



JON LOWE
HERITAGE

Heritage Statement

Brook House, Sherborne,
GL54 3DR

On behalf of Will Hine

November 2023 | Project Ref. 00504 | V.1





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Heritage Statement

Brook House, Sherborne

Authored by Miriam Holland

Report Version: V1

Project Reference: 00504

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Introduction

1. This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Jon Lowe Heritage Ltd under instruction from Will Hine. It supports an application submission for the construction of a single dwellinghouse on land adjacent to Brook House in the village of Sherborne.
2. The site lies within the Sherborne Conservation Area. A pre-application process was conducted on the proposals in March 2023 (22/04313/PAYPRE) and although the principle of the development was considered to be acceptable under Local Plan Policy DS3, the LPA's conservation officer raised concerns. Their response stated:

"The proposal would result in the loss of positive garden area which forming part of a garden curtilage, large gardens are an important and defining characteristic of the locality. Should this garden area be developed this would result in the loss of residential garden and this would have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the Sherborne Conservation Area"

3. Research that has been carried out since the initial pre-application has demonstrated that the response above was based upon a misunderstanding of the historic form and evolution of the gardens associated with Brook House. This Heritage Statement will describe the site's history and evolution and presents Cotswold District Council, the decision makers, with a statement of significance on the heritage assets potentially affected by the works applied for, together with an assessment of the impacts and effects of the works upon that significance. In doing so it supports the statutory obligation on decision-makers to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of conservation areas and to have special regard to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and their settings.

Proposed Scheme

4. The proposals are confined to the construction of a single-storey dwellinghouse and its detached garage building on land currently associated with Brook House, within the Sherborne Conservation Area. The existing pedestrian access which is situated off a private unadopted lane would be widened to form a 3m wide vehicular entrance leading to a driveway, and the area around the proposed dwelling house would be thoughtfully landscaped.

Methodology

5. The site, its relationship to context and the wider area have been observed by the author during site visits conducted in April 2023. The findings have informed design development.
6. Value judgements based on observation of the building fabric, form and features were made and these were further supported by documentary research. Observations and external inspections were also undertaken to better identify the overall sensitivity of the site to change, together with opportunities for enhancement.

Report Structure

7. This report presents a summary understanding of the application site and surrounding heritage assets, including a description of their historic background. This is followed by a proportionate description of the significance of the heritage assets potentially affected by the proposals. This is followed by an assessment of the proposed changes and their impact upon the significance of the heritage assets.



Figure 1: Site location shaded in red.



Understanding the Site

Understanding the Site

Location & Context

8. Brook House is situated on the Main Street in the village of Sherborne. The village is linear in character and has primarily developed as groups of dwellings along the north side of a single road with a small number of lanes (often unadopted) directly off of it. Sherborne House, the estate's large Grade II* listed country house, sits towards the eastern end of the village. Its associated Grade II listed park & garden lies to both the north and south of the village.
9. Sherborne is very rural in character—dwellings along the main street sit behind generous front gardens often fronted with traditional stone walls and hedges. Views from the main street to the south onto the estate's parkland are open and pastoral, while views north onto the developed part of the village are more constrained by buildings, walls, tall hedges and trees.
10. While most dwellings in the village are associated within moderate plot sizes, Brook House sits within a considerably larger garden. This is uncharacteristic of buildings in the area and as discussed in the historic development section of this report, is the result of an early 20th century extension to its garden.

Brook House

11. Brook House sits within a large L-shaped plot. The house itself, which is considered an undesignated heritage asset, is approximately mid-19th century in date. It has recently received a modern conservatory extension to its rear and is accessed from a driveway to the south, off the village's main street. There is a coach house immediately to its rear that can be accessed directly off the lane to the east of the house. The house and its garden are surrounded by stone walling and tall hedges to its south, east and much of its west sides, meaning views onto the property and its associated garden and land are generally constrained and narrow.

12. Brook House has a large formal garden to its west, and at the western end of this garden lies the plot of land upon which the new scheme is proposed. This land is separated from the property's 'original' garden by hedges and trees and is informal and generally untended and unused in character. By virtue of its hedges and the orientation of Brook House itself, there are very few views from the house towards this piece of land—the primary views from the house are towards the south and north.



Figure 2 (top left): View down unadopted road that runs north off the main street, to the east of Brook House. The proposed development plot is on the other side of the tall hedge on the left.

Figure 3 (bottom left): View north on the proposed development plot; Brook House out of shot behind hedges and trees on the right.

Figure 4 (top right): View onto main southern elevation of Brook House from its driveway.

Figure 5 (bottom right): View east from the proposed development plot towards Brook House.

Understanding the Site

Heritage Context

Conservation Area

13. The site is located within the Sherborne Conservation Area, which covers a large area and includes the Sherborne House Estate and village. The conservation area map and reproduced on p.13, with the site highlighted.
14. Brook House is within the conservation area's boundary and forms part of the ribbon of development along the primary east-west aligned road. Typically plots have road frontage with detached or semi detached properties being set back from the road. The roadside is often defined by traditional stone walling.
15. Much of the building stock has historic association with the estate and collectively they illustrate its historic scale and influence. It is understood Brook House was Dower House associated with the estate. Its architecture is polite, reasonably formal and of a scale that reflects its direct association with the estate.
16. Development within the conservation area, including the area in which the study site is located, has a loose grain. There are multiple structures/buildings that are accessed via lanes set perpendicular to the road. These structures set a precedent for structures (whether ancillary or not) set away from the main village road.

Listed Buildings

17. The proposed development is within the setting of a number of Grade II listed buildings—the location of these in relation to the site is laid out in the map in Figure 6.
18. The former forge is the closest of these—it has an associated ancillary building on the lane along with a stone wall between the forge and this

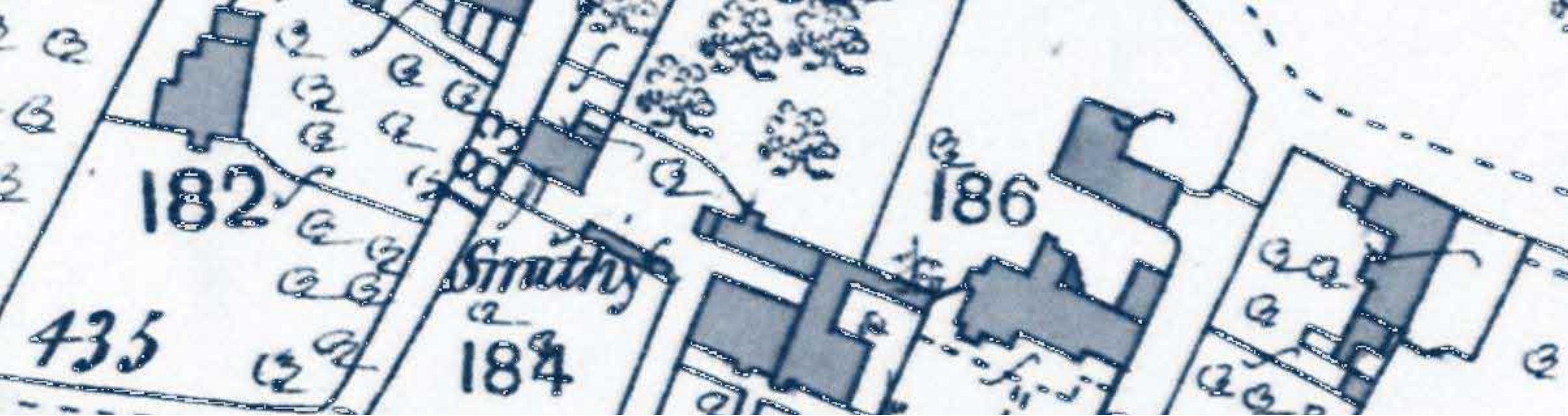
ancillary building. These buildings/structures about the southern boundary of the Site. Historically they may have had a connection and relationship with the application site but historic maps suggest that there has been no relationship with the site since at least the 1930s, prior to the buildings being added to the list. As such the site is not curtilage to the listed buildings.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Name: ELM TREE COTTAGE
Designation Type: Listing
Grade: II
List UID: 1155953 |
| 2 | Name: NOS 14 AND 15 AND FORMER FORGE AT REAR
Designation Type: Listing
Grade: II
List UID: 1090435 |
| 3 | Name: THE MEAD HOUSE
Designation Type: Listing
Grade: II
List UID: 1340794 |
| 4 | Name: THE KENNELS
Designation Type: Listing
Grade: II
List UID: 1155941 |
| 5 | Name: K6 TELEPHONE KIOSK
Designation Type: Listing
Grade: II
List UID: 1249391 |
| 6 | Name: SHERBORNE HOUSE
Designation Type: Park and Garden
Grade: II
List UID: 1000780 |



- Grade II Listed
- Curtilage listed?

Figure 6: Area plan of the proposal site, delineated in red, and its surroundings. Nearby designated heritage assets shaded in blue.



Historic Background

Historic Development

19. The history and development of the village of Sherborne is tied to the development of the Manor of Sherborne. A settlement had existed on the site for some time before a parish church was first built in 1175. At this time the village was the property of Winchcombe Abbey, and it remained so until the Dissolution of the Monasteries. The parish church was rebuilt again in the late 13th or early 14th century, and is situated towards the east of the village next to Sherborne House.
20. The manor was purchased by Thomas Dutton in c.1550 and before the end of the century his son William (d.1618) had enclosed a deer park north-east of the village. Another was created to the south-west c.1630, and in the mid-17th century a large country house was built by Valentine Strong for John Dutton on the site of a former hunting lodge. The house would be substantially rebuilt in 1829-1834.
21. Many of the buildings in the village of Sherborne were directly associated with the manor. Brook House itself is said to have been the estate's Dower House, while there are also Almshouses, kennels and numerous farmhouses. Most of the buildings in the village date to the 17th to 19th centuries, and almost the whole of the village's east end was rebuilt as a 'model' village, consisting of groups of cottages, in the early 19th century.
22. Brook House is likely to have been constructed c.1840s-1850s, and forms a group with its Coach House and Stables. The garden it sits within was substantially enlarged in the early 20th century; a brief overview of the development of the application site is laid out on the following page.



Figure 7: Sherborne House, c.1700, prior to the 19th century rebuilding.



Figure 8: Sherborne House, 1893.



Figure 9: Aerial photo of Sherborne House looking east, c.1944.

Historic Development

23. The first available map illustrating the site's environs is the Ordnance Survey of 1873-84 (Figure 10). At this time Brook House was sited within a clearly defined plot (parcel 186—highlighted) comprising house, coach house, front garden and rear garden with definable boundaries.
24. The plot was smaller than at present and excluded the current application site. Much of the application site, although now part of the garden to Brook House, was in use as an orchard and was enclosed (185) as a separate parcel of land.
25. The western most part of the application site was a linear garden or land to the rear of the small building on the lane. It is not clear if this was affiliated to the Smithy (184) and how this related to central plot (185).
26. The numbers used (i.e. 184, 185 and 186) identify individual 'parcels' in area terms. A 'parcel' may comprise several parts and if so a brace symbol (stretched 's' symbol) is used to span boundaries to connect two adjoining plots or areas so that their areas are calculated and counted as one. This may not reflect separate ownership but, together with the drawn line boundaries, demonstrates that the plots may be separate entities. There is no brace symbol connecting the garden of Brook House with the application Site.
27. The second edition Ordnance Survey map of 1898-1902 (figure 11) shows that at this time, Brook House remained a clearly defined plot (186). It still comprised a house, coach house, front garden and rear garden with clearly definable boundaries. The application site is as shown on the earlier map, split into two clearly defined areas and separate from Brook House.
28. The third edition Ordnance Survey of 1912-1922 (figure 12) shows that by this date, the gardens to Brook House had been extended to include the adjacent land/gardens

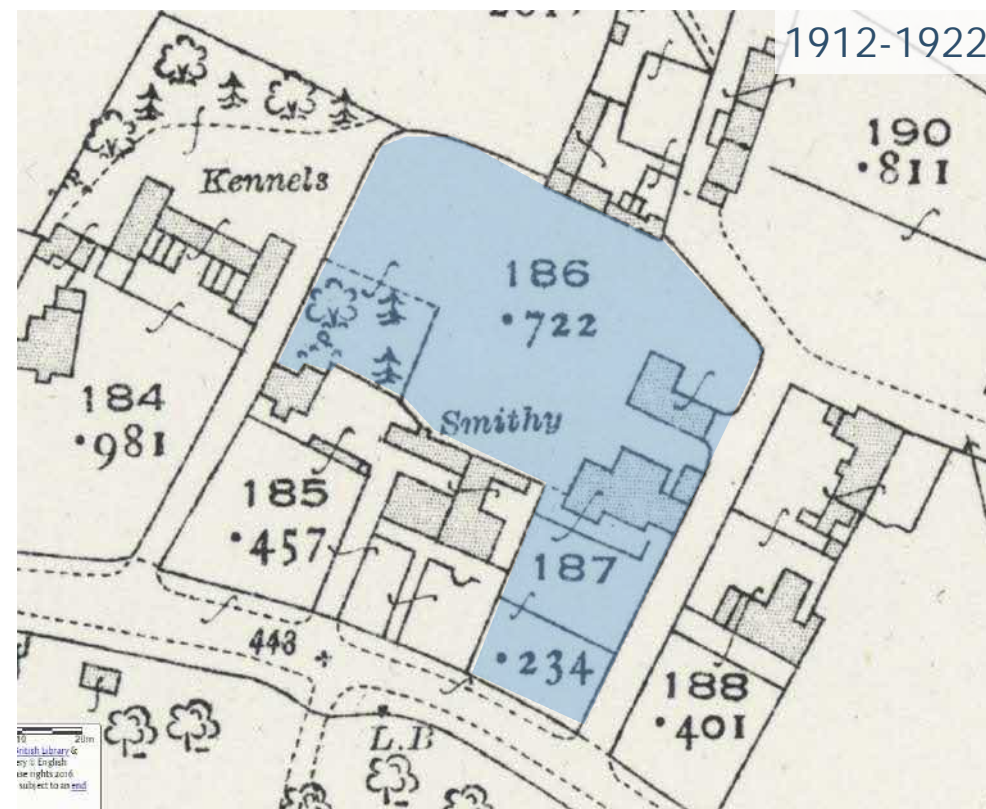
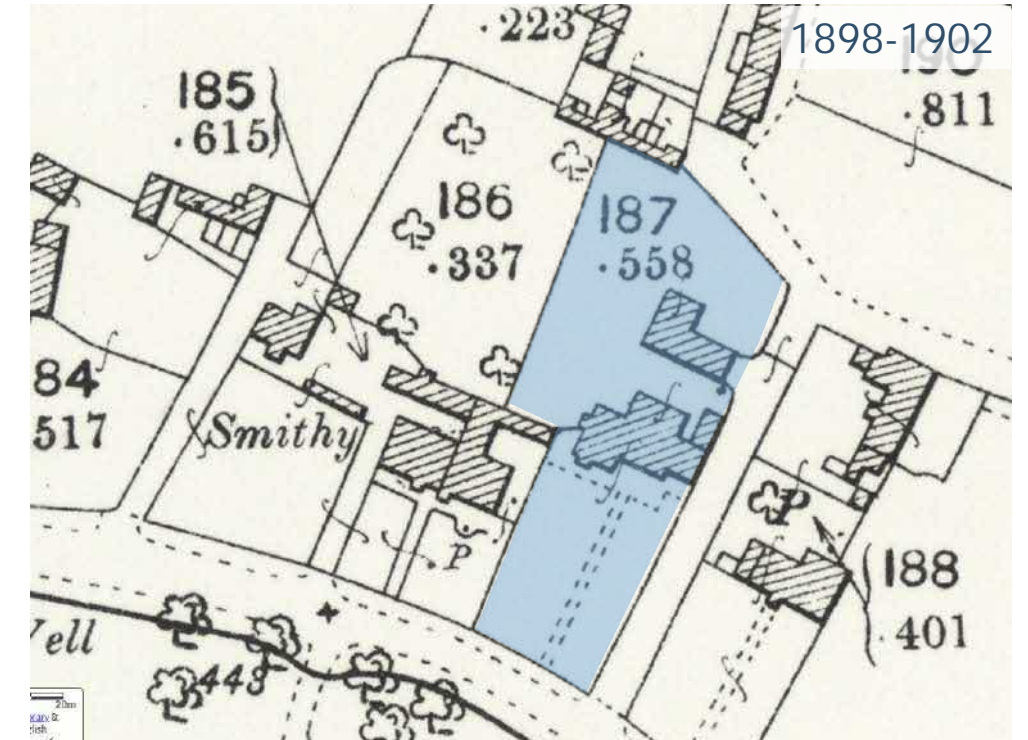
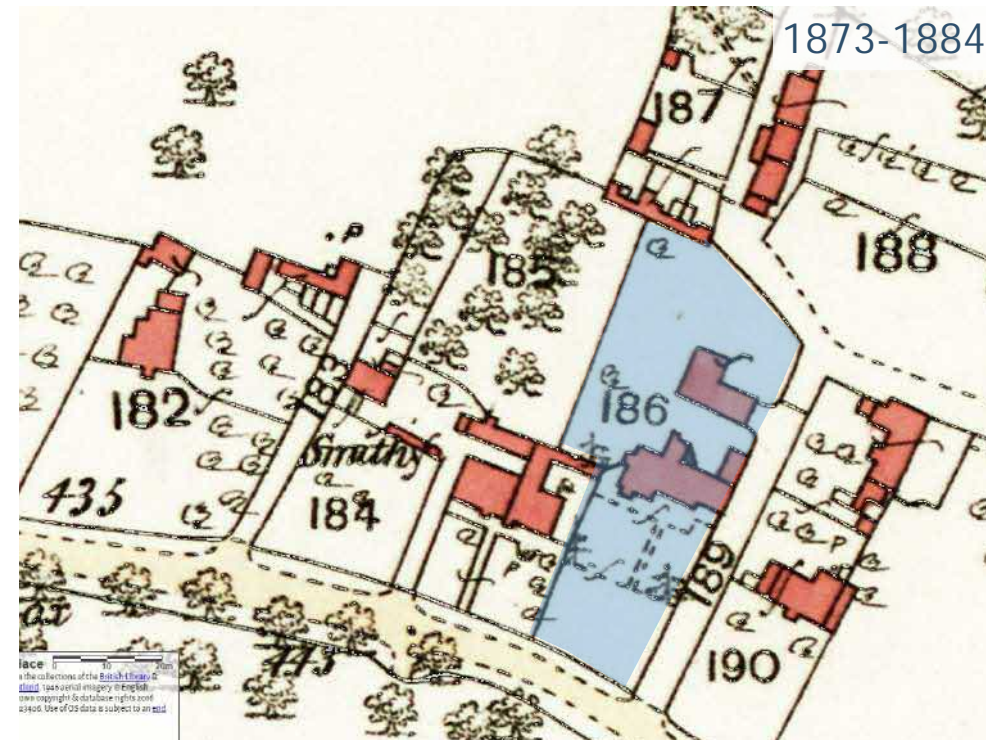


Figure 10 (Top left): First Edition Ordnance Survey, c.1873-1884. Brook House can be seen sitting within a clearly defined plot (186), which is considerably smaller than the plot it sits within today.

Figure 11 (Top right): Second Edition Ordnance Survey, c.1898-1902. Few changes between this edition and the first edition can be seen— Brook House is still sitting within a small plot (187).

Figure 12 (Left): Third Edition Ordnance Survey, c.1912-1922. By this time the gardens surrounding Brook House had been enlarged to take in the neighbouring plot.



Assessment of Significance

Assessment of Significance

29. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, revised 2023) promotes understanding significance in order to judge the acceptability of the effects of a proposal upon it. Significance, for heritage assets, comprises the asset's architectural, historical, archaeological and artistic interests.
30. This section provides a proportionate interpretation of the significance of those heritage assets potentially affected by the proposed development through change within their setting.

Brook House

31. Brook House and its ancillary structures are not listed buildings, but they have been identified as undesignated heritage assets. Their interests and significance are described below:
32. Architectural Interest: Brook House has architectural interest which is primarily derived from the quality and appearance of its exterior. It is a good example of a c.mid-19th century Dower House and is of a materiality and architectural language that is typical of the area. Its associated Coach House and Stable building to the rear are also of interest, and together they form a complimentary group with primary and ancillary elements. It presents polite architecture rather than rustic vernacular.
33. Historic Interest: Brook House derives historic interest from its role as the Dower House related to the estate.
34. Setting: The immediate setting of Brook House is its associated ancillary building and the garden within which they sit. As a group, the buildings contribute to each other's setting. As has already been discussed, the garden setting of Brook House has changed over time since being extended in the early 20th century. The plot size now associated with Brook House does not contribute to its significance as it is essentially a modern amalgamation of two separate plots of land. It is also uncharacteristic of gardens in the

area as it is considerably larger than those relating to other dwellings in the village.

35. A hedge and a row of trees currently divide the more formal garden associated with Brook House from the unkept extended land now being proposed as the development site. This extended part of the garden shares little visual relationship with Brook House due to the presence of hedging and trees, and is of a distinctly different informal character. By virtue of this and its origins as a much later addition to the site, it is incidental rather than a contributory part of the setting to Brook House.

Listed Context

36. There are a number of designated heritage assets in the vicinity of the site with the potential to be affected by the proposed scheme through change within their setting. These include:
 - Elm Tree Cottage;
 - Nos.14 & 15 Sherborne Village and former forge at rear;
 - The Mead House;
 - The Kennels;
 - K6 Telephone Kiosk;
 - Sherborne House (Park & Garden).
37. A description of the significance of these designated heritage assets and the character and appearance of the Sherborne Conservation Area is presented below. These descriptions are proportionate to the significance of the assets and are sufficient to understand the nature of the impacts the proposed scheme may have upon that significance.
38. Nearby listed buildings assessed in this section are recognised as being of special architectural or historic interest. They each contribute to the character and appearance of the conservation area and are important features within the immediate street scene around the site.

Elm Tree Cottage

39. The significance of Grade II listed Elm Tree Cottage is primarily architectural and historic.
40. Architectural Interest: Architectural interest is principally derived from the quality and appearance of the cottage. The property has mid-17th century origins and was altered in the 20th century—it is of two storeys with attic dormers and is rectangular in plan. It has stone-mullioned casement windows with stopped hoods to ground and first floors and its coursed squared and dressed limestone is typical of the area. Through its form and appearance it contributes to the quality of the streetscape.
41. Historic Interest: The property derives historic

interest from its associations with the development of Sherborne village.

42. Setting: The immediate setting of the building is the open fields to the north of Elm Tree Cottage and the associated stables to its south-west. These stables act as a visual barrier between the proposal site and the cottage itself which minimises the role the proposal site plays in the setting of the listed building.

Nos.14 & 15 and the former forge at rear

43. Architectural Interest: The architectural interest of these buildings is primarily derived from their visual character and appearance. No.15 has mid-17th century origins while No.14 dates to the late 18th/early 19th century, and the separate



Figure 13: Application site, looking south

Assessment of Significance

forge is 19th century in date. A multi-phased set of buildings, the cottages and forge are modestly built of local dressed limestone. The buildings contribute to the character and quality of the streetscape.

- 44. Historic Interest: The properties derive historic interest from their associations with the development of Sherborne village.
- 45. Setting: The immediate setting of the pair of cottages is their large front gardens and shared views onto the main road. The forge building to the north of the cottages shares a visual relationship with the application site, although this is screened by the cottages from the public highway and is primarily experienced privately.

The Mead House

- 46. Architectural Interest: The architectural interest of Mead House is principally derived from the quality and appearance of its elevations. It is a higher-status mid-19th century detached property of dressed limestone. It is T-shape in plan, with three small gables lit by stone mullioned casements. Through its form and appearance it contributes to the quality of the streetscape.
- 47. Historic Interest: The property derives historic interest from its associations with the 19th century phase of development of Sherborne village.
- 48. Setting: The immediate setting of Mead House is its large front garden, the neighbouring allotments and Brook House to the west. Shared views at the front of the property are wide and undeveloped, while the land at the rear of the property is more built up with dwellings and outhouses. There is little shared visual relationship between Mead House and the study site due to the topography of the land and surrounding buildings, walls and hedges.

The Kennels

- 49. Architectural Interest: A detached early-mid 19th century house, the architectural interest of the Kennels and its ancillary structure to the rear is primarily derived from their visual character and appearance. The main house is L-shaped in plan with three half dormers and a shallow stone-built porch. Together, the two buildings contribute to the quality of the streetscape.
- 50. Historic Interest: The buildings derive historic interest from their associations with the 19th century phase of development of Sherborne village.
- 51. Setting: The immediate setting of The Kennels and the large curtilage listed building to the rear is their large gardens to the south, although the eastern side of the curtilage listed buildings borders the private lane adjacent to the application site. There is therefore some shared visual relationship between this building and the application site, although it is largely screened by walls and hedges.

Sherborne House Park & Garden

- 52. Artistic Interest: The edge of the 260ha Grade II listed park & garden associated with Sherborne House sits to the north-east and south of the application site. As a designed landscape with layers of development and varying uses, the park & garden contains areas of pasture, woodland, earthworks and many specimen trees. Though its character and appearance it contributes to the quality of the village streetscape it surrounds.
- 53. Historic Interest: The park & garden derives historic interest from its associations with the Dutton family and the development of the estate from the manor of Sherborne to an inclosed deer park and designed parkland.

- 54. Setting: The large park & garden forms an important part of the setting of all heritage assets in Sherborne village, and they in turn contribute to its setting to varying degrees. The application site has a lesser shared visual relationship with the edges of the park & garden than most other areas in its vicinity due to its position behind the main road and between existing buildings and established hedges and walls.



Figure 14 (top): Formal garden to Brook House.



Figure 15 (bottom): Unkept land forming part of the 20th century garden extension.



Assessment of the Proposals

Assessment of Effects

60. This chapter appraises the impacts of the proposed development on the heritage assets identified within the report and any effects upon their significance. It supports the Local Planning Authority in their decision making process. The proposed scheme is shown in the architect's drawing pack and is described in detail in the Design & Access Statement which also forms part of the planning application and should be consulted before reading the following section. The most prominent heritage issues will concern the potential impact of the proposed scheme on the setting and significance of nearby listed buildings and on the character and appearance of the Sherborne Conservation Area.

Design & Materiality

61. In order to reduce the potential for any adverse impacts on views in the area, the proposed dwelling and its associated detached garage have been designed to hug the landscape—it is stepped to follow the contours of the site. This means it sits very low on its plot; its roofline is lower than the level of the ancillary or secondary buildings to the south of the site, and lower than the established hedge on the site's western boundary. The materiality of the proposed structure has also been carefully considered. Cotswold dry-stone cladding is proposed for use on its elevations in order to conform to the established material language of the village.

62. Due to the modest scale of the proposed dwelling and garage they will also not be visible from the village's Main Street—in terms of street views, they will only be visible from the private lane running north that gives access to a small number of properties, and even then, will only be glimpsed when the access gates are open.

Plot Subdivision

63. As discussed in the pre-application response (see Appendix 1 on p.18), the proposed building's plot was not originally associated with Brook House, and the size of the garden plot as a whole is considerably larger than those

associated with other houses in the village. The proposed reduction to the size of the garden associated with Brook House is beneficial as it returns the garden to a scale commensurate with the house and more closely reflects its historic curtilage. Its reduced scale garden would be similar to scale and proportions of the gardens of neighboring properties and better reflect the plot grain within the conservation area. The existing outlook looking west from Brook House is also not of particular interest, and the addition of the proposed traditional Cotswold stone boundary wall between Brook House and the proposed building plot would enhance its setting and plot definition.

Access

64. In order to provide access onto the site, it is proposed to widen the existing gate in the stone boundary wall on the western edge of the site into a 3m wide opening leading to a gravel driveway. The majority of this boundary wall and hedge would therefore be retained and the new opening detailed as a traditional access point with a pair of traditional solid timber gates.

65. This proposed entry point to the site is discreetly situated on an unadopted lane off the village's main street—it is a dead end and appears to only otherwise provide access to the ancillary building associated with the Kennels and occasional pedestrian footpath traffic. As such its sensitivity to change and the magnitude of experienced effect are low with the visibility and experience of this proposed widened opening would be very limited. Because of its position in the townscape and the normality of experiencing such openings in boundaries walls in the conservation area, there is very little potential for the opening to adversely impact the setting of nearby listed buildings. Its proposed traditional solid timber gates will prevent views into the proposed building's plot unless they are open, and they are stylistically and materially in keeping with surrounding structures. In views from the lane the new dwelling would be

discrete, of architectural interest and good design and material quality. As demonstrated by the 1898-1902 Ordnance Survey Map (Figure 11) a large opening or break in this boundary wall has previously existed.

Precedents for Development

66. There is considerable precedent for acceptable development on the application site—application 21/00801/FUL was consented in December 2021 and proposed the construction of an orangery and garden store, an outdoor swimming pool and a full-size tennis court. The current dwelling is proposed to be positioned approximately on the site of the previously consented tennis court, although it is smaller than the consented court and would impose less hard standing. Tennis courts, unlike residential properties, are not a characteristic of the conservation area and the visual presence of the tennis court's enclosing fence would have an impact that would draw attention to the alien feature.

67. From a heritage perspective, an ancillary building or structure has as much potential to impact on the setting of heritage assets as an independent dwelling. A tennis court in this location would represent a large, non-traditional intrusion. It would have comprised a very large area of hard standing surrounded by a 2.75m high chain link fence and at its north end would have required an increase in ground level to accommodate it. It would consequently have been positioned far more prominently towards the south of the site (almost meeting its boundary) than the proposed discreetly stepped dwelling which is set much further back on the plot. In comparison to this visually and aesthetically intrusive tennis court, the proposal for a low, stepped and discreetly-positioned dwelling which has been thoughtfully and sympathetically designed, surrounded by carefully considered landscaping, is considerable improvement on this previously-consented scheme.

Impact on Setting and Character

68. The discretion and sympathetic design of the proposed dwelling limits its potential to adversely impact on the setting of nearby listed buildings. The closest asset that could be affected is the curtilage listed building associated with The Kennels to the west of the site, and Nos.14 & 15 and their former forge to the rear, at the south of the site. In both instances there would be very little, if any, shared visual relationship between these buildings and the proposed dwelling.

69. To the west the site will be screened by the existing retained hedge and will only be visible from the unadopted lane when the proposed gate is open. This gate sits within an existing wall and is of a scale and materiality in keeping with the character of the area. Its situation on an unadopted dead-end lane means it will not be easily read as providing access to an independent dwelling. To the south, the low profile of the proposed dwelling, the fact that it is stepped back from the boundary, and the proposed landscaping, will all make any adversely impactful shared visual relationship very unlikely.

70. For the same reasons the proposed dwelling and its discreet access are very unlikely to affect how the conservation area is experienced. As well as being thoughtfully-designed using a palette of materials in keeping with the architectural language of the area, the proposal site will not be visible from the main road through the village, and may only be glimpsed from certain locations to the north. This is a viewpoint that few people would experience as there are no roads or other dwellings in this location. The scale and footprint of the dwelling, its position within its defined garden, and the scale of that garden would all be characteristic of the conservation area. Accordingly, the character and appearance of the conservation area and the setting of nearby heritage assets would be preserved.



Policy Compliance & Conclusions

Policy Compliance & Conclusions

Policy Compliance

71. It is considered in this heritage statement that the proposed scheme will result in an at least the preservation of the significance of the heritage assets potentially affected and their contribution to the Sherborne Conservation Area, thereby according with Section 16 and Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
72. The proposed scheme, has been informed by an understanding of the site's significance and sensitivities. In accordance with the statutory duties of Section 16 and 72 of the 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, that process has identified what is desirable to preserve in order to sustain the assets' significance and character.
73. In accordance with paragraph 194 of the NPPF (revised 2023) this report provides a proportionate description of the significance of the heritage assets affected or potentially affected by the proposed development. It follows a full inspection of the accessible fabric and archives. The impacts and effects of the proposed development have been fully assessed. It is concluded that there is no harm to heritage significance.
74. Given the sympathetic nature of the proposals it is concluded that the proposed changes applied for are entirely within the conservation area's tolerance for change and that their execution would support the preservation of significance.
75. The significance of those listed buildings potentially affected by the proposals, through a perceived change within their rural setting, or in views in which they are experienced and appreciated, has been considered. The overall design rationale of the proposals has carefully considered the site's context in respect of the setting of listed buildings and its design reflects

this. The proposals would represent a discreet, high quality addition to the village that would preserve the setting and significance of the nearby listed buildings.

76. The assessment concludes that because of the discreet, low design of the proposed dwelling, its stepped nature that hugs the contours of the site, and its complimentary materiality, the scale of any potential impact to significance is minimal. The significance of the listed buildings has been considered and no adverse effects or erosion of significance would be caused by the development.
77. Paragraph 203 of the NPPF requires that the effects of an application on a non-designated heritage asset (in this case Brook House) should be taken into account in decision making. From inspection and assessment of the building it is clear that its heritage interests are principally derived from the building's exterior. The proposed changes have considered the heritage value of Brook House and its context and will be sympathetic to both, preserving significance and where possible, enhancing it.
78. The proposals accord with the relevant policy set out within Cotswold District Council's Local Plan 2011-2031. There is no compromise of local character and overall the heritage assets affected are conserved. The proposals are considered to comply with Policies EN10, EN11 and EN12: the proposals are considered to respect local context and character, they will preserve and enhance the setting of nearby designated and undesignated heritage assets and the character and appearance of the Sherborne Conservation Area, thereby protecting its special architectural and historic interest.

Conclusions

79. The site is a plot now associated with Brook House, but prior to the early 20th century it appeared to have no direct association Brook House at all. There are a number of heritage assets near the site, including the undesignated heritage asset of Brook House itself, a number of Grade II listed buildings, and the Sherborne Conservation Area. This report has presented a proportionate description of the significance of the heritage assets affected and appraised the effects of the proposals thereon, in accordance with the NPPF and local policy requirements.
80. The pre-application advice note stated that the addition of a single storey building to provide ancillary residential accommodation would be supported in principle, subject to appropriate design details and materiality. Whether the proposed dwelling is independent or ancillary is irrelevant in heritage terms, and as has been demonstrated throughout this document's impact assessment, the proposed dwelling has been thoughtfully designed and makes use of traditional local materials. Its proposed access is also merely a widening of an existing access gate which is situated off of an unadopted and largely private lane—this is a discreet solution to providing access to the proposed dwelling, and as has been demonstrated in paragraph 65, would not result in any adverse impacts to the setting of nearby designated or undesignated heritage assets.
81. The proposed scheme addresses the specific site constraints and presents a scheme that provides discreet and heritage-sensitive accommodation which will maintain the site's relationship to the rural streetscape and contribution to the conservation area while better responding to its surrounding context.
82. The design of the proposed dwelling has taken account of the area's key characteristics, the composition and form of surrounding buildings, the significance and setting of nearby heritage assets and significance of Sherborne Conservation Area. The proposals have been assessed against the policy and guidance set out within the NPPF and Cotswold District Council's Local Plan. This assessment concludes that the proposals accord with the policy and guidance and offer sympathetic and informed changes that will maintain and improve the overall interests of the site, the conservation area and setting of nearby listed buildings.

Appendix 1:

Pre-Application Response

Pre-Application Response

83. An pre-application process was conducted on the proposals in March 2023 and although the principle of the development was considered to be acceptable under Local Plan Policy DS3, the LPA's conservation officer raised concerns. These concerns and our response to them are laid out below as context prior to our assessment:

Council: *The scheme seeks provide an independent residential dwelling within an area that is residential garden, below is OS plan dating from 1898 showing the site and its surroundings with adjacent designated heritage asset. This demonstrates little change to the spatial character of the site and surrounding plots whereby traditional development has clustered around this area enclosed by traditional stone boundary walling.*

Our comment: As demonstrated in this report, the garden plot now associated with Brook House is a modern amalgamation of two historically separate plots. The application site was originally not affiliated with Brook House. The land only became an extension to the Brook House Garden between c1902 and c.1912-30.

Council: *A characteristic of the area is that of large garden curtilages with stone boundary walling and this makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.*

Our comments: Traditionally constructed stone boundary walls will be maintained as a key characteristic of the site.

Council: *Large gardens are a defining*

characteristic of Sherborne this is due to the historic development of the Lane whereby plots have remained relatively unchanged since the 1st edition map therefore the spatial character of the Lane is that of large open garden plots. Should this garden area be developed this would result in the loss of this aspect and would change the character of the non designated heritage asset as well as having a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the Sherborne Conservation Area. The garden area proposed for development is not an area which is identified as a vacant plot or has a negative impact on the site itself or the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Our comment: The current garden to Brook House is larger than originally intended and is disproportionately large in comparison with other gardens in the village. It is unlikely that many (if any) houses in the conservation area have experienced growth in plot size and therefore Brook House is an exception rather than being wholly characteristic.

Council: *EN11 (Designated Heritage Assets – Conservation Areas) of the Local plan states that development proposals shall “preserve and where appropriate enhance the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area in terms of siting, scale, form, proportion, design, materials and the retention of positive features” and “will not result in the loss of open spaces, including garden areas and village greens, which make a valuable contribution to the character and/or appearance, and/or allow important views into or out of the Conservation Area” The proposal for a dwelling on this site results in the loss of positive garden area contributes to the*

character and appearance of the Conservation Area. The proposal if forthcoming would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation and would be contrary to local plan policies and Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Our comment: This proposal represents the partial restoration of plot boundaries through the subdivision of the previously enlarged Brook House garden plot. An ancillary structure was also recently supported within the garden of Brook House, suggesting that some building within these plots would be acceptable if a large amount of garden area is retained (which it is in the case of these proposals).

Council: *The proposal would result in the loss of positive garden area which forming part of a garden curtilage, large gardens are an important and defining characteristic of the locality. Should this garden area be developed this would result in the loss of residential garden and this would have a harmful impact on the character and appearance of the Sherborne Conservation Area. The introduction of such development could also have a harmful impact on the setting of adjacent designated heritage assets, no information has been provided regarding the form, scale and materiality of the property or impacts on boundary treatments to the existing site. The site contributes to the character and appearance of the conservation area and the Local Planning Authority is statutorily obliged to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area. The proposal also*

conflicts with local plan policies whereby the scheme would “result in the loss of open spaces, including garden areas and village greens, which make a valuable contribution to the character and/or appearance, and/or allow important views into or out of the Conservation Area” which the local plan seeks to preserve. Therefore a proposed dwelling on this site would not be supported should a formal application be submitted.”

Our comment: The new development would be consistent with the pattern and grain of development in the village. It is situated on the north side of the village, where the established village development lies, and is of low, unobtrusive design. Any amount of perceived harm, due to a minor loss of garden area as a result of the construction of a new building, would be localised to the site in question and would not impact the special interests of the conservation area as a whole.

Council: *“The single storey L-shape and its position allows for a subservient ancillary development and its massing is not objectionable in principal. No detailed designs have been provided, but this should follow a traditional vernacular form with high quality materials. The design of the dwelling should be of an outbuilding character, not domesticated utilising roof lights and small window openings, window/door openings could be set behind timber shutters and recessed. The Cotswold design code provides further information on design and materiality to be followed. Regarding landscaping this should remain as existing with residential garden area and pedestrian access,*

Pre-Application Response

this ensures that the scheme site comfortably within the garden setting and provides an ancillary/outbuilding character that is not overly domesticated. The host dwelling has a large area of car parking to the front of the property providing sufficient parking space for any ancillary accommodation, this allows the scheme to be subservient and act as an outbuilding within the garden curtilage. Subject to design and ensuring the scheme is low scale in its massing, retaining a subservient and uncluttered character the proposal could be acceptable.”

Our comment: The above support for a new structure/new massing contradicts earlier pre-app comments. This implies that the case against a structure on the site is based on a misunderstanding of the historic boundaries and the scale of gardens original intended at Brook House. As has been demonstrated, the garden plot now associated with Brook House is a modern amalgamation of two historically separate plots. The application Site was originally not affiliated with Brook House and the land only became an extension to the Brook House Garden between c.1902 and c.1912-30.

Appendix 2:

Legislation and Planning Policy

Legislation, Policy & Guidance

Legislation

- 1) The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the current legislation relating to listed buildings and conservation areas and is a primary consideration.
- 2) In respect of proposals potentially affected listed buildings, Section 66 states that *“in considering whether to grant planning permission or permission in principle 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”*.
- 3) In respect of conservation areas, Section 72 of the Act places a duty on the decision maker to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the area.

National Planning Policy Framework (revised 2023)

- 4) The Government’s planning policies for England are set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (revised 2023). It sets out a framework within which locally prepared plans can be produced. It is a material consideration and relates to planning law, noting that applications are to be determined in accordance with the local plans unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5) Chapter 16, ‘Conserving and enhancing the historic environment’, is of particular relevance.
- 6) Heritage assets are recognised as being a irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. (Paragraph 189) The conservation of heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance is also a core planning principle.
- 7) Conservation (for heritage policy) is defined at

annex 2 as: “a process of maintaining and managing change in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.” It differs from preservation which is the maintenance of something in its current state.

- 8) Significance (for heritage policy) is defined at annex 2 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...”
- 9) As a framework for local plans the NPPF, at paragraph 190, directs that plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, taking into account four key factors:
 - a. “The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - b. The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
 - c. The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
 - d. Opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.”
- 10) This approach is followed through in decision making with Local Planning Authorities having the responsibility to take account of ‘a’ as well as ‘The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality’ and ‘the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and

distinctiveness’. (Paragraph 197)

- 11) Describing the significance of any heritage asset affected, including the contribution made by its setting, is the responsibility of an applicant. Any such assessment should be proportionate to the asset’s significance. (Paragraph 194)
- 12) Identifying and assessing the particular significance of any heritage asset potentially affected by a proposal, taking into account evidence and expertise, is the responsibility of the Local Planning Authorities. The purpose of this is to ‘avoid or minimize any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal’. (Paragraph 195)
- 13) In decision making where designated heritage assets are affected, Paragraph 199 places a duty of giving ‘great weight’ to the asset’s conservation when considering the impact of a proposed development, irrespective of the level of harm.
- 14) Heritage Assets are defined in Annex 2 as: “A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).”
- 15) Harm to designated heritage assets is categorized into ‘substantial harm’, addressed in Paragraphs 200 and 201 of the NPPF, or ‘less than substantial harm’, addressed in Paragraphs 202.
- 16) The effects of any development on a heritage asset, whether designated or not, needs to be assessed against its archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic interests as the core elements of the asset’s significance.
- 17) The setting of Heritage Assets is defined in

Annex 2 of the NPPF 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.”

National Planning Practice Guidance

- 18) National Planning Practice Guidance relating to Chapter 16 of the NPPF was last modified on 23 July 2019.
- 19) In respect of levels of harm paragraph 018 recognises that substantial harm is a high test. Case law describes substantial harm in terms of an effect that would vitiate or drain away much of the significance of a heritage asset. In cases where harm is found to be less than substantial, a local authority is to weigh that harm against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 20) Proposals can minimise or avoid harm to the significance of a heritage asset and its setting through first understanding significance to identify opportunities and constraints and then informing development proposals.
- 21) A listed building is a building that has been designated because of its special architectural or historic interest and includes the building, any object or structure fixed to the buildings, and any object or structure within the curtilage of the buildings which forms part of the land and has done so since before 1 July 1948. (Paragraph 023)
- 22) The term ‘Special architectural or historic interest’ as used in legislation are used to describe all parts of a heritage asset’s significance.
- 23) Paragraph 007 of the NPPG states:

Policy Compliance & Conclusions

*67)*Heritage assets may be affected by direct physical change or by change in their setting. Being able to properly assess the nature, extent and importance of the significance of a heritage asset, and the contribution of its setting, is very important to understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals."*

24) Paragraph 013 states:

*25)*The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to visual considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each."*

Cotswold District Local Plan 2011-2031

Policy EN10

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT: DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

1. In considering proposals that affect a designated heritage asset or its setting, great weight will be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be.
2. Development proposals that sustain and enhance the character, appearance and significance of designated heritage assets (and their settings), and that put them to viable uses, consistent with their conservation, will be permitted.

3. Proposals that would lead to harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset or its setting will not be permitted, unless a clear and convincing justification of public benefit can be demonstrated to outweigh that harm. Any such assessment will take account, in the balance of material considerations: the importance of the asset; the scale of harm; and the nature and level of the public benefit of the proposal.

Policy EN11

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT: DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS - CONSERVATION AREAS

1. Development proposals, including demolition, that would affect Conservation Areas and their settings, will be permitted provided they:
 - a. preserve and where appropriate enhance the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area in terms of siting, scale, form, proportion, design, materials and the retention of positive features;
 - b. include hard and soft landscape proposals, where appropriate, that respect the character and appearance of the Conservation Area;
 - c. will not result in the loss of open spaces, including garden areas and village greens, which make a valuable contribution to the character and/or appearance, and/or allow important views into or out of the Conservation Area;
 - d. have regard to the relevant Conservation Area appraisal (where available); and
 - e. do not include internally illuminated advertisement signage unless the signage does not have an adverse impact on the Conservation Area or its setting.

Policy EN12

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT: NON-DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

1. Development affecting a non-designated heritage asset will be permitted where it is designed sympathetically having regard to the significance of the asset, its features, character and setting.
2. Where possible, development will seek to enhance the character of the non-designated heritage asset. Proposals for demolition or total loss of a non-designated heritage asset will be subject to a balanced assessment taking into account the significance of the asset and the scale of harm or loss.
3. The assessment of whether a site, feature or structure is considered to be a non-designated heritage asset, will be guided by the criteria set out in Table 6.