



RIDGEWAY
HERITAGE CONSULTANCY

Outbuildings at Bec House, Ampport Road, Monxton, Andover, Hampshire SP11 8AH

A Heritage Statement



Client: Nick and Tory Brown

Project No: RHC 2023-23/01

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RHC Project No. 2023-23

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Front cover: View, looking west, with the group of Grade II-listed outbuildings to the north of Bec House.

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SUMMARY

Bec House is a substantial brick-built house, which is listed at Grade II, and of eighteenth-century date. A courtyard arrangement of service buildings on the northern side of the house is separately listed at Grade II. Of these, a thatched vernacular Coach House has a high carriage entrance and adjoining stables, with a loft above. There is evidence of considerable structural deterioration. To the south of the Coach House, a small, single-storey addition of eighteenth-century date has a hipped, slate roof with some well-preserved internal features. On the eastern side, abutting the Coach House, is a single-storey stables range of later nineteenth-century date, which is of more limited historic and architectural interest.

The central Coach House is proposed for residential conversion, entailing limited changes to plan-form. Principal changes would include the infilling of the wide carriageway entrance with glazed double doors and side-lights, and insertion of an internal spiral staircase. The adjoining stables would provide ground and first-floor accommodation, with an additional dormer window to match an existing example. The adjoining single-storey stables range on the eastern side would be fully repaired and reconstructed in its existing form, with the addition of a cart-shed extension at its eastern end, which would close-off the courtyard on its northern side.

The proposed scheme of repair and conversion would result in limited harm, and would secure the long-term preservation and sustainable use of these buildings. There would be only limited effect on the appearance and historic character of the group, with the principal change being the infilling of the carriage entrance of the Coach House with glazing. The small single-storey building on the southern side of the Coach House would be converted to guest accommodation, with an ensuite space. This would entail repairs to the roof and interior, and the provision of a new timber door within the existing opening.

The proposed scheme, together with the urgently required repairs of the thatched roof of the Coach House, and of supporting cob and brick walls, would prevent further deterioration and loss of significance of these buildings. Limited changes to external appearance would add a degree of interest to repaired structures, which currently display poor visual amenity. The limited harm resulting from conversion would be greatly outweighed by the heritage benefits of the proposed scheme.

In their current condition, these buildings do not contribute positively to the Conservation Area, or to the settings of surrounding heritage assets. The proposed conversion of these buildings would avert the possibility of further deterioration, and would actively enhance the settings of both Bec House and heritage assets to the north, within the Conservation Area.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In April, 2023, Ridgway Heritage Consultancy was commissioned by Fowler Architecture and Planning, on behalf of Nick and Tory Brown, to prepare a heritage statement to support proposals for the repair and conversion of a group of three Grade II-listed outbuildings on the northern side of Bec House, Amport Road, Monxton, Andover, Hants SP11 8AH (NGR 431257 144547) (Figs. 1, 2, 3 and 4). The outbuildings range in date from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century, and are in varying states of disrepair and structural instability. The proposals have been the subject of pre-application enquiry and extensive discussion with Test Valley Borough Council. Bec House itself is listed at Grade II (NHLE 1093881), and is located within the Monxton, Amport and East Cholderton Conservation Areas.

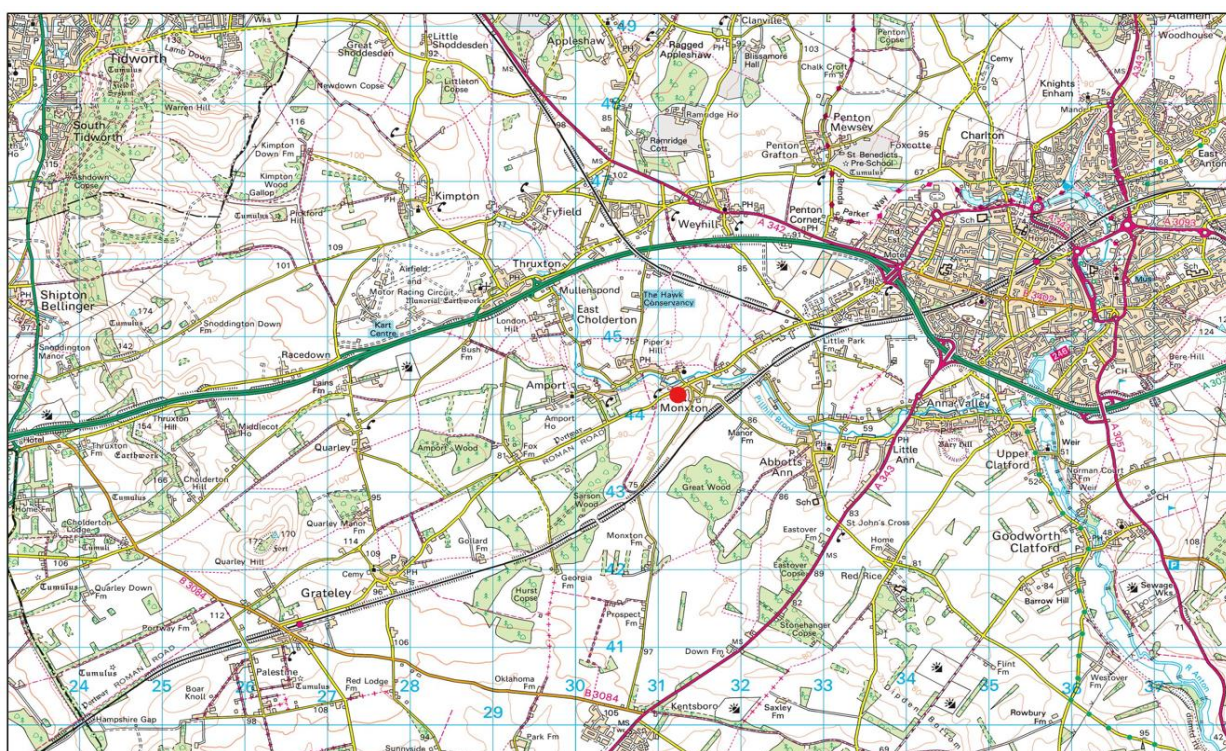


Fig. 1: Location Plan (approximate scale 1:50,000).

Location

1.2 Bec House is situated on the south side of Amport Road, Monxton, and adjacent to a pronounced bend in the road which may relate to the plan of the medieval village (Figs. 2, 3 and 4). Amport Road represents a northern branch from the main axis of the village represented by the line of the High Street, which comprises a surviving section of the Portway Roman road. Monxton is a village of broadly linear plan, which extends for

approximately one kilometre along the narrow valley of the Pillhill Brook, a minor tributary of the River Anton. Bec House is situated at an elevation of 68m above Ordnance datum (aOD), within a gradually sloping valley side, which reaches a height of 92m aOD at Piper Hill, to the north-west. Andover town centre is located 5.3m to the east, and Tidworth 9.2m to the north-west. Bec House is bounded to the north and east by Amport Road and the historic buildings along its northern side, which include Monxton Manor, Corner Cottage and Rectory Cottage, and to the south by green space running down to the Pillhill Brook (Fig. 4).

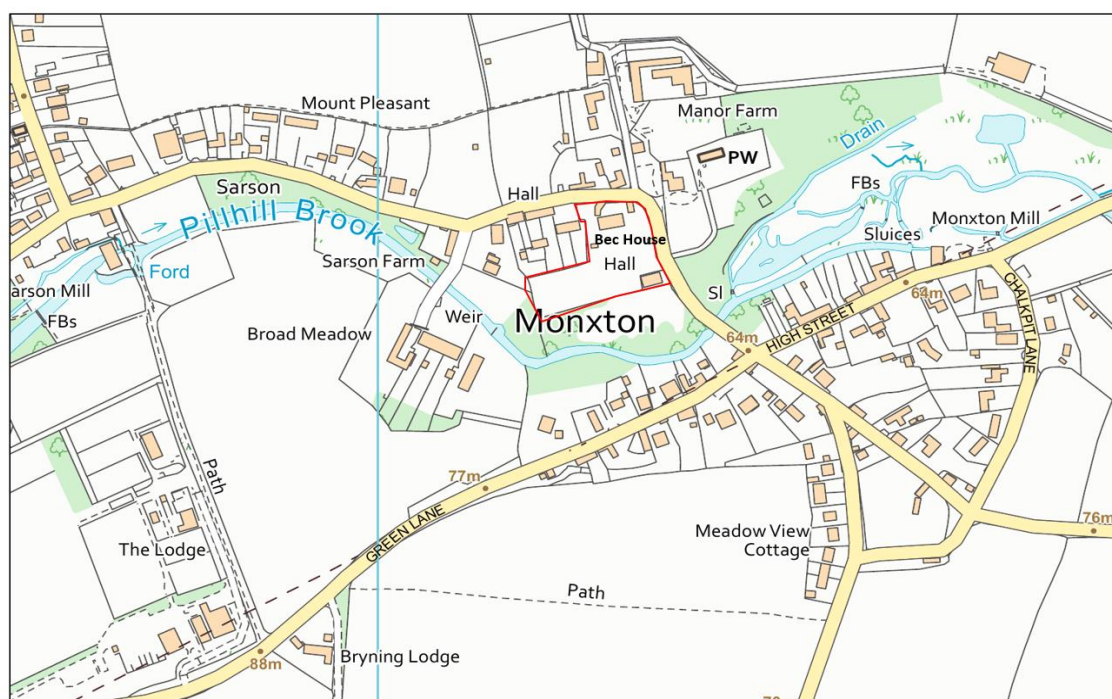


Fig. 2: The location of Bec House within Monxton village (approximate scale 1:10,000).

The Proposed Development

- 1.3 It is proposed to undertake a scheme of repair and conversion of the group of Grade II-listed outbuildings on the northern side of Bec House (Figs. 3 and 4). Principal heritage interest concerns the thatched central Coach House, which is proposed for conversion to residential accommodation on two floors. The buildings are currently unused, and without prospect of future use in their currently deteriorating condition. Without urgent consolidation and repair, the outbuildings are in danger of collapse. An adjoining single-storey building on the southern side of the Coach House would also provide residential guest accommodation, and a single-storey stables range on the eastern side would be repaired and re-purposed as storage space, with an eastern cart-shed extension of similar character.

Heritage Constraints

1.4 Bec House is a substantial brick-built country house which is listed at Grade II (NHLE 1093881) (Figs. 5 and 6). The adjacent Monxton Manor, across Amport Road, is listed at Grade II (NHLE 1339051), and is a substantial brick-built house of late eighteenth-century date, with mid-nineteenth-century additions (Fig. 4). Immediately opposite are Grade II-listed Corner Cottage (NHLE 1229610), and Rectory Cottage (NHLE 1093921), with the Grade II-listed Parish Room (NHLE 1093924), located 45m to the west (Fig. 4). These buildings are all situated within the Monxton, Amport and East Cholderton Conservation Areas, which were jointly designated in 1980 (Test Valley Borough Council 2006). The outbuildings immediately to the north of Bec House are collectively listed at Grade II, in view of their intrinsic architectural and historic interest and their spatial and historical relationship to the Grade II-listed house.

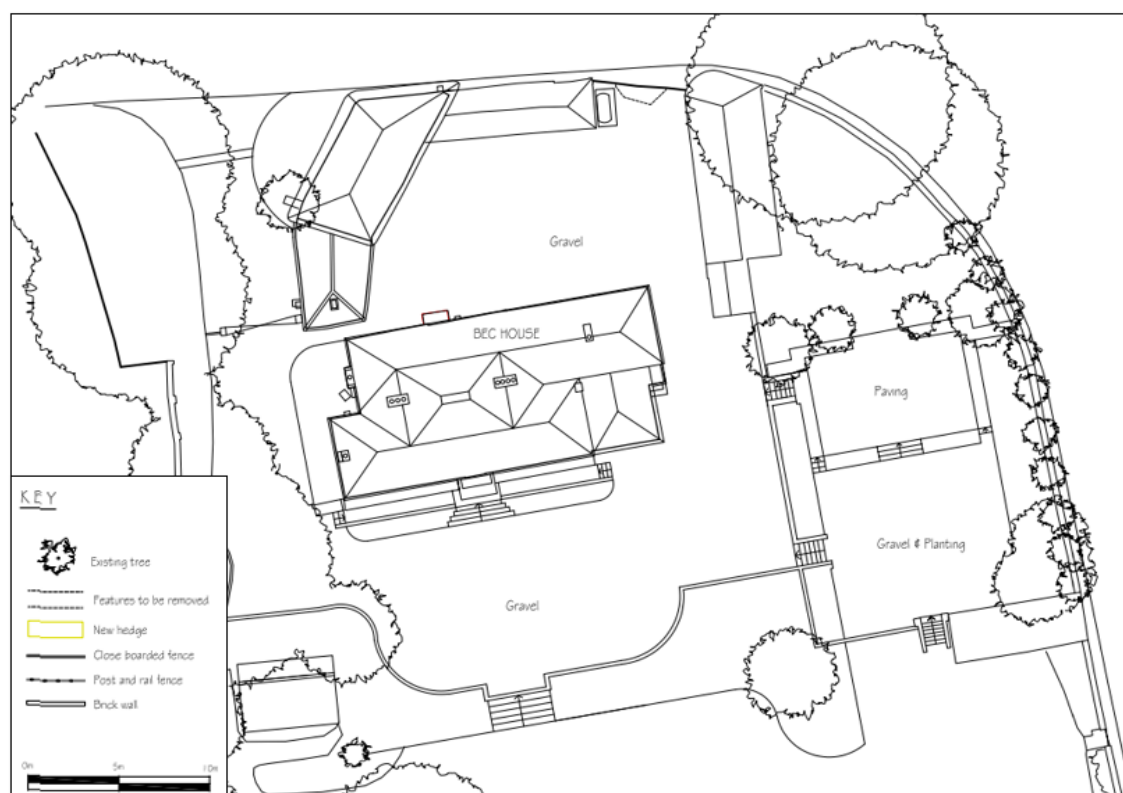


Fig. 3: Existing site plan of Bec House and the outbuildings on the northern side (Fowler Architecture and Planning).

Aims and Objectives

1.5 In considering applications for development which results in impacts to listed buildings, the statutory duty, under Sections 16 (2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, is to 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”. It will also be necessary to articulate the significance of this heritage asset and to assess the impact of the proposed works upon that significance, in accordance with Paragraph 200 of the National Planning Policy Framework:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance.

1.6 In the light of previous local authority comments, and in order to assess the potential effects of the currently proposed works on the fabric, form and significance of the Grade II-listed outbuildings at Bec House, it will be necessary to:

- provide a detailed description of the form, date, historic character and architectural interest of the outbuildings concerned;
- relate the building to the historical development of Bec House;
- articulate the significance of the buildings, and the heritage values associated with them;
- assess the potential effects of the proposed works on the historic fabric, form and significance of the buildings;
- assess the potential effect of the proposed works to the outbuildings at Bec House on the settings, historic character and significance of surrounding heritage assets, including the Grade II-listed Bec House itself;
- assess the overall levels of harm to significance resulting from the proposed works;

1.7 A site visit, including a detailed assessment of the outbuildings at Bec House, and of their historic fabric, form and character, was made on April 19th, 2023, in overcast conditions.



Fig. 4: Annotated aerial image, with the locations of Bec House and the associated outbuildings within their village setting (Geoinformation Systems).

2. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT AND GUIDANCE

2.1 This Heritage Statement has been compiled in accordance with the following statutory, planning policy and guidance documents:

- National Heritage Act 1983 (amended 2002);
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990;
- National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (revised December 2023);
- National Planning Practice Guidance: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (2016 revised 2021);
- English Heritage guidance: ‘Conservation Principles; policies and guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment’ (2008);
- Historic England guidance: ‘Historic Environment good practice advice in planning: Note 2; Managing significance in decision-taking in the historic environment’ (2015a); and
- Historic England guidance: ‘Historic Environment good practice advice in planning: Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets’ (2015b).
- Historic England guidance *Making Changes to Heritage Assets, Historic England Advice Note 2* (2016);
- Historic England guidance *Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice* (2016); and
- In addition, emphasis will be placed on current selection criteria, guidance and thematic studies relating to historic farmsteads and farm buildings, including the *National Farmsteads Character Statement* (English Heritage 2014a), and the *South East Historic Farmsteads Character Statement* (English Heritage 2014b), together with published thematic studies and guidance.

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990)

2.2 The 1990 Planning Act states that:

‘in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall, 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 that it possesses (Section 66)’.

National Planning Policy Framework (2012, rev. December 2023)

2.3 The Framework sets out national planning policy relating to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. It defines the historic environment as: “all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscape and planted or managed flora.” Individual components of the historic environment are considered to constitute heritage assets: “buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of their heritage interest”.

2.4 Key tenets of the Framework are that:

- when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset, the greater that weight should be (Paragraph 205).
- heritage significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset, or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to, or loss of, a Grade II-listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to, or loss of, designated assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, Grade I or II*-listed buildings, registered parks and gardens and World Heritage Sites should be wholly exceptional (Paragraph 206).
- where a proposed development will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal (Paragraph 202).
- With regard to non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having due regard to the scale of any harm or loss, and to the significance of the heritage asset affected (Paragraph 209).
- Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas [and World Heritage Sites], and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset

(or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably (Paragraph 212)

- 2.5 Local Planning Authorities are urged to request applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposed development, including any contribution made to significance by their setting. The level of detail required in the assessment should be “proportional to the assets’ importance, and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance

Planning Practice Guide (PPG)

- 2.6 The Planning Practice Guide (PPG) (MHCLG, 2019) clarifies this additional requirement under ‘What is the main legislative framework for planning and the historic environment?’ where it states that:

‘In addition to the normal planning framework set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.....the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides specific protection for buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest. Any decisions relating to listed buildings and their settings and conservation areas must address the statutory considerations of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (see in particular sections 16, 66 and 72), as well as satisfying the relevant policies within the National Planning Policy Framework and the Local Plan. (MHCLG, 2019, PPG, Para. 2.)’

- 2.7 PPG states that local planning authorities may identify non-designated heritage assets, and in some areas, these heritage assets may be identified as ‘locally listed’ (DCLG et al, 2014, para. 39). These identified heritage assets may include buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes which have a degree of value meriting consideration in planning decisions but which are not formally designated heritage assets (DCLG et al, 2014, para. 39).

- 2.8 The PPG states under ‘Why is ‘significance’ important in decision-taking?’ that: ‘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’.

- 2.9 Under the discussion of ‘How to assess if there is substantial harm?’ the PPG offers:
‘What matters in assessing if a proposal causes substantial harm is the impact on the significance of the heritage asset. As the National Planning Policy Framework makes clear, significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting’.

Local Planning Policy

- 2.10 Planning policies relating to the historic environment are included in the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan DPD 2011-2029. This was adopted by Test Valley Borough Council on January 27, 2016. Some aspects of the Local Plan have been subject to a five-year review in 2021, in accordance with the revisions made to NPPF, in 2019 and 2021. Policy E9 of the Revised Local Plan relates to the conservation and management of heritage.

Policy E9: Heritage

- 2.11 Development and/or works affecting a heritage asset will be permitted provided that:
- a) it would make a positive contribution to sustaining or enhancing the significance of the heritage asset taking account of its character, appearance and setting; and
 - b) the significance of the heritage asset has informed the proposal through an assessment proportionate to its importance.
- 2.12 Development which will result in the substantial harm to or loss of the significance of a designated heritage asset will not be permitted unless:
- c) it is outweighed by the substantial benefit to the public of bringing the site back into use;
 - or d) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable use; and
 - e) its conservation cannot be achieved by either a viable alternative use, support from public ownership or funding from other sources; and
 - f) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.
- 2.13 Development which will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset will be considered against the public benefit of the proposal, including securing a viable use. The merits of a development affecting an undesignated heritage asset will be balanced against the scale of the harm or loss, either directly or indirectly, to the significance of that heritage asset. The Council will only permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage

asset where it can be demonstrated that the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.

2.14 Policy E9 is supported by relevant planning guidance within the Revised Local plan, including the following:

‘Heritage assets are irreplaceable, and should be retained wherever possible. For listed buildings, the Council will have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any historic features of interest. The Council recognises that some change may be necessary to ensure the asset is continued to be used, and retained in its current or alternative appropriate use that is compatible with the conservation of its significance. However, such changes will need to be undertaken sensitively, having fully recorded, understood and appreciated the significance of the heritage asset. (Section 66(1) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990).

2.15 ‘To show an understanding of the significance of the asset, the Council will expect the following assessment to have been carried out:

- an analysis of the asset to establish their historic, architectural and archaeological significance both as a whole and specific parts affected by the proposal;
- an assessment, where appropriate, of the contribution made by the setting of the asset to its significance;
- demonstrate that the assessment has informed the proposed use of the heritage asset and that it is compatible with its conservation;
- that the detailed design, scale, layout, materials and architectural or historical features would be appropriate and sympathetic.

2.16 In addition to the above policy provisions for the historic environment, Policy E2 of the Revised Local Plan contains measures for the protection, conservation and enhancement of the landscape character of the Borough, including historic landscapes;

Policy E2: Landscapes

2.17 To ensure the protection, conservation and enhancement of the landscape of the Borough, development will be permitted provided that:

- a) it does not have a detrimental impact on the appearance of the immediate area and the landscape character of the area within which it is located;
- b) it is designed and located to ensure that the health and future retention of important landscape features is not likely to be prejudiced;
- c) the existing and proposed landscaping and landscape features enable it to positively integrate into the landscape character of the area;
- d) arrangements for the long-term management and maintenance of any existing and proposed landscaping have been made; and
- e) it conserves the landscape and scenic beauty of the New Forest National Park or the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty where applicable; and
- f) does not result in the loss of important local features such as trees, walls, hedges or water courses.

3. METHODOLOGY

General

3.1 The methodology employed by this assessment is in accordance with key professional guidance, including the *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment* (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2014), the Historic England guidance *Conservation Principles* (2008) and Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment* (Historic England 2015). Impacts to heritage settings were assessed using the methodology detailed within the current Historic England guidance *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: the setting of heritage assets* (2015).

Sources

3.2 This Heritage Statement has involved detailed consultation of readily-available historical information drawn from documentary and cartographic sources. The major repositories of information consulted have comprised:

- National Heritage List for England (EH);
- Published and unpublished documentary sources;
- Historic maps and photographs;
- The Monxton, Amport and East Cholderton Conservation Areas | Character Appraisal (TVBC 2006);
- English Heritage Archives (EHA) and AMIE (Archives and Monuments Information, England) data;
- Online sources, including Local Plan policies and information.

3.3 A bibliography of documentary, archive and cartographic sources consulted is included in the References section of this report.

The Significance of Heritage Assets

3.4 Heritage assets are defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (henceforth, ‘the Framework’; revision of 2021) 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’. The term Heritage Asset includes both designated heritage

assets and assets identified by the local planning authority as possessing heritage significance (including locally-listed structures)’. Non-designated heritage assets include sites held on the Historic Environment Record, in addition to other elements of the landscape understood to have a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions.

- 3.5 The assessment of the heritage value (significance) of a site determines the ways in which particular aspects of a place and different periods in its evolution contribute to, or detract from, those identified heritage values associated with the asset.
- 3.6 Heritage significance is defined in Planning Practice Guidance (Annex 2, 2021) as ‘the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical fabric, but also from its setting’
- 3.7 Current national guidance for assessing the significance of heritage assets is based on the criteria provided by Historic England (formerly English Heritage) in *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* (English Heritage 2008). Within this document, significance is weighed by the estimated potential for the asset to demonstrate the following criteria:
- Evidential value derives from ‘the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity’ (ibid, 28). It is primarily embodied by physical remains or historic fabric, but also includes buried archaeology;
 - Historical value derives from ‘the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present’ (ibid, 28). Illustrative historical values depend on visibility in a way that evidential value does not; and ‘have the power to aid interpretation of the past [...] through shared experience of a place’ (ibid, 29). Associative historical values relate to historical connections with a notable family, person, event or movement;
 - Aesthetic values derive from ‘the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place’ (ibid, 30). Aesthetic value might be generated through conscious design and artistic endeavour, fortuitous and organic change, and the relationship of structures and materials to their setting; • Communal value is tied to historical (associative) value and aesthetic value, deriving from ‘the

meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory’ (ibid, 31);

- Communal values may be commemorative, symbolic or social. The latter is typically ‘associated with places that people perceive as a source of identity, distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence,’ and might only be articulated when the resource is under threat (ibid, 32).

3.8 Further information on good practice in implementing historic environment policy in the NPPF is provided within the guidance Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (Historic England 2015a). This document provides advice on the assessment of the significance of heritage assets in support of applications for planning permission, and emphasises that the information required regarding heritage significance should be no more than would be necessary to inform the planning decision.

Sectoral Guidance

3.9 This Statement has been compiled in accordance with the following statutory, planning policy and guidance documents:

- National Heritage Act 1983 (amended 2002);
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990;
- National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (revised 2021);
- National Planning Practice Guidance: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment 2016 (revised 2021);
- English Heritage guidance: ‘Conservation Principles; policies and guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment’ (2008);
- Historic England guidance: ‘Historic Environment good practice advice in planning: Note 2; Managing significance in decision-taking in the historic environment’ (2015a); and

Approach to Historic Building Assessment

3.10 The approach to historic building assessment in this report has been based on the current Historic England guidance: *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (2016). While this assessment does not represent a definitive recording or survey of the

historic outbuildings at Bec House, it does comprise a description of their architectural form and fabric and, in placing these within an historical context, provides a detailed articulation of the significance of the buildings. The assessment therefore includes elements of the Level 2 recording defined in Historic England guidance (2016):

Level 2

- 3.11 This is a descriptive record, which may be made of a building which is judged not to require a more detailed record, or it may serve to gather data for a wider project. Both the exterior and interior of the building will be seen, described and photographed. The examination of the building will produce an analysis of its development and use, and the record will include the conclusions reached, but it will not discuss in detail the evidence on which this analysis is based. A plan and sometimes other drawings may be made.

Assessing levels of Impact

- 3.12 Impact assessment addresses predicted changes in the existing condition of the environment, as a result of a proposed development. The significance of an impact is generally determined as the combination of the ‘sensitivity and/or value’ of the affected receptor, and the predicted magnitude of change. In this case, heritage receptors comprise a Conservation Area and Grade II and II*-listed buildings, which may be considered both as individual structures and as coherent groups of related assets. These are considered to represent receptors of medium to high sensitivity and/or value.

Magnitude of Impact

- 3.13 The determination of the magnitude of change is based on the current level of survival, or condition, of the receptor. The variable factors which determine the magnitude of change include the vulnerability or sensitivity of the site or feature to change. The criteria commonly used to determine the magnitude of impact are as described in the following table:

Magnitude of Impact	Description
Major	The proposed development would cause a large change to existing environmental conditions.

	Complete destruction of the site or feature. Change resulting in a fundamental change to the ability to understand or appreciate the asset and its context and setting.
Moderate	The proposed development would cause noticeable change to existing environmental conditions. Change resulting in appreciable change to the ability to understand or appreciate the asset and its context and setting.
Minor	The proposed development would cause small change to existing environmental conditions. Change resulting in small change to the ability to understand or appreciate the asset and its context and setting.
Negligible	The proposed development would result in no discernible change to existing environmental conditions. Negligible change or no material change to the site or feature. No change to the ability to understand or appreciate the asset and its context and setting.

Table 1: Criteria used to determine the level of impact.

Significance of Impact

3.14 The significance of impact and environmental effect is determined by two variables:

- The importance or significance of the receptor; and
- The magnitude of change affecting the receptor.

Environmental effects may be either adverse or beneficial, depending on the nature of the impact.

Receptor sensitivity/value	Magnitude of Impact			
	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible
Very high	Substantial	Substantial	Moderate	Slight
High	Substantial	Moderate	Slight	Negligible
Medium	Moderate	Slight	Negligible	Negligible
Low	Slight	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Table 2: Criteria used to determine the significance of impact.

4. THE OUTBUILDINGS AT BEC HOUSE: THEIR FORM, HISTORY AND SIGNIFICANCE

Bec House

4.1 Bec House, formerly known as The Rectory (Fig. 9), was added to the National List, at Grade II, in April 30th, 1985, in view its architectural and historic interest (NHLE 1093881). The listing description is given as follows:

House, once the rectory. C18. Brick and tile. Symmetrical front, (south) of 2 storeys, 7 windows (upper east side filled). Hipped roof, brick dentil eaves. Walls of Flemish bond, rubbed flat arches to the ground-floor. Sashes in exposed frames. Arched entrance with plain architrave, panelled reveals, fanlight and 6-panelled door, with arched hood on carved brackets. The rear elevation has narrow horizontal flint panels, cambered openings, casements, and a doorway with a 6-panelled (2-top-glazed) door beneath a hood. End elevations have flint panels, with a late C19 single-storeyed block at the east end.



Fig. 5: The south, front elevation of Bec House, looking north-west.

4.2 The precise symmetry, regular fenestration and hipped roof of the front elevation all suggest a date not much later than 1750 (Fig. 5). The symmetry is partly disturbed by a small, single-storey addition to the right, which appears to be of modern date, and a projecting element of the rear range. The formal, polite character of the front elevation faces gardens and sloping ground running down to the Pilhill Brook. The rear elevation, by contrast, is of

plainer, more domestic character, with camber-headed casements rather than sashes, and appears to comprise two distinct phases of construction (Fig. 6). The right-hand half of this elevation incorporates flint bands with brick dressings, while to the left, construction is of plain brick, laid in Flemish bond. There is a blocked round-headed opening to the right, possibly representing a former doorway. To the left, casement windows are of simpler form, and more closely spaced than those to the right (Fig. 6). The evidence suggests two principal phases of construction, with the flint-banded section to the right the earlier of the two. The plain brick phase to the left may be contemporary with the front elevation, and thus represent a major phase of expansion or reconstruction of the house, in *c.* 1750.



Fig. 6: The north, rear elevation of Bec House, looking south-west.

The evidence of historic mapping

- 4.3 Earlier historic mapping provides little reliable information regarding the historical development of Bec House and its ancillary buildings. Neither the maps of Isaac Taylor, of 1759, or of Thomas Milne, of 1791 (neither illustrated), depict Bec House in plan, although this will have been a substantial building at the time. William Stanley's map of *c.* 1810 does depict the house, albeit indistinctly, with what may be its outbuildings (Fig. 7), although these are depicted with much greater clarity on the first-edition Ordnance Survey map of *c.* 1850 (Fig. 8). Maps of sufficient scale and accuracy to show the historic plan and layout of Bec

House and its buildings were not available until the later nineteenth century. The 25-inch Ordnance Survey map of 1894 depicts these in their current plan (Fig. 9), indicating that there have been no significant changes since that time, although it is regrettable that there are no earlier indications of the historical development of the site.



Fig. 7: Extract from William Stanley's *Map of Andover*, of c. 1810 (British Library).

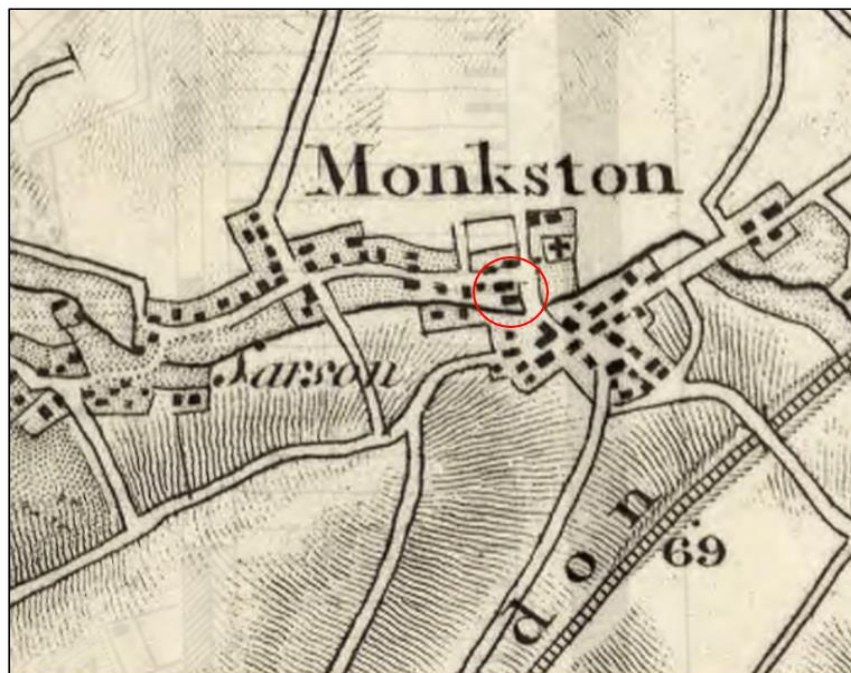


Fig. 8: Extract from the Ordnance Survey first-edition one-inch map of c. 1850 (National Library of Scotland).

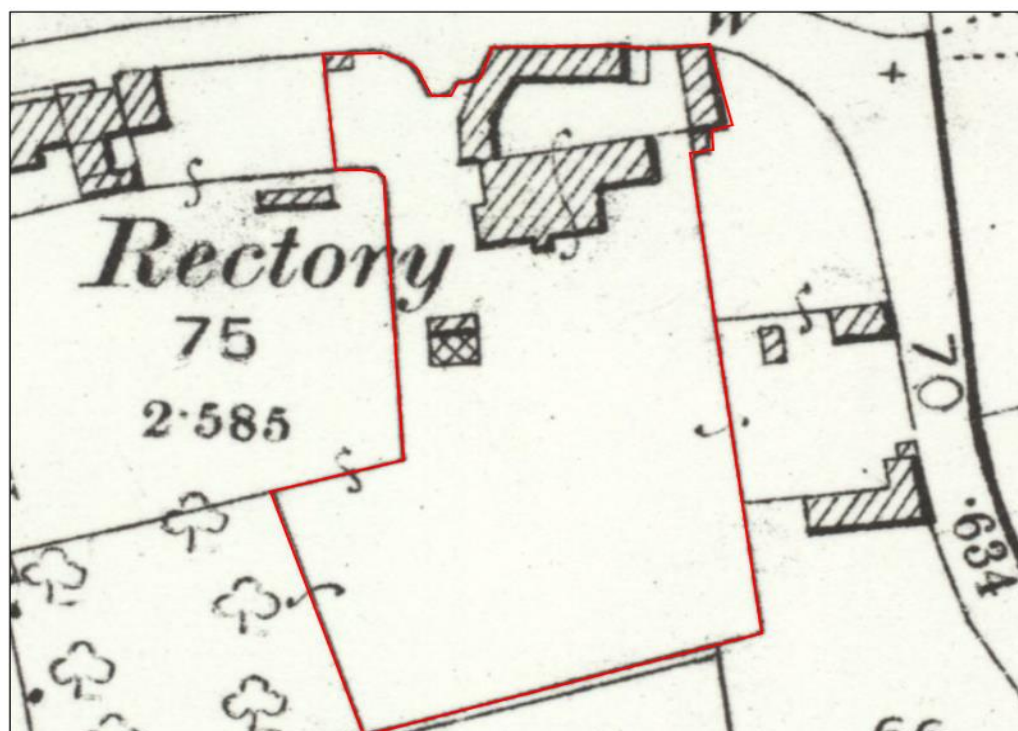


Fig. 9: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 25-inch England and Wales series 1842-1952, revised 1894 (National Library of Scotland).

The Outbuildings of Bec House

- 4.4 The outbuildings of Bec House comprise three component elements. The central, thatched Coach House may comprise the oldest element, with a small, single-storey range to the left, and a longer, single-storey range to the right, the whole comprising an L-shaped plan which, with an additional building at the eastern end, forms a courtyard arrangement on the northern side of the house (Front cover and Figs. 10, 23 and 237A). This is evident on later nineteenth-century mapping, and must presumably have comprised part of the eighteenth-century layout of Bec House.
- 4.5 The outbuildings of Bec House were separately included, at Grade II, in the National List, on April 30th, 1985, in view of their historic and architectural interest (NHLE 1339072). The listing description is given as follows:

Stables and coach-house. Early C19. Cob and brick, thatch and slate. Older central block with a hipped thatch roof, with eyebrows to hayloft doors. Walls rendered on cob and brick: carriage entrance, and stable door. At each end there extends a lower stable block, with a hipped slate roof, brick walls on a flint base (part-rendered). The whole forms an L-shaped building enclosing the rear courtyard of the house, with features along the roadside and the entrance to the site.



Fig. 10: View, looking west, of the three component structures of the Bec House outbuildings.

The Central Coach House

- 4.6 The central coach house has a hipped roof of thatch, with a notably irregular roof-line and form (Figs. 10, 11 and, 12). The plan of this building is best understood from its rear elevation, where it appears to occupy a shallow, L-plan (Figs. 17 and 27A). On the front, courtyard entrance is a wide carriage doorway, with a smaller stable entrance to the right (Figs. 11 and 13) There is a small timber-framed casement window to the right of this, which has been partly obscured by the later addition of the single-storey east range on this side (Fig. 11). The carriage entrance has a broad timber lintel, with a boarded fascia at eaves level, above which is a small, timber-framed casement, set within an eyebrow dormer (Figs. 11 and 13). This window served a loft level within the roof-space of the coach house.
- 4.7 The full-height wooden doors which would have served this entrance have not survived. There is an original floor of brick. Timber wall studs, supporting horizontal boarding, are visible on the interior wall to the right (Fig. 16A), with timber box-framing with brick infill on the left-hand side (Fig. 16C). The rear wall retains decayed areas of original cob construction, much of which has been rebuilt in brick (Fig. 16B). The highly unstable ceiling and roof are now supported within the centre of the coach house by a steel beam, supported on modern brick piers (Fig. 13). The original roof-structure was without purlins or struts,

which were inserted later, to support a sagging roof structure. There is also no ceiling-tie to the rafters. The roof is pushing the cob walls outwards at eaves-level, resulting in an outward lean of walls and serious structural cracking. A number of later purlins and rafters have failed, due to increased load and decay due to water ingress.



Fig. 11: The front elevation of the central coach house and stables, looking west.

4.8 To the right of the wide carriage entrance is a doorway to the adjoining low, ground-floor accommodation, with a loft above (Fig. 11). There is a two-leaf stable door, with an opening above, providing access to the loft. The intervening, timber-framed wall between the Coach House and adjoining stables was probably once external, as this comprises lapped boarding and extends up to the roof ridge. The roof over the stables is of common rafters, supported on surrounding cob walling. External walls are of white-painted cob, with areas of brick infill. Internally, an original timber partition survives, and partly supports a chamfered timber cross-beam, which is also supported at both ends by wall-posts of similar character (Figs. 14 and 15). The rear cob wall to the right retains an original covering of lime plaster. The original external walling of this building which is exposed within the interior of the later adjoining single-storey range displays flint-rubble construction which incorporates early brick (Fig. 16D). This suggests that elements of this building are considerably earlier than the nineteenth-century date offered by the listing description, and that a sixteenth or seventeenth-century origin is plausible (Fig. 28).

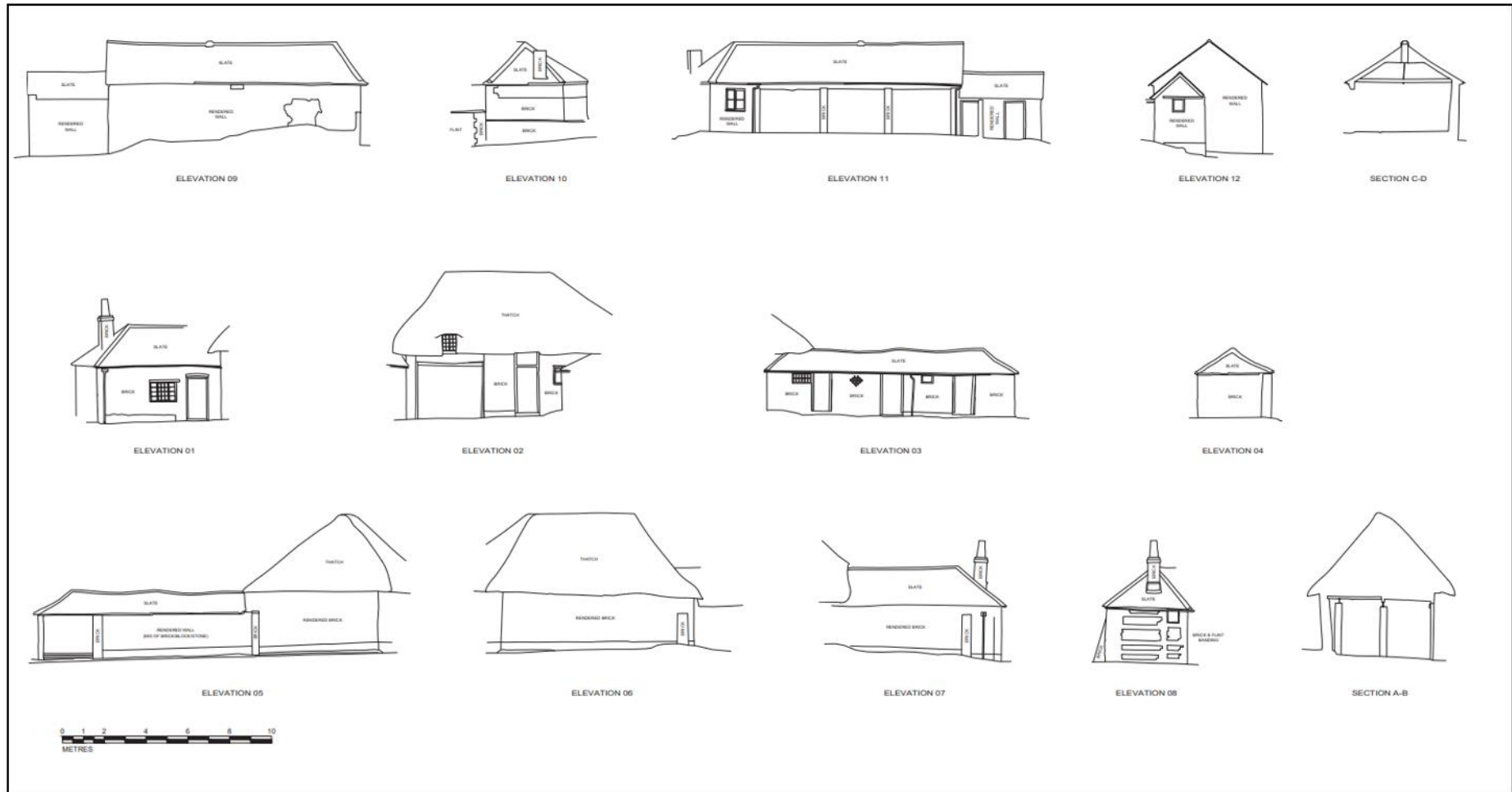


Fig. 12: Survey drawings of the existing elevations of the outbuildings at Bec House (LDS Surveys).



Fig. 13: View, looking west, of the coach house entrance, with details of internal construction and recent repair.

- 4.9 To the rear, the central coach house building presents a blank wall of painted cob construction, with areas of brick infill (Figs. 12 and 17). This immediately faces the entrance to Bec House, and it is evident that this building has been integral to the northern boundary of the property and to its principal entrance, from an early date. The thatched roof has deteriorated badly on this side, permitting water ingress to wall-tops and exposed fabric, and thus hastening the deterioration of underlying areas of cob construction (Fig. 17). Much of the observed internal instability of the coach house may result directly from this problem.
- 4.10 Despite evidence of severe structural weakness, the central coach house represents a remarkable historical survival, and is rare example of a post-medieval domestic or service building of vernacular construction. It retains fabric, including areas of cob and flint

construction, of an earlier date which, along with its built form, may suggest an early post-medieval origin. The ground floor of the building, with its timber stable partition, exhibits remarkable internal preservation, with original fabric and fittings of probable eighteenth-century date (Fig. 27A).



Fig. 14: Looking north-west within the stables, with surviving fabric and fittings.



Fig. 15: Looking east within the stables, towards the doorway.



Fig. 16 A-F: Details of original fabric and construction within the central coach house.



Fig. 17: View, looking east, of the rear elevation of the central coach house.

The small, western single-storey range

- 4.11 Immediately to the left of the central coach house and stables is a small, single-storey addition, with a hipped, slate roof (Figs. 10, 12, 18, 22 and 27A). This is of brick construction on its right-hand side, ie immediately adjacent to the coach house, and of flint-rubble construction to the left. There is a single, segmental-headed doorway opening on this side, with a plank door, and a three-light, metal-framed casement to the left, with a timber lintel (Fig. 21D). A single brick stack is located towards the southern end of the building (Figs. 12 and 17). Flint and brick banding is exposed on its south, end elevation (Fig. 22).
- 4.12 Internally, there are two knee-braced timber trusses, with queen struts supporting two purlins and common rafters, although the upper levels of roof construction are concealed by raised ceiling collars and a lath and plaster surface (Figs. 18 and 19). The truss at the southern end is supported by an exposed internal post and a curved brace. The rear wall is of notably irregular profile, and appears to be largely of cob construction. The floor is of brick, laid flat-wise, and probably original. At the southern end is a large brick structure, with a raised fire-box or furnace, and a tapering flue leading to the external chimney (Figs. 20 and 21B). This is partly encased by brick construction on the right side, which includes the

remains of a bread oven. The purpose of this imposing feature, which is free-standing and not integral to the external walls, is not clear, although it seems likely that this building originally served as a forge and workshop.



Fig. 18: View, looking west, of the small single-storey building to the left of the Coach House.



Fig. 19: View, looking east, within the interior of the small, single-storey building.

4.13 This small building also displays evidence of structural instability, particularly towards its northern end and its junction with the cob construction of the adjoining coach house. Here, there is clear evidence of structural movement and cracking of the lath and plaster ceiling (Figs. 19, 21A and 29). The building is of contrasting fabric to that of the adjoining Coach House, and appears to have been built as a modest lean-to construction against the earlier building to the right, and the pre-existing cob wall to the rear (Fig. 27A). There is evidence of sagging of trusses and dropping of roof purlins, with consequent outward movement of walls, particularly on the outer, north-western side, where the instability of the cob wall is exacerbated by that of the adjoining Coach House. An iron tie-rod has been inserted at some stage, to arrest roof-spread. This is a small, functional building, which otherwise displays remarkable levels of internal and external preservation, including a number of unusual features such as the forge/bread oven. It represents an addition of probable mid to late eighteenth-century date, which is of considerable historic interest.



Fig. 20: Looking south within the small, single-storey building, with details of internal construction, and the brick forge/bread oven to the rear.



Fig. 21: A-D: Details of internal and external features of the small, single-storey building to the left of the coach house.



Fig. 22: View, looking north-east, with the side and rear elevations of the small, single-storey building, with details of construction.



Fig. 23: View, looking north, of the eastern single-storey range, comprising stabling.

4.14 Like the small, single-storey building on the south side, the eastern range comprises a later addition to the central coach house and stables (Front cover and Figs. 10, 12, 23 and 28). This is a low, single-storey building, with a hipped slate roof, and of painted brick construction, laid in Flemish bond, on its southern, courtyard side. This side has three wooden doors of identical pattern, which provide entry to individual spaces defined by internal wooden partitions. This building was evidently intended to provide further stabling accommodation. The central door has an adjoining small timber-framed casement window, and there is another small window at eaves-level between the middle and eastern doors (Figs. 12 and 23).



Fig. 24: Looking north-west within an interior space within the eastern single-storey range, with details of roof construction and timber partition.



Fig. 25: Looking north within the interior of the eastern range, with cob and concrete block construction of the rear wall.

4.15 Internally, the slate roof is supported by small-quarter queen-post trusses, with steeply-angled struts supporting purlins and ridge-beam (Fig. 24). These support half-round pole rafters, some of which are badly affected by woodworm. It would appear that sawn ridge-boards and purlins have been inserted at a later date. The well-preserved internal partitions comprise horizontal boarding, supported by wall studs (Figs. 24 and 25). The rear wall

includes areas of cob construction, which presumably originally formed the roadside boundary wall of the property. This has been replaced in a number of places by modern concrete block and brick construction, and has clearly been subject to long-term decay (Fig. 25). The floor of this range comprises flint cobbles, with inset clunch or limestone slabs at door thresholds (Fig. 26). The character of this flooring suggests that it may predate the building itself, and that this may therefore have been constructed within an earlier footprint.



Fig. 26: Detail of floor construction within the eastern single-storey range.

- 4.16 Structurally this building is in poor condition, with the failure of the roof visible in a number of spaces, together with the deteriorating condition of the poorly-repaired rear wall (Figs. 25 and 27). The undulating roof-line of the building is indicative of the structural condition of roof timbers (Figs. 12 and 27), which have been vertically propped in a number of locations. Purlins are broken in places, and some rafters have become detached from the ridge-board. This movement has resulted in the opening-up of covering slates, with damaging water ingress.
- 4.17 Chronologically, this building comprises the most recent component of the Bec House outbuildings, and is likely to date from no earlier than the mid to late nineteenth century. It includes inserted, machine-cut softwood timbers in its roof construction, and in its form and

fabric is not a vernacular structure. While it is possible that the existing building occupies the footprint of an earlier structure (Fig. 26), it is intrinsically of limited architectural or historic interest, and is therefore of a correspondingly lower level of significance than the two adjoining outbuildings to the west.

- 4.18 On the eastern side of the courtyard to the north of Bec House, but not included within this listing, is a north/south-aligned building of elongated plan (Figs. 3, 4 and 28). This has recently been restored and converted to a three-bay, open-sided garage, with small room-spaces at either end. Closer inspection reveals that exposed cross-walls display evidence of cob and flint construction, which is more fully revealed on the rear elevation. This building is therefore integral to the historic courtyard arrangement on this side of the house, and is likely to be broadly contemporary with the three buildings described above. Its successful repair and conversion therefore offers a valuable precedent for the re-purposing of the component elements of the Grade II-listed Coach House and Stables.



Fig. 27: The rear, roadside elevation of the single-storey eastern range.

The heritage significance of the outbuildings at Bec House

- 4.19 The Outbuildings of Bec House are a good surviving example of a group of historic service buildings, of eighteenth and nineteenth-century date. Collectively, their heritage significance

is enhanced by aspects of internal preservation, with limited evidence of later change or adaptation, which enables their original form and mode of construction to be readily appreciated and understood. These buildings retain much of the historic character of their courtyard plan, as depicted in historic mapping, and therefore exhibit considerable group value. The central Coach House is a building of wholly vernacular character, which may well pre-date the current Bec House and thus possibly representative of an earlier large house on the site (Fig. 16D). Aspects of fabric and form of this building suggest a possible sixteenth or seventeenth-century date and, if so, it is remarkable that this was not demolished and replaced at the time of construction of the main house. It therefore comprises a remarkable survival.

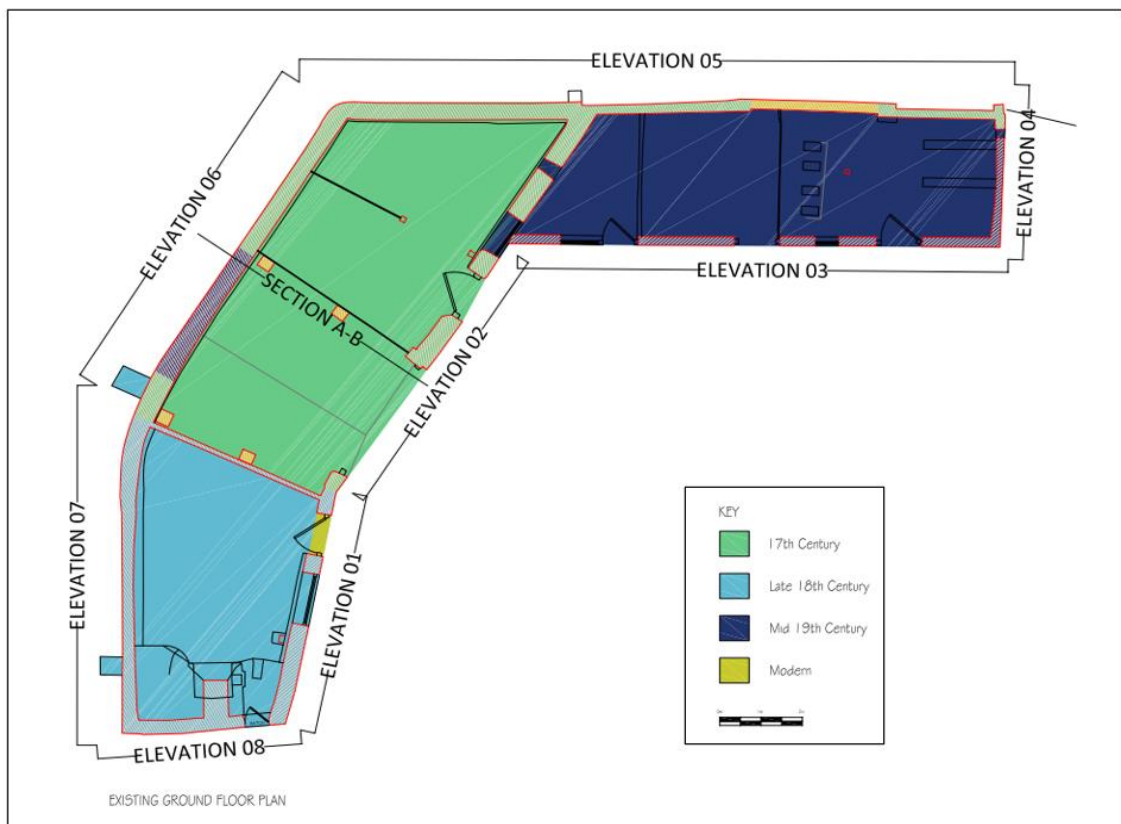


Fig. 28: Phased ground-floor plan of the outbuilding at Bec House, showing estimated dates of component structures and built features (Fowler Architecture and Planning).

4.20 The outbuildings of Bec House incorporate traditional materials and methods of construction. They display some interesting vernacular architectural forms, and are representative of important surviving examples of classes of rural buildings which amply reflect the adoption of regional styles and use of materials.

Historic Illustrative Heritage Values

- 4.21 The Bec House outbuildings retain important historical illustrative heritage values, which relate to vernacular building techniques and the use of traditional materials and methods of construction in the post-medieval and early modern periods. Such illustrative values are enhanced in places by high levels of preservation, and also relate importantly to the integral functions and complementary layout of the buildings and their historical role in the organisation of a large country house. The buildings are also importantly illustrative of the technical development of building techniques over time, and of the persistence of vernacular styles and methods in rural areas. Such developments may also be considered to reflect the wealth and ambitions of the property owners concerned.

Aesthetic Heritage Values

- 4.22 The buildings are associated with important Design Aesthetic heritage values, which relate to their built form, use of materials and construction, as interesting examples of these classes of buildings, which display remarkable historic character. The proportions of the buildings, together with the sweep of traditional thatched and slate-clad roofs and internal timber-framed construction, adds to their aesthetic value. Fortuitous aesthetic heritage values relate to the 'patina of age' evident in the exterior of the buildings, which enhances the visual quality and texture of traditional materials, most particularly the roofs. Aesthetic values are also evident in the mix of roof-lines, and in the contrasting forms of the component buildings.
- 4.23 While the three component elements of this group collectively display a high level of significance, commensurate with their designation, such significance does not apply in equal measure to all. In terms of age, architectural interest and preservation, it is argued that the central Coach House is of primary significance, to be followed by the small single-storey range to their left. The eastern single-storey range is of later date, and of an altogether lower level of architectural interest, and thus makes a correspondingly lower contribution to the overall significance of the group of buildings. The significance of the outbuildings is also limited by their current condition, with evidence of serious structural defects, and decay of historic fabric, which principally affect elements of cob construction and thatched roofing within the central Coach House (Fig. 29). In this case, probable collapse has only been averted by the installation of brick piers and a supporting steel beam (Fig. 13). The significance of these buildings can only be preserved by a programme of repair, conversion

and sustainable reuse, which will preserve their form and character. The buildings in their existing form are technically redundant for modern usage, and if left in their current condition will continue to deteriorate, with further loss of significance.

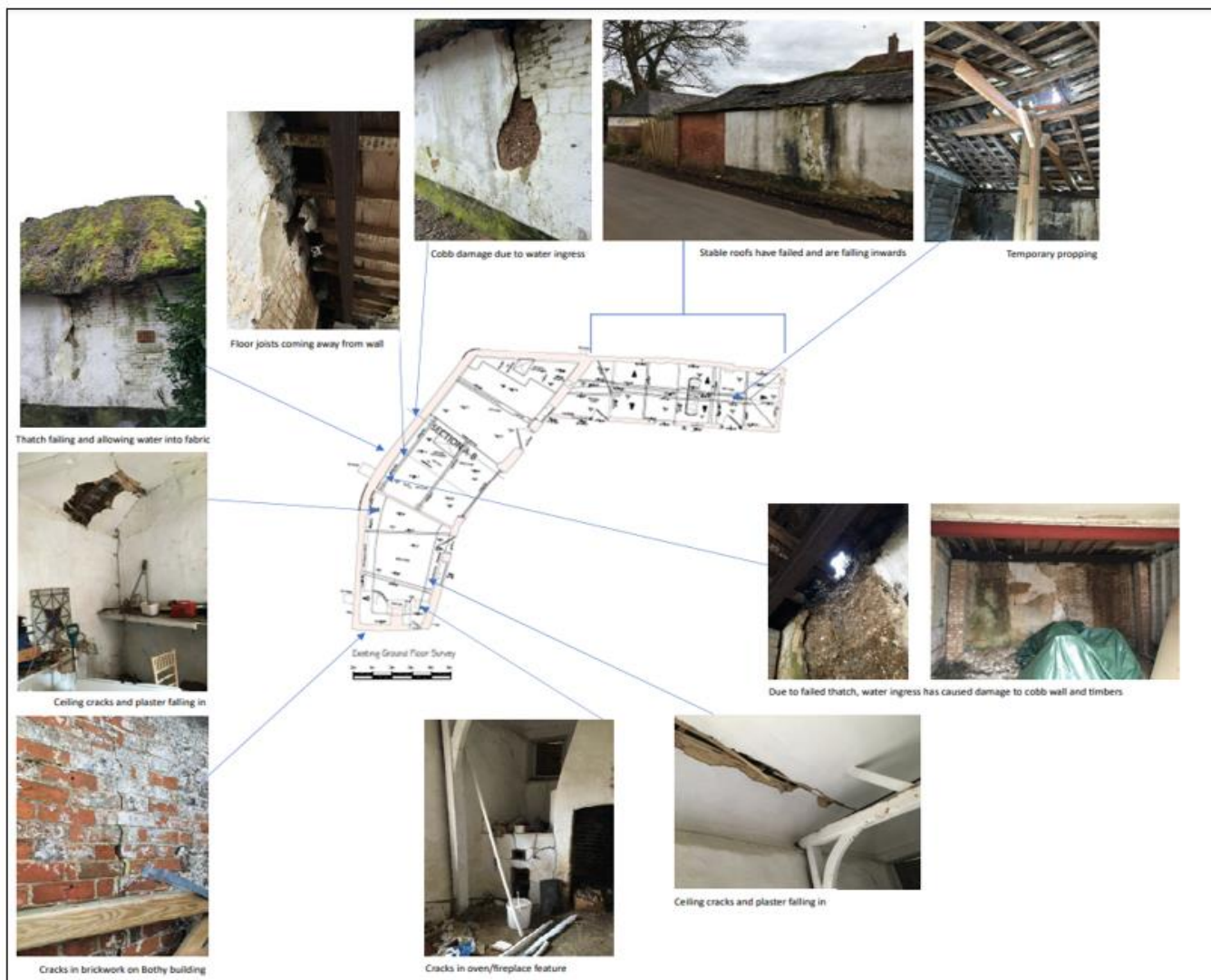


Fig. 29: Aspects of decayed and deteriorating fabric, and its locations, within the outbuildings at Bec House (Fowler Architecture and Planning).



Fig. 30: The west elevation of the unlisted converted building at the eastern side of the courtyard.

5. THE PROPOSED CONVERSION WORKS AND THEIR POTENTIAL IMPACT

5.1 It is proposed to convert the older outbuildings to the north of Bec House to ancillary residential accommodation, and to repair and rebuild the single-storey nineteenth-century stables range to the east (Figs. 32-35). Principal interest attaches to the thatched central Coach House, which would form the centrepiece of the proposed scheme, with the reconstruction and extension of the eastern, single-storey range, the restoration and rebuilding of the supporting cob and brick boundary wall, and the repair and conversion of the single-storey southern building, as guest accommodation. This section provides a description of the proposed changes to these buildings, and assesses the effects of such changes on their historic character and heritage settings.

The central Coach House

5.2 The structural survey of the central Coach House has confirmed its unstable condition, and has recommended removal of its defective thatched roof to forestall the imminent collapse of the building (Nigel Challis Ltd 2024; Figs. 16 and 29). It has therefore been proposed to provide waterproof sheeting to prevent further water ingress, before removing the thatch and undertaking an inspection of decayed and defective elements of timber framing. It is proposed to repair and convert the central Coach House as residential accommodation (Figs. 32-35). This will require substantial initial repairs to the roof, and to the supporting cob wall to the rear. This would be repainted, where necessary, to match the existing.

5.3 The ground-floor of the Coach House would be converted to a living-room space, with the wide carriage entrance on the south-eastern side infilled with Crittall-type, metal-framed fully glazed double doors, with glazed side-lights (Fig. 34). The adjoining ground-floor accommodation with stable partition, on the north-eastern side, would be converted to a hallway and an adjoining kitchen/dining space. This arrangement would enable the retention and repair of existing historic timber partitions in this space. The hallway, to be accessed through an existing doorway opening on the south-eastern side, would incorporate a spiral staircase, providing access to the first-floor (Fig. 32). A new internal doorway opening would be created between the former Coach House and the adjoining ground-floor accommodation with stable partition, immediately to the north-east. All internal walls within the central Coach House building would be lined with insulation and damp-proofing, with a surface of lime plaster to match the existing character of the walls.

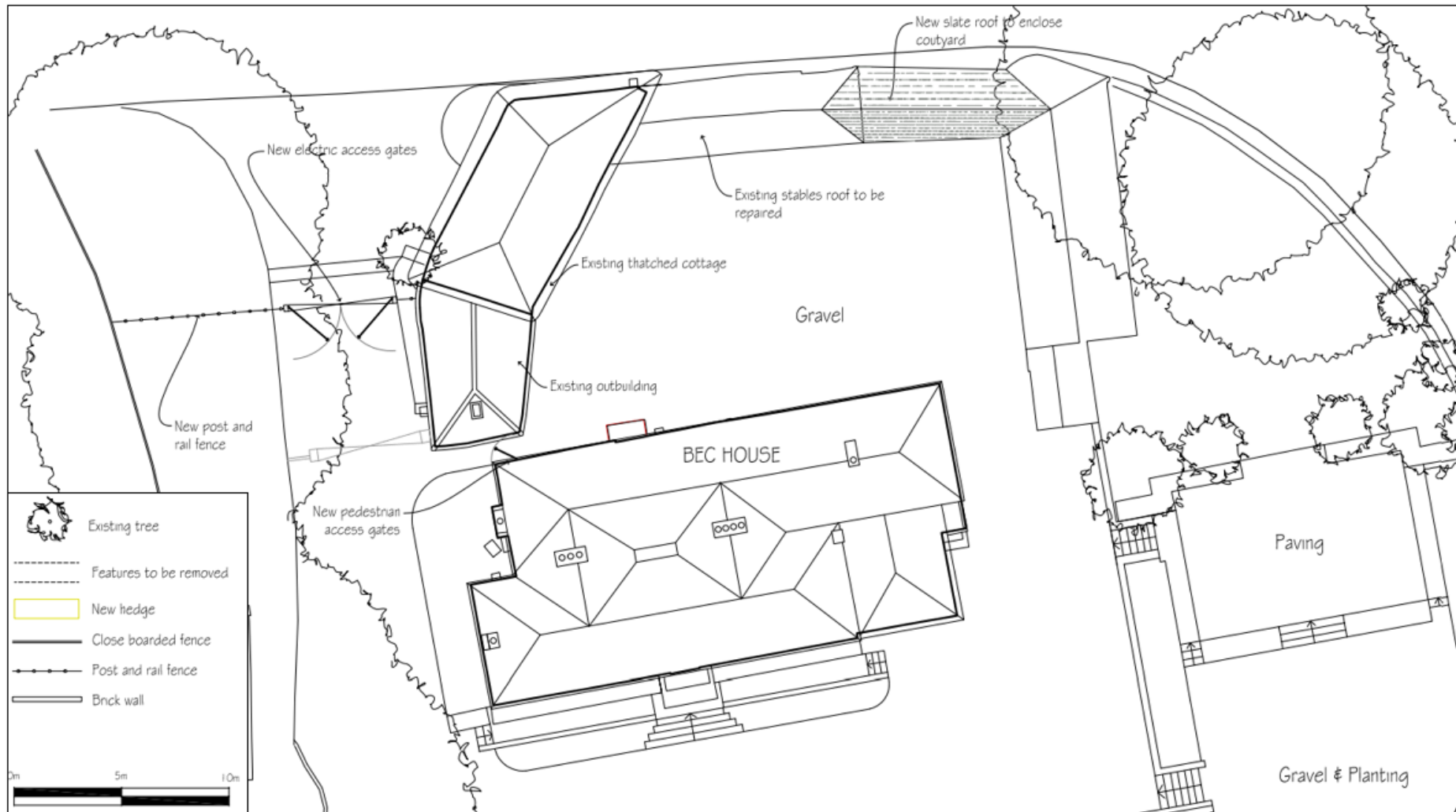


Fig. 31: Site plan of Bec House and outbuildings, with proposed layout (Fowler Architecture and Planning).

- 5.4 At first-floor level, the central Coach House building would be converted to a bathroom on the north-eastern side, with a guest bedroom on the south-western, each room to be accessed off a small central landing leading off the spiral staircase (Fig. 33). A new dormer, with timber-framed casement, would be inserted towards the northern end of the south-east elevation, which would serve the proposed bathroom, and match the existing dormer to the left (Figs. 33 and 34). The existing dormer on this elevation would be retained, and a new timber casement window installed, to match the existing. A new timber door, of appropriate historic pattern would replace the existing stables door on the south-east elevation (Figs. 32 and 34).
- 5.5 It will be necessary to ascertain the condition and soundness of roof timbers within this building, which are likely to have suffered some degree of decay caused by water ingress through damaged or deteriorated areas of thatch (Nigel Challis Ltd 2024). Wherever possible, existing timbers would be retained and repaired, with damaged and decayed timber members replaced, using traditional joinery methods. Thatching throughout the building will be repaired and renewed, using traditional layering techniques, to enable effective water-shedding and insulation (Figs. 34 and 35). Each layer of thatching material would be carefully laid and attached to the base-coat, using traditional methods. It is proposed to retain the existing base-coat, to preserve this aspect of the historic character of the building.

The small, single-storey building

- 5.6 It is proposed to convert this building as guest accommodation, entailing repairs to the existing slate roof and the provision of internal insulation and damp-proofing (Figs. 31 and 32). This would entail repairs, including re-pointing and repainting, of the existing brick wall on the north-western side (Figs. 34 and 35). An ensuite space would be created on the northern side of the interior, with the insertion of stud walling. The position of these inserted walls would conform to the line of an existing timber truss above, and its curvature would reference that of the historic oven feature on the southern side of this space (Fig. 32). It is anticipated that reinforcing measures between this lean-to structure and the adjoining Coach House, would address a number of observed structural defects. Fibreboard insulation and damp-proofing membrane would be used to line the interior walls, with a surface of lime plaster to match existing character and contours.

- 5.7 On the courtyard side, a new timber door would be inserted within the existing opening, and the existing window on this side repaired as necessary (Fig. 34). All internal historic features, including timber trusses, and the brick forge/bread oven, would be retained *in situ* (Fig. 20). New roof slates would be employed to match the existing, where required. Within the narrow access point between the southern end of this building and the north-west corner of Bec House, a new timber pedestrian access gate would be fitted to an existing timber frame (Fig. 22). A new, freestanding timber post-and-rail boundary fence would be erected along the roadside from the north-western corner of the single-storey building (Fig. 35). At the main roadside entrance to Bec House, close to the south-western elevation of the single-storey building, it is proposed to install a pair of new, electrically-operated timber access gates.

The single-storey eastern range

- 5.8 This element of the group of listed structures is of comparatively recent, nineteenth-century date, and is of more limited historic and architectural interest. The building displays evidence of long-term disuse, and in its current form is considered to be at risk, with the supporting rear wall and roof timbers displaying considerable structural instability (Nigel Challis Ltd 2024). It is proposed to repair and reconstruct this building in its existing form. This would entail the rebuilding and repair of the cob and brick rear boundary wall against which this range has been constructed, with re-pointing and repainting where necessary (Figs. 33, 34 and 35). In addition, it will be necessary to repair and rebuild the failed existing roof of this range, in historic form, using traditional methods and materials. Existing timber roof-members would be retained, treated and reused wherever possible. Where necessary, new slates of historic pattern would be employed, to match the existing.
- 5.9 It is also proposed to extend this building at its eastern end, to create a traditional, open-sided two-bay cart-shed structure (Figs. 33 and 34). On the southern side, the slate roof would be supported by a single new oak post, set on a stone staddle. A new brick supporting wall on the northern side, of traditional pattern, would close-off the courtyard on the northern side of Bec House. The new roof would be constructed directly off the primary timbers of the repaired roof of the eastern range. The existing hip at the eastern end of this roof would be retained, and exposed as a feature of the new roof extension (Figs. 33 and 34). This would have a covering of slate, to match that of the existing range.

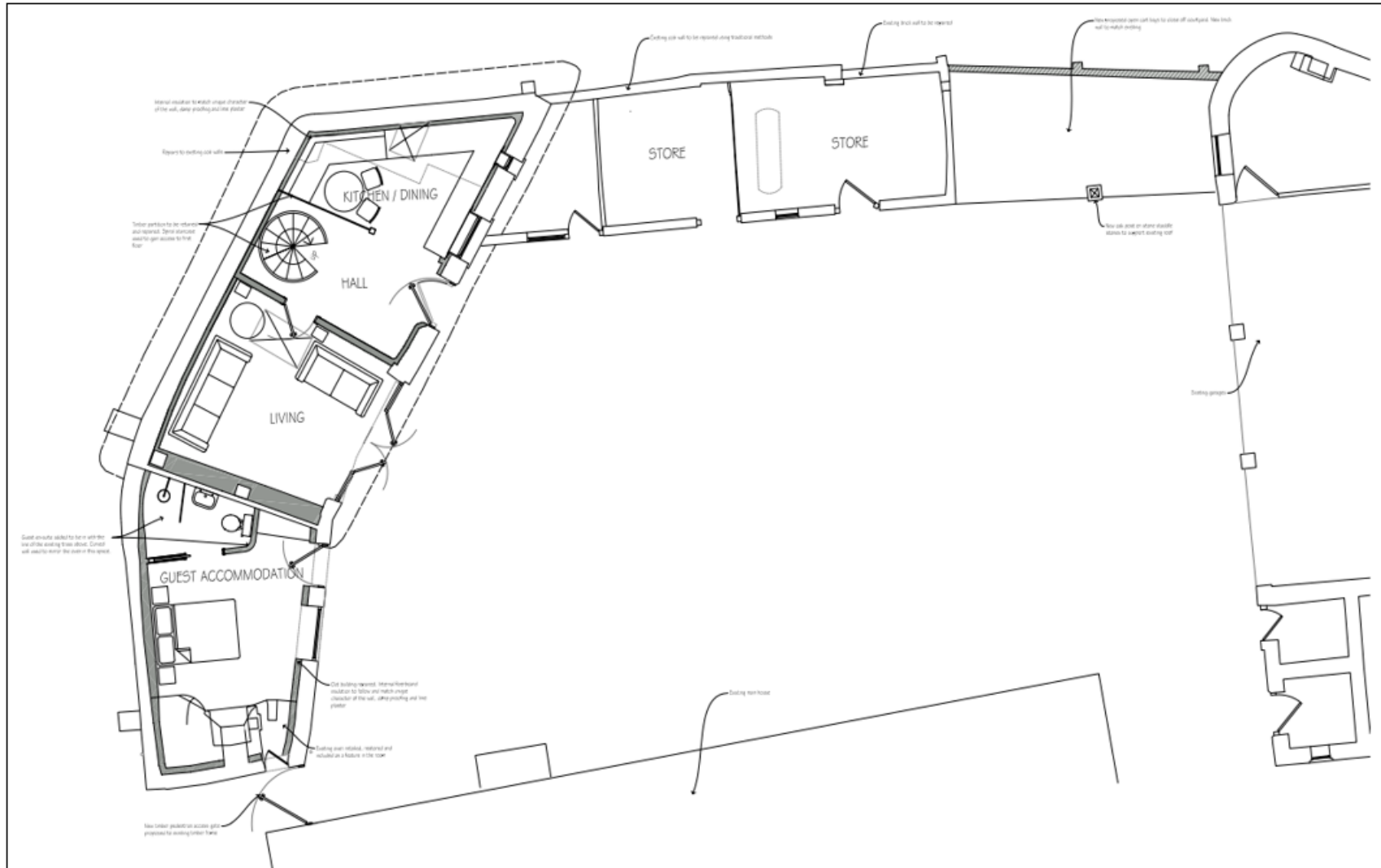


Fig. 32: Proposed ground-floor plan of the outbuildings at Bec House (Fowler Architecture and Planning).

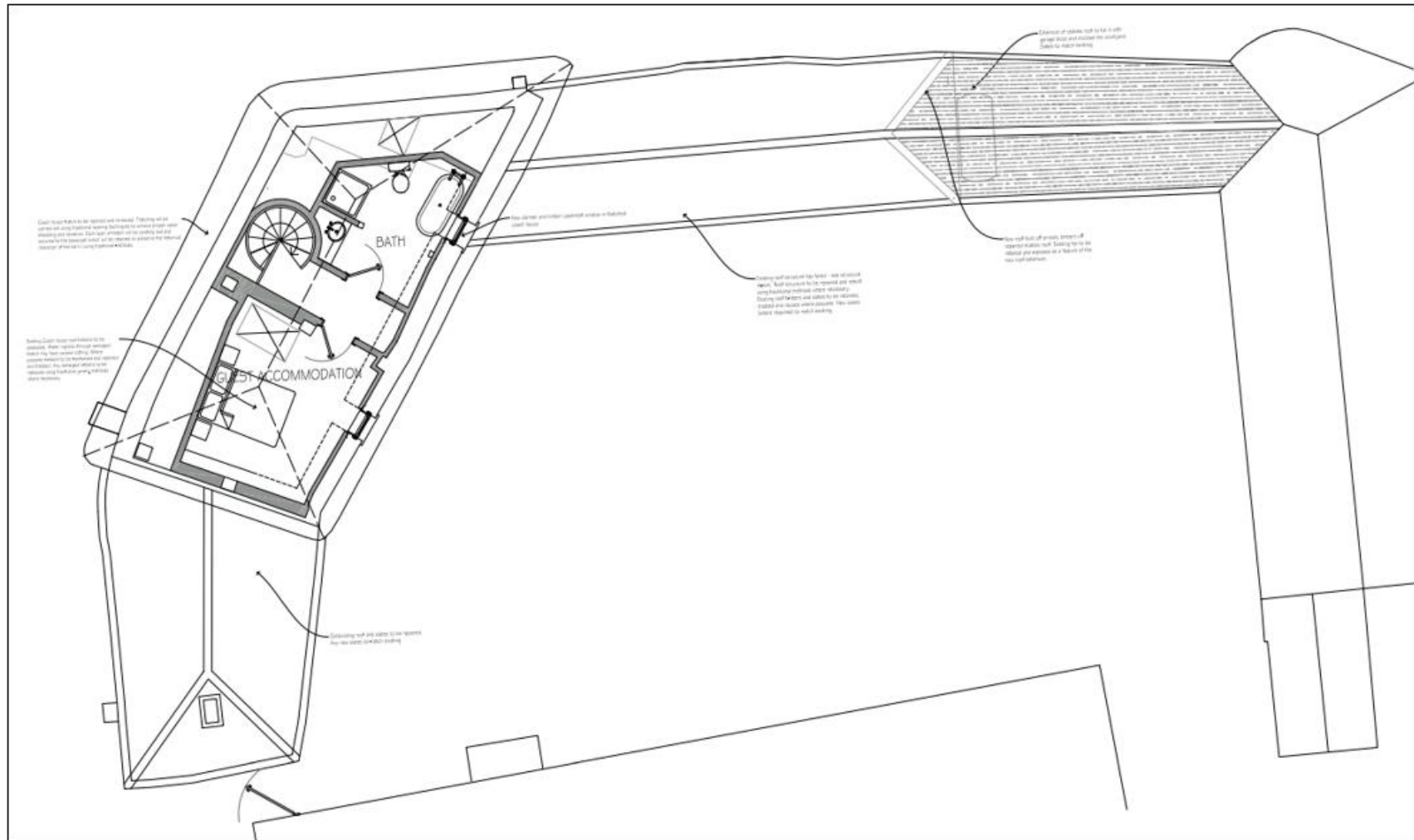


Fig. 33: Proposed first-floor plan of the outbuildings at Bec House (Fowler Architecture and Planning).

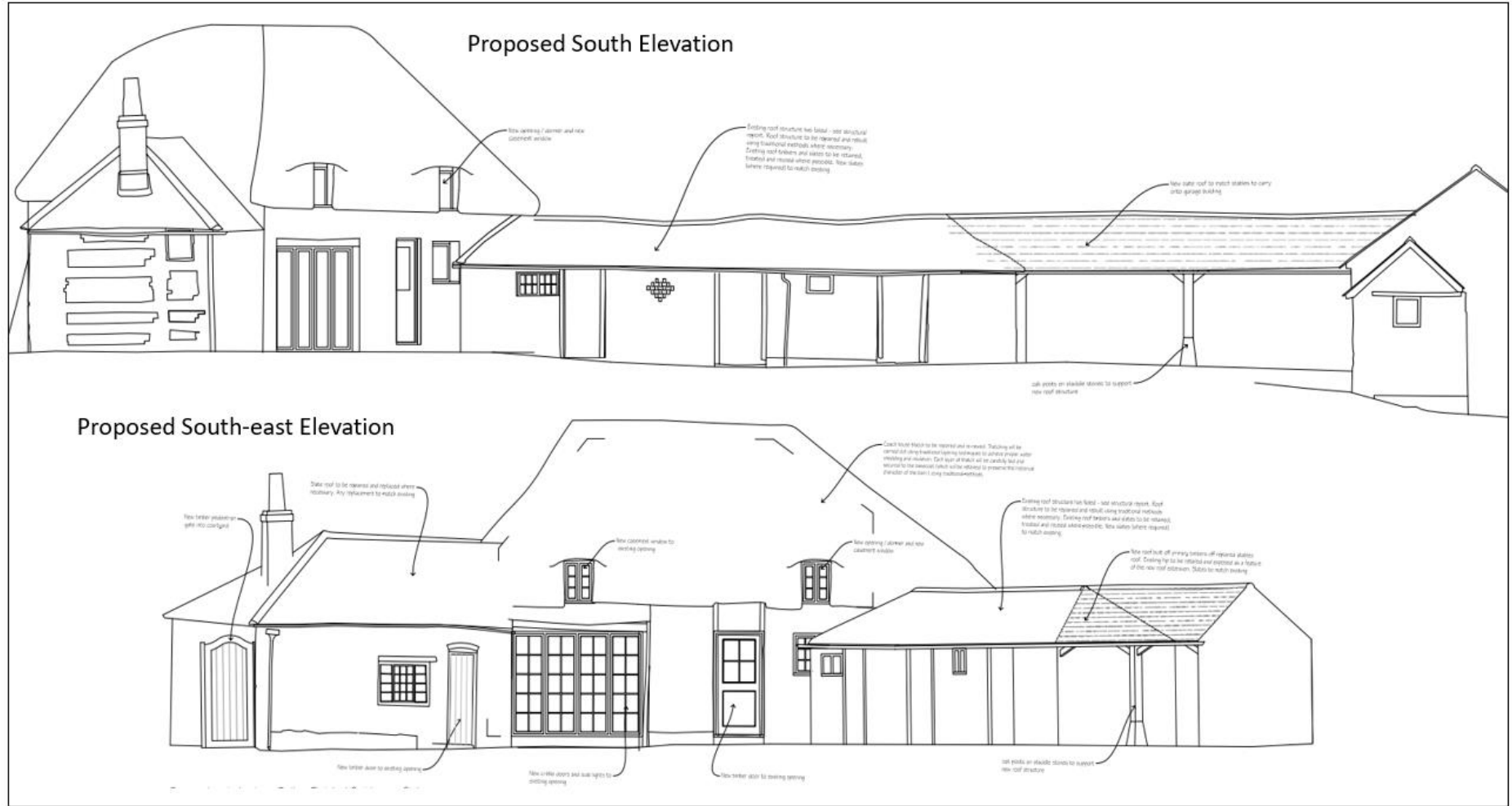


Fig. 34: Proposed south and South-east elevations of the converted outbuildings at Bec House (Fowler Architecture and Planning).

Assessing the potential impact of the proposed conversion works

- 5.10 The potential impacts of the proposed scheme of conversion must be assessed within the context of the current condition of the buildings. These all display evidence of long-term lack of use, with advanced structural instability recorded in a number of locations (Figs. 16 and 29). The partial collapse of the roof of the badly-affected central Coach House has only been averted by the insertion of a supporting steel beam (Fig. 13). The proposed scheme of residential conversion within the Coach House and adjoining single-storey building therefore offers a valuable opportunity for the repair, conservation and sustainable reuse of these structures, which would forestall further deterioration and loss of significance.
- 5.11 While an unstable building of limited historic and architectural interest, the single-storey eastern range is integral to this group of listed buildings (Figs. 10, 23, 24 and 25). The reconstruction of this range would retain its form and character, and the construction of a cart-shed extension at its eastern end would complement the character and scale of the building. This addition would confer the benefit of closing-off the existing courtyard arrangement on its northern boundary, and thus complement the settings of adjoining outbuildings, and of Bec House itself (Figs. 33 and 34). The proposed reconstruction and repair would maintain the appearance and form of the roof, and would retain those existing doorway openings and internal divisions integral to the historic function of the building.
- 5.12 Principal interest in this case relates to the residential conversion of the central Coach House which, as a building of interesting vernacular form and earlier date, comprises the most significant of the three component structures. The residential conversion of this building would entail minimal change to internal plan-form and fittings, with the retention of a timber partition (Figs. 31-35). The external appearance and character of the building would be retained, with the principal change being the infilling of the wide coach entrance with Crittall-type glazed double doors and side-lights (Fig. 34). This would introduce a modern, reflective feature within a historic opening, which would have the benefit of being visually permeable within inward views. The existing opening, displaying evidence of structural reinforcing, does not contribute positively to the appearance and significance of this building, and it is argued that the proposed infilling of this space would represent a considerable improvement in aesthetic terms, in addition to providing necessary natural lighting.

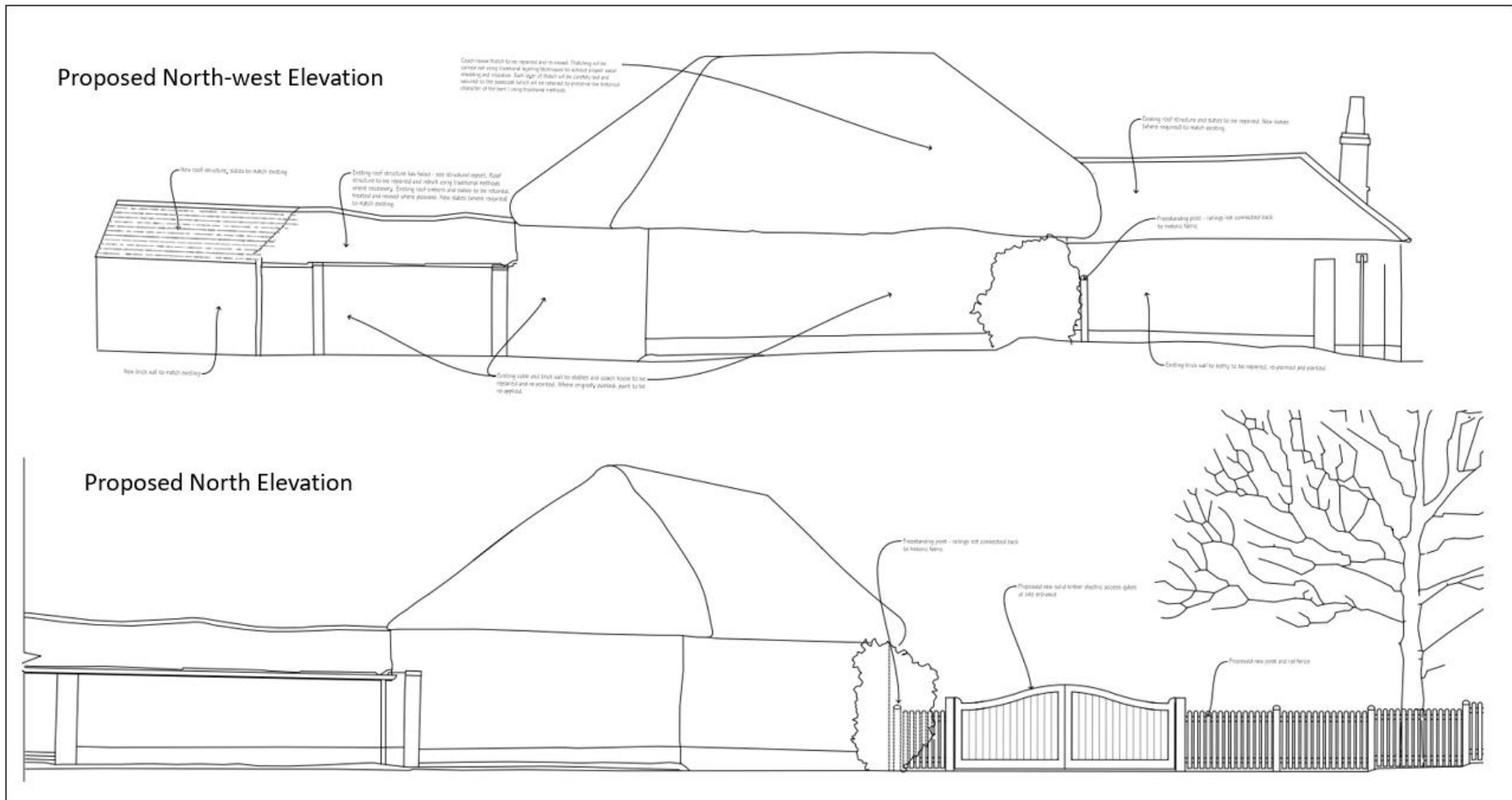


Fig. 35: Proposed North-west and North elevations of the converted outbuildings at Bec House (Fowler Architecture and Planning).

- 5.13 Proposals for the removal of the thatched roof of the central Coach House, and the repair and removal of defective elements of timber framing are warranted by the recent structural survey (Nigel Challis Ltd 2024). These are considered to be wholly necessary to stabilise the building, and to permit its effective conversion and future use. Necessary precautions would be undertaken to render the exposed structure weatherproof during the course of this work. The provision of a repaired thatched roof would greatly enhance the appearance of this building, in addition to securing its sustainable future use.
- 5.14 Principal changes to the external appearance of the central Coach House would include the insertion of full-height glazing within the existing wide carriage entrance on the courtyard side, with a new door to the right (Fig. 34). The addition of a dormer window at attic level would replicate the existing, and be wholly appropriate to the form and character of this elevation. Within the small single-storey building to the south, the existing door would be replaced with one of suitable historic pattern. These changes, involving modern features and materials, would have some limited effect on perceptions of the appearance and historic character of these buildings, but would add a degree of interest to what currently comprise rather forlorn and deteriorating structures (Figs. 34 and 35). The overall form and profile of these buildings would remain unaffected, and the scheme would entail no additions to existing form. Similarly, existing openings would largely be retained, and windows would be replaced, where required, with ones of appropriate historic pattern.
- 5.15 Overall, the magnitude of impact to the outbuildings of Bec House resulting from the proposed scheme, to include the loss of the single-storey eastern range, must be regarded as moderate, thus entailing a moderate significance of impact (Tables 1 and 2). The proposed conversion of these buildings would result in a level of harm which is assessed as being within the low range of less than substantial, although such harm would be decisively outweighed by the heritage benefits of the scheme, which would secure the long-term structural stability, historic interest and sustainable reuse of these buildings.

Impacts to heritage settings

- 5.16 The courtyard plan of the outbuildings on the northern side of Bec House is essentially inward-looking, with the built form of the buildings themselves and the associated boundary wall effectively obstructing inward views from the north (Figs. 3 and 4). Consequently, these

buildings and, most particularly, their inward-facing courtyard elevations, have very little visibility from surrounding parts of the Conservation Area, although the existing roof-line and rear elevation of the single-storey eastern range is clearly visible from Amport Road and from some listed buildings to the north (Figs. 27 and 36). In this case, the repair of the cob and brick outer boundary wall would enhance the quality of such inward views (Fig. 35). The extension of the single-storey eastern range would have the effect of closing-off the courtyard arrangement to the north of Bec House (Figs. 32 and 34). This would have very limited effect on the wider settings of heritage assets to the north, but would enhance the settings of Bec House and the associated listed outbuildings.

5.17 In their currently dilapidated condition, these outbuildings do not contribute positively to the appearance of the Conservation Area or the settings of surrounding heritage assets, including Bec House itself (Figs. 17, 27 and 36). However, the rear elevations of all three buildings all back onto Amport Road, and these are directly visible from Grade II-listed Monxton Manor, Corner Cottage and Rectory Cottage (Fig. 4), where their deteriorating condition is evident.



Fig. 36: View, looking south-west from Amport Road, with the existing rear elevations of the outbuildings.

5.18 The proposed repair, conversion and sustainable reuse of these buildings would avert the possibility of further structural deterioration and possible collapse, and would actively enhance the setting of Bec House on its northern side. Although enjoying little visual connection with the northern side of Bec House, the wider settings of heritage assets on this side of the property would also be enhanced. The successful repair and conversion of the non-listed historic building on the eastern side of the Bec House courtyard offers an important and relevant precedent in this respect (Fig. 30).

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 Bec House is a substantial brick-built house, which is listed at Grade II, and is located on the south side of Amport Road, Monxton. Principal architectural interest derives from its highly regular south elevation, of *c.* 1750. The plainer, more domestic character of the north elevation of the house is associated with a courtyard arrangement of service buildings, which is separately listed at Grade II. Of these, the most significant is a thatched vernacular building, with a high carriage entrance, and adjoining stables to the right. There is a loft above both sides, with a single casement window set within an eyebrow dormer. This building has suffered considerable structural deterioration, due in part to the spreading of roof timbers and its unstable rear wall of brick and cob construction. The adjoining ground-floor accommodation with stable partition, to the right, displays good preservation of internal fabric and fittings, including a timber partition. Elements of flint-rubble construction suggest that this building, which retains considerable historic character, may be of possible sixteenth or seventeenth-century origin.
- 6.2 To the south of the Coach House is a small, single-storey addition of probable eighteenth-century date, with a hipped, slate roof. This retains some well-preserved internal features, including knee-braced timber trusses and a free-standing brick forge and bread oven. This building also displays a number of structural defects. On the north side of the courtyard arrangement and abutting the Coach House, is a single-storey range of three former stables with a hipped slate roof. This has been built against an earlier cob and brick boundary wall on the northern side of the property, and is of probable later nineteenth-century date. It is of comparatively limited historic and architectural interest, and is in deteriorating structural condition, due to the failure of its roof timbers.
- 6.3 Within a proposed scheme of repair and conversion, the supporting sections of cob and brick walling at the rear of the outbuildings would be repaired. Both floors of the thatched Coach House would be converted to residential accommodation, with an inserted spiral staircase between floors. Internal plan-form would be largely retained, including the existing timber partition on the ground-floor of the stables. A new dormer window, to match the existing example, would be inserted on the right-hand side of the Coach House, and the wide carriage opening on the south-east elevation would be infilled with full-height glazing,

including Crittall-type double doors and side-lights. A new door would be provided, within an existing opening, on the right-hand side of the Coach House. The small single-storey building on the southern side of the Coach House would be converted to guest accommodation, entailing necessary repairs to the roof, rear wall and interior, and the replacement of an existing timber door on the courtyard side. Internal historic features would be retained, although an ensuite space would be inserted on the northern side.

- 6.4 The single-storey eastern range is in poor structural condition, with failure and propped support of roof timbers, and displacement of slates. It is proposed to repair the supporting cob and brick wall on the northern side, and to reconstruct the roof, reusing recovered and treated timbers where possible. The existing form of the building with its doorway openings and internal divisions, would be retained. It is proposed to extend this building at its eastern end, as an open-fronted cart-shed structure, with the roof on the southern side supported by a single oak post set on a stone staddle. The new roof of the extension would be constructed directly off the primary timbers of the repaired roof of the existing building. The existing hip at the eastern end of this building would be retained, and exposed as a feature of the roof of the new extension.
- 6.5 The three outbuildings all display evidence of very long-term disuse, with advanced structural deterioration. The proposed scheme of repair and conversion would therefore offer a valuable opportunity for the conservation and sustainable reuse of these structures which would forestall further deterioration and loss of significance. The central Coach House is of interesting vernacular form and earlier date, and therefore comprises the most significant of the three component structures. The residential conversion of parts of this building would entail some limited change internal plan-form and fittings, but would result in little change to their overall form and character.
- 6.6 Principal changes to external appearance would include the insertion of full-height glazing within the wide carriage entrance of the Coach House, with a new door in an existing opening to the right. An additional dormer window, to match the adjacent existing example, would be created within the eaves of a repaired thatched roof. These changes would partly affect perceptions of the appearance and historic character of these buildings, but would add a degree of interest to currently deteriorating and unused structures. However, the overall

form of these buildings would remain unaffected, with no structural additions. The proposed scheme of repair and conversion would secure the long-term sustainable use and significance of historic buildings, which are otherwise in imminent danger of collapse.

- 6.6 The built form of the buildings themselves, and the associated boundary wall, effectively obstruct inward views from the north, so that the inward-facing courtyard elevations of these buildings have very little visibility from surrounding parts of the Conservation Area. The proposed eastward extension of the single-storey eastern range would enclose the courtyard, and thus further restrict inward views from the north. In their current condition, these buildings do not contribute positively to the appearance of the Conservation Area, or to the settings of surrounding heritage assets. The proposed conversion and re-purposing of these buildings would avert the possibility of further deterioration, and would actively enhance the settings of both Bec House and neighbouring heritage assets to the north. The successful repair and conversion of the non-listed historic building on the eastern side of the Bec House courtyard offers an important precedent.
- 6.7 The proposed conversion of the outbuildings at Bec House would result in a level of harm which is assessed as being within the low range of less than substantial, although such harm would be decisively outweighed by the heritage benefits of the scheme, which would secure the long-term structural stability and sustainable reuse of these buildings, and preserve a number of significant historic features.
- 6.8 The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special regard be given to the desirability of preserving listed buildings and any features of architectural or historic interest they possess. This statutory approach is reflected in Policies E2 and E9 of the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan 2011-2029. Similarly, Paragraph 205 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that, when considering the impact of development on the significance of a listed building, great weight should be given to its conservation. On the basis of the assessment presented in this heritage statement, it is considered that the proposed changes to these Grade II-listed structures are proportionate to their existing scale and condition, and would result in an acceptably low level of overall harm to their significance. Such proposals are in accordance with the statutory requirements

stated in Sections 66 of the Planning Act, National Planning Policy Framework, and Policies E2 and E9 and SD13 of the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan 2011-2029.

6.10 The following paragraphs of NPPF are particularly relevant in this case:

Paragraph 203.

In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

Paragraph 208.

Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

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