



## **Wakes Cottage, Selborne**

Heritage Statement

22nd February 2024

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*Architecture & Conservation*

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## 1. Introduction



Wakes Cottage is a house on the High Street in Selborne, Hampshire that is grade II listed for group value. It sits parallel to and facing the road and is adjoined to The Wakes to its east. It is situated within the Selborne Conservation Area.

The house is of two storeys with a pitched roof, with two gables to the front elevation. The front façade is red brickwork in a Flemish bond with burnt headers, with hung tiles at first floor. The roof has two main ridges that run front to back, with a perpendicular ridge joining them at the front of the house and an infilling flat roof to the rear. The main roofs are roofed in handmade clay peg tiles. The side and rear elevations are of coursed malmstone, and there is a modern conservatory with a slate roof to the rear.

This heritage statement is written to support an application for listed building consent for works proposed to the house. In line with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, the significance of the relevant heritage assets are set out, in this case Wakes Cottage, The Wakes and the Selborne Conservation Area, following which the impact of the proposals is assessed.

This document was written and produced by Sarah Earney BSc (Hons) DipArch MSc (Historic Conservation) RIBA FRSA. She is a chartered architect and RIBA registered Conservation Architect with more than 20 years' experience working with historic buildings and within historic environments. This statement has been prepared following a review of the statutory records for the property and those heritage assets nearby, an appraisal of published documentation and site visits carried out in November 2023 and January 2024.



Top: Front elevation as seen from the High Street, with The Wakes beyond.

Bottom: View of the rear of the house from the garden of The Wakes.



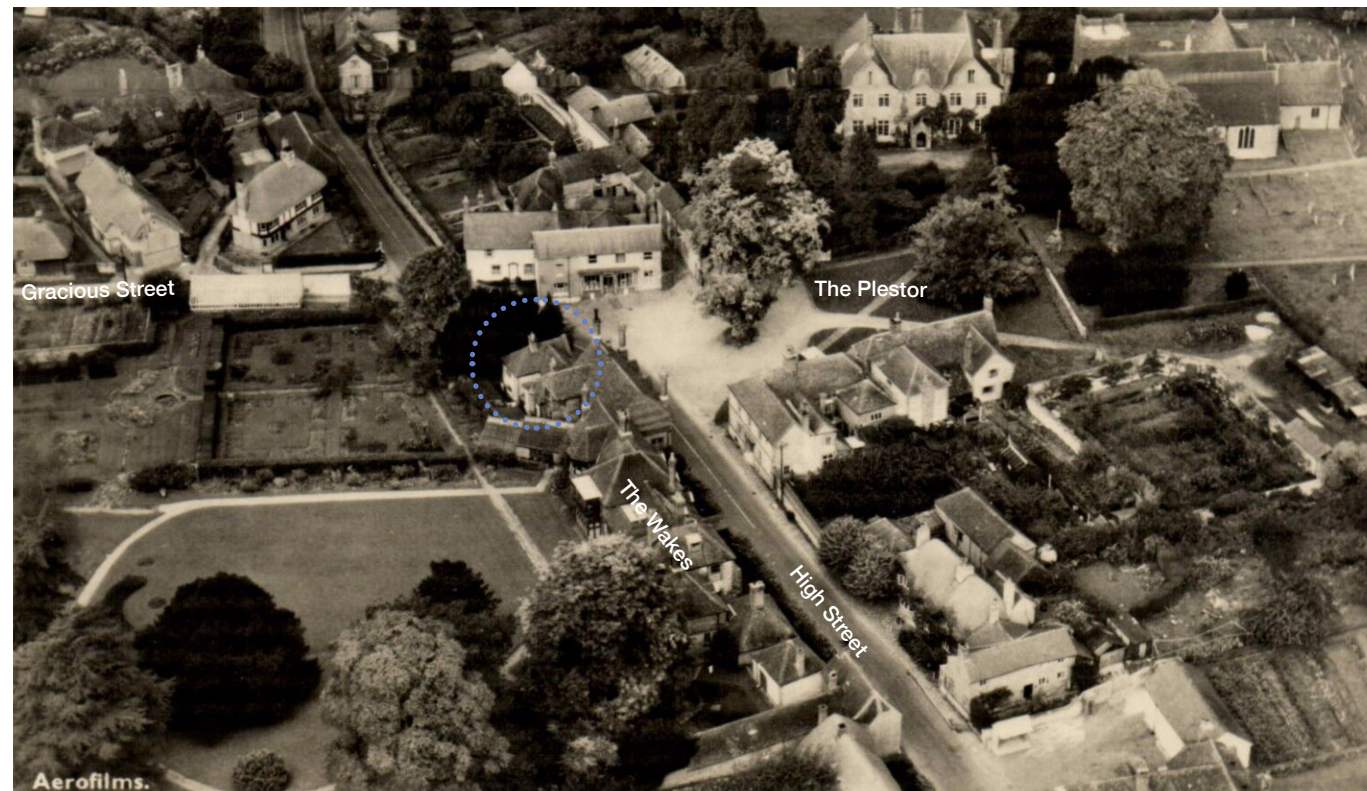


## 2. History and development of the area and of the house

Selborne has a long history, with Neolithic finds at Grange Farm, an Iron Age village between Selborne and Newton Valence and the Roman Road between Chichester and Silchester passing through the village. A church was recorded in 1086 in the Domesday book and Selborne Priory was founded in 1233, gaining the manor of Selborne and the responsibility of maintaining a vicar at the church. A market was held on the Plestor, the open area in front of the church from 1271. The Bishop of Winchester, William Waynefleete, dissolved the priory in 1485, using the proceeds to found Magdalen College, Oxford.

The village appears to have developed along the road from its historic centre at the Plestor and seems to always have been fairly spread out. Some of the oldest houses are timber framed and houses with the remnant of timber frames that date from the 17th century and are to be found along the High Street and Gracious Street (the original main road to Alton), as well as the Wakes, which has origins as a 16th century timber-framed hall. Through the following centuries the village became more densely developed as newer houses infilled between the existing ones.

Wakes Cottage is thought to have been built around 1845 as a two-storey double-pile house with fireplaces on the intermediate walls. It was built by Professor Bell, owner of The Wakes from 1845, adjacent, for his staff. It was built as two parallel ranges with gables to the front elevation and a connecting range between, forming a 'U'. The two rear rooms were accessed from the front rooms. This left a courtyard between the two wings at the rear that was later filled in and the staircase was likely reconfigured at this time. Photographic evidence shows this to have happened in the second half of the 20th century. There is a later conservatory to the rear, which has a slate roof.



Top: 1896 map of Selborne, with Wakes Cottage circled. Note The Wakes does not yet extend to join Wakes Cottage, and the land on which the cottage sits is indicated as being within the same ownership as The Wakes.  
Source: National Library of Scotland

Bottom: aerial photo of Selborne, with Wakes Cottage circled. Note the northern extension of The Wakes now joins to Wakes Cottage. The rear of Wakes Cottage clearly steps in, which was subsequently infilled.  
Source: Aerofilms (postcard), c. 1930?





Top: Front elevation as seen from the High Street, with tiled roof and hung tiles to the front elevation.

Bottom: View of the street elevation of The Wakes, showing many different extensions in different styles.

### 3. Heritage assessment

Paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) requires that applications for consent affecting heritage assets should include a description of the significance of any heritage assets affected by the proposals, including any contribution made by their setting. This section firstly identifies the relevant heritage assets and then sets out their significance.

There are a number of heritage assets that may be affected by proposals to Wakes Cottage. The property itself is a listed building, having been listed in 1986 at grade II for group value. This property also sits within the Selborne Conservation Area, within East Hants District and the South Downs National Park. To the east of Wakes Cottage is the grade I listed The Wakes, originally a private house but now a museum, and to the rear is the garden of The Wakes, on the Register of Parks and Gardens at grade II\*. For the purposes of this assessment, the significance of the following heritage assets will be included:

- Wakes Cottage
- The Wakes and its garden
- Selborne Conservation Area

#### Significance of Wakes Cottage

Wakes Cottage is a symmetrical 2-storey double-pile house of around 1840, though most likely after 1845, extended in the 20th century. Built by Professor Bell, then owner of The Wakes, for his staff, it is a pretty, chocolate box cottage with a palette of materials common to Selborne. This includes red brickwork with burnt headers, coursed rubble malmstone walling to the side and rear, handmade clay tiles to the roof and as hung tiles to the front elevation. It has tall, coupled windows with Gothic heads, and a four-centre arched front door with a small timber canopy with a lead roof. This has the same detail as Bell Cottage, Gracious Street, which is dated 1845.

Wakes Cottage has significance as one of the early Victorian houses in the village of Selborne and for its association with The Wakes, adjacent. It was listed for group value, which is the contribution it makes to the streetscene of various traditional and vernacular buildings of similar building materials.

#### Significance of The Wakes and its garden

The Wakes is the immediate neighbour to Wakes Cottage and is the largest group of buildings in the village. The house itself is listed at grade I, the brewhouse at grade II, the cottage and stables at grade II and the gardens at grade II\*. The brewhouse, cottages and stables are not within sight of Wakes Cottage and are therefore omitted from this assessment.

The house was the home of Gilbert White, the 18th century vicar, naturalist and author of 'The Natural History of Selborne'. The house and gardens are now a museum in his honour and that of two explorers of the Oates family, a descendant of whom was instrumental in the acquisition of the house for its use as a museum.



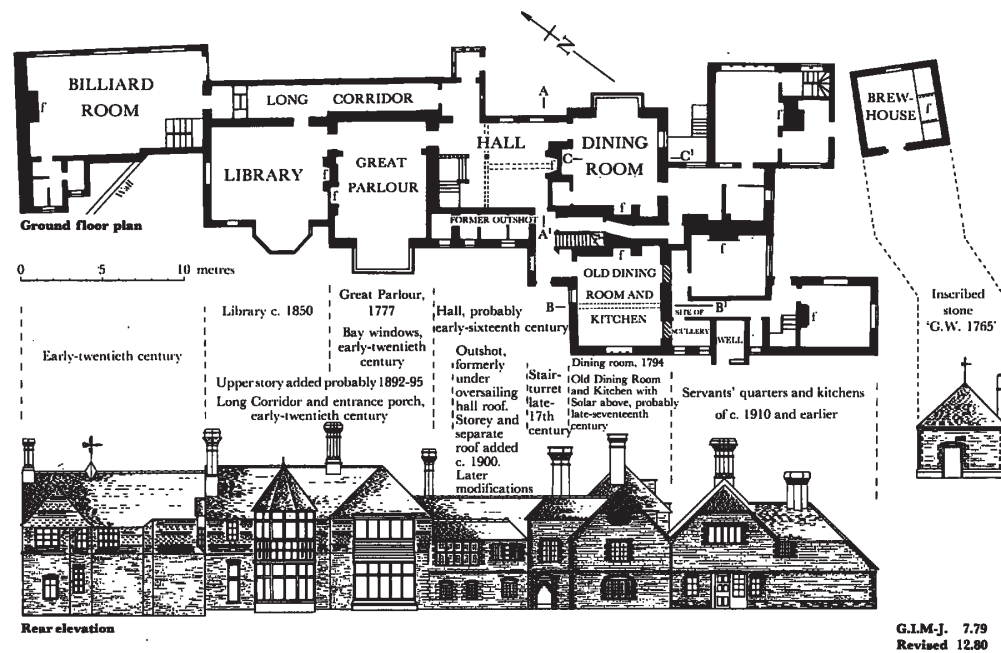


Fig 1a. The Wakes: ground-floor plan and rear, or garden, elevation.

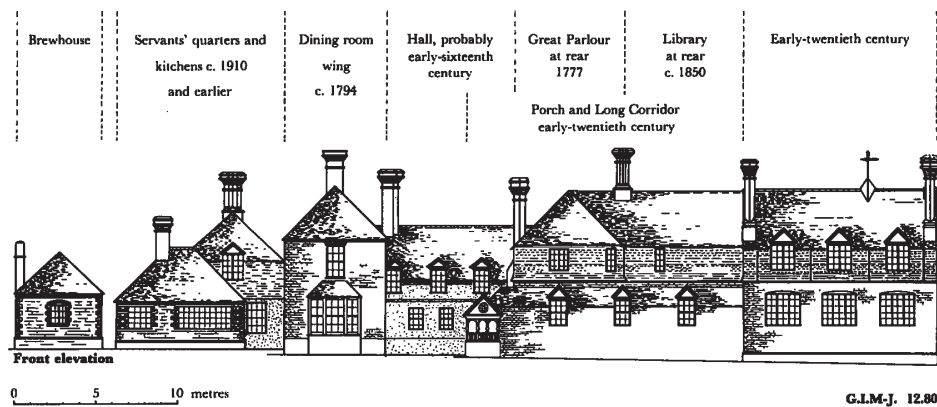


Fig 1b. The Wakes: front, or street, elevation.



Top: Plans and elevations showing the development of The Wakes, including the billiard room, which adjoins Wakes Cottage. Source: Proceedings of the Hampshire Field Club Archaeological Society.

Left: View across the rear of The Wakes, with Wakes Cottage beyond.

The house started as a 16th century timber-framed hall house, subdivided through the 16th and 17th centuries to become a two-storey building with a solar wing and associated staircase. Gilbert White built the Great Parlour, to the north in 1777 and after his death his family rebuilt the south of the hall to build a dining room with bedrooms over. In 1844 the house was bought by Professor Thomas Bell, dental surgeon and zoologist, who added a library to the north of the great parlour. Following his death in 1880, at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century the servants quarters and kitchens were built to the south and a billiard room to the north. The house as it stands now is a rambling country house, with an additional range of service buildings to the south, which have been converted to support the house's use as a museum.

The house's significance encompasses its architectural and historical interest in the way that it has developed, along with its association with Gilbert White. It should be noted that it is the most northerly part of the house, built as the billiards room in the early 20th century, that adjoins Wakes Cottage and it is this part of the house that is primarily read in relation to Wakes Cottage.

The grounds include areas of gardens, parkland and ornamental woodland and have significance for having been laid out by Gilbert White between 1751 and the early 1760s. This includes his landscape experiments and garden layouts, which were documented in his writings and illustrations.

### Significance of the Selborne Conservation Area

The village of Selborne is spread out along the High Street (the B3006), 'straggling', as Gilbert White put it. This is a result of the topography as the village sits beneath a steep chalk hangar with beech woodland, while the other side of the road the topography slopes down towards the Oakhangar Stream to the north east along the lythes. Winding lanes lead off the High Street towards other villages, including Gracious Street, which used to be the main road towards Alton, and which is where some of Selborne's larger houses are situated. Houses along the High Street tend to be set closer together and sit at varying aspects - some face the road with small or no gardens, others are set back behind hedges or low boundary walls, others are accessed from lanes or cul de sacs. Some of the houses on the High Street are among the oldest in the village, and sit adjacent to houses that infill from the 19th century onwards.

The main road through Selborne at to the south more or less follows the line of the boundary between the chalks rising up the hangar and the upper greensand known locally as malmstone, which stretched east into Sussex and Kent. This gives rise to one of the most common building materials used in the village. Generally the older buildings are built in timber frame or in malmstone with brick for window and door surrounds, owing to the softness and less durable nature of the stone. The Victorian buildings in the village, and those that have been refaced, tend to be built in red brick, with some, including Wakes Cottage, having burnt headers that make a pleasing pattern within the brick bond.

The conservation area has significance for the setting of the village within its particular landscape, sitting below the chalk hangars and on the greensand terrace spreading to the north east. It has significance for the pattern of historic development, linearly along the High Street and Gracious Street from the centre at the Plestor and St Mary's church. It has further significance for the historic buildings, their arrangement, massing, materials and details, and the patina that has come from the years of weathering.

## 4. The proposals and their impact on Heritage Significance

This section will set out the works proposed and assess their impact on the significance of the relevant heritage assets as set out in the previous section.

### Proposals

The proposed works are set out on the accompanying drawings and described in the Design and Access Statement. They are:

#### **Reroofing:**

The reroofing consists of the removal of the existing roof coverings, repairs to the roof structure where required, insulation of the roof, formation of a new loft hatch and the reroofing with a breather membrane, battens, cross battens and a mix of new and reused handmade plain clay peg tiles.

#### **Raising of flat roof and gutter:**

As part of the insulation of the roof, the abutment gutter where the cottage adjoins the Wakes, and the area of flat roof infilling at the rear are proposed to be insulated. In line with best practice, these will be insulated above the existing roof structure, meaning they become warm roofs. They will then be reroofed with new lead above a lead membrane on a plywood deck.

### Impact

The impact of the works needs to be considered on three separate heritage assets or groups thereof, which is set out below.

#### **Assessment of impact on Wakes Cottage**

##### **Reroofing:**

The reroofing of the cottage is proposed because there is currently rainwater ingress in a number of locations through the existing roof. This is causing damage to the roof structure and to internal finishes. The reroofing will therefore have a beneficial impact on the listed building.

The new roof is proposed to the same or similar details as the existing, with the addition of a breather membrane, which will be installed taut across the roof to minimise the risk of localised condensation build up, and the associated provision of battens above it. This will cause the roof level to raise by 25mm, which will be concealed behind the gable parapets on the front elevation and by the gutter at the sides and rear. This is judged to have no impact on the significance of the building.

The insulation of the roof will be carried out with a breathable insulation, such as wood-fibre or sheeps wool. This is in line with best practice as described by Historic England and the SPAB as it mitigates the risk of condensation

build up within the roof construction, while improving thermal performance and allowing the building to play a part in reducing carbon emissions. The insulation is proposed to be fitted between and above the ceiling joists, so will have no visual impact on the appearance of the building. This is judged to cause no harm to the significance of the listed building.

The new loft hatch is proposed to enable access to the western roof pitch, which currently has no access. The ceiling in this location is plasterboard. The existing ceiling joists would need to be trimmed to allow the formation of the opening. This is judged to cause some very minor less-than-significant harm to the significance of the listed building.

**Raising of flat roof and gutter:**

The flat roof and gutter proposed to be raised as part of the strategy to insulate the roof at the same time as reroofing. Both are proposed to be raised by approximately 130mm. The gutter abuts the northern part of The Wakes and is concealed in the valley. The increase in the level of the gutter will have no impact on the significance of the listed building.

The flat roof is currently finished in a built-up felt, which is incongruous against the handmade clay tiles. Raising the roof will be noticeable but not out of character, and finishing it in lead will improve its appearance and visual relationship to the rest of the building. This proposal is judged to cause less-than-significant harm to the listed building.

**Assessment of impact on The Wakes and its garden**

**Reroofing:**

The reroofing will have no physical impact on The Wakes or its garden. Once the new roof has weathered in, there will be very little difference in the appearance of Wakes Cottage, so the setting of The Wakes and its garden will not be affected. These works are judged to cause no harm to the listed building or the registered park and garden.

**Raising of flat roof and gutter:**

The gutter abuts the billiard room extension of The Wakes, which was built in the early 20th century, thus causing The Wakes and Wakes Cottage to become conjoined and necessitating the construction of the abutment gutter. This is the area of the most recent extension to the original house and as such is of much lower significance. Raising the level of the gutter will mean that the existing lead flashing will be raised. This is a traditional detail and will cause only very minor harm to The Wakes in cutting out a mortar course to insert the flashing. The gutter is concealed against the building so will have no visible impact on the house or the garden. This proposal is judged to cause only very minor harm to an area of very secondary importance of the listed building, and no harm at all to the registered park and garden, nor the setting of either heritage asset.

Raising the flat roof has no physical impact on The Wakes or its garden. The increased level of the roof will be visible from the garden of The Wakes, but as the increase in height is small and not out of character for a roof of this type, combined with its reroofing in the traditional and more appropriate material of lead, this proposal is judged to cause no harm to the listed building, the registered park and garden, nor the setting of either.

**Assessment of impact on the Selborne Conservation Area**

**Reroofing:**

The reroofing will have a very minor impact on the appearance of the conservation area, and once weathered in this will be unnoticeable. The proposals respect the details, materials and pattern of existing buildings within the village and seeks to blend in with them, as required of the Conservation Statement. The works therefore do not



affect the character, appearance or reading of the conservation area. The works are judged to cause no harm to the conservation area.

**Raising the flat roof and gutter:**

Raising the level of these two areas will not be visible from any public areas, they do not affect the character, appearance or reading of the conservation area. The works are therefore judged to cause no harm to the conservation area.

**Conclusion**

The impact of the proposals on the heritage asset of the Selborne Conservation Area is benign, causing no harm to the heritage asset.

The impact of the proposals on The Wakes is very minor, causing some very small amount of harm by way of cutting out a mortar joint to allow a new flashing to be installed in the side wall of a 20th century extension to the listed building, which is to say an area very much of secondary significance. The proposals are judged to cause no harm to the gardens nor the setting of the house or gardens.

The impact of the proposals on Wakes Cottage and its setting are minor and where harm occurs it is judged to be less-than-significant. There are parts of the proposals, namely the reroofing, that are judged to have a benefit to the listed building for the repair and cessation in damage to the building's fabric.

We as a society and as individuals need to mitigate and adapt our buildings to reduce our carbon emissions to the current climate emergency. In line with the Historic England Advice Note on Climate Change and Historic Building Adaptation (public consultation version), our historic buildings must play a part in this, while protecting the historic character. The proposals here address the need to reduce carbon emissions and do so by insulating the roof of this listed building in a manner that does not, on balance, harm its significance.

The less-than-significant harm caused to Wakes Cottage by these proposals is therefore judged to be mitigated by the benefits to the building, namely the replacement of a failing roof covering, and the public benefit brought by reducing carbon emissions.

The proposals thereby satisfy the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the policies of the NPPF, the South Downs Local Plan and supplementary planning guidance, and should be granted planning permission and listed building consent.

## 5. Bibliography

Doubleday, H. & Page, E. (1973) A History of the County of Hampshire: Volume 2, "Houses of Austin canons: Priory of Selborne.", British History Online <<https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/hants/vol2/pp175-180>> [Accessed 19th January 2024]

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Selborne Parish Council (2023) Selborne Village Design Statement. Selborne Parish Council, Selborne, Hants.



## 6. Appendix

Historic England Listing:

SU 7433 11/20

SELBORNE HIGH STREET (WEST SITE) No. 1 (Wakes Cottage) GV II

House. c 1840. The upper walls (from the middle of the upper windows) and gables are tile-hung with scalloped bands, otherwise they are of brickwork in Flemish bond with blue headers, rubbed flat arches, plinth band above a stone base. Tiled roof with front gable at each side, with a parapet between. Symmetrical front (north-east) of 2 storeys, 3 windows. Tall coupled casements, with Gothic lights: the central window being small with a pointed head. The doorway has a moulded Gothic frame, and 4 panelled door, with a thin lead canopy (the design being the same as that of nearby Bell Cottage, Gracious Street, dated 1845). The side walls are of malmstone ashlar, with brick quoins and plinth. Included for group value.

Listing NGR: SU7406233697

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