end this beam is connected to the beam spanning the opening noted in item 5, whilst to the eastern end it was inadequately supported. In removing the concrete slab floor (as noted in the approved scheme of works) a new pad foundation has been added in this location, and an oak post sited on it to support the eastern end of the beam, removing this loading from the eastern wall of the northern range, which required extensive masonry repair.</p>	

2.1 **Ground Floor in Detail (cont.)**

Item 6 – Replacement posts
<u>Description</u> – Replacement oak posts, as existing posts were not original or long enough.
<u>Discussion</u> – A pair of existing posts (dating from the 20 th Century works) were insufficiently long to provide support for the beam above. They have been replaced with structural oaks.

Item 7 – Chimney repairs
<u>Description</u> – Due to partial collapse of existing brickwork chimney during removal of late 20C. timber framing and brick infill, chimney partially taken down to underside of ceiling level and reconstructed in brickwork. Existing bressummer beam re-installed in original location.



Reference Images – This is a portion of the brickwork core to the chimney breast located centrally to the middle of the western range. More extensive photographic records of this and other defects found, can be reviewed in Appendix C – Contractor’s Record Photographs.

Discussion – It was clear during the development of the previous application that questionable works had been carried out to the central chimneybreast of Whitfield Court – evidenced particularly by the faux bread ovens, stretcher bond brickwork and decorative timberwork. Upon opening up, removing these detrimental features, the core of the chimney breast was found to be in a poor state of repair, and consequentially was propped and the brickwork consolidated by the Contractor. Historic timbers, including the bressummers, have been reinstated in their original locations.

Item 8 – Structural repairs to opening into entrance hall
<u>Description</u> – Late 20C. fake brickwork infills removed. New oak post installed, and adjacent opening retained.



Reference Image – The existing lintel was exposed, revealing poor quality masonry above it, and no pad stones where bearing on piers below.

Discussion – As elsewhere, these alterations were carried out in the 1980’s, and are of a poor quality. Replacement lintels and piers were installed to the Conservation Accredited Structural Engineer’s details.

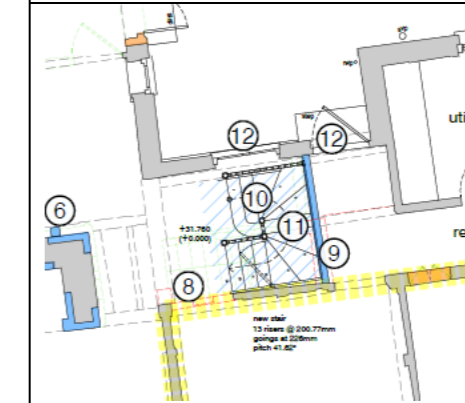
Item 9 – Formation of stud wall
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Description – Existing late 20C. brickwork supporting staircase to be removed. New timber stud wall to support new staircase.

Discussion – The previously approved scheme of works included replacing the 1980’s staircase to the centre of the main east-west built range. The previously proposed alternative staircase sat on the same footprint at the 1980’s stair, though due to the structure of the landing area above, the head height was lower than the guidance set out in current Building Regulations. During the opening up works in this area, the floor joists in this portion of the building were found to have had their hangers cut short and so were not providing a structural connection to the external masonry walls. As it became necessary for the Contractor to remove and replace them, the opportunity arose to reconsider the layout of the staircase. The revised proposal is expanded upon in Item 10, however it included introducing two sets of winders, and therefore requires a rear wall to fix the stringer to. This gave the opportunity to split the existing northern door into the rear hall from the dining/kitchen/lounge range, accessed through a re-opened doorway into the entrance hall.

Item 10 – Revised staircase design

Description – New oak staircase and reconfiguration of existing first floor landings.



Reference Image – This extract of the ground floor plan shows the proposed revised staircase layout.


Discussion – The previous 1980’s staircase was unsafe (as it had a very steep pitch, open treads, and no handrail on the non-wall side), and aesthetically out of character with the surrounding built fabric. As the floor joists to the landing above and around this staircase required structural alterations, there is the opportunity to make the staircase compliant with Building Regulations, and therefore safe for a variety of users. The staircase is proposed to be constructed of oak, to simple but traditional detailing, creating a clear architectural hierarchy between it and the more elaborate Georgian staircase to the eastern end of the range, which is not proposed to be modified.

Item 11 – Structural base for staircase
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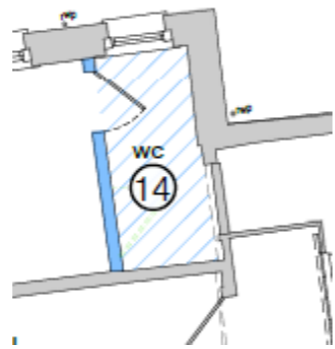
Description – New concrete base under new stair and stud wall.

Discussion – This area of flooring was glazed late-20th Century tiles, over a loose cementitious mix. This is proposed to be broken out, and replaced with a new supporting base, to the Structural Engineer’s details.

2.1 **Ground Floor in Detail (cont.)**

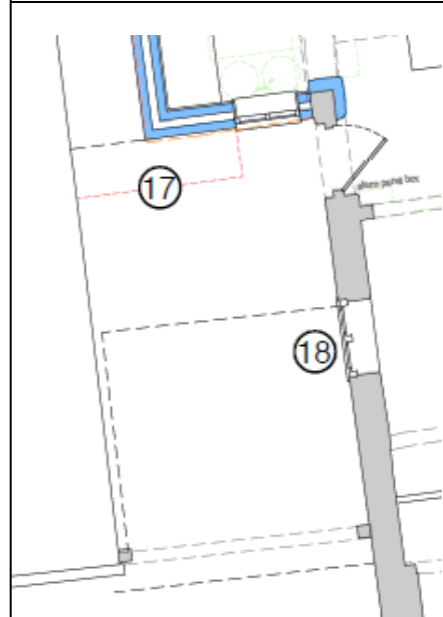
Item 12 – Lintel replacement
<u>Description</u> – Existing modern window and door lintels replaced with new concrete lintels more compatible with the existing fabric of the building.

<u>Reference Image</u> – The existing wall was pinned and the lintel removed, with brickwork repair being carried out with integrated restraining straps to the Structural Engineer's detail.
<u>Discussion</u> – The internal lintel above the door and window adjacent to the proposed new staircase were assessed by the Structural Engineer, and found to be inappropriate and insufficiently sized. It is proposed to introduce new correctly sized lintels, to be concealed beneath new lime plaster internally.

Item 13 – Replacement sole plate to timber framing between entrance hall and lounge
<u>Description</u> – Yellow dashed line indicates extent of existing sole plates to be repaired/replaced as required.
<u>Discussion</u> – During opening up works, the timber plate at the base of the wall between the lounge, entrance hall, and music room was found to have rotted and become friable, and so was replaced with a new oak section of a matching profile.

Item 14 – Removal of concrete slab and associated works	
<u>Description</u> – Remove existing concrete slab and poor condition brickwork separating wall. Reinstall vented timber joist floor and construct new timber wall to WC.	
	<u>Reference Image</u> – This extract of the ground floor plan shows the area of W.C which is proposed to have its floor replaced and wall/doorway reconfigured.
<u>Discussion</u> – The utility room, which leads through to the W.C., has a timber ventilated floor. The W.C. however has a cast concrete slab which is cracking in places and is driving moisture into the solid masonry construction of the adjacent walls, which has led to damage to the brickwork externally to this portion of the building. It is proposed to break out this slab and replace it with a ventilated timber joisted floor, replacing the poor quality separating wall at the same time.	

Item 15 – Re-hanging door leaf
<u>Description</u> – Existing door to be re-hung with new swing direction.
<u>Discussion</u> – The door leading from the eastern stair hall into the Office, the easternmost room of the house, opens into the room. The applicant wishes to re-hang the door leaf to open against the adjacent panelled wall, as all other doors at ground floor level currently swing. The door architrave would remain unaltered, and only the hinge point of the leaf would require alteration to allow this reversible change.

Item 16 – Replacing cement cills with stone
<u>Description</u> – Remove poor condition cementitious rendered cills and replace with new Portland stone stooped cills.
<u>Discussion</u> – To the southern (principal) elevation of the house, the window cills are formed of a cementitious render to approximate a stooped stone cill. Following attempts at consolidating and repairing these cills, it was determined that it would be better for the built fabric if the cills were replaced with new Portland stone cills, which match the existing profiles, but are less likely to fracture and cause water ingress and consequential damage to the walling below the cills.

Item 17 – Extending existing flat canopy	
<u>Description</u> – Existing late 20C. external canopy adjusted to fully cover pathway to Kitchen external door.	
	<u>Reference Image</u> – This extract of the ground floor plan shows the area of flat canopy (dashed in red) proposed to be extended, with the current extent of the canopy shown to the dashed line at the base of the drawing extract.
<u>Discussion</u> – There is an existing flat roofed canopy between the western wall of the house, and an adjacent built range. To the northern end of the canopy there is a small area of side passage not covered by the canopy, and this is proposed to be filled in.	

Item 18 – Replacement single glazed windows
<u>Description</u> – Existing windows repaired and reglazed with single horizontal glazing bars to match style of existing first floor windows to Master Bedroom.
<u>Discussion</u> – The applicant wishes to replace a two light and a three light window to the East and West walls of the kitchen range, to match the detailing of existing adjacent windows, with a central horizontal astragal.

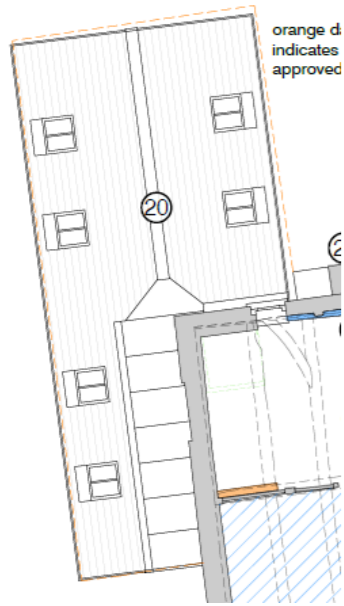
Item 19 – Replacement external doors
<u>Description</u> – New external doors to have single horizontal glazing bar to match windows.
<u>Discussion</u> – The double doors leading from the kitchen onto the garden (agreed to be replaced as part of the previous application) are proposed to have a slightly varied design, with a single horizontal astragal splitting each glazed section horizontally, in the same manner as the proposed replacement windows to this range.

2.2 **First Floor in Detail**

The following table should be read with drawing 2314-P101-P1, which is the proposed revised First Floor plan of Whitfield Court, prepared by CLT. As with the ground floor plan, the first floor plan has numbered each alteration, and the following comments should be read in this context.

Item 20 – Adjustments to proposed single storey rear extension

Description – Size and alignment of Pantry & Back Kitchen Extension adjusted slightly from previously approved design, 2no. additional rooflights added, window to east elevation removed.



Reference Image – This extract of the first floor plan shows the proposed slightly revised roof form to the single storey extension.

Discussion – As noted in item 1 (which describes the slight amendment to the layout and positioning of the walls to the proposed new single storey extension), the roof form has accordingly been varied slightly. Generally, the approach to the roof design remains consistent, with a gabled tiled roof, with a slight hiplet to the southern junction with the existing north-western corner of the house, leading on to a section of lead flat roof.

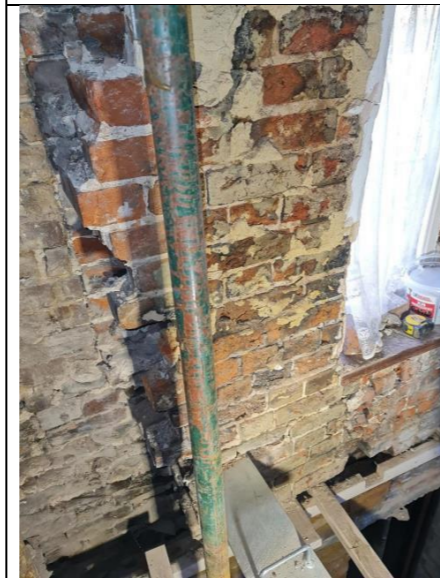
Item 21 – Chimney repairs

Description – Existing external brickwork chimney stack repaired.

Discussion – As noted in item 2, the upper section of the chimney stack also requires repairs and localised brick replacement/repointing.

Item 22 – Repairs to northern wall

Description – Existing brickwork repaired as required following removal of existing mock chimney breast.



Reference Image – This is a portion of the debonded brickwork, with propping in the foreground to prevent collapse.

Discussion – As noted in item 4, upon opening up the brickwork to the internal northern elevation of the north range was found to not be sufficiently tied back to the masonry beyond. This necessitated rebuilding a portion of the brickwork, tied back to the wall's core beyond to the Structural Engineer's details.

Item 23 – Rebuilding first floor joists

Description – New joists and floorboards to achieve level floor throughout within Master Suite (joists to be under-boarded within Kitchen with new plasterboard and acoustic insulation fitted between).



Reference Image – Here a portion of the undersized joisting sitting into voids in the brickwork can be seen, following opening up.

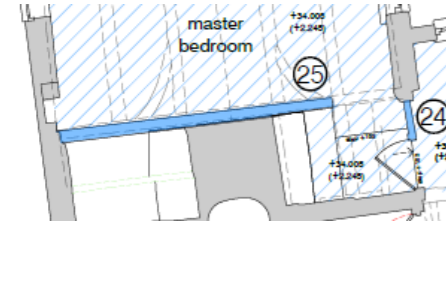
Discussion – The first floor to this portion of the building was known to be quite 'live', and the previous proposals noted that following opening up, strengthening of the existing structure was proposed to ameliorate this issue. However, it was found that the existing joists were not historic and were undersized compared to their span, and in places were unsupported at their junction with supporting walls. It is proposed to enlarge the common joists, retaining existing floor structure where possible, and adding acoustic insulation between the joists.

Item 24 – Step repositioning

Description – 2no. new steps formed from new Landing floor level down to new floor level in Master Suite.

Discussion – There is a substantial timber cross beam leading to the master bedroom suite in the northern range, and so it is proposed to reposition a pair of existing steps (presumed to date from the late-20th Century alterations) to improve the head height within the master bedroom.

2.2 **First Floor in Detail (cont.)**

Item 25 – Adjustments to proposed single storey rear extension	
<u>Description</u> – New timber stud wall and door constructed under existing frame, and infill sections of frame over.	
	<u>Reference Image</u> – This extract of the first floor plan shows the proposed location of a new stud wall to the southern side of the master bedroom suite.
<u>Discussion</u> – The southern wall of the master bedroom is formed of an opening to the eastern side (leading to the stair hall and landing) and a cupboarding nook to the western side. It is proposed to form a new stud partition against the central chimney breast, to create a flat wall (for siting a bed against), and allowing for running electrical conduit without surface mounting the conduit or chasing into the fabric of the chimney. The partition would be lightweight and fully reversible.	

Item 26 – Amendments to first floor landing
<u>Description</u> – New oak staircase and reconfiguration of existing first floor landings.
<u>Discussion</u> – As noted in item 10, it is proposed to reposition the location of the previously approved replacement staircase, and this will necessitate reconfiguring the landing to suit this. As noted in items 8 and 12, the floor structure in this area were poorly and unsafely installed in the 1980's, and so required replacing and structurally tying to the surrounding masonry walls.

Item 27 – Partial infill between existing timber frame
<u>Description</u> – New half-height infills between existing post/rails to form guarding to stairwell.
<u>Discussion</u> – Due to the proposed reconfiguration of the staircase, it is proposed to partially infill (with a stud framed and plastered reversible panel) between several elements of exposed timber framing, to create a balustrade and fall protection from the stair hall over the staircase below. This approach has been taken in previous works to the stair hall to the East, between the bathroom and hallway.

Item 28 – Rehang door to bedroom 04
<u>Description</u> – Existing door to be re-hung with new swing direction.
<u>Discussion</u> – As noted to the study door at ground floor level, the applicant wishes to rehang the door to bedroom 04 to allow it open against the adjacent wall, rather than into the room. The existing door leaf could be reused, and these works would be reversible in the future if necessary.

Item 29 – New door to loft stairs
<u>Description</u> – New wall and door to base of staircase to loft space.
<u>Discussion</u> – It is proposed to add a door to the base of the staircase leading to the loft. The door would be positioned to align with those of bedrooms 03 and 02, to the southern wall of the stair hall corridor.

Item 30 – Rehang door to bedroom 01
<u>Description</u> – Existing door to be re-hung with new swing direction.
<u>Discussion</u> – As noted to the study door at ground floor level and bedroom 04 at first floor level, the applicant wishes to rehang the door to bedroom 01 to allow it open against the adjacent wall, rather than into the room. The existing door leaf could be reused, and these works would be reversible in the future if necessary.

Item 31 – Replacing cement cills with stone
<u>Description</u> – Remove poor condition cementitious rendered cills and replace with new Portland stone stooped cills.
<u>Discussion</u> – As noted in item 16 at ground floor level, to the southern (principal) elevation of the house, the window cills are formed of a cementitious render to approximate a stooped stone cill. Following attempts at consolidating and repairing these cills, it was determined that it would be better for the built fabric if the cills were replaced with new Portland stone cills, which match the existing profiles, but are less likely to fracture and cause water ingress and consequential damage to the walling below the cills.

3.1 Analysis of Proposals' Impact upon Heritage Values

The NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) sets out that proposals for the alterations of listed buildings should be considered and based on an understanding of the asset's significance. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's significance and no more than is necessary to understand the potential impact of the proposal on that significance.

Historic England defines 'significance' as 'the sum of the cultural and natural heritage values of a place'.

The rationale for proposing changes where we have, based on a considered understanding of the significance of Whitfield Court as it stands, the needs of the owners (as noted in the brief), and the impact on the significance of the heritage asset in any changes proposed was set out in detail in the previous Design, Access and Heritage Statement (Appendix B).

The analysis set out in this portion of the document is intended to focus specifically on the changes to the previously proposed scheme of works, where amendments to the proposals have become necessary, either due to iterative design changes, or through opening up works revealing previously unforeseen structural defects.

'Significance', in this context, is determined on the basis of statutory designation (the listing description of the building) and professional judgement (that of Cerowski Architects in assessing the history of the building, with a particular focus on the areas where changes are proposed).

Our approach for determining significance builds upon our professional experience and the guidelines contained in two main national documents:

- The DCMS's 'Principles of Selection for Listing Buildings' (2010).
- English Heritage (now Historic England's) 'Conservation Principles' (2008)

The first of these documents states that the special interest of a building is determined based on its Architectural and Historic Interest, assessed through the principles of Age and Rarity, Aesthetic Merits, Selectivity and National Interest. Whilst useful guidance generally, the second document gives four 'Values' which are corroborated in the NPPF, which suggest that the significance of a place can be assessed by identifying its 'aesthetic, evidential, historic and communal values':

- **Aesthetic Value** – relates to the ways in which people derive sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place.
- **Evidential Value** – relates to the potential of a place to yield primary evidence about past human activity.
- **Historic Value** – relates to ways in which the present can be connected through a place to past people, events, and aspects of life.
- **Communal Value** – relates to the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, and whose collective experience or memory it holds.

It is normally desirable to sustain all of the identified heritage values of a place, but, on occasion, what is necessary to sustain some values, will conflict with what is necessary to sustain others. In other instances, the overall needs of the property, to allow it to continue in its optimum viable use (that is, the use which is least likely to cause harm to the significance of the asset – in this case, for Whitfield Court to continue to function as a single family home), require an understanding of the various values relative to one another.

The grading system used in order to establish and record the significance of the building's elements is defined as follows:

- **High** – parts or elements of special interest that are fundamental to the design concept of the building and/or parts that play a major role in its 'historical timeline': alteration or removal of features of this level will be strongly resisted.
- **Medium** – parts or elements of special interest that are specific to the vocabulary of the building and/or parts that play a considerable role in its 'historical timeline': efforts should be made to retain features on this level, although some degree of flexibility in terms of alteration would be possible.
- **Low** – elements of some or little special architectural or historic interest, but that contribute to the vocabulary of the building as a whole and its 'historical timeline': a greater degree of alteration or removal would be possible than for items of high or medium significance, though a low value does not necessarily mean a feature is expendable.
- **Neutral** – parts or elements which have little or no inherent cultural value but which does not actually detract from the character or appearance of the building or site. Alterations should be possible to these features.
- **Detrimental** – elements or features which actually detract from the character or appearance of the building or site. Efforts should be made to remove these features, potentially allowing the understanding of an aspect of the assets' value to be better understood in the process.

The **aesthetic value** of Whitfield Court is principally in the designed elements of the principal southern façade, and the fortuitous evolution of the rear northern façade and interior, where clear evidence of the various phases of development of the house can be visually understood in the remaining built fabric from each period. As set out in the previous application, the 'design' changes to the house were the replacement of the flat roofed 20th Century extension to the North, and the replacement of a 20th Century unsafe staircase internally. Though the aesthetic value of the house as whole is considered to be high, the design amendments are largely centred around the two areas of 20th Century built fabric in the revised proposals, and by removing aesthetically detrimental elements and replacing them with more architecturally deferential alternatives, the impact upon the aesthetic value of the property is deemed to be positive.

Evidential value can be derived from either physical remains or genetic lines that have been inherited from the past. The ability to understand or interpret this information (and therefore attribute evidential value) is generally diminished in a proportional manner to the extent of its removal or replacement for a given heritage asset. In the case of Whitfield Court, the evidential value relates to the legibility of the various phases and development of the building's historical development through the physical remains of the earlier phases of the building's construction. The evidential value is considered to be medium, however the new alterations are deemed to have a neutral impact upon this, and a positive impact in the case of the various repairs, which will preserve the built fabric of Whitfield Court, and prevent consequential damage which could cause loss of evidential value if left unattended.

Historic value can either be illustrative, meaning that which illustrates an aspect of history – linking past and present people, or associative, meaning that the building is associated with someone or something of great importance. Illustrative historic value is somewhat similar to evidential value but may be more overt – for example the periods of wealth or poverty of a farm building may be illustrated through historical development of the building or subdivision, and this can be visually 'read' in the still visible phases of the building. Associative historic value may be drawn from a buildings ability to allow us to understand the context of historically important events or groups of people, though this generally relies on the building somewhat resembling its form and detailing at time of the historically significant association. As noted above, the design changes are to historically insignificant portions of the property, and the repairs proposed will preserve historic built fabric as far as possible, and so both are considered positive.

Communal value derives from the meaning of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory. It may be either commemorative (for example a war memorial) or symbolic (for example the Houses of Parliament – which symbolises wider values). Whitfield Court has limited communal value, however the proposals set out in this revised application would not impact upon any commemorative value of known local historic figures who were associated with the property.

3.2 Conclusion

The revised proposals discussed in this document are an evolution of those previously proposed, rather than a revolution. They are principally:

- Minor changes to the previously proposed replacement single storey extension and staircase, replacing late-20th Century built fabric of no significance nor architectural quality.
- More extensive repairs, discovered during opening up works to carry out the repairs set out in the previous application and approved in the previous consent.

It is the author's opinion that the proposals are sensitive to the historic significance of Whitfield Court, and appropriate within this context.