



**Donald Insall Associates**  
Chartered Architects and Historic Building Consultants

**Grandpont House, Abingdon Road, Oxford**

Heritage Impact Assessment for Mr Xavier Bosch

March 2024



## Contact Information

### Robert Ayton IHBC MRTPI

Senior Historic Buildings Advisor

E: Robert.Ayton@insall-architects.co.uk

T: 020 7245 9888

### Harriet Still

Researcher

E: Harriet.Still@insall-architects.co.uk

T: 01865 520170

[www.donaldinsallassociates.co.uk](http://www.donaldinsallassociates.co.uk)

<i>Version:</i>	3
<i>Issue date:</i>	March 2024
<i>Prepared by:</i>	RZA/HZS
<i>Checked by:</i>	HXE
<i>Version description:</i>	Listed building consent application

This report and all intellectual property rights in it and arising from it are the property of or are under licence to Donald Insall Associates Limited. Neither the whole nor any part of this report, nor any drawing, plan, photograph, other document or any information contained within it may be reproduced in any form, including online, without the prior written consent of Donald Insall Associates Limited. All material in which the intellectual property rights have been licensed to Donald Insall Associates Limited, and such rights belong to third parties, may not be published or reproduced at all in any form, and any request for consent to the use of such material for publication or reproduction should be made directly to the owner of the intellectual property rights concerned. Checked by HXE.

## Contents

1.0	Summary of Heritage Impact Assessment	1
2.0	Historical Background	5
3.0	Site Survey Descriptions	26
4.0	Assessment of Significance	69
5.0	Commentary on the Proposals	71
6.0	Justification of the Proposals and Conclusion	76
	Appendix I - Statutory List Descriptions	77
	Appendix II - Planning Policy and Guidance	81
	Appendix III - Planning History	88
	Appendix IV - Georgian Joinery in the West Wing	90



- Key
- Grade II\* Listed Building
  - Grade II Listed Building
  - Scheduled Monument
  - Property boundary

Ordnance Survey map reproduced under Licence 100020449

## 1.0 Summary of Heritage Impact Assessment

### 1.1 Introduction

Donald Insall Associates was commissioned by Mr Xavier Bosch in November 2022 to assist in the preparation of proposals for extensions and alterations to Grandpont House, Oxford.

The investigation has comprised historical research, using both archival and secondary material, and site inspections. A brief illustrated history of the site and building, with sources of reference and bibliography, is in Section 2; the site survey findings are in Section 3. The investigation has established the significance of the building, which is set out in Section 4 and summarised below. The specific constraints for this building are summarised below.

This report assesses the impact of the proposals by Studio Stassano on the significance of the relevant heritage assets. Section 5 provides a justification of the scheme according to the relevant legislation, planning policy and guidance.

### 1.2 The Building, its Legal Status and Policy Context

Grandpont House is a Grade II\* listed building located at the very southern end of the Central (City and University) Conservation Area in the City of Oxford. It is in the setting of Holy Rood Church which lies to the south, and is a Grade II listed building.

The boundary wall along Abingdon Road is listed Grade II and is part of the Grandpont causeway which is a scheduled monument. The reasons for the designation of the latter state:

*The Grandpont represents an example of a causeway, few of which now survive in their original form. Although this example has been obscured by later alterations and additions, original fabric is visible from the river whilst partial excavation has demonstrated the survival of substantial archaeological remains beneath the modern road surface. The causeway is thought to have its origins in the Saxon or early Norman period and represents an important element in understanding the layout of early medieval and medieval Oxford. It is one of the very few examples where both detailed archaeological and documentary records are available. The causeway may have its origins in the Saxon or early Norman period and it represents an important element in understanding the layout of early medieval and medieval Oxford.*

Alterations to a listed building generally require listed building consent; development in conservation areas or within the setting of a listed building or conservation area requires local authorities to assess the implications of proposals on built heritage.

The statutory list descriptions of the listed buildings referred to are included in Appendix I and a summary of guidance on the Central (City and University) Conservation Area provided by the local planning authority is in Appendix II along with extracts from the relevant legislation and planning policy documents.

### 1.2.1 Legislation

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the legislative basis for decision-making on applications that relate to the historic environment. Sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Act impose statutory duties upon local planning authorities which, with regard to listed buildings, require the planning authority to have 'special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses' and, in respect of conservation areas, that 'special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area'.

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan applicable to the Site comprises the Oxford Local Plan (2016-2036) which has policies that deal with development affecting the historic environment. These are set out below.

### 1.2.2 National Planning Policy Framework 2023

The courts have held that following the approach set out in the policies on the historic environment in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023 will effectively result in a decision-maker complying with its statutory duties. The Framework forms a material consideration for the purposes of section 38(6). At the heart of the Framework is 'a presumption in favour of sustainable development' and there are also specific policies relating to the historic environment.

The Framework states that heritage assets are 'an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations'. The Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework defines a heritage asset as:

*A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).*

The Framework, in paragraph 200, states that:

*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.*

Section 4 of this report – the assessment of significance – meets this requirement and is based on the research and site surveys presented in sections 2 and 3, which are of a sufficient level of detail to understand the potential impact of the proposals. The Framework also, in paragraph 205, requires that:

*When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.*

The Framework goes on to state at paragraph 206 that:

*Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting) should require clear and convincing justification.*

Section 5 of this report provides this clear and convincing justification.

The Framework requires that local planning authorities categorise harm as either 'substantial' or 'less than substantial'.

Where a development proposal will lead to 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the Framework states, in paragraph 208, that:

*...this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.*

Extracts from the NPPF and NPPG, which expands on the NPPF, are included in Appendix II.

### 1.2.3 Oxford Local Plan 2036

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan applicable to the site comprises the Oxford Local Plan 2036.

The Oxford Local Plan 2036 has policies that deal with development affecting the historic environment, namely:

- DH1: High quality design and placemaking
- DH3: Designated heritage assets

The most applicable policies for the consideration of these applications are DH1 and DH3, as follows:

#### **Policy DH1: High quality design and placemaking**

*Planning permission will only be granted for development of high quality design that creates or enhances local distinctiveness.*

#### **Policy DH3: Designated heritage assets**

*Planning permission or listed building consent will be granted for development that respects and draws inspiration from Oxford's unique historic environment (above and below ground), responding positively to the significance character and distinctiveness of the heritage asset and locality.*

*For all planning decisions for planning permission or listed building consent affecting the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight will be given to the conservation of that asset and to the setting of the asset where it contributes to that significance or appreciation of that significance.*

*An application for planning permission for development which would or may affect the significance of any designated heritage asset, either directly or by being within its setting, should be accompanied by a heritage assessment that includes a description of the asset and its significance and an assessment of the impact of the development proposed on the asset's significance. As part of this process full regard should be given to the detailed character assessments and other relevant information set out any relevant conservation area appraisal and management plan.*

*The submitted heritage assessment must include information sufficient to demonstrate:*

*a) an understanding of the significance of the heritage asset, including recognition of its contribution to the quality of life of current and future generations and the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits they may bring; and*

*b) that the development of the proposal and its design process have been informed by an understanding of the significance of the heritage asset and that harm to its significance has been avoided or minimised; and*

*c) that, in cases where development would result in harm to the significance of a heritage asset, including its setting, the extent of harm has been properly and accurately assessed and understood, that it is justified, and that measures are incorporated into the proposal, where appropriate, that mitigate, reduce or compensate for the harm.*

*Where the setting of an asset is affected by a proposed development, the heritage assessment should include a description of the extent to which the setting contributes to the significance of the asset, as well as an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the setting and its contribution to significance.*

*Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, this harm must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Clear and extensive justification for this harm should be set out in full in the heritage assessment.*

### **1.3 Summary Assessment of Significance**

A detailed assessment of significance, with guidance on the relative significance of elements of fabric and plan form and the extent to which these elements are sensitive to alteration, is included in Section 4.0 of this report.

The building is a large detached Georgian house from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century (circa 1785). It is an important house, originally built for a wealthy Oxford family, on the southern edge of Georgian Oxford. The building is particularly unusual as it is built over a stream which flows into the Thames, effectively sitting on a bridge, and with good views towards the Thames and Christchurch Meadow to the northeast.

The main house is remarkably intact internally and externally, apart from the render on the east (front) and south (flank) walls. The timber framed facades are unusual for the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, and may have been used to reduce the load of the house on its bridge foundations. The interior contains much joinery and plasterwork from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. The original roof survives.

The west wing, which is likely to be earlier than the main house (late 17<sup>th</sup> or early 18<sup>th</sup> century) and possibly built originally as a mill. It retains its historic planform, albeit with some alterations, there is some significant historic fabric, including 18<sup>th</sup> century joinery. The 18<sup>th</sup> century roof survives beneath the 20<sup>th</sup> century additions. The out-buildings on the north side of the forecourt on Abingdon Road, the former stables and coach house are also of interest, although much altered internally, so

that their significance is primarily due to their exterior. The extensions on the north side of the house, dating from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, are utilitarian and, although part of the historical evolution of the house, they are not considered to be of significance.

The gardens of the house form its immediate setting, and the garden wall to Abingdon Road is important in its own right as an historic structure. The landscaped gardens are somewhat overgrown but could easily be restored. The water courses, to the north and the stream which runs through the garden and under the house, are very important historic elements of the setting of the house, contributing to its picturesque character.

#### **1.4 Summary of Proposals and Justification**

The current proposals represent a carefully considered, high quality design solution for the future of Grandpont House. They meet the clients requirements of providing additional accommodation and improved facilities, whilst respecting the significance of the listed building and its setting. Pre-application advice has been provided by officers from Oxford City Council and Historic England. This has been taken into account and the proposals have been revised for the applications.

The proposals may be considered to cause a low level of less than substantial harm to parts of the building, including the demolition of the extensions on the north

side of the house and the sub-division of the rear rooms at second floor level in the main house and in the rooms in the west wing.

However the scheme offers a number of important heritage benefits which far outweigh any harm identified:

- Improving the quality of accommodation and giving the building a new lease of life for the future
- Extending the building in a sensitive manner, which respects its significance, with high quality modern architecture
- Repair of the facades including the render on the east and south facades
- Recovering the roof slopes with Welsh slate
- The addition of a traditional mansard roof on the out-buildings and the reinstatement of the missing gable
- The repair of the facades of the derelict cottages
- The removal of unsightly modern pipework from the exterior
- The restoration of the first floor south principal room, following the removal of the chapel
- The installation of appropriate chimneypieces where these are missing
- Improvements to the setting of the building by enhancing the appearance of the courtyard
- The improvement of the environmental

performance of the buildings

- The addition of solar panels on the inner slopes of the roof of the main house
- Improvements to the setting of the building by enhancing the garden to improve its biodiversity.

We consider that the proposals pass the NPPF test of balancing harm and benefits. The proposals also comply with the local plan policies set out in the Oxford Local Plan (2016-2036). They will preserve and enhance the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building and the character and appearance of the Central (City and University) Conservation Area, in accordance with the statutory duty imposed by Sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

## 2.0 Historical Background

### 2.1 The Development of Grandpont House

#### 2.1.1 Before the Building of Grandpont House

The Oxfordshire Building Recordings Report has speculated on the presence of buildings on the site before the construction of Grandpont House in 1785.<sup>1</sup> This has been influenced by Historic England's tantalizing list description - 'there was once a mill here' - and the appearance of a building (marked as B1) on the west end of the island ('An Ham') in Robert Whittlesey's 1726 map for Brasenose College [Plates 2.1].<sup>2</sup> This is joined by another building (B2) on Isaac Taylor's 1750 and Thomas Jeffreys' 1766-67 maps [Plates 2.2 and 2.3]. There is much about the west wing and the north wall of the main house that suggest they may contain the core of an older building, namely the unusually thick north wall (80cm at its thickest point) in the main house, the west wing's similarity in form to a three-cell lobby-entrance hall house and the potentially 17<sup>th</sup>-century and early-18<sup>th</sup>-century joinery present in the west wing (see Section 3). However, the cartographic evidence frustrates this reading, with neither of the buildings that appear in the earlier maps matching the orientation and location of the current west wing.

---

1 David Clark, Oxfordshire Buildings Record Report OBR.467 'Grandpont House, Oxford' (October 2021), pp. 1-2 & 21-23

2 Historic England, 'Grandpont House', <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1299941?section=official-list-entry> (January 1954) [accessed 13 Dec 2022]

By the time that Town Clerk William Elias Taunton (c.1744-1825) bought the land and commissioned the building around 1785, the riparian scenery of the Abingdon Road Thames crossing, and its accidentally picturesque 13<sup>th</sup> century Friar Bacon's Study, had inspired several artists of the 1770s, being captured most notably by Michael 'Angelo' Rooker and JMW Turner.<sup>3</sup> Sadly, Friar Bacon's Study was lost to road-widening measures in 1779, however, these romanticised views of the river may have influenced Taunton's choice to buy one of the islands from the City of Oxford and site his urban villa here.<sup>4</sup> It was described as a piece of ground and 'water covered with arches for the foundations of a house intended to be built by Taunton', priced at 5 guineas and adjoining Taunton's existing garden grounds.<sup>5</sup>

---

3 Patrick Conner, 'Michael Rooker' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/24065> [accessed 14 Dec 2022]; ArtUK, 'Folly Bridge and Briar Bacon's Study by Michael Rooker', <https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/folly-bridge-and-friar-bacons-study-224154>; Howard Hotson, 'Friar Bacon's Study and Folly Bridge', <https://www.cabinet.ox.ac.uk/friar-bacons-study-and-folly-bridge> (March 2017) [accessed 13 Dec 2022]; Tate, 'Folly Bridge and Bacon's Tower, Oxford by J M W Turner' <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/turner-folly-bridge-and-bacons-tower-oxford-d00001> [accessed 13 Dec 2022]; Grandpont House, 'About', <http://grandpont-house.org/about> [accessed 13 Dec 2022]

4 Hotson, 'Friar Bacon's Study and Folly Bridge'

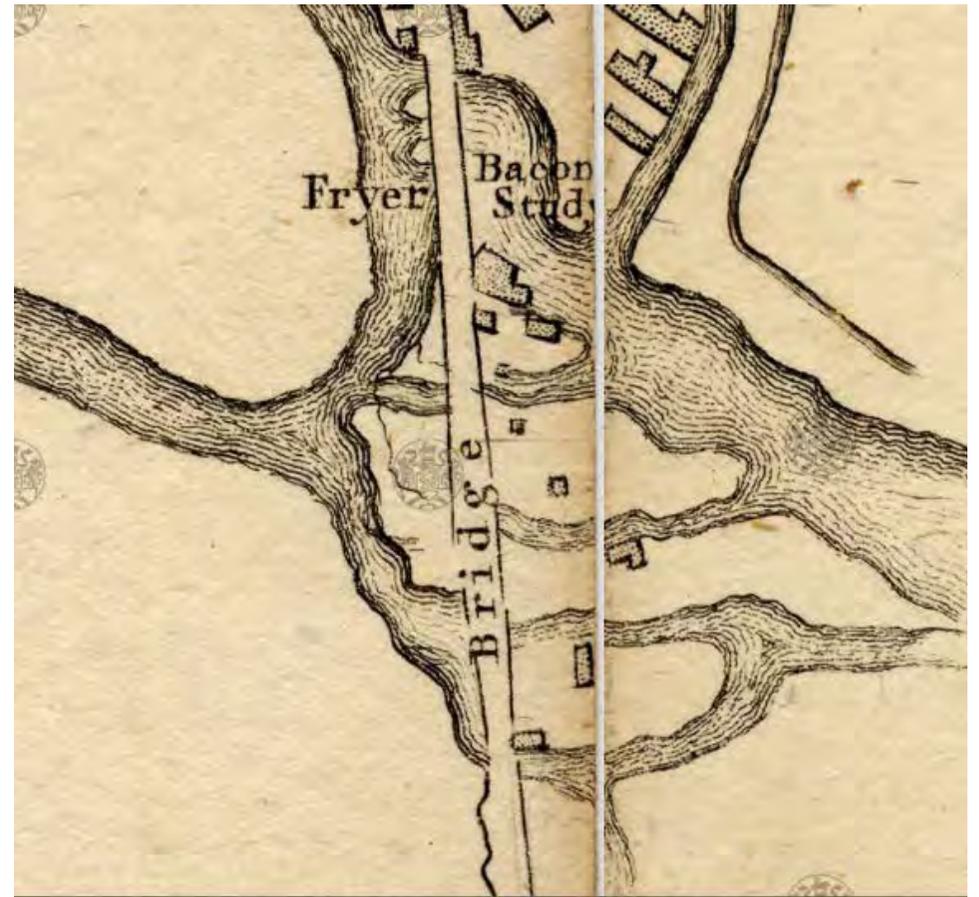
5 H E Salter, *Oxford City Properties* (Oxford: OUP, 1926), p. 114.



2.1 Robert Whittlesey's map for Brasenose College of the Grandpont House site in 1726 (Brasenose College Archives, B14.1\_30c)



2.2 Detail from Isaac Taylor's map of 1750 (Oxfordshire County Council – Oxfordshire History Centre, POX0251004)



2.3 Detail from Thomas Jeffreys's 1766-67 engraving (Oxfordshire County Council – Oxfordshire History Centre, POX0081932)

### 2.1.2 Late-18<sup>th</sup>-century Building and Landscaping

The newly built Grandpont House (circa 1785) can first be clearly identified on Faden's map of 1789, as an L-shaped house with two canted bay windows on the east front, along with its planned garden of walkways and watercourses [Plates 2.4]. The main house forms the higher status house, while the west wing serves as the subsidiary service wing. The main house, including both east and west wings, seems to materially support the documentary evidence for a late-18<sup>th</sup>-century build date. The general notion is of a house built to impress but not one that is particularly substantially constructed, with the main house's timber-framed east and west walls. Subsequent early changes to the house's fabric can be noted in the insertion of the south wall window in the ground floor main house: The broken line of opening and lack of brick closers confirms that it is a later insertion, while the window's lack of horns implies a pre-1850 date, placing this adjustment in the early-19<sup>th</sup> century. However, the main house interior and exterior appears to have remained largely unchanged since its 1785 build date, including extensive plaster, composite and timber moulded dados rails, skirting boards and cornices (see Section 3).

Intriguingly both Faden and Davis' maps (respectively 1789 and 1793-94) show another watercourse seemingly exiting the north wall of the main house, where the double brick arch with stone rubble infill

remains in the cellar, implying that this originally ran through what is now the cellars (although the arch may have been blocked in before the house was erected). A further consequence of this rechannelling seems to be the gradual erosion of a small north-east garden island. This evolution is traceable through the maps from 1750 to the present day. Faden's and Davis's maps also show the stream to the west of the house further north than its current position, in the same location as the existing yard. This could be an error on the maps. The 1847 tithe map shows the current arrangement.

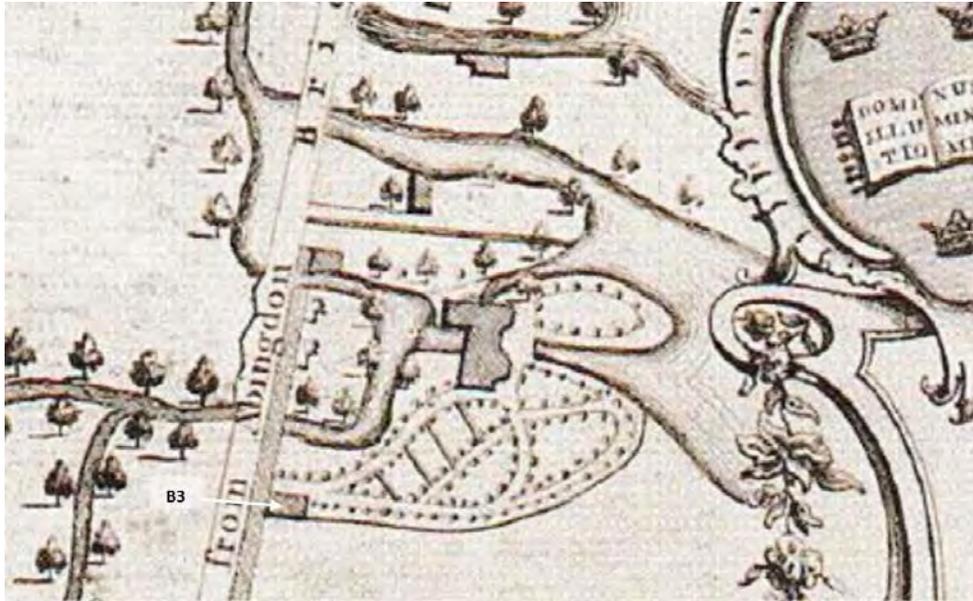
The initial build does not seem to have included much work to the ancillary outbuildings. Both Faden's 1789 and Davis's 1793-94 maps show the pre-existing buildings (B1 and B2), presumably re-used to serve the new house (refer back to Plates 2.1 and 2.2).<sup>6</sup> However, a new building appears to have been added to the site as part of the garden layout (B3), adjacent to Abingdon Road at the south of the garden (see Plates 2.4 and 2.5). This building survives in part as the car park wall of Holy Rood Church, with a door way, joist sockets and blocked windows still evident. The garden wall, running between Grandpont House and the Abingdon Road, also first appears on Faden's 1789 map, implying that it was part of the initial 1785 build.

The garden played to late-18<sup>th</sup> century fashions for landscaped gardens, with sinuous walkways, informal planting of shrubs and trees, and interplay with water

features. Taunton seems to have used and manipulated the existing Isis (Thames) waterways to create these ornamental water features: one forms an ornamental ox-bow watercourse, which would have reflected the rear of the house from the west. The house also sits across three arches spanning another channel, reminiscent of Alexander Pope's mid-18<sup>th</sup>-century Twickenham villa with the tunnels under the primary façade and the tripartite fenestration reflected in the river [Plate 2.6].

---

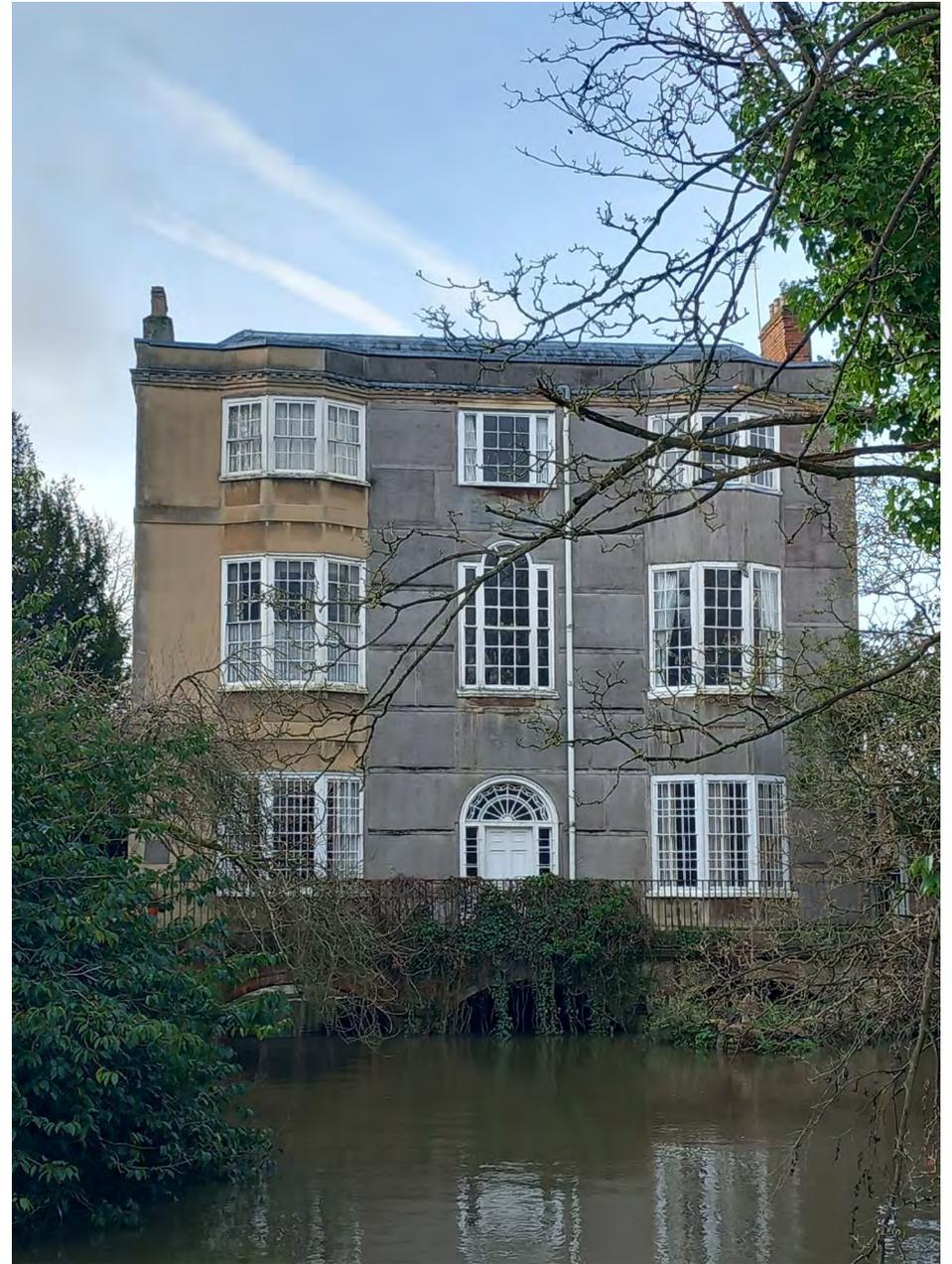
6 The scale and positioning on Richard Davis and William Faden's maps are, however, rather amorphous compared to the current orientation of Grandpont to its island, leading one to not place too much weight on this evidence for the exact position of previous watercourses.



2.4 William Faden's map of 1789, first showing Grandpont House (Bodleian Library (E) C17.70 Oxford (67))



2.5 Richard Davis' map of 1793-4, showing Grandpont House and its garden (Oxfordshire County Council – Oxfordshire History Centre, POX0250894)



2.6 The east front of the east wing, showing the arches on which the house is built across the Isis (DIA)

### 2.1.3 Early-19<sup>th</sup>-century Development of the Outbuildings

By the early-19<sup>th</sup> century, Grandpont House still very much appears to be the well-appointed urban villa of a town notable, with the high-status ancillary and garden buildings one would expect for such a house. In addition to these are added a purpose-built stable block and a two-bay cottage, which appears to have incorporated the remains of an earlier English bond wall.

A sales advertisement in *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, on 27 June 1807, specifies that the house would come with 'all suitable Office and Out-Buildings; adjoining are large Gardens, Shrubbery, Hot House, seventy-five Feet long, Coach House, Stabling, &c.' [Plate 2.7].<sup>7</sup> The stylistic evidence of the current coach house and stabling, makes it plausible that this is the 1807 'Coach House' and 'Stabling' mentioned. Based on the evidence available, the cottage seems to be of a similar, although slightly later, date: the cottage's front wall is not keyed into the coach house's gable, and it lacks its own gable, while the similar roof pitch angle, echoed stylistic features (in particular the semi-circular relieving arches mimicking that over the stables' central door), late-18<sup>th</sup>-century fluted hob grate and mention of a 'Cottage' in an 1831 advertisement support that it is probably also early-19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>8</sup>

Another sale advertisement from 1832 describes the service rooms in more detail: 'butler's pantry, excellent kitchen, dairy, pantry and cellars [...] 2 capital stables, coach-house, loft, wood and coal-houses, with spacious yard' [Plate 2.8].<sup>9</sup> This confirms the presence of generous stabling and coach-house facilities. It is also the first evidence of the service rooms and buildings along the north wall, especially the flat-roofed 'butler's pantry' and 'wood and coal-houses'.

---

7 Taunton's plans to sell Grandpont House seem to have been abandoned, as the property did not change hands following the appearance of this advert

8 Clark, OBR.467, pp. 28-29.

---

9 Clark, OBR.467, pp. 28-29.

LOWELL & CO. PRINTERS.

Oxford, June 27th, 1807.

**T**O be SOLD,—The **MANSION HOUSE** and **RESIDENCE** of Mr. **TAUNTON**, at Grand Pont, within a few Minutes' Walk of any Part of the University and City of Oxford, situated on the Banks of the River Isis, and commanding the most interesting and lively Views. The House contains a spacious Dining Room and Drawing Room, a good Breakfasting Parlour, ten Bed Chambers, a Water Closet, and all suitable Offices and Out-Buildings; adjoining are large Gardens, Shrubbery, Hot House, seventy-five Feet long, Coach House, Stabling, &c. together with several Acres of excellent Meadow Land.

Further Particulars may be known by applying to Mr. Taunton.

**N. B.** Half the Purchase Money may remain.

### **Mansion House to be Let.**

**T**O be LET, for a term, or as may be agreed on, unfurnished,—A spacious and handsome **MODERN-BUILT MANSION HOUSE**, in complete repair, near the City of Oxford, called **GRAND PONT**, commanding an extensive and pleasant prospect over and along the banks of the River Isis, and the Meadow and Walks of Christ Church, and the surrounding country. The House contains a handsome entrance hall, on the ground floor; breakfast and spacious dining parlours, drawing room of lofty dimensions, study, eight airy bed rooms, and water closet, butler's pantry, excellent kitchen, dairy, pantry; and cellars. The out-offices consist of two capital stables, coach-house, loft, wood and coal-houses, with spacious yard, delightful lawn, pleasure, fruit, and kitchen gardens, highly productive; private fishery, and every other requisite for a family in want of a residence combining the advantages of a detached situation with those of the immediate neighbourhood of a city.

For particulars apply to Mr. John Taunton, Oxford.

2.7 Advertisement for the sale of Grandpont House in Jackson's Oxford Journal, 27 June 1807 (British Newspaper Archive)

2.8 Advertisement for the leasehold of Grandpont House, in Jackson's Oxford Journal 8 September 1832 (British Newspaper Archive)

### 2.1.4 Mid-19<sup>th</sup>-century Changes

Change came to the area, in 1844, in the form of Oxford's first passenger railway station.<sup>10</sup> Grandpont Station was sited approximately 300 yards due west of Grandpont House [Plate 2.9]. Two years after this, the house was acquired by Brasenose College, potentially seeing it as a particularly valuable asset given its new transport links, which the university was keen to embrace but careful to monitor (the destinations undergraduates could buy tickets to were restricted under university guidance).<sup>11</sup> Although the station only served passengers until 1852, and goods until 1872, its arrival changed the character of the pastoral landscape across Abingdon Road from Grandpont House, presaging further change to come.

By 1847, the Tithe Map first confirms the presence of the symmetrical coach house and further single outbuilding to the west of the main house, where A1 is currently sited (see plate 2.9). These have replaced the two 18<sup>th</sup>-century buildings (B1 and B2), which had occupied the site before Taunton's build. A gentler development to the setting is the evolution of the garden's watercourses. The ox-bow garden watercourse has been widened, by this point, to form more of a feature, giving the impression from the south-west of a house sited on the edge of a small lake. This small lake surrounds a rectilinear garden, walled on the north, south and west sides, which we may infer

is the where the 75ft long hothouse sat. What is now Hogacre Ditch (surrounding the main garden island) is clearly shown for the first time, carrying water, and there appears to be a ham-shaped pond occupying

around a third of the garden island. The paths seem to have been simplified, with prominence given instead to the water features.



2.9 1847 tithe map showing Grandpont Railway Station in relation to Grandpont House (The National Archives, IR.30.27.3) (Note - North is Northwest on the map)

10 Liz Woolley, 'The coming of the railway to Oxford', <https://southoxfordhistory.org.uk/interesting-aspects-of-grandpont-and-south-oxford-s-history/the-coming-of-the-railway-to-oxford?highlight=WyJ3ZXN0ZXJull0=> [accessed 11 Dec 2022]

11 Woolley, 'The coming of the railway'

### 2.1.5 Late-19<sup>th</sup>-century Royal and Literary Associations

Various lessees passed through Grandpont House over the next few decades, with the particularly notable Thomas Randall arriving in 1863.<sup>12</sup> Randall was a member of the town council and seen as a bridging figure between the worlds of 'town and gown'. However, his greater legacy is perhaps to literature: he described himself as a 'hatter' and is one of the prime candidates for Lewis Carroll's Mad Hatter, having known Alice Lidell well (she often came to walk his dog 'Rover') and bearing an uncanny resemblance to John Tenniel's Mad Hatter illustration. Grandpont House's garden was the backdrop for one of his famous tea parties, thrown for local children, with Mark Davies implying that these events may have been the source for the literary conceit of Carroll's Mad Hatter's Tea Party.

Randall's tenure also brought about Grandpont House's royal associations: Firstly, *'Alderman Randall's residence, known as Grand-pont-house, and situate over a tributary of the Isis, has been taken for his Royal Highness [Prince Hassan, son of the Viceroy of Egypt], and preparations and alterations have already been commenced for his reception'* to start his studies at Christ Church in 1869.<sup>13</sup> Secondly, the accommodation of Prince Leopold, the youngest and most cosseted son of Queen Victoria, who stayed at the house for

12 Mark Davies, 'Hatter matter: A new original for Carroll's character?' in *TLS Times Literary Supplement*, no. 5746, (17 May 2013), pp. 14+. Gale Academic OneFile, [link.gale.com/apps/doc/A674625189/AONE?u=cambuni&sid=bookmark-AONE&xid=91720790](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A674625189/AONE?u=cambuni&sid=bookmark-AONE&xid=91720790). [accessed 13 Dec 2022].

13 'The Son of the Viceroy of Egypt' *The Times*, 7 September 1869, p. 7 (The Times Digital Archive)

part of his studies in the early 1870s (a fact which Kelly's Directory continued to see as one of the key distinctions of Grandpont even by 1883),<sup>14</sup> These royal arrivals may have been the justification for the laying of the geometric tiles in the hallway, which would date to this period.<sup>15</sup>

Similarly, by the time of the 1873 and 1876 OS survey, a long range of buildings had appeared along the north side of the house, in addition to the existing stable block/coach house, cottage and small outbuilding to the immediate west of the house [Plates 2.10 and 2.11]. These include what were later known as the 'Butler's Pantry', 'Servants Sitting Room', 'Wood and Coal Store' and 'Bathroom' (although it is unclear whether the bathroom was on the ground or first floor). A glass walkway running from the north end of the small west outbuilding east-west to the 'Butler's Pantry' has also appeared by 1873. However, it is unclear whether any of these changes were directly related to the royal 'preparations and alterations' referred to by the newspapers of the time.

14 Christ Church College, 'Prince Leopold', <https://www.chch.ox.ac.uk/blog/prince-leopold> [accessed 13 Dec 2022]; *Kelly's Directory of Berkshire, Bucks and Oxon.: with maps engraved expressly for the work* (London: Kelly & Co. Ltd., 1883), p.621, *Internet Archive* <https://archive.org/details/kellysdirectoryo00kell/page/620/mode/2up?q=grandpont> [accessed 13 Dec 2022]

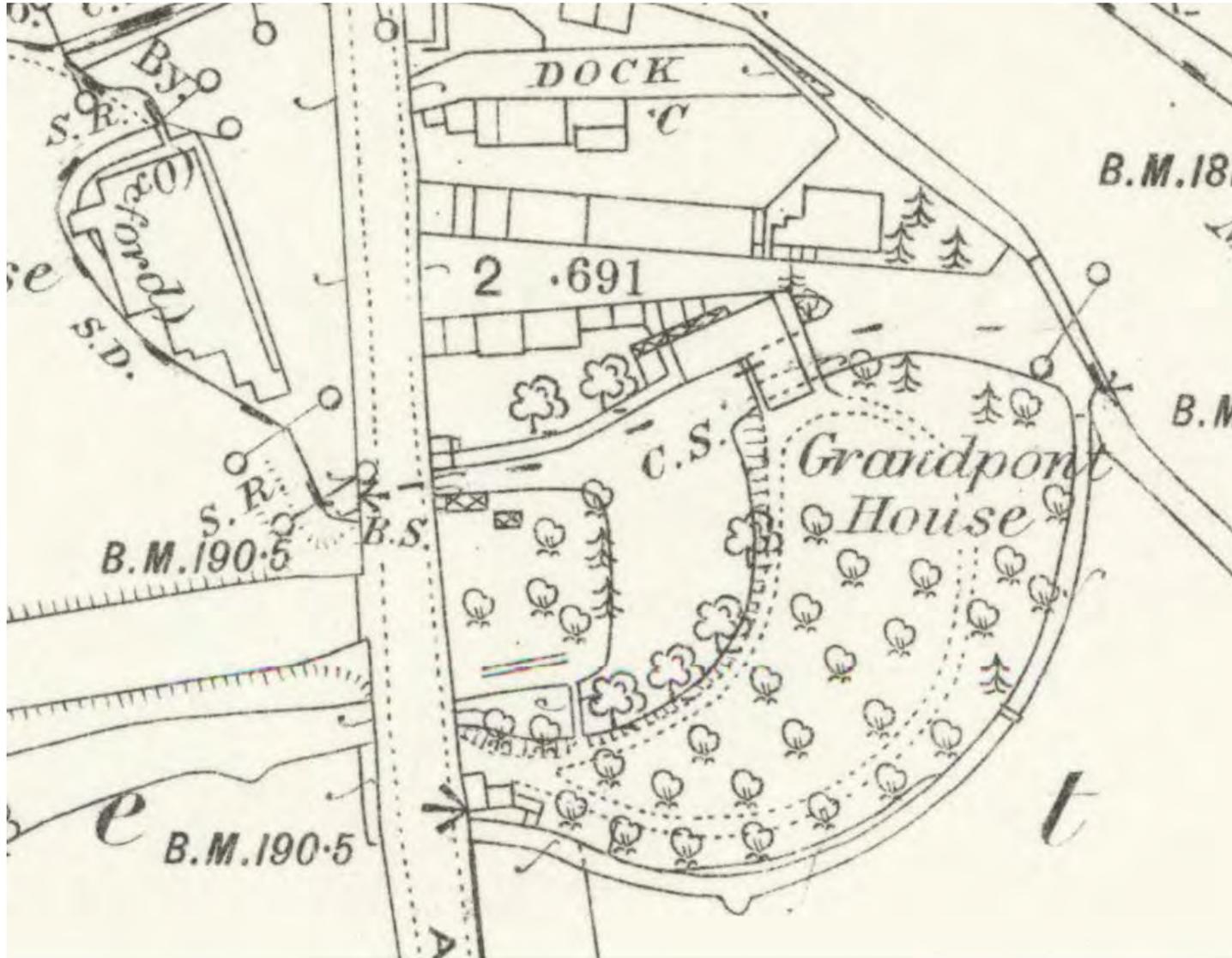
15 Victorian Society, 'Decorative Tiles', <https://www.victoriansociety.org.uk/advice/decorative-tiles> [accessed 20 Dec 2022]; Stephen Calloway and Alan Powers (ed.), *Elements of Style: an encyclopaedia of domestic architectural details* (3<sup>rd</sup> edn.) (London: Mitchell Beazley, 2005), pp. 251-51

In the garden, the wide ox-bow watercourse was still in place, but the ham-shaped pond-like feature has been planted with trees. The rectilinear island inside the ox-bow watercourse is revealed in more detail as a kitchen garden/nursery, linked to the main garden island by a small bridge, with greenhouses adjacent to the road and rectilinear paths bounding a grid of beds. The south-east crossing of Hogacre Ditch (labelled 'drawbridge' in the 1910 OS map [Plate 2.12]) has also appeared. Buildings still appear on the site of the late-18<sup>th</sup> century B3, although it is impossible to say whether these are the same or altered. The garden has been planted densely with trees along Hogacre Ditch, but is more openly wooded in the centre with a semi-elliptical lawn to the south of the main house.

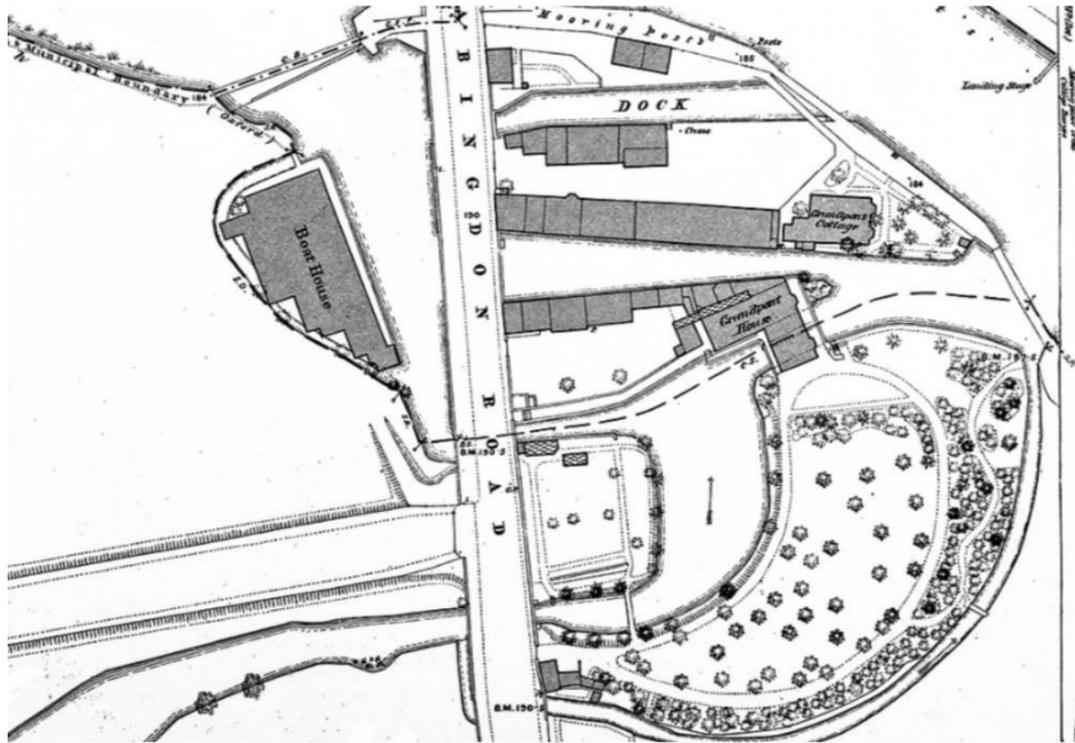
### 2.1.6 The Development of Grandpont Housing Estate

From 1880, Grandpont housing estate grew on the old railway spur site, filling the vacant land to the west of Grandpont House across Abingdon Road.<sup>16</sup> The estate's construction seems to have necessitated the blocking of the inlet to the ox-bow watercourse, with the inflow subsequently running entirely into Hogacre Ditch [Plate 2.12]. Without the constant flow of water, this seems to have caused the subsequent silting up of the ox-bow watercourse to the extent that it is now perceived as a silted up pond in the garden.

16 Liz Woolley, 'Victorian Development', <https://southoxfordhistory.org.uk/grandpont-and-south-oxford-through-time/victorian-development#GrandpontEstate> [accessed 20 Dec 2022]



2.10 1873 OS map showing (Berkshire VI.3 - Surveyed 1873, Published 1878 (25 inch)) (National Libraries of Scotland)



2.11 1876 OS map showing Grandpont House, ox-bow watercourse and garden island (Oxfordshire County Council – Oxfordshire History Centre)



2.12 1910 OS map showing Grandpont House and gardens (Berkshire Sheet VI Surveyed 1910, Published 1914) (National Libraries of Scotland)

### 2.1.7 Early-20<sup>th</sup>-century Changes

The tenancy of Ernest Wilcox, a doctor of medicine, his wife Elizabeth and their three children (along with two live-in servants) saw several alterations to the ancillary buildings, in 1911 **[Plates 2.13 and 2.14]**.<sup>17</sup> The proposed plans also allow us to pre-date the existence of the 'Butler's Pantry' (previously mentioned), a 'Servant's Sitting Room' and the conversion of rooms on the first and second floors of the main house to bathrooms to before 1911.

The 1911 plans significantly changed the service rooms along the north wall. They appear to have led to the demolition of the 'existing buildings' and the north wall glass-roofed walkway and the bathroom that extended from the north wall of the west wing. The walls of the 'Servants' Sitting Room' (G15) were partially rebuilt and the north wall of the service yard was raised and coped (see Plate 2.13). A small 'Larder' (G14) was added to the east of this sitting room, necessitating the rebuilding of the east jamb of the back door. The application also included the insertion of windows in G8 and G11, the addition of the ground floor toilet (G13) and the rebuilding of the east walls of the 'Coal & Wood' store (A2) and 'Cycles' store (A1). As a result of the 1911 alterations, the west wing's service rooms were better lit, expanded in capacity and served by their own toilet. However, the changes also meant that the west wing's ground floor north and west walls underwent substantial alterations, losing much of

their earlier fenestration and doorways, and subtly altering the circulation from the previous back door to an adjacent one.

At some point, between 1911 and the present day, various disparate changes have been made. These include the subdivision of what had been the 1911 kitchen in the west wing into a smaller kitchen with a toilet and ancillary room, alterations to the butler's pantry and its lobby (G16), what appears to be the insertion of a window into a blind opening on the north wall at first floor level and the re-roofing of the twin pitched roofs on west wing between 1911 and 1919 to a single pitched roof **[Plates 2.13 and 2.15]**.

The early-20<sup>th</sup> century saw the decline of the landscaped garden layout. The 1911 plans show the ox-bow watercourse, and this is still visible in the 1920 aerial photograph from the south east **[Plate 2.16]**. However, by winter 1952 this has silted up to the extent that trees and grass are growing in it **[Plate 2.20]**. Another useful aerial view was taken in c.1919, which reveals more detail of the previous form of the stable block, with the chimney rising from the existing fireplace in the tack room, as well as two decorative finial-topped pinnacles, two rear windows and a central gable facing the stable yard **[Plate 2.15]**. The photograph by Henry Taunt (1900) shows the front façade with dark painted windows and string courses, and a trellis at ground floor level **[Plate 2.17]**. Planning permission was granted in 1927 for the erection of a steel-framed, asbestos-panelled motor house to the west of the house, but this had been demolished by 1976 **[Plates 2.18, 2.19, 2.22 and 2.23]**.

17 The Genealogist, '1911 Oxfordshire Census'. [https://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/search/advanced/census/main-household/?y=1911&county=522&household\\_id=24599417&a=Search&hh=1&hs=1&cl=1](https://www.thegenealogist.co.uk/search/advanced/census/main-household/?y=1911&county=522&household_id=24599417&a=Search&hh=1&hs=1&cl=1) [accessed 3 Jan 2023]





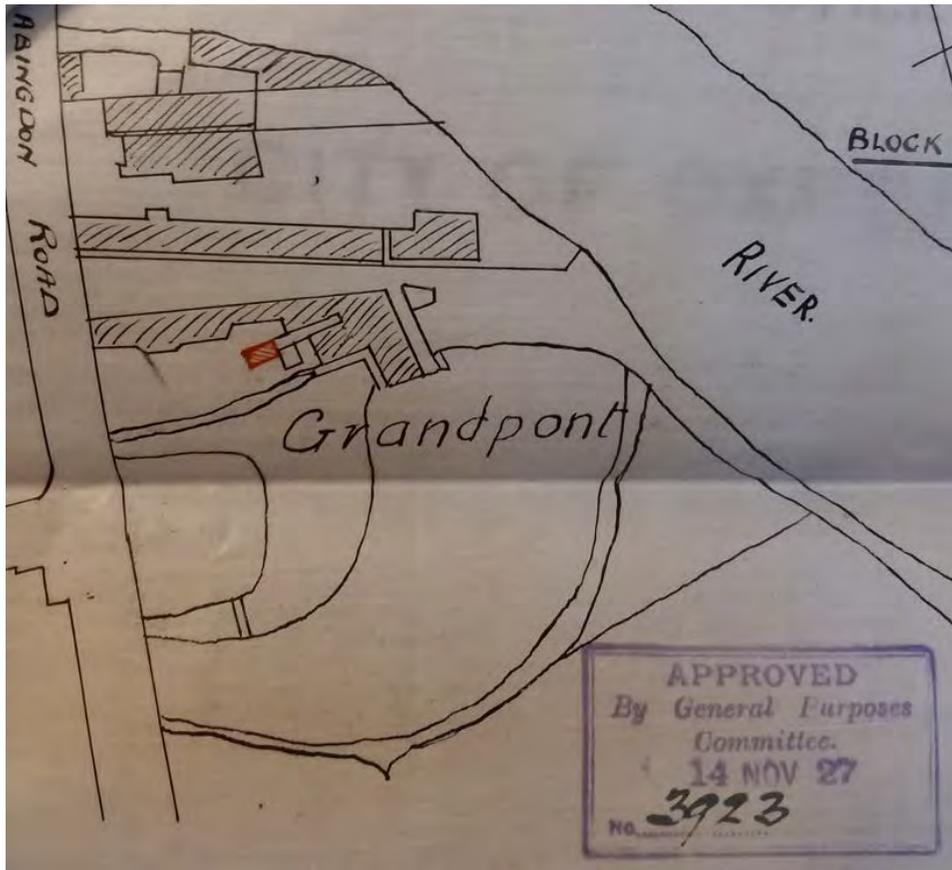
**2.15** Aerial view of the north side of Grandpont House, c.1919 (Oxfordshire County Council – Oxfordshire History Centre, POX0251036)



**2.16** Grandpont House from the south-east, 1920 (Britain from the Air, EPW000836)



**2.17** The east facade in 1900 (Henry Taunt)



2.18 1927 plans of the proposed garage (Oxford Town Council, 3923 NS)



2.19 Illustration of garage erected at Grandpont in 1927 (Oxford Town Council, 3923 NS)



**2.20** *Grandpont House from the south, 1952 (Britain from the Air, EAW047926)*

### 2.1.8 Mid-20<sup>th</sup>-century Changes

In April 1959, Netherhall Educational Association opened Grandpont House as a centre to provide educational facilities and accommodation for their charitable mission.<sup>18</sup> The previous year, a successful planning application had gained them permission to convert the house into a student hostel and staff accommodation, as well as building a chapel in the stable yard and another building in the walled garden [Plate 2.21].<sup>19</sup> The same planning proposal reveals that the cottage was still in use as 'workshops' in 1958. The chapel and walled garden building plans were not carried through, with the charity instead converting the first floor southern room of the main house into a chapel. The conversion took the form of inserted decorative pilasters along the west wall, to frame the altar and reredos, the blocking of the Georgian fireplace and insertion of a canopy over the altar. In this same period, the south-western part of the garden island was acquired by North Hinksey parish and Holy Rood Church was dedicated on this site in 1961, sitting across the former inlet to the ox-bow watercourse.<sup>20</sup>

From 1976, the charity applied to use the stable block as a venue for a Boys' Club.<sup>21</sup> By this time, the stable block's central gable (visible in Plate 2.22) had partially collapsed, making it unsuitable as a venue for the club without consolidation work.<sup>22</sup> This led to the decision to replace the stables and central bay's roof, minus the central gable, chimney and twin turrets [Plates 2.23 and 2.24]. The photographs show a previous central door, which was replaced with the current glazed one, and reveal that the majority of windows in the south front of the stable block have also been replaced or renovated at this time (see Plates 2.23 and 2.24). This was probably also when the divisions and new north wall windows were inserted into the stables, harness room and coach house, although no plans are available to verify this. At some point after 1976, the cottage lost its roof and fell into dereliction.

---

18 Grandpont House, 'About'

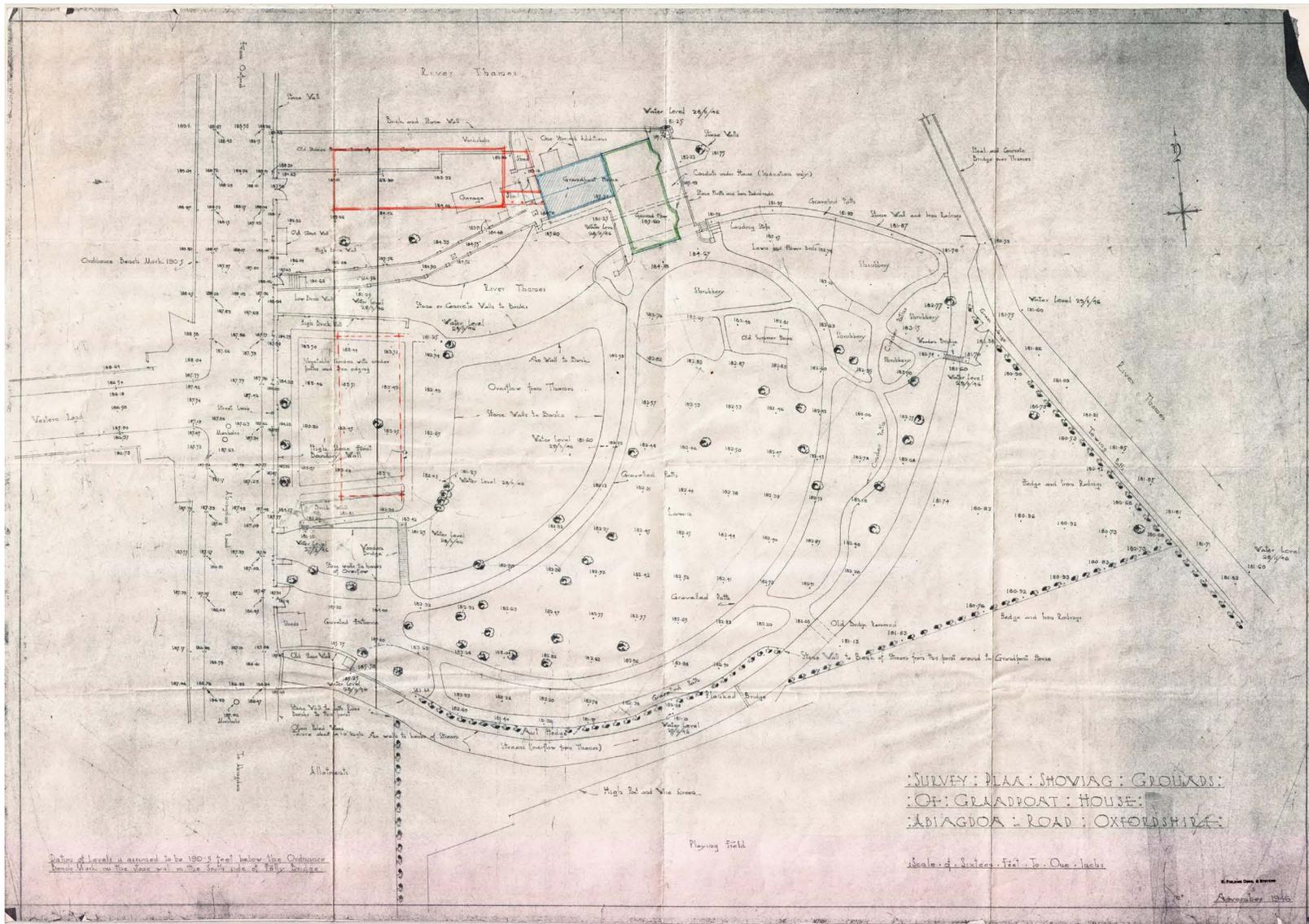
19 Oxford City Council, 'Planning Application Summary 58/00759/D\_H', [https://public.oxford.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=5800759D\\_H](https://public.oxford.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=5800759D_H) [accessed 18 Jan 2023]

20 Holy Rood Church, 'Holy Rood Church', <https://www.hinkseyparish.org/our-churches/holy-rood/> [accessed 20 Dec 2022]

---

21 Oxford City Council, 'Planning Application Summary 76/00008/A\_H', [https://public.oxford.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=7600008A\\_H&activeTab=summary](https://public.oxford.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=7600008A_H&activeTab=summary) [accessed 18 Jan 2023]

22 Clark, OBR.467, 'Annex 1: The Outbuildings'



2.21 1958 planning proposals showing the functions of the stables, coach house and workshops (Oxford City Council, 58\_00759\_D\_H)



**2.22** *View into stable yard from west showing gable of stableblock and garage, c.1958 (Grandpont House archives)*



**2.23** Replacement of the stable block roof from the central bay, c.1976 (Grandpont House archives)



**2.24** Replacement of the stable and coach house roof, c.1976 (Grandpont House archives)

## 2.2 Planning History

The planning history is set out in Appendix III.

## 2.3 Sources and Bibliography

### Archives

Brasenose College Archive  
Britain from the Air  
British Newspaper Archive  
Grandpont House (private archive)  
National Libraries of Scotland  
Oxfordshire History Centre  
Oxford City Council  
The Genealogist  
The Times Digital Archive

### Published Sources

Calloway, Stephen, and Alan Powers (ed.). *Elements of Style: an encyclopaedia of domestic architectural details* (3<sup>rd</sup> edn.) (London: Mitchell Beazley, 2005)  
Conner, Patrick. 'Michael Rooker' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/24065> [accessed 14 Dec 2022]  
Davies, Mark. 'Hatter matter: A new original for Carroll's character?' in *TLS Times Literary Supplement*, no. 5746, (17 May 2013), pp. 14+. Gale Academic OneFile, <link.gale.com/apps/doc/A674625189/AONE?u=cambuni&sid=bookmark-AONE&xid=91720790>. [accessed 13 Dec 2022]  
Davies, Mark. *Alice in Waterland: Lewis Carroll and the River Thames to Oxford* (Signal Books, 2010)

Hall, Linda. *Period House Fixtures and Fittings: 1300-1900* (Newbury: Countryside Books, 2005)

Historic England List Description

Johnson, Matthew. *Housing Culture: Traditional Architecture in an English Landscape* (UCL Press, London, 1993)

[Kelly's Directory of Berkshire, Bucks and Oxon.: with maps engraved expressly for the work](#) (London: Kelly & Co. Ltd., 1883)

Salter, H E. *Oxford City Properties* (Oxford: OUP, 1926)

### Unpublished Sources

ArtUK, 'Folly Bridge and Briar Bacon's Study by Michael Rooker', <https://artuk.org/discover/artworks/folly-bridge-and-friar-bacons-study-224154>

[accessed 13 Dec 2022]

Christ Church College, 'Prince Leopold', <https://www.chch.ox.ac.uk/blog/prince-leopold>

[accessed 13 Dec 2022]

Clark, David. Oxfordshire Buildings Record Report OBR.467 'Grandpont House, Oxford' (October 2021)

Grandpont House, 'About', <http://grandpont-house.org/about> [accessed 13 Dec 2022]

Holy Rood Church, 'Holy Rood Church', <https://www.hinkseyparish.org/our-churches/holy-rood/>

[accessed 20 Dec 2022]

Hotson, Howard. 'Friar Bacon's Study and Folly Bridge', <https://www.cabinet.ox.ac.uk/friar-bacons-study-and-folly-bridge> (March 2017) [accessed 13 Dec 2022]

Tate, 'Folly Bridge and Bacon's Tower, Oxford by J M W Turner' <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/turner-folly-bridge-and-bacons-tower-oxford-d00001>

[accessed 13 Dec 2022]

Victorian Society, 'Decorative Tiles', <https://www.victoriansociety.org.uk/advice/decorative-tiles>

[accessed 20 Dec 2022]

Woolley, Liz. 'The coming of the railway to Oxford', <https://southoxfordhistory.org.uk/interesting-aspects-of-grandpont-and-south-oxford-s-history/the-coming-of-the-railway-to-oxford?highlight=WyJ3ZXNOZXJull0=> [accessed 11 Dec 2022]

Woolley, Liz. 'Victorian Development',

<https://southoxfordhistory.org.uk/grandpont-and-south-oxford-through-time/victorian-development#GrandpontEstate>

[accessed 20 Dec 2022]

With thanks to Paul Shrimpton of Grandpont House and Mark Lawrence of Oxford History Centre.

## 3.0 Site Survey Descriptions

### 3.1 The Setting of the Building

#### 3.1.1 The Wider Setting

The building lies on the east side of Abingdon Road, on the south bank of the Thames just south of Folly Bridge (listed Grade II) and to the east of the Grandpont causeway which is a scheduled monument. The garden wall on Abingdon Road is an historic wall listed Grade II. To the south lies the Grade II listed Holy Rood church. To the north and northwest are modern buildings built for Hertford College Graduate Centre.

When it was built the house was on the edge of Georgian Oxford, on the flood plain of the Thames. To the south was open agricultural land. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century development of the city spread southwards along the Abingdon Road, although largely on its west side. To the south of Grandpont House the land adjacent to the river, which is liable to flooding, remains largely undeveloped. To the east is the Thames, and, beyond that, the large open space of Christchurch Meadow.

#### 3.1.2 The Immediate Setting

The house was designed to face the Thames and to be seen from it, although as the trees have matured the view of the house is partially obscured. **[Plate 3.1]**. The eastern part of the setting comprises the Thames, the Hogacre Ditch and parts of the landscaped garden. A stream divides the west part of the site into two elements: the garden to the south and the courtyard and out-buildings to the north. **[Plate 3.2]**. The garden features a large number of mature trees, with a lawn in its centre. On the north side the site is bounded by another stream. The courtyard is used for car parking and has a gravel surface on its north side, and a lawn to the south. Behind the south wall of the courtyard is a path leading from Abingdon Road to the rear of the house.



**3.1** *The east facade of the main house seen from the river bank of the Thames*



**3.2** *The west side of the house showing the west wing (left)*

### 3.2 The Buildings

The buildings comprise the following:

1. The main house facing east towards the Thames (built c. 1785)
2. The west wing (predating the main house)
3. The extensions on the north side of the main house and west wing
4. The outbuildings (stables, coach house and cottage) to the west of the main house and west wing (adjacent to Abingdon Road)

The chronology of the construction of these buildings is shown in Plate 3.3.

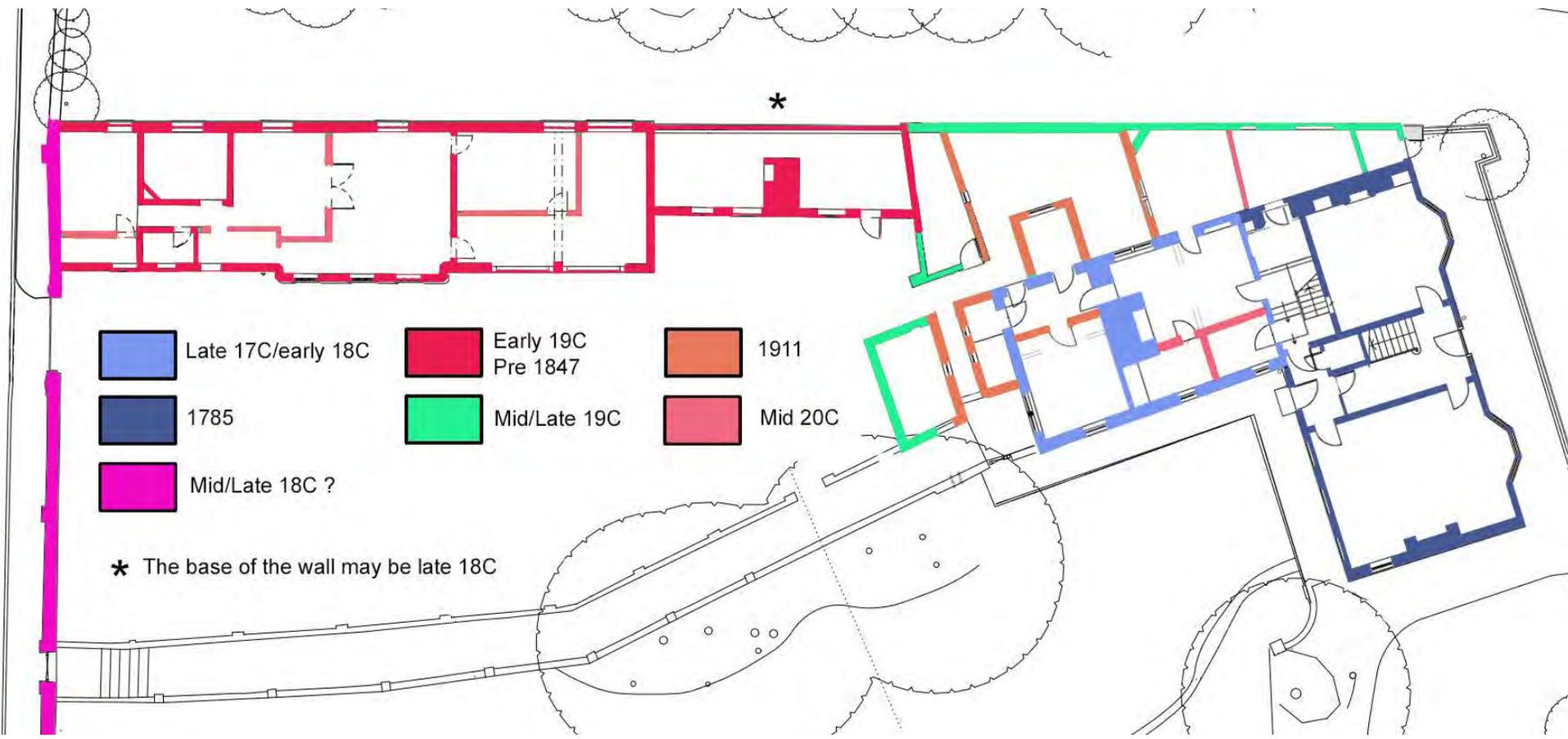
The house is a large detached late 18<sup>th</sup> century Georgian house, comprising three storeys, with a small basement at the north end. The rear, west, service wing is also three storeys but is lower than the main house, and its floor levels are all lower too. The main house sits on a bridge above the stream, and it faces east towards the Thames. The front facade is visible from the path on the south side of the Thames, where the stream can be seen running beneath the southern part of the main house. The rear of the house faces west towards Abingdon Road.

The main house and the west wing are different in design and layout and so are examined separately in the report. It is possible that the west wing was built

in the 17<sup>th</sup> century or early 18<sup>th</sup> century and would therefore predate the main house by approximately 100 years. The later extensions and the outbuildings are also dealt with separately.

All of the rooms and spaces in the house are labelled in Figures 1 to 5.

Our assessment of the building does not accord fully with that carried out by the Oxford Building Record (OBR.467). We agree that parts of the building could predate the main house of 1785. However, they conclude that there are few features in the house which date from 1785, and suggest that the interior could date from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century (1825-1831). We consider that this is not likely to be correct, because much of the interior is consistent with late 18<sup>th</sup> century interiors found in London houses of the period, such as those on the Portman Estate in Marylebone. For example, the timber staircase is very similar stylistically to those dating to the 1780's in Duke Street, London W1. Their statement that Georgian dado rails stopped short of the door jambs is incorrect. They do not identify 18<sup>th</sup> century joinery in the west wing and suggest the wing was altered in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. We consider that it was probably altered when the main house was built in 1785.



3.3 Plan showing chronology of the buildings on the site

### 3.3 The Main house - Externally

#### 3.3.1 Front Elevation (East)

The front elevation is a timber framed facade covered in render, which is channelled to make it appear ashlar like, and where the render has failed (on about two thirds of the facade), plywood has been used as a cladding. The date of the render is unknown. There are horizontal projecting bands at the first floor and second floor levels. It is a symmetrical composition with a central entrance door at ground floor level. Above the entrance is a Palladian (Venetian/Serlian) window at first floor level. At second floor level there is a square window opening with two 6 pane sashes, with side lights with two 2 pane sashes. These central windows light the main staircase. **[Plates 3.1 and 3.4].**

There are two canted bays, three storeys high, either side of the entrance, with vertically sliding timber sash windows; each bay has three openings. At ground floor and first floor levels the windows comprise two nine pane sashes per opening. At second floor they are 6 pane sashes. The window sills are covered with lead flashings. Most of the sash windows appear to be late 18<sup>th</sup> century in date.

The facade is capped with a simple rendered dentil cornice and parapet. Behind the parapet are two shallow pitched slate covered roofs with their ridges running parallel to the front and rear facades. The chimney stacks are at both ends of the roof.

At the front of the ground floor is a walkway over the stream, with a simple metal balustrade. Below the house, at the southern end are two bridge arches

through which the stream flows. The third, northern arch does not span the stream, and this part of the house contains the small basement.

#### 3.3.2 Rear Elevation (West)

The west facade is rendered. At the north end is the rear door. This is a 6 panelled door with flat panels with astragal mouldings, with rectangular fanlight and projecting timber canopy above (now blocked internally), dating from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. There are three blind windows on the south side of the door. **[Plates 3.2 and 3.5].**

At first floor there are two window openings with two 9 pane sashes in each opening, and two blind openings. At second floor there are a total of seven window openings but only the second, third and sixth (from the west) contain sash windows. The rest are blind. Like the front facade the rear is capped with a simple dentil cornice and parapet. There is a Georgian hopper at eaves level, above the junction with the west wing.

At ground floor level there is a stone flagged walkway parallel to the facade, with wrought iron balustrade. Below the house are the two vaulted opening which carry the stream which flows eastwards into the Thames.

There is a walkway at the rear of the house which links the garden to the south to the rear door. The walkway is supported by the brick arches of the bridge over the stream. It has a wrought iron balustrade with simple square stick balusters and a chamfered handrail. There are signs that the balusters penetrated the handrail, but the tops of the balusters have been removed.

#### 3.3.3 South Elevation

This facade was rendered in the past but much of this has been removed, exposing Flemish bond brickwork. There are two horizontal projecting bands of brickwork at the first floor and second floor levels, aligned with those on the front facade. The facade is capped with a dentil cornice and parapet, above which is the chimney stack, with four pots, in the centre of the facade. At ground floor is a window opening in the west corner, with two 9 pane sashes (GI). This appears to be a later alteration but the sashes are similar to original sashes in the facades **[Plate 3.6].**

#### 3.3.4 North Elevation

The north facade is faced in brickwork. There are two horizontal bands of projecting brickwork at first floor and second floor level, and a thin band below the parapet. At the western end of the facade are two bullseye windows at ground floor and first floor levels. At roof level is the central chimney stack, with four pots. **[Plate 3.7].**

#### 3.3.5 Roof

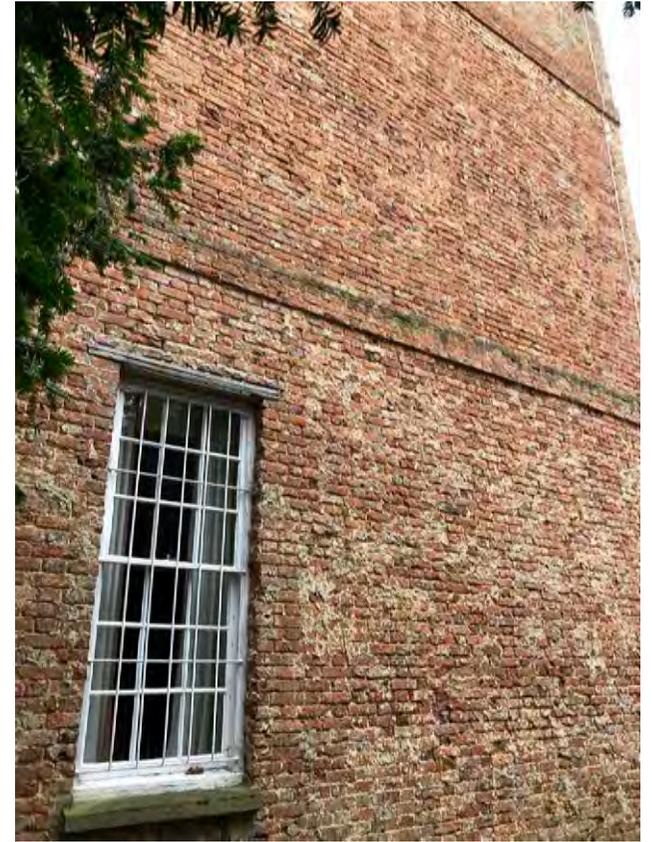
There are two shallow pitched, covered with Spanish slates (installed in the 1980's ?), hipped roofs with their ridges running parallel to the front and rear facades. These are set behind the parapets. These are clasped purlin roofs with substantial rafters and a ridge board. This is consistent with a date of 1785. **[Plate 3.8].**



**3.4** *The front entrance*



**3.5** *The entrance door at the rear of the main house*



**3.6** *The south wall of the main house*



**3.7** North wall of the main house (left) and west wing (right)



**3.8** The interior of the western roof of the east wing looking east

### 3.4 The West Wing– Externally

#### 3.4.1 The south facade

The south facade is rendered, lined out to resemble ashlar, and has three modern windows at ground floor level, with their cills just above the level of the external walkway. These light rooms G9, G10 and G11. The west window has two 19<sup>th</sup> century/early 20<sup>th</sup> century two pane sashes. The other two windows comprise a fixed four pane sash with an opening two pane sash above a transom rail. The eastern window does not appear on the 1911 plans, and both are likely to be later 20<sup>th</sup> century alterations. **[Plate 3.9].**

There are three 18<sup>th</sup> century sashes at first floor level (lighting rooms F7, F8 and F9) and three at second floor level (lighting rooms S7, S8 and S9). The first floor windows comprise two 6 pane sashes. The second floor windows each comprise one 3 pane and one 6 pane sash. There is a small square steel window between the two eastern windows. There is a rainwater pipe and a soil vent pipe at the east end, the latter adjacent to the main house.

On the south side of the wing is a stone walk way supported on brick work above the stream. This has a simple balustrade with metal stick balusters and a curved handrail. This differs from the balustrade on the west side of the main house which it joins. This walkway is likely to be later, probably added in the 1870's, as it does not appear on the OS map surveyed in 1873 but does appear on the map of 1876.

#### 3.4.2 The west facade

The west facade is rendered and there is an extension at ground floor level (G13), at the northern end, faced with rough cast render and with two small single pane sashes. It is shown as being proposed on the 1911 plans. There are a pair of two single pane sash windows at the southern end, also shown on the 1911 proposed plans. There are no windows at first floor level, and a six pane sash below a three pane sash, at second floor level, lighting room S9. At the south end is a modern rainwater pipe. **[Plate 3.10].**

#### 3.4.3 The north facade

At ground floor level much of the facade is now internal, within the later extensions to the original building. The facade is faced with red bricks laid in Flemish bond with some black headers. There is a projecting brick band course (4 bricks high) which is near the top of the first floor window openings. This aligns with the band at first floor level on the main house. **[Plate 3.11].**

The openings have brick arches over them, the east one has a keystone made from 5 cut bricks. The west one does not have this feature. The windows light the corridors at first floor and second floor levels (F6 and S6). The openings at the east end at first floor and second floor level are blind. The arches over the second floor level windows are obscured by the eaves gutter.

At ground floor level there are a pair of single pane sashes with a white panelled lintel over, lighting room G8. These match those on the west wall of the Servants' Lounge (G15) and are part of the 1911 works (see below). Below the windows the brick facade sits on a plinth of limestone. **[Plate 3.12].** The door at the western end, adjacent to the Larder (G14) is a 20<sup>th</sup> century partially glazed door, beneath a rendered lintel. The 1911 drawings refer to an 'existing bathroom to be pulled down', at the northeast corner of the west wing, at first floor level. There is little sign of this externally, except for an area of painted brickwork.

#### 3.4.4 The roof

The existing roof is, in part, a modern, steeply pitched and has projecting eaves. It is clad in Spanish slates (installed in the 1980's ?), and hipped at both east and west ends. The east end adjoins the rear of the main house, and there is a horizontal section immediately adjacent to the rear wall, in order to avoid the windows in the west facade. Internally the timber frame if the wall is visible, and appears to be a hardwood structure. The 1911 plans show the west wing having a pair of shallow pitched roofs, with their ridges running east to west, similar in form to the roof of the main house. The structure of these roofs survives and form the base of the new roof (see below). The large chimney stack extends significantly above the roof and has five chimney pots.



**3.9** South wall of west wing



**3.10** The west wall of the west wing, seen from the entrance courtyard, with the main house behind



**3.11** *The north wall of the west wing*



**3.12** *The base of the north wall of the west wing*

### 3.5 The Northern Extensions - Externally

These have facades on the east, north and west sides only, as they adjoin the house on the south side. These extensions are all 19<sup>th</sup> century/early 20<sup>th</sup> century in origin. The Servant's Room (G15) and the Larder (G14) were shown as extensions in the proposed plans of 1911.

#### 3.5.1 The east facade

The east facade is very narrow, at the north end of the front facade. It is single storey shed (G17), with a flat, felt covered roof. The wall is rendered, with a modern door. It was formerly part of the Butler's Pantry (G16), at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### 3.5.2 The north facade

This takes the form of a brick wall with two steel windows at the east end, under concrete lintels, which light the Butlers Room (G16), and a section of render which forms a gable end to the Servants' Lounge (G15). The western end encloses the service yard and is a brick wall. **[Plate 3.13]**. The lower parts of the wall appear to be in English bond and could be remains of a late 18<sup>th</sup> century garden wall defining the northern edge of the garden along the bank of the stream.

#### 3.5.3 The west facade of the Servants' Lounge (G15)

This wall has a pair of sash windows at the southern end. The wall is covered with rough cast render, with an eaves gutter at the base of the shallow, slate covered pitched roof. The roof is asymmetrical in section, being shallower on the east side, adjacent to the flat roof of the Butler's Room. **[Plate 3.14]**.

#### 3.5.4 The facades of the Larder (G14)

This extension has three facades, covered with rough cast render (dating from 1911). The east and west are blind walls and the north wall has a single window, comprising two fixed timber sashes. The ridge of the slate covered roof runs north-south and it is hipped at the north end. There is an eaves gutter running around the extension. **[Plate 3.15]**.



3.15 The north wall of the larder



**3.13** *The north wall of the extensions on the north side of the main house*



**3.14** *The west facade of the servants lounge (left)*

### 3.6 The Out-Buildings - Externally

The out-buildings comprise the long wing which runs east to west along the north boundary of the site, from Abingdon Road to the northern extensions, comprising the stables and coach houses at the west end, the derelict cottages and the cycle shed (at the east end) and also the free standing building immediately west of the west wing (the coal and wood store shed). The out-buildings do not have a west elevation as they adjoin the stone wall on Abingdon Road which is listed Grade II.

The out-buildings are of different dates. They do not appear on the maps of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century (see plates 2.4 and 2.5) but are shown on the 1840's Tithe map (see plate 2.9). The stables and coach house were probably built first, and the servants cottages built slightly later. The cycle shed is later still, not appearing on the maps until 1873, although parts of the west wall may be part of an earlier garden wall. The free standing coal and wood shed appears on the 1847 map but the structure that is there today is more recent than that, possibly later 19<sup>th</sup> century or early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### 3.6.1 The south elevation

##### a. The stables and coach house (A4 to A13)

At the western end of the out-buildings are the former stables and coach house, which are early 19<sup>th</sup> century/late Georgian (A4 to A13). [Plate 3.16]. The composition is broadly symmetrical with a projecting, and slightly higher, central section, which previously had a gabled roof (see Plate 2.21), with a central (modern) door and a window on both sides, each comprising two 8 pane

sashes, which are likely to be early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The windows have very slender cills. The facade is faced with red brick, in Flemish bond, with shallow (soldier) arches over the openings, except for the central door which has a semi-circular arch, comprising two rows of headers with flush stone impost.

At the west end are the former stables with two door openings, with rounded corners, with a window between them. The eastern door is a modern six panelled door with raised and fielded panels. The western door is vertically boarded with a horizontal light above. The window between them is modern, comprising a fixed six pane sash and an opening two pane sash (at the top), and it is set flush with the facade. At the far west, adjacent to the stone wall, is a modern louvred vent from the plant room inside.

At the east end are two pairs of garage doors to the coach house with timber lintels over. The vertically boarded doors have L shaped hinges and may be 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The modern slate covered roof is shallow pitched and is hipped at the west end. It has a gable at the east end adjoining the cottages. There is an eaves gutter on the south side. The former of the original roof is unknown although it is likely that it was a similar shape, with the addition of a gable above the central part.

##### b. The servants' cottages (A3)

At the eastern end is the façade of the two derelict cottages (A3). [Plate 3.17]. This is a symmetrical composition, with a door opening at either end, with semi-circular arches over, and two windows at ground

floor and first floor level, which have been blocked up with modern bricks. The western door is also blocked up. The door openings have thin timber lintels over them, and the openings are narrower than the arches above them. At the east end it is clear that the opening has been altered. The windows have similar thin lintels above them. The top of the facade has tile copings. The roof has been removed but the central chimney stack survives, without pots.

At the west end the lower part of the facade is laid in English Bond. Just above the door this changes to Flemish bond, which suggests that the first floor is a later addition. The façade is not tied into the east wall of the coach house. At the east end Flemish bond has been used at the base of the wall.

#### 3.6.2 The north elevation

This comprises a brick wall along the edge of the stream to the north of the house. The western end features six multi-pane UPVC windows, with concrete lintels over, which light the former coach house and stables. Above this section is the hipped roof. There is an eaves gutter and two rainwater pipes. The eastern end, which is the rear wall of the derelict cottages is blind. The lowest parts of the wall are possibly the remains of an early garden wall as they are in English bond as opposed to Flemish bond, used on the upper parts. [Plate 3.18].

#### 3.6.3 The cycle shed (A2)

The cycle shed has a blind wall on its western side, fronting onto the courtyard, adjoining the cottages. [Plate 3.19]. The southern facade is a patchwork of

poor quality brickwork and render, and has a vertically boarded timber door, under a painted timber lintel. It has a mono pitched roof with a transparent plastic covering. The east facade was rebuilt in 1911 and is partly rough cast rendered, at the southern end, but this seems to have been removed from the northern end, exposing the brickwork. There is a square four pane sash window below a timber lintel. The cill is made of chamfered bricks. This appears to be 20<sup>th</sup> century.

On the west side the red brickwork is laid in stretcher bond. It is not tied into the facade of the cottages, and seems likely to have been a later garden wall, which has been extended vertically. There is projecting brick coping at the top of the lower section, and above this is a timber lintel, with 11 courses of later brickwork, also in stretcher bond. There is a brick pier at the southern end of the wall, which appears to be later than the red brick wall, probably built to support the original (leaning) pier on its east side.

#### 3.6.4 The coal and wood store (A1)

The coal and wood store is a small rectangular freestanding building at the west end of the west wing. **[Plate 3.20]**. The walls are brick and it has slate covered roof with its ridge running north-south, with two gable ends. The south wall appears to be in older brickwork (mid-19<sup>th</sup> century) than the eastern wall, which seems to have been rebuilt in 1911. The rafters project beyond the walls and there are eaves gutters. There are small windows on the north and east sides, with timber lintels over and chamfered brick cills below, and a two panel door, with ovolo mouldings, under a painted timber lintel on the south side.



**3.16** The south facade of the outbuildings - Stables (left) and coach house (right)



**3.17** *The south facade of the derelict cottages*



**3.18** *Part of the north wall of the outbuildings*



**3.19** *The east wall of the coal and wood store*



**3.20** *The cycle shed, west of the west wing. The path to the rear door of the main house is through the arched opening on the right*

### 3.7 The Main house - Internally

The main house dates from circa 1785 and the interior is largely consistent with this date. There are large number of original decorative features including joinery, plasterwork and chimneypieces. The plain plasterwork on the walls and ceilings may also be original. Generally the windows are all late 18<sup>th</sup> century in design, with slim ovolo and fillet glazing bars, and the original architraves survive internally.

#### 3.7.1 Basement

The main house sits on a 'bridge' above the stream which joins the Thames at this point. This bridge supports the southern two thirds of the main building. There is a small basement at the north end of the building. This is accessed from under the secondary stair, via two modern panelled doors, but the original steps leading to the cellar have been removed and access is difficult.

It has a very low floor to ceiling height. There are signs that it once had a lath and plaster ceiling. There is a central corridor with small brick built spaces to the north and south, which may have been for storage, such as wine. The openings to these spaces have timber lintels over them. **[Plate 3.21]** The north wall is made of rubble stone and there is wide brick arch on the south side of the wall, towards its western end.



**3.21** *The basement at the north end of the house, looking east*

### 3.7.2 Ground Floor

The ground floor of the main house comprises two large rooms and two staircases. The main staircase lies in the centre of the plan and the secondary staircase is in the northwest corner adjacent to the west wing. There are two chimney stacks, one at the north end and one at the south end of the main house. The end walls (north and south) are masonry; the front and rear facade (east and west) facades are timber framed.

#### G1

This room is the largest on the ground floor. It features late 18<sup>th</sup> century cornices and dado. The dado rail is a complex moulding, capped with an ogee. The low skirting board is a simpler profile. The picture rail is likely to be 19<sup>th</sup> century as these were not generally used in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. There is an impressive Adam style chimneypiece, in painted timber with composition moulded decoration, with marble slips. The sash windows appear to be from 1780s. The window in the south wall is possibly a later addition. The ceiling is plain except for a small ceiling rose, also likely to be 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The door from the hall at the east end is six panelled with ogee and bead mouldings on the inside and small ovolo mouldings on the hall side. The architraves match the door mouldings on both sides of the door. There is a similar door at the west end of the room. [Plate 3.22]. The floor was hidden by a carpet but it is understood to be a suspended timber floor.

#### G2

This room is smaller than G1 as it has the secondary stair on its west side. It has a smaller late 18<sup>th</sup> century cornice than G1 with palmette decoration with a fine dentil moulding above. There is a flush dado, with simple rail and skirting boards. The picture rail is likely to be 19<sup>th</sup> century. There is a marble chimneypiece which probably dates from the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The ceiling is plain except for a small ceiling rose, also likely to be 19<sup>th</sup> century. [Plate 3.23].

The door from the hall features raised and fielded panels with ovolo mouldings and a small bead around the edge of the flat panel. There are fitted cupboards either side of the chimney breast. These appear to be late 18<sup>th</sup> century. They have fine mouldings and the doors feature raised and fielded panels with ogee mouldings and astragals at the edge of the flat panel. The floorboards run east to west and appear to be oak.

#### G3

This is the entrance hall. The stair rises on the north side; this is described later. The walls are plain plastered, with no cornice, and papered above the dado. Unusually there is no cornice. The floor has been tiled in a decorative pattern, and this probably dates from the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. There is a simple torus dado rail and ovolo moulded skirting board. The floor is a 19<sup>th</sup> century tiled design. [Plate 3.24].

The main entrance door is a late 18<sup>th</sup> century six panelled door with ovolo and fillet mouldings and raised and fielded panels, with astragals fixed to their perimeter. Either side of the door are side lights, with three panes each. Below these are solid panels with

ogee and astragal mouldings. The composition is framed with four square pilasters, with small capitals. This framework supports the semi-circular decorative fanlight. This is all typical 'Adam' style from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

#### G4

This is a lobby at the west end of the hall. It is a later alteration to the original hall. The rear door to the main house gives on to this space. It is a late 18<sup>th</sup> century six panelled door with ovolo and fillet mouldings and raised and fielded panels, with astragals fixed to their perimeter. The soffit of the staircase is lower and cuts off the top of the architrave and conceals the fanlight above the door, which is visible externally. This is probably an original, albeit unconventional, arrangement. There is a flush dado which runs around the space. With a minimal torus dado rail and low ovolo moulded skirting board.

On the south side is a late 18<sup>th</sup> century six panelled door which opens into the main room, G1. The lowered ceiling conceals the top of the architrave. On the north side is a modern flush door which leads to the secondary stair and the west wing. On the east side is a 20<sup>th</sup> century glazed, hardwood partition with wide doors, with horizontal solid timber panels at the base, opening onto G3.

#### G5

This is a small cupboard under the main stair. This is a later addition, but the original stone floor survives.

### G6

This space leads to the secondary stair, accessed on the east side. There are two doors to the west wing, giving on to rooms G8 and G9. There are three steps down from the ground floor of the main house to the ground floor of the west wing. On the east side of the space, under the stair, are small doors giving access to the basement. [Plate 3.25].

### G7

This is the northern end of G6, separated from it by a shallow arch beneath the secondary stairs, which aligns with level of the first landing. (See 3.24). The walls are roughly plastered and there is no cornice. There is a very low skirting board. At the northern end of the space is a very thick masonry wall, with a rounded corner on the west side and a large timber beam exposed at ceiling level, with a recess in its west end and a 20<sup>th</sup> century four panelled door to the Butlers Room (G16) to the east. On the west wall is a blind, recessed door opening.

The thickness of the wall in this area is difficult to explain but it is possible that this relates to the previous use of the west wing as a mill. It is noteworthy that it is very similar to the thickness of the wall in the west wing, at the west end of G8, which contains the large chimney stack. The thick wall appears to continue the full height of the west wing in both areas.

Please note: Rooms G8 to G17 in the west wing are dealt with below.

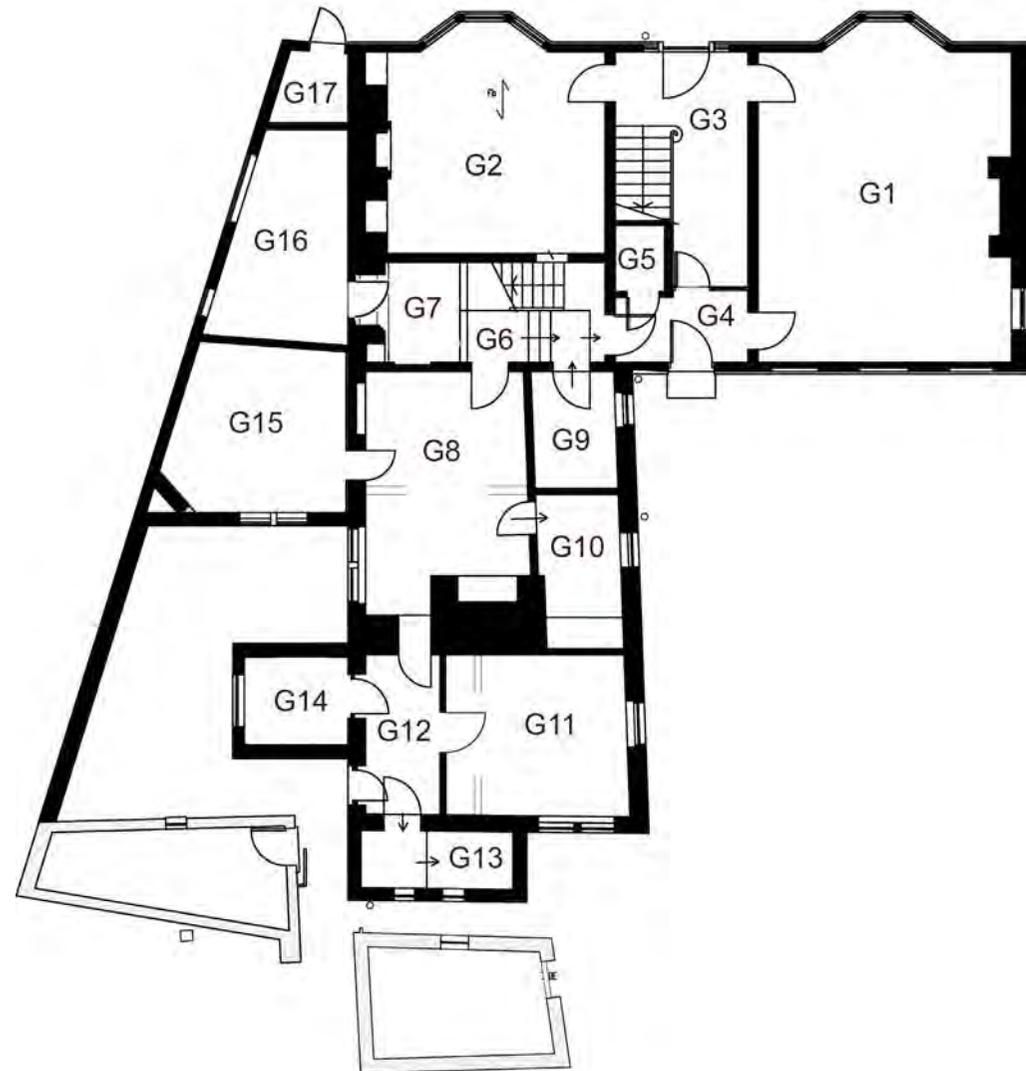


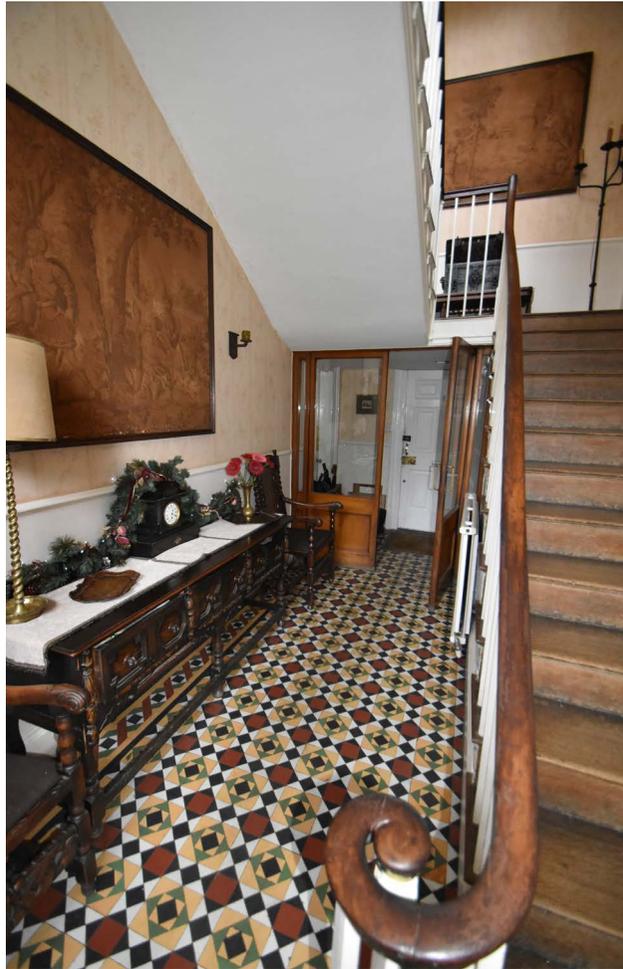
Figure 1. Ground floor



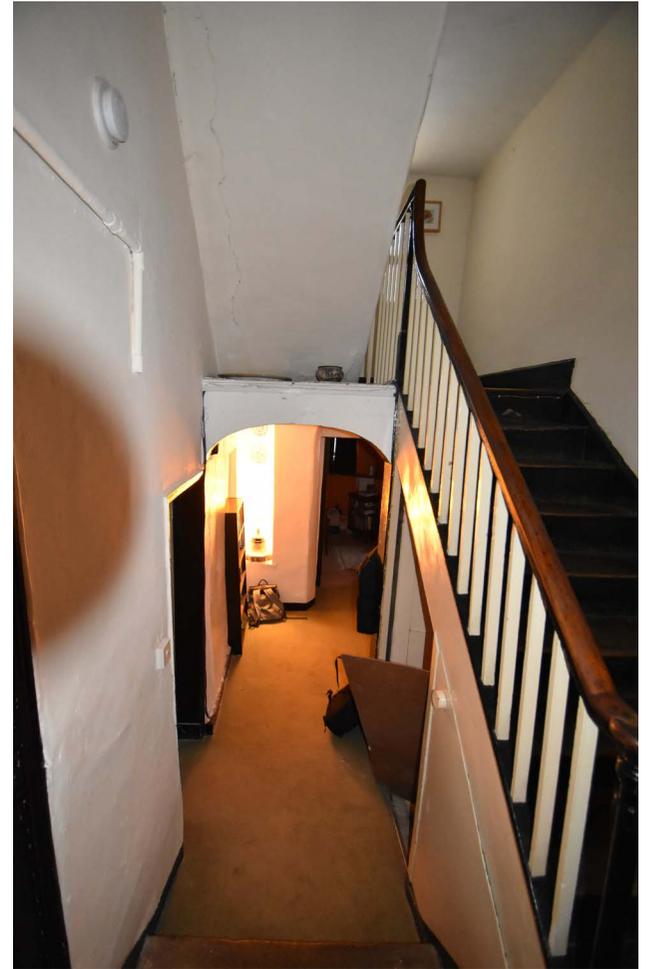
3.22 The southern ground floor room (G1)



3.23 The north ground floor room - G2



3.24 The entrance hall (G3) and lobby (G4)



3.25 The secondary stair looking north (G6 and G7)

### 3.7.3 First Floor

The first floor of the main house is similar to the ground floor, with two large rooms separated by the main staircase in the centre of the plan. In the northwest corner is the secondary staircase.

#### F1

This is the largest room on the first floor, and is used as a chapel. It features a late 18<sup>th</sup> century Adam style cornice and dado. There is no chimneypiece, although the fireplace may still exist, but is covered over. The dado is flush, with a wave moulded (in composition) dado rail, capped with a reverse ogee. There is a low skirting board. The picture rail is likely to be 19<sup>th</sup> century. **[Plate 3.26].**

The entrance door is six panelled. On the landing side it has ogee mouldings and flat panels. The architrave also has ogee and bead mouldings. On the inside the door and architrave have ovolo mouldings. (This is like the door to G1). The architrave has an astragal applied to it, which is unusual. There is a second door in the southwest corner of the room but this is not a functioning opening as the stair rises behind it.

The west wall has been altered with the addition of the altar, with a suspended canopy above it, and pilasters and a painting, on the west wall.

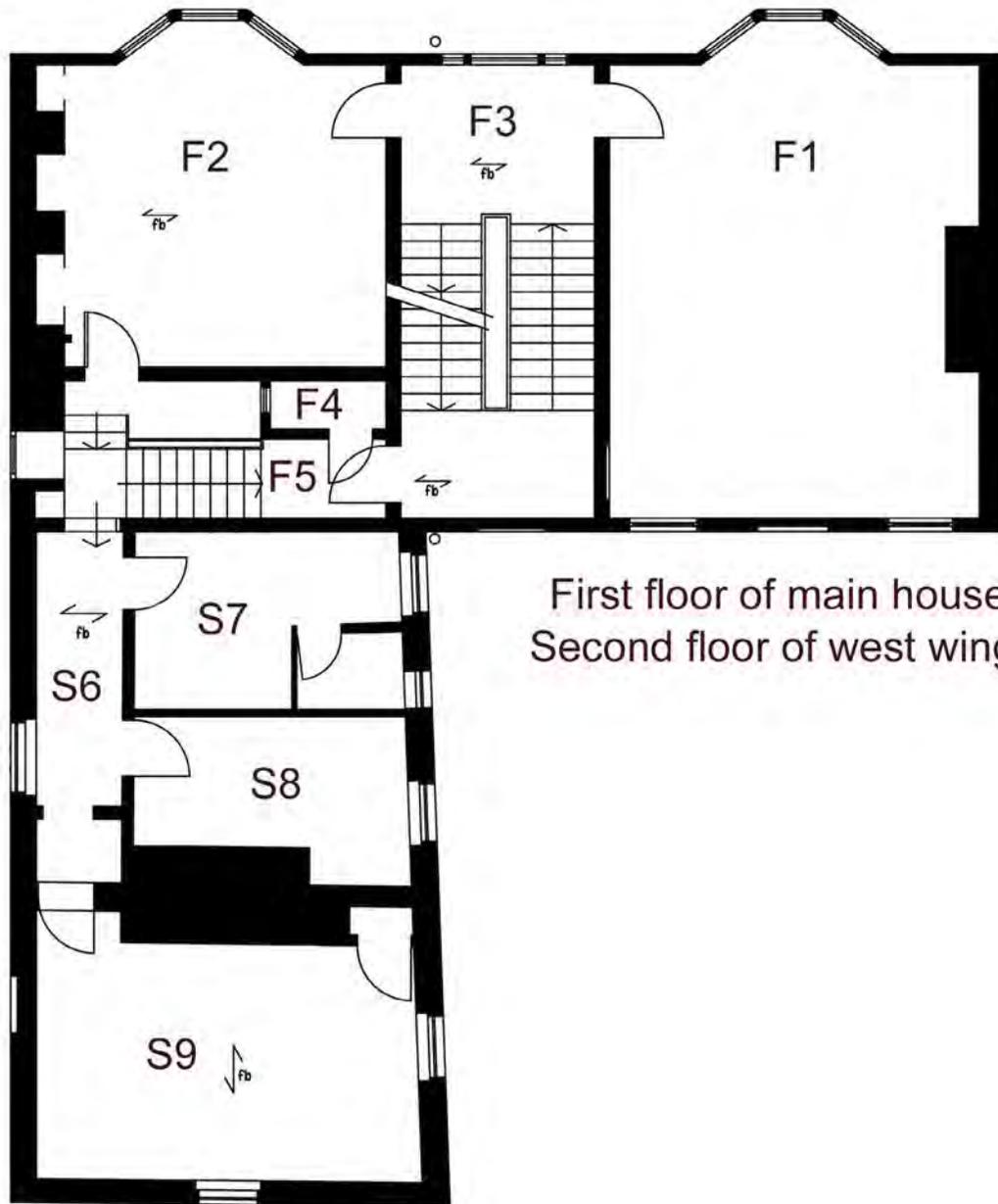
#### F2

This room has a simple cornice which contrasts with the others in the house and its date is unknown. The ceiling is plain with a small decorative rose. Below the cornice is a later picture rail. There is a simple flush dado; the rail has ogee and bead mouldings at the top and an astragal at the base. **[Plate 3.27].**

The entrance door is six panelled, like that to F1, except the panels are square edged, without mouldings. The architrave is like that at F1, with ogee and bead mouldings. On the room side the door has ovolo and fillet mouldings and the architrave also has ovolo mouldings (also like F1). The door and architrave on the west side, leading to the secondary stair, features the same mouldings as the entrance door (ovolo and fillets).

There is a simple classical painted timber chimneypiece with marble slips, which is likely to be late 18<sup>th</sup> century. On the west side of this is a fitted cupboard which is walnut (?) veneered. This features fine late 18<sup>th</sup> century mouldings and could be an original part of the interior. The mouldings on the pilaster and capitals are similar to those on the chimneypiece. There is a cupboard door on the east side of the chimney breast, with six panels.

The floorboards run north to south (which could indicate the use of a double floor structure) and appear to be pine. These are likely to be original.



First floor of main house  
Second floor of west wing



3.26 The south room at first floor level - the chapel (F1)



3.27 Second floor north room (F2)

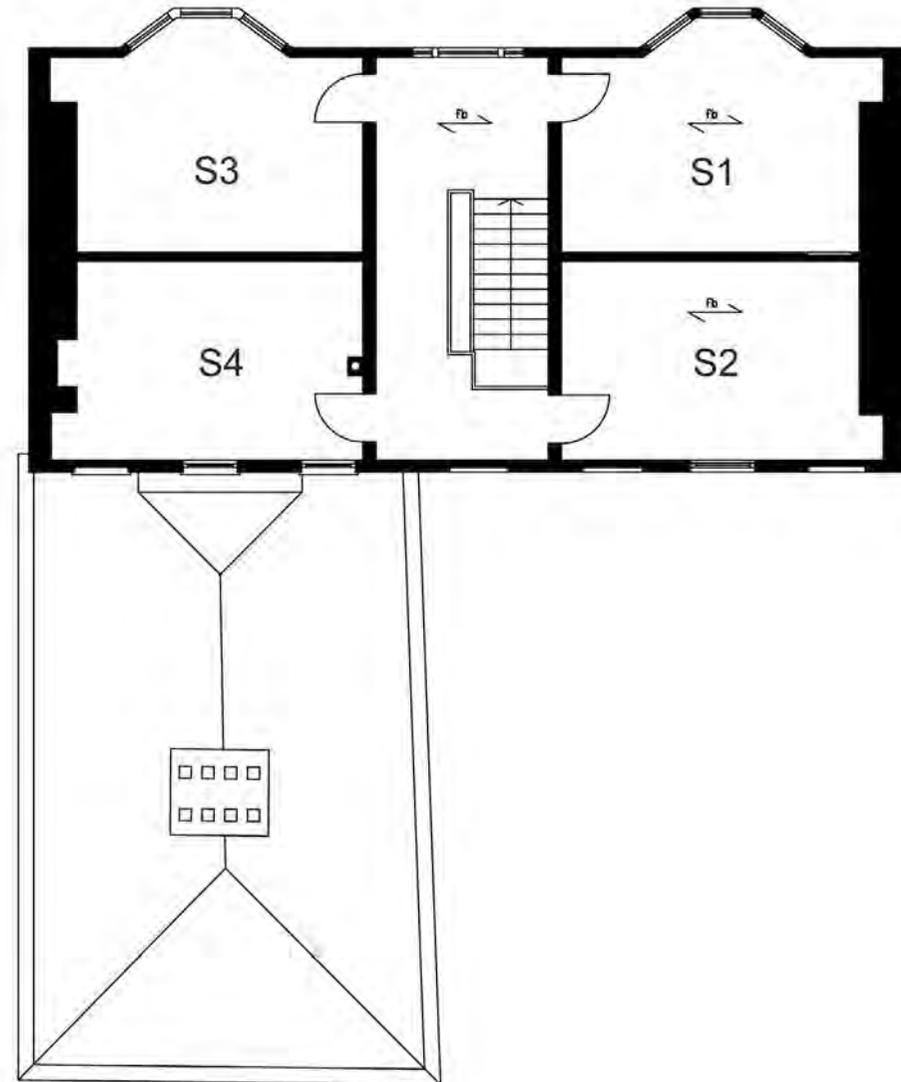
### 3.7.4 Second floor of the main house (S1 to S5)

The second floor is divided into four bedrooms, two on each side of the central main staircase (S1, S2, S4 and S5). There is no secondary stair at this level. The rooms are plain, with no cornices or dados but there are picture rails, which are likely to be 19<sup>th</sup> century. [Plate 3.28]. Rooms S1 and S3 are lit by the sash windows in the canted bays on the front facade. Room S2 is lit by one central window in the west wall. S4 is lit by two windows. The third window at the north end of the rear facade is blind.

The doors to the rooms are four panelled and generally ovolo moulded on the room side and unmoulded on the stairwell side. There are square (unmoulded) timber panels below the windows. The windows have original Georgian architraves. The rooms all have built in cupboards with narrow two panelled doors some with raised and fielded panels, some with flat panels..

Some of the door architrave have ovolo/cavetto/bead mouldings which are likely to be later (post-Georgian) replacements. There is what appears to be a blocked up opening between rooms S1 and S2 at the south end.

The staircase landing is towards the north side of the house and provides access to all four rooms. There is a dado rail and low skirting board (with ovolo moulding) and the walls are plain plastered without a cornice and the floorboards are pine. It is lit by the window in the east facade only. At its western end the landing has a stepped plan form.





**3.28** Second floor northwest room showing cupboard door (S5)

### 3.7.5 The main stair (G3, F3 and S3)

The open well, open string stair is wide, with oak treads and risers from ground floor to first floor. The handrail is mahogany, with white painted stick balusters which are rectangular in section, rather than the more common square section. The newel posts are square in section with recessed panels and square capitals. The tread ends feature simple carved brackets. It is terminated with a curtail supported on a square section post. The stair has a low string on the wall side with a moulding comprising two ovolo mouldings, and a flush dado with a simple torus moulding to the rail. These features are all characteristic of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. The stairwell has no cornices. **[Plate 3.29].**

At the first landing there are two square section newel posts and the handrail is ramped. The bases of the newel posts are decorated with small round floral mouldings. There is a curious feature on the balustrades to the landings at first floor and second floor with an ogee shaped piece of timber either side of the central baluster. From first floor to second floor the stair treads and risers appear to be in pine, but otherwise it is like the lower part of the stair. At the landing between first floor and second floor is the access to the secondary stair, on the north side. **[Plate 3.30].**

### 3.7.6 The secondary stair

The secondary stair is an open well, close string stair and is located at the rear (west) of the north room of the main house and runs parallel to the rear wall. It is similar to the main stair in its design, although it appears to have pine treads and risers and handrail, and the newels are elongated round columns rather than square. The stick balusters are rectangular in section. The walls are plain plastered and there are no cornices in the stairwell. The stairwell is lit by two bullseye windows in the north wall at first floor and second floor levels.

There is a curious arrangement at the first floor landing, where the balustrades do not align. **[Plate 3.31].** This is likely to be an original late 18<sup>th</sup> century arrangement, rather than evidence of a later alteration. It could be a compromise in design in order to overcome the different floor levels in the main house and the (existing?) west wing, while creating a wide landing at first floor level. At the north end is a door leading to F2 in the main house. The door is six panelled, without mouldings, with a fine late 18<sup>th</sup> century architrave.

At the top of the stairs there is a landing which adjoins the landing of the main stairs between first floor and second floor levels. This landing has a walk-in cupboard built on it, with a small four pane window facing north. This may be a later addition, although there is a Georgian latch on the door.

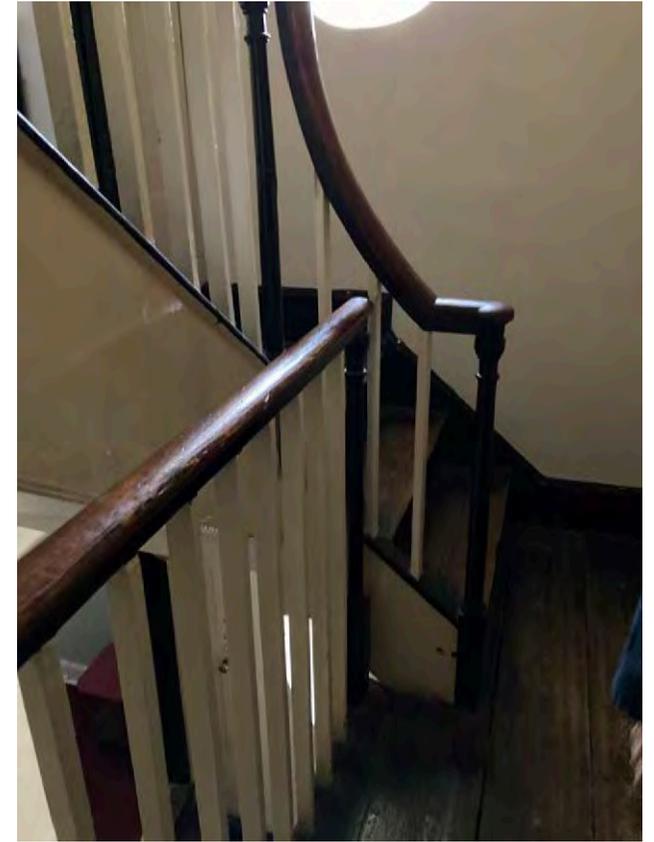
In the northwest corner of the stairwell is a recess in the very thick masonry walls which contain the bullseye windows. The recess contains a cupboard, which could be late 18<sup>th</sup> century.



**3.29** *The curtail of the main stair*



**3.30** *The second floor landing*



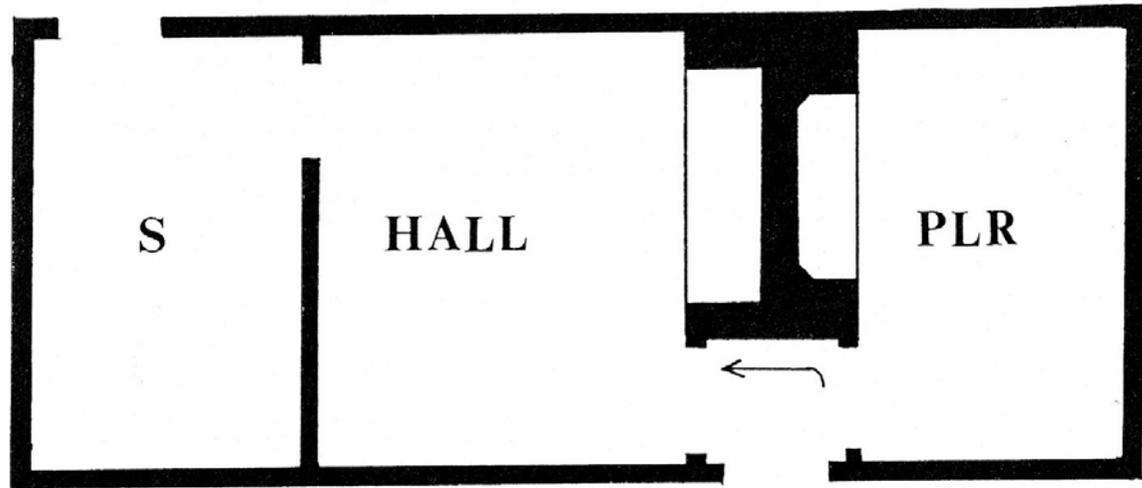
**3.31** *The secondary stair at first floor level*

### 3.8 The West Wing - Internally

The west wing comprises two large spaces with a central chimney stack between them. On plan it looks like a 17<sup>th</sup> century lobby entry house. [Plate 3.32]. The spaces have mostly been subdivided, possibly when the main house was built. The floor levels do not marry up with the floors of the main house. They are all lower, including the ground floor.

Although there is no map evidence for an earlier building on this site, it does appear that the west wing could predate the main house of 1785, but it may have been significantly altered at the time the main house was built to create the service wing, including the kitchen, larder, butler's office and staff bedrooms.

Photographs of the surviving Georgian joinery in the west wing are included in Appendix IV.



3.32 Plan of 17<sup>th</sup> Century Lobby Entry House (Johnson 1993)

### 3.8.1 Ground floor

The eastern room (G8) has two small rooms (G9 and G10) on the south side. These were created out of one large space in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. (See the 1991 plans). There is a door on the north side which leads to an extension on the north side of the wing (G15). The western part has a corridor on the north side (G12) and a squarish room on the south side (G11). From the corridor is a door leading to the north side of the wing, and a door leading to a small extension on the north side, the larder (G14). A door at the west end leads the toilet extension on the west side (G13).

#### G8

Room G8 is the largest room at ground floor level. Its walls are lined with book shelves and the ceiling is plain plastered, with an exposed beam running north to south. The floor is carpeted. This room was previously used as the kitchen (shown on the 1911 plans), and incorporated G9 and G10. The partition on the south side of G8 is therefore a 20<sup>th</sup> century alteration. **[Plate 3.33].**

The door from the main house features 8 panels with bolection mouldings. The top two panels have been glazed and its bottom rail has been cut down. It is not a Georgian door, and could date from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century/early 18<sup>th</sup> century. The architrave has an ogee (cyma recta) moulding and appears to be late 18<sup>th</sup> century in style. The 1911 plans show this door opening as being the only one between the main house and the wing at ground floor level.

The door on the south side gives onto G10. This is a two panelled door, with ovolo mouldings (without fillets) and raised and fielded panels. The door appears to be 18<sup>th</sup> century but has been reduced in size (the styles have been reduced in width) and the hinges not Georgian. While two panelled doors are common in servant areas in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century/early 18<sup>th</sup> century, this could be late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Similar doors are used in the second floor rooms of the main house, which date from 1785. Again the architrave has an ogee moulding and appears to be late 18<sup>th</sup> century. The door and architraves have been reused and adapted for their current location.

On the west wall is the large chimney breast with a chimneypiece which is partially hidden but appears to have Georgian elements, such as a cornice. On the north side of the chimney breast is a door leading to the western end of the wing. The wall here is very thick (750 mm) and is lined with vertical painted boards. The architrave in G8 is late 18<sup>th</sup> century in style with fine ogee, cavetto and bead mouldings.

#### G9

This is a bathroom, without decorative features. It is accessed from the stairwell of the secondary stair (G6) via a 20<sup>th</sup> century (?) six panelled door and lit by a modern window, adjacent to the rear entrance door of the main house.

#### G10

This is a utilitarian room, with boiler plant. It is also lit by a modern (20<sup>th</sup> century) window. The room is rough plastered. At the western end there is what could be a large timber beam at ceiling level, on the south side of the large chimney stack.

#### G11

Room G11 is at the west end of the west wing, and is lit by windows in the south and west walls. The door has four panels and there is a 19<sup>th</sup> century architrave. There is an exposed (historic) beam in the plain plastered ceiling just south of the door, running east to west. The partition between G11 and G12 appears on the 1911 plans as existing, and so probably dates from the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

#### G12

The corridor G12 provides access from the main room G8 to G11, the toilet G13 and the larder G14 (to the north). It has plain plastered walls and a carpeted floor. An interesting feature is the small historic hatch in the wall above the east door. Its function is unknown. **[Plate 3.34].**

The door to G8 is four panelled (without mouldings) and the architrave is probably 20<sup>th</sup> century (quirked ogee and chamfered fillet). The door to G14 is a six panelled door, with the top two panels glazed, and flat panels with ovolo and fillet mouldings below. There is a rectangular fan light above. This work probably dates from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (circa 1911). There is a door in the northwest corner leading out to the northern yard. This has two glazed panels at the top and two solid panels below. It is 20<sup>th</sup> century in origin.

**G13**

This is a toilet within an extension dating to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century (circa 1911). It has plain plastered walls and a vinyl floor covering. The door has two horizontal panels at the top and two vertical panels below. It is lit by two small windows on the west wall. It is a plain room and there are no historic features of interest.

**G14 to G17**

These rooms are the northern extensions, described separately below.

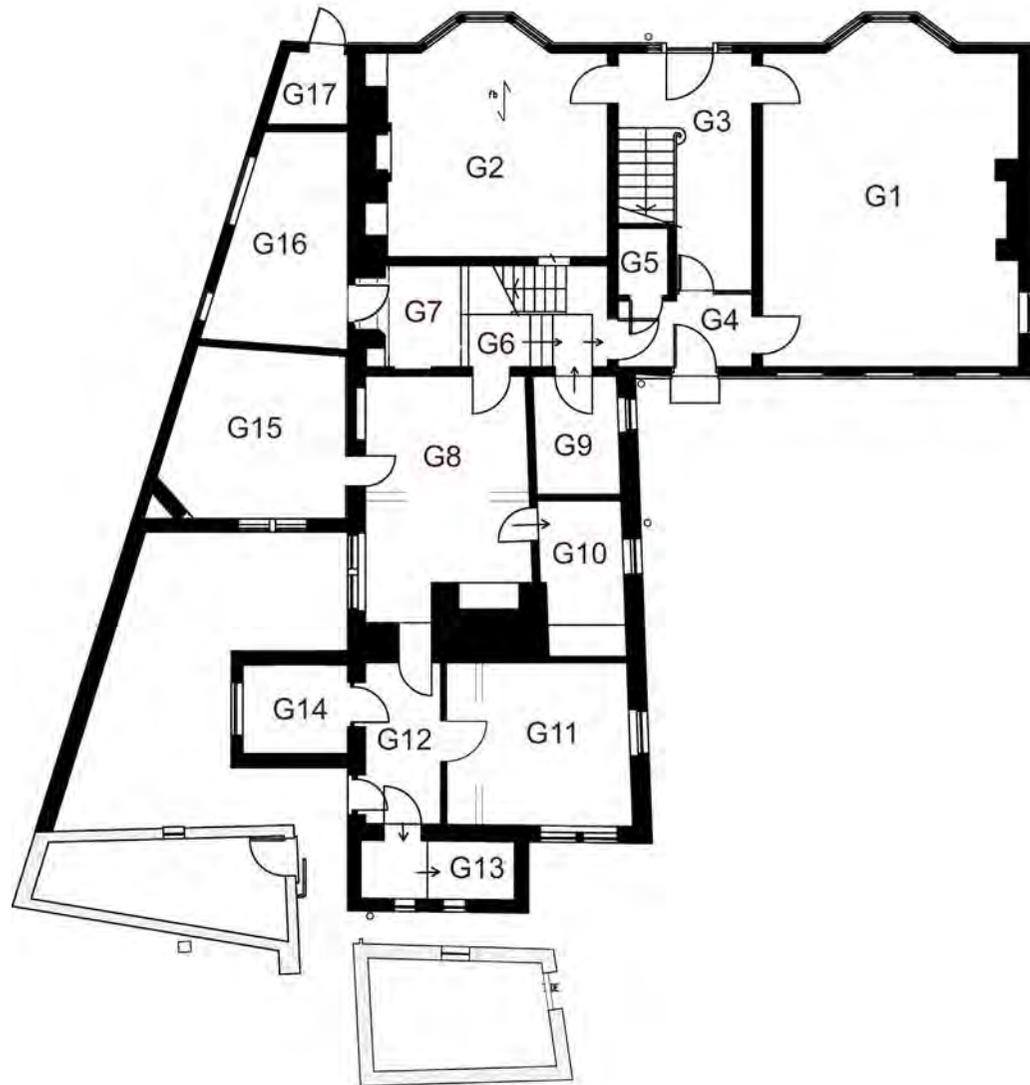
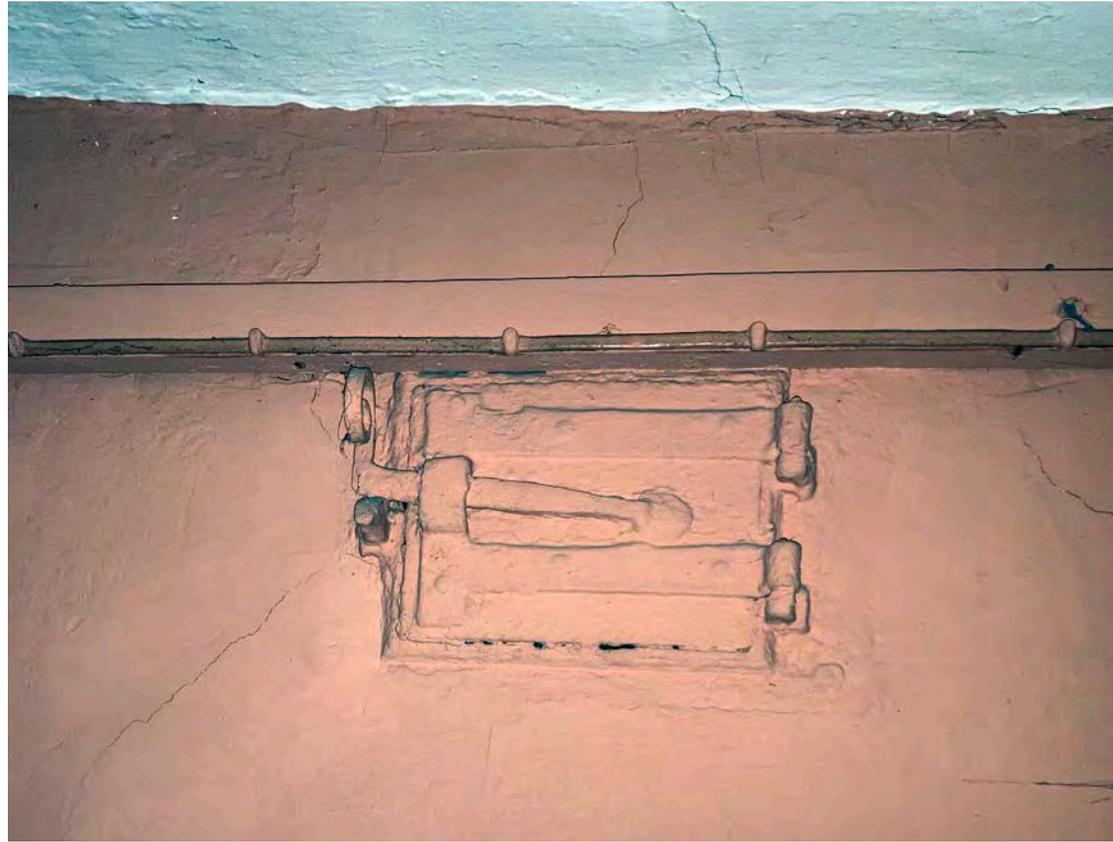


Figure 1. Ground floor



**3.33** The main ground floor room in the west wing - G8



**3.34** Small hatch in G12.

### 3.8.2 First Floor (F6 to F9)

The first floor of the west wing is at a lower level than the first floor of the main house, and is accessed from the main house from the first landing of the secondary stair. It comprises three rooms, the largest being at the west end (F9). At the east end the space is divided into two smaller rooms (F7 and F8), with a corridor on the north side (F6).

#### F6

The corridor on the north side is lit by a single window. The space is plain plastered and the floor is carpeted. There is no cornice. The opening to the secondary stair has a Georgian ogee moulding, but there is no door. The opening to room F7 also has an ogee and bead moulding but this is later, and it does not match the one to the stair.

#### F7

This is a plain plastered room, with low simple skirting board, lit by a window in the southeast corner. On the room side the door opening has a late 18<sup>th</sup> century ogee architrave. The door has flat panels with small ovolo mouldings, probably 19<sup>th</sup> century or later. There is no chimney breast or chimneypiece. The 1911 plans (Plate 2.13) show that the west wall, between F7 and F8 was further to the east, and the space which is now F7 was used as a WC and lobby. F8 was shown as a bathroom and was a much larger room than it is now.

#### F8

The room is similar to F7 but has a cupboard in the southwest corner, adjacent to the chimney breast. This has a Georgian two panelled door with raised and fielded panels and small ovolo mouldings. It also appears to have Georgian hinges. The architrave is a small ogee. [Plate 3.35]. There is no chimneypiece.

#### F9

The room is plain plastered, with an exposed timber beam in the ceiling, running east to west. [Plate 3.36]. It is lit by a single window in the south wall. The door is a four panelled door with ovolo mouldings. The top rail has been cut down at an angle. There is a cavetto architrave with a small ogee. This is likely to be 18<sup>th</sup> century in origin. There is a cupboard in the southeast corner, with a Georgian six panelled door, with raised and fielded panels and an ogee architrave. There is a late 18<sup>th</sup> century dado running around the room with low skirting board (with an ovolo (?)) and an ogee and bead moulded rail. There is no chimneypiece, and the fireplace (shown on the 1911 drawings) has been blocked up.

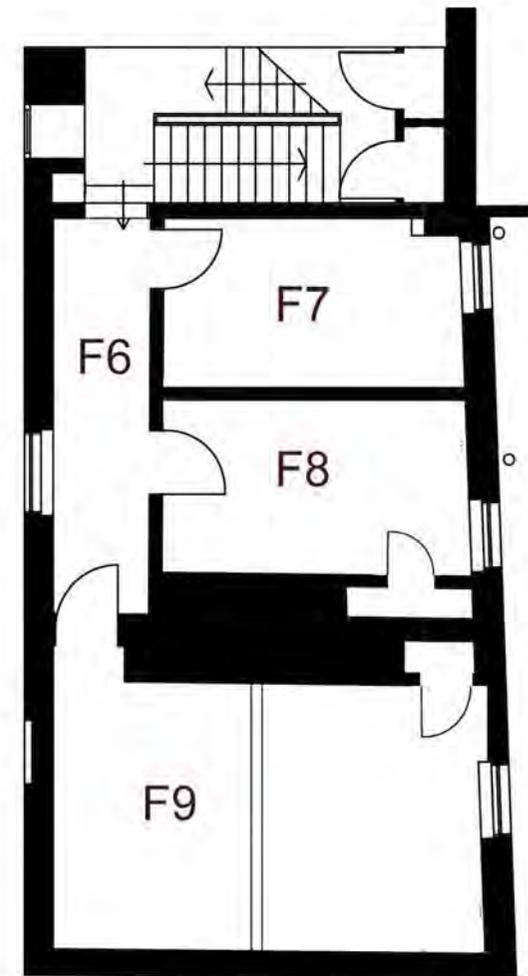


Figure 2. First floor of West wing only



**3.35** Room F8. Note 18C cupboard on right



**3.36** Room F9. The cupboard is on the left of the window

### 3.8.3 Second floor (S6 to S9)

The plan form is like the first floor with one large room at the west end and two smaller rooms at the east end, with a corridor on the north side. Rooms S7 and S8 have been much altered from the form shown on the 1911 drawings, which indicates that the partition between the two rooms is 20<sup>th</sup> century.

#### S6

This is the corridor on the north side of the wing, lit by a single window. At the west end is a lobby, shown on the 1911 plans as existing, with shelves on the south wall. The floor is covered with Georgian (?) pine boards. [Plate 3.37].

#### S7

The room is plain plastered without a cornice. The door is early 20<sup>th</sup> century (1930's?). There is a late 18<sup>th</sup> century architrave around the window opening. There is a modern toilet in the southwest corner, lit by a small steel window, and a timber beam in the ceiling which continues in S8. There is no chimneypiece and this is an unheated room. The current arrangement appears to have been created after 1911 as the plans shown in plate 2.13 show a different arrangement of partitions.

#### S8

This room is also plain, with a low simple skirting board. The door is a two panelled Georgian (early?) door, with flat panels and ogee mouldings, with L shaped hinges (probably 18<sup>th</sup> century). The architrave on the room side is a Georgian ovolo, and on the corridor side it is a cavetto and bead, possibly early 20<sup>th</sup> century in date.

The window and architrave are late 18<sup>th</sup> century. There is no chimneypiece. As with room S7 the layout is likely to be post-1911.

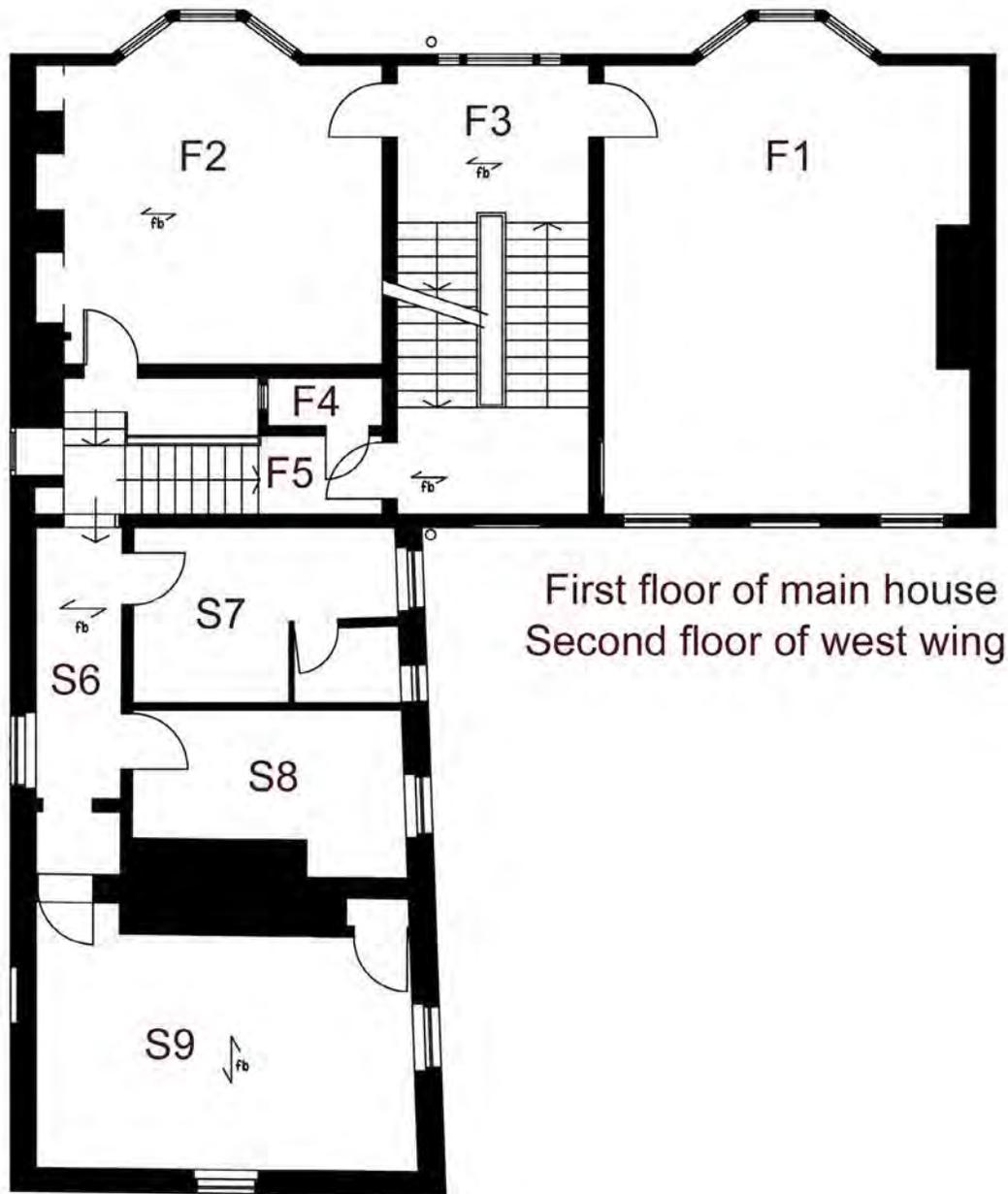
#### S9

The western room is the largest at this level and is plain plastered and carpeted. There are windows in the south and west walls, and these appear to be late 18<sup>th</sup> century. There are ogee architraves of a similar date. The entrance door is six panelled, with the top two being plain panels without mouldings and the lower four are raised and fielded panels with ovolo mouldings. The bottom rail has been cut down severely. The architrave has ogee and bead mouldings and is probably late 18<sup>th</sup> century. There is no chimneypiece. The fireplace shown on the 1911 plans has been infilled.

There is a cupboard in the southeast corner, adjacent to the chimney stack, which is not expressed in the room. The cupboard door is two panelled, with small ogees on the room side and no mouldings internally. These are likely to be late 18<sup>th</sup> century. The architrave has ogee and bead mouldings and appears to be late 18<sup>th</sup> century.



3.37 Corridor S6 looking east towards the main house from Room S9



First floor of main house  
 Second floor of west wing

Figure 3. First floor of the Main House and second floor of the west wing

### 3.8.4 The roof

The existing steep pitched roof is a 20<sup>th</sup> century alteration. The earlier roof structure survives internally. It appears on the 1911 plans and took the form of two roofs, with their ridges parallel to the north and south facades. These roof structures were retained when the roof was altered, by adding a roof structure above them, continuing the pitch of the outer roof slopes and thereby removing the valley between the two roofs. The surviving roof structures probably date to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century when the main house was built. [Plate 3.38].



**3.38** *The interior of the roof to the west wing showing the retained 18C structure*

### 3.9 The Northern Extensions – Internally

#### 3.9.1 The Store (G17)

This is a small space at the north east corner of the ground floor, accessed from the front of the house. It is shown as part of the Butlers' Room on the 1911 plans. Its interior is utilitarian and is not of significance.

#### 3.9.2 The Butler's Room (G16)

The Butlers Room abuts the north wall of the main house and dates from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is accessed from the space at the north end of the secondary stair (G7). It has plain plastered walls, a low timber skirting board and exposed modern timbers in the ceiling. It is a modern utilitarian room. In the 1911 plans there was an existing lobby at the western end of the space, between G15 and G16, but this has been removed. [Plate 3.39].

#### 3.9.3 The Servant's Lounge (G15)

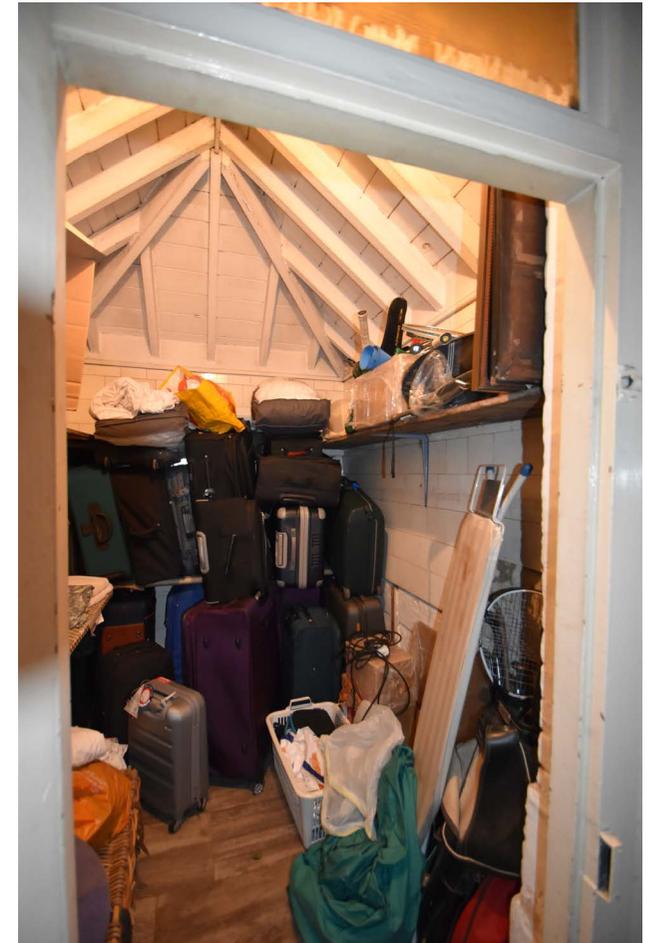
This room is on the north side of the west wing, and is accessed from the room G8 in that wing. It has sash windows looking over the yard to the west. This room is similar to G16 and is of little interest.

#### 3.9.4 The Larder (G14)

This small square utilitarian building has a tiled interior and exposed roof timbers. There is a six panelled door, with the top two panels glazed, from the corridor (G12). This is likely to be early 20<sup>th</sup> century in origin, added at the same time as the larder. [Plate 3.40].



3.39 The Butler's Room - G16



3.40 The larder - G14

### 3.10 Out Buildings– Internally

#### 3.10.1 The Coal and wood store (A1)

The interior is utilitarian, with an exposed timber roof, which is 20<sup>th</sup> century. The brickwork is part 19<sup>th</sup> century and part early 20<sup>th</sup> century. [Plate 3.41].

#### 3.10.2 The Cycle shed (A2)

Similarly this is a very utilitarian structure, in relatively poor condition. The roof and the east wall are 20<sup>th</sup> century. The wall on the west side incorporates a more hoist curving wall which is probably early 19<sup>th</sup> century. [Plate 3.42].

#### 3.10.3 The Servant's cottages (A3)

These are derelict and there is almost nothing internally, except for the large chimney stack. There is a late 18<sup>th</sup> century grate in one of the fireplaces. [Plate 3.43]. The walls show signs of historic finishes and joist locations. There is no roof.

#### 3.10.4 The Coach House (A4 and A5)

The coach house has been divided into two spaces. A4 is L-shaped, providing a link to the former stables to the west. A5 is a square room. The walls are painted brickwork. The ceiling is plasterboard or similar. Both are lit by modern, UPVC, windows in the north wall. The floor is concrete. The rooms contain little or no historic fabric and have a very utilitarian interior. [Plate 3.44].

#### 3.10.5 The former Stables (A6 to A13)

##### A6

This is a large room, with entirely modern finishes; flush hardwood doors, plain architraves, low, plain skirting board, plain plastered walls and ceilings, without cornices. It is lit by a window in the north wall and two windows in the south wall. The partially glazed entrance door in the middle of the south wall is modern. It features semi-circular, glazing at the top with diagonal glazing bars below. The base of the door comprises two raised and fielded panels. Above the door is a plain semi-circular fanlight. The floor is parquet. [Plate 3.45].

##### A7

The room has a similar modern appearance to A6. There are a pair of double doors leading to A6, and a corridor leading from the southwest corner to the western end of the building (A10).

##### A8

This the entrance lobby with a modern door, with six raised and fielded panels, and a plain light above.

##### A9

Currently used as a kitchen this room has painted brickwork walls with vertical butt-beaded boarding (probably 19<sup>th</sup> century or early 20<sup>th</sup> century) which terminates below the ceiling, but above head height. [Plate 3.46]. The ceiling is plain and there is no cornice. In the southwest corner is a chimney breast; the fireplace has been infilled and no chimneypiece is visible. The floor is covered with linoleum/vinyl. The room has no door and the opening has a painted timber lintel over, and a 20<sup>th</sup> century architrave adjacent to the boarding in A10 on the corridor side.

##### A10

This is a corridor, lined with unpainted vertical, butt-beaded boarding (pine). This seems to be historic but of unknown date (probably 19<sup>th</sup> century or early 20<sup>th</sup> century). The floor is parquet.

##### A11

A small toilet, without any notable features. The ceiling and walls are plain, with a low modern skirting board. The window reveals are curved. The modern window comprises a fixed six pane sash, with a top hung two pane casement above.

##### A12

Another plain, utilitarian space, with plain ceiling and walls, and a low modern skirting board. In the west wall at high level is an early 19<sup>th</sup> century (?) timber beam. .

##### A13

A small store room, without any notable features. The ceiling and walls are plain, with a low modern skirting board. It has modern shelving on the walls. It is lit by a small square window at high level.

##### The roof

This appears to be a wholly modern roof structure. The rafters are supported by struts from the base of a central A frame. [Plate 3.47].

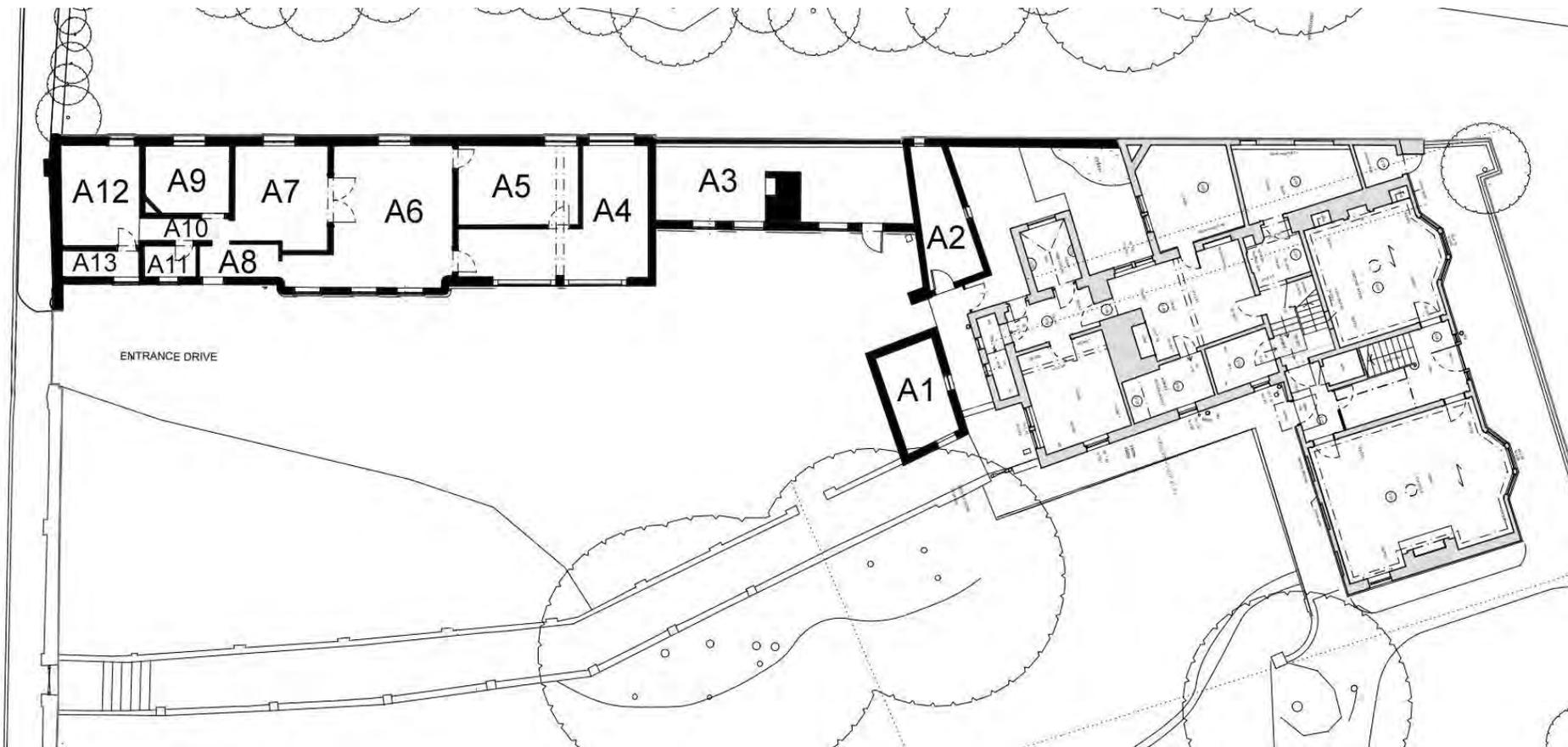


Figure 5. The outbuildings



**3.41** *The coal and wood store - A1*



**3.42** *The cycle store - A2*



**3.43** *The interior of the derelict cottages looking east*



**3.44** *The coach house interior - A4*



**3.45** *The stables interior - A6*



**3.46** *The kitchen with its boarded walls*



**3.47** *The modern roof of the outbuildings*

### 3.11 Garden

The house is located in the northeast corner of the large garden. [Plate 3.48]. The garden has been reduced in size with the building of Holy Rood Church but many elements of the original garden remain. The main entrance from Abingdon Road was through what is now the access to the church. On the south side of this entrance was a lodge and remnants of this can still be seen in the south garden wall [Plate 3.49]. The route from the gateway was a circular one, and may have operated in a one way system.

At the north end was the entrance, which remains the main access to the house today, with the out-buildings on the north side for horses and coaches. South of this was a pedestrian entrance leading to the west wing of the house, most likely used by servants and trades people. This is now linked to the rear of the main house by the walkway on the south side of the west wing. (This walk way is not shown on the OS map surveyed in 1873 (but published in 1878) but is shown on the 1876 map).

### 3.12 Garden wall

The garden wall runs the length of the Abingdon Road frontage and is punctuated with three entrances to the original garden. At the north end is the entrance to the courtyard. The middle entrance is to the pedestrian walkway to the rear of the house. The southern entrance was the main coach entrance but is not the access to the Holy Rood Church. The wall is built of



3.48 View of the south wall of the main house from the garden

coursed stone. The entrances have substantial piers and the pedestrian entrance, with a six panelled door, in poor condition, has a heavy lintel over it. [Plate 3.50].



**3.49** *The internal south wall of the now demolished lodge*



**3.50** *The garden wall on Abingdon Road. The entrance to the courtyard is on the left, and the pedestrian entrance on the right.*

## 4.0 Assessment of Significance

### 4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to provide an assessment of significance of Grandpont House, so that the proposals for change to the building are fully informed as to its significance and so that the effect of the proposals on that significance can be evaluated.

This assessment responds to the requirement of the National Planning Policy Framework to 'recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance'. The NPPF defines significance as;

*'The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological (potential to yield evidence about the past), architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting'.*

### 4.2 Assessment of Significance

The building's significance arises from it being a grand detached house from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, which has remained remarkably unchanged since it was built. Its location, just south of the city centre and facing the River Thames is of importance, as is its garden setting, although this has changed, particularly with the loss of the southern part and the building of the Holy Rood Church. It was built for the town clerk (see paragraph 2.1.1).

It is unusual that, for such a large 18<sup>th</sup> century house its two principal facades appear to be timber framed. The external appearance of the building has changed little over the years, although the original render may have been replaced, and indeed in many areas it is missing completely. It is not known if any 18<sup>th</sup> century render survives. The brickwork on the north wall is also of importance as this appears to be from 1785.

The interiors of the main house are of very high significance. The original plan form is evident on all floors and there are a large number of original decorative features, including joinery and plasterwork. The original main and secondary staircases are in their original late 18<sup>th</sup> century form and are of high significance.

The rear wing is also of high significance. Its plan form and large chimney stack suggest that it could date from the 17<sup>th</sup> century or early 18<sup>th</sup> century, and therefore predate the main house. The wing contains a number of 18<sup>th</sup> century joinery features (doors and architraves) which could be earlier than the main house, but probably are contemporary with the main house of 1785. The sash windows certainly appear to be late 18<sup>th</sup> century. On the ground floor there is also an 8 panelled door with bolection mouldings which appears to be pre-Georgian. The roof was altered in the 20<sup>th</sup> century but an earlier roof (of similar form to that of the main house) still survives. The west wing also contains a number of 19<sup>th</sup> century and 20<sup>th</sup> century elements, including partitions, doors, architraves, windows, which whilst reflecting the changes over time, are not in themselves of significance.

While there is no evidence on the historic maps of a building in this precise location before 1785, other buildings are shown in the area. It is possible that these 18<sup>th</sup> century maps are not accurate. Whether or not the west wing predates the main house, it seems very unlikely that it could post date it. It could have been built at the same time as the main house, but it seems odd that, if this was the case, the floor levels are so different, and there are awkward changes in level between the two buildings. Also, if they were built at the same time then it seems likely that the secondary stair would not have been built within the main house, but within the west wing.

The outbuildings are also of significance, although not as important as the main house and west wing. The front facade is significance but the rear wall has been harmed by recent alterations and the interior is little or no significance. The main range on the north side of the entrance yard, which were used as stables and coach houses, date from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, probably built a decade or so after the main house. The derelict cottages were probably built shortly after the stable block. The facade of the cottages is in poor condition but is still of some significance.

The main house was extended on its north side in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Although these extensions are part of the evolution of the house, they are utilitarian and of relatively little architectural merit, and contribute little to the significance of the building. This special interest is manifest in the fabric and plan form of the building, which has the following hierarchy of significance.

Of the **highest** significance is / are:

- The main house – its external appearance; its entrance doors and windows
- The main house – its internal features; staircase, doors, architraves, dados, chimneypieces, cupboards, cornices
- The main house – its timber and masonry structure
- The setting of the house – its relationship to the streams and river ; its garden

**Factors which detract** from the building's significance are:

- The plywood cladding on the front facade
- derelict cottages adjacent to the west wing
- the north wall of the out-buildings

Of **high** significance is / are:

- The west wing – its external appearance; its brickwork and windows; chimney stack
- The west wing – its plan form, chimney stack, internal historic pre-19<sup>th</sup> century joinery
- The out-buildings – the external appearance of the stable and coach house block – south façade and roof
- The listed garden wall to Abingdon Road

Of **moderate** significance is / are:

- The facade of the servants cottages

Of **neutral** significance, neither contributing to or detracting from the significance of the whole is / are:

- The extensions on the north side of the main house
- The outbuildings immediately to the west of the west wing – cycle shed and coal and wood store

## 5.0 Commentary on the Proposals

### 5.1 Description of the Proposals and their Impact on the Heritage Assets

The proposals for Grandpont House are outlined in the drawings and Design and Access Statement by Studio Stassano. The proposed alterations mainly affect the outbuildings and extensions on the north side of the house and the interior of the west wing. The interior of the main house is largely unaffected by the proposals, except for the two rear rooms at second floor level. The exteriors of the main house and west wing are repaired, and new sashes are installed in some blind window openings.

The environmental performance of the buildings will be improved through sensitive and appropriate retrofitting measures. The facades will be rendered using an insulating lime render, except for the north facade which will be limewashed. Secondary glazing will be used internally.

### 5.2 The Works to the Out-Buildings

#### 5.2.1 The former stables and coach houses

The front and rear facades are retained along with the main structural internal walls. The ground floor is lowered and the modern roof is replaced by a traditional mansard roof to provide a new floor of accommodation. There will be small projecting traditional dormers in the roof slopes. The missing central gable end on the south facade is reinstated.

Following concerns raised by officers from Oxford City Council and Historic England the western end of the roof, adjacent to Abingdon Road has been modified, by removing the proposed dormer window and lowering the pitch, so that the visual impact of this part of the proposed roof is reduced.

The internal fabric of the buildings is almost entirely modern and is not of special interest. The only fabric which is historic is the vertical boarding at the west end of the building, but the date of this is unknown. It is more likely to be 19<sup>th</sup> century or early 20<sup>th</sup> century. This boarding can be retained and reused in the new interior.

The roof is entirely modern fabric, although it is probably in a similar form to the original roof. The proposal involves removing the modern roof and replacing it with a traditional mansard which is hipped at the west end, and with the original south facing gable reinstated. The roof will be clad in Welsh slates, with a very shallow lead roof above. Although there is no evidence that the out-buildings have had a mansard roof in the past, this is a common form of roof on many historic stable buildings. The proposal is well designed, appropriate to the building, and would not appear at all incongruous in its context.

The rear wall of the building is probably early 19<sup>th</sup> century but it has been much altered, in a harmful way, with the use of concrete lintels and UPVC windows. The proposals will improve the appearance of the rear wall by replacing the windows with multi-pane steel windows, with recessed infill brick panels above.

The front façade will be retained and new, more appropriate doors will be installed. The existing garage doors will be retained but modified so they become folding doors. When shut they will appear very similar to their current form. When open they fold away to reveal windows.

The works will not result in harm to the significance of the out-buildings, or the setting of the house. The demolition of the modern roof does not result in the loss of any historic fabric and the proposed mansard roof will be of an appropriate form of extension. The new windows on the north wall will improve its appearance. The reinstatement of the gable is a significant heritage benefit. **[Plate 5.1]**.



5.1 View of the sables (left) and the new entrance to the house (right) (Studio Stassano)

### 5.2.2 The cottages

The front façade of the cottages will be enclosed within the new building, on the south side, which takes the form of a timber framed, glazed corridor with a flat zinc roof. The facade will be retained and repaired and restored. The façade will form an interesting part of the building, albeit one that can only be fully appreciated from within the building. A new roof will be built over the derelict cottages and the chimney stack will be demolished and replaced with a staircase. The south side of the roof will be a shallow pitched slate covered roof with two small gabled dormers. On the north side the roof will feature two large dormers with three pairs of sash windows per dormer, and a small rooflight between them to light the stairs.

The rear (north) wall of the cottages, which is likely to be early 19<sup>th</sup> century, is in poor condition and the client's structural engineer has advised that it should be rebuilt. The bricks will be salvaged wherever possible and reused in the construction of the new wall. This will cause a low level of harm to the significance of the cottages, but it is justified for structural reasons. New steel windows are proposed in the existing rear wall, to match those in the rear wall of the stables.

### 5.2.3 The cycle shed

This will be demolished to create the lobby to the new chapel and a sacristy. The west wall (the east wall of the cottages) is retained. As with the cottages, the north wall will be demolished and rebuilt, as advised by the structural engineer. The existing bricks will be reused

where possible. This is a much altered structure in poor condition and its demolition would only cause a very low level of less than substantial harm.

#### **5.2.4 The coal and wood store**

The coal and wood store will be replaced by the new entrance to the building. This takes the form of a single storey brick façade, with a flat zinc roof. Its height will be similar to the existing store. The store was originally built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century but has been much modified, notably in the 1911 works, and is of little interest. The demolition of the existing building will cause a low level of less than substantial harm to the listed building and its setting. The new entrance is a simple but high quality design which celebrates the new entrance, reflecting its importance, but without dominating the courtyard or the adjacent out-buildings. This is an acceptable and appropriate replacement for the existing building.

The toilet extension (circa 1911) on the west side of the west wing will be demolished to create the new entrance foyer. This will restore the historic plan form of the west wing, which is a heritage benefit.

The new entrance, and the glazed corridor to the north, are of high quality modern design and their massing reflects the existing arrangement. The existing buildings appear to be a somewhat muddled collection of mediocre buildings and the proposal will provide a more rational arrangement, creating a large, welcoming entrance, which will enhance the setting of the main house and the out-buildings.

### **5.3 The Demolition and Redevelopment of the Northern Extensions**

The extensions which were added to the main building in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, although they are part of the historical evolution of the building, they are of neutral significance. They would all be demolished to provide a new chapel, which would be relocated from the south room of the main house at first floor level. This demolition would result in a low level of less than substantial harm to the significance of the house.

The new chapel will be accessed from the new entrance in the courtyard which leads to the foyer, with the chapel lobby on the north side. The foyer and lobby have flat zinc clad roofs. The chapel will have a pitched roof has its ridge running approximately east-west, and it will be clad in slates. On the north side of the new chapel the existing wall along the river will be rebuilt using the original bricks wherever possible. There will be new steel windows, as used on the north wall of the stables and cottages.

The new chapel is of high quality modern design and of a height and scale which will appear sub-ordinate to the house, and will not harm its setting. The relocation of the chapel from the main house will allow the restoration of the important first floor room, which is an important heritage benefit.

### **5.4 The Works to the West Wing**

The proposals primarily involve internal works to the west wing. At ground floor a corridor running along the north side will be created which links the main house, west wing, the new main entrance and the out-buildings. This is a key part of the proposed development. To improve the circulation the width of the opening in the very thick wall on the north side of the chimney stack will be increased. Following pre-application comments from Oxford City Council and Historic England the size of this opening has been made smaller, reducing the impact on historic fabric. The existing boarded linings and the architrave on the east side (in G8) will be retained and reused in the wider opening.

On the north side of the corridor the existing window and door openings (early 20<sup>th</sup> century) will be blocked up on the north side, within the proposed Oratory. On the south side the openings will be retained as recesses with back lit glass, except for the door opening at the east end (in G8) which will be wholly infilled.

The existing partition in the west room (G11), which is probably early 20<sup>th</sup> century in origin, will be replaced with a glazed partition on a slightly different alignment. Given that the existing wall is not of significance the proposal will not harm the significance of this space. A new chimneypiece of appropriate design will be installed in the chimney breast.

The main change is to the eastern room (G8) where the existing partition will be removed and a new small room created on the east side of the space. This will leave

the chimney breast fully exposed, in contrast to the current arrangement where the partition clashes with the chimney breast. The chimney piece can be restored.

The existing partition on the south side of the room is post-1911 and is not of significance, although it does contain a two panelled Georgian door which will be retained and reused. The eight panelled bolection moulded door (possibly 17<sup>th</sup> century) which leads to the main house will be retained but fixed shut in its current location.

At first and second floors new bedrooms and bathrooms are created. The west rooms will be retained, and links created through the existing cupboards to shower rooms within the east rooms. The east rooms will be altered by the removal of the later partitions and installation of new ones. These proposals will affect Georgian joinery at first floor in particular. It is proposed to retain and reuse this fabric in the proposed arrangement; the cupboard doors and architraves will be relocated to the new partitions.

It is also proposed to install a window in the west wall at first floor where there is currently a blind window. The new window would match the existing one at second floor above. It is unknown whether there was a window in this opening before, but the new window would not harm the appearance of the building. Unsightly modern pipework will be removed from the south wall.

The roof slopes are currently covered in Spanish slates and these will be replaced by new Welsh slates. This is an important heritage benefit. (See Hutton+Rostron report on the roofs<sup>23</sup>).

Internal wall insulation will be carefully installed within the west wing. This should be relatively straightforward because the walls are plain plastered and there are no cornices. Where Georgian joinery survives, such as the dado rail at first floor (west room) this can be retained and reinstated.

Overall the proposals will cause a low level of less than substantial harm to the interior of the west wing, but this harm is far outweighed by the public benefit of the scheme overall.

## 5.5 The Works to the Main house

The main house will be largely unaffected by the proposed works. The southern principal room at first floor level will be restored to its original form with the removal of the chapel and its fittings. A new chimney piece of appropriate late 18<sup>th</sup> century design will be added. This is an important heritage benefit.

The front façade of the building is in very poor condition and approximately two thirds of it is clad in plywood. The rear facade is covered with a

cementitious render. These will be removed and the facades will be re-rendered using an insulating lime render on oak lathes. This is also a significant benefit.

The roof slopes are currently covered in Spanish slates and these will be replaced by new Welsh slates. This is an important heritage benefit. (See Hutton+Rostron report<sup>24</sup>).

The main internal works affect the two western rooms at second floor level. These will be subdivided to create square (rather than rectangular) bedrooms and small bathrooms. This will have an impact on the plan form of the second floor but the historic fabric will be largely unaffected. The existing joinery and plain plasterwork will be retained. The previous opening between the front and rear rooms at the southern end will be reinstated. A similar opening will be created between the two northern rooms. Overall these changes would only cause a low level of less than substantial harm to the interior of the second floor.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century tile floor in the entrance hall is of some significance. It is a high quality floor and is part of the history and evolution of the house. It is proposed to reinstate a more appropriate Georgian floor, to match that which survives in the under-stair cupboard. **[Plate 5.2]**. The loss of the existing tiles would cause a low-medium level of less than substantial harm to this part of the interior, but the reinstatement of an appropriately designed late 18<sup>th</sup> century floor would be beneficial, provided this is carried out carefully, using appropriate high quality materials.

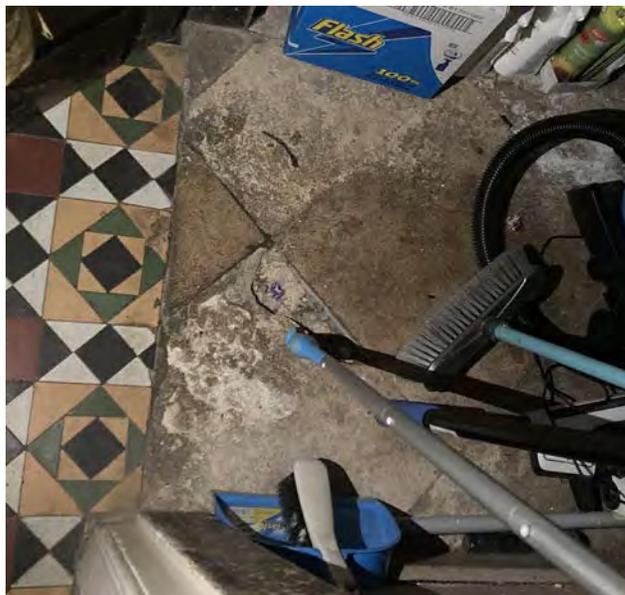
---

23 Hutton + Rostron Environmental Investigations Limited - Grandpont House, Oxford: Roof finishes investigation Site note 2 for December 2023-January 2024, job no. 160-42

---

24 Op. cit.

New windows are proposed in the west facade to replace existing blind openings at ground floor and second floor levels. It is not known at this stage if the existing blind windows are original to the building. The new windows would be traditional sashes to match existing windows in this facade, at first floor and second floor levels. If, on further investigation, it can be shown that the blind openings have previously contained sash windows, then the installation of new windows should be acceptable in principle. However, if the openings have always been blind, then the addition of new windows may be considered to cause a low level of harm to significance.



**5.2** *The remains of the original stone floor in the under-stair cupboard (right)*

## **5.6 Structure**

The client's consultant structural engineer has concluded that Grandpont House is essentially structurally stable but, as with all buildings of this age, minor movements have occurred and consequently there is some cracking and distortion of the historic fabric, which has to be accepted. Conservation-based repair, strengthening and maintenance works will be required, and indicative solutions will be proposed. These will need to be discussed further with specialists, the City Council and Historic England.

## **5.7 Improved environmental performance**

The proposals include retrofitting measures which will improve the environmental performance of the buildings. These measures can be summarised as follows:

The exterior of the main house and the west wing will be rendered using an insulating lime render, except for the north masonry wall which will be limewashed. It would appear that historically the north wall was limewashed and the south wall was rendered. (See the Hutton and Rostron report<sup>25</sup>).

The environmental performance of the timber framed east and west facades will be improved through the use of breathable insulating material within the timber

frame, before the facade is re-rendered. The roof spaces will also be insulated, without harming their original structure.

The proposals also involve a heat recovery system which involves installing air extract fans within the roof space of the west wing, and using the existing chimney flues for ducting. The roof can accommodate the plant while retaining the Georgian roof structure. Metal grilles of appropriate design will be installed within the fireplaces where this will not harm any existing chimneypieces.

The existing hot water heating system will be retained with new traditional radiators installed in the rooms. No significant new pipe runs are proposed. The existing concrete floors in the outbuildings and the west wing will be replaced with new solid floors with under floor heating.

Air source heat pumps are to be located on the west side of the courtyard, adjacent to the listed garden wall, but not physically touching it. These will be housed within a simple, but well designed, timber clad structure. Immediately south of this will be a similar enclosure housing the refuse storage.

Photovoltaic panels are to be installed on the inner slopes of the roof of the main house, facing east and west. These will not be visible from ground level. They will not involve any harmful alterations to the existing roof structure and their impact on significance is negligible.

25 Hutton + Rostron Environmental Investigations Limited - Grandpont House, Oxford: Façade investigation. Site note 4 for December 2023-January 2024, job no. 160-42

The main house, the west wing and the out-buildings all contain historic windows dating from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. These will be retained and repaired as necessary. Secondary glazing will be used internally to improve the environmental performance of the buildings. The installation of carefully designed and positioned secondary glazing would cause a low level of less than substantial harm to the interior but this would be offset by the environment benefits of improved thermal performance.

### 5.8 Boat house

It is proposed to erect a timber framed building for the storage of boats and associated equipment in the garden, on the south side of the stream. There have been a number of buildings in the garden over the years, for example as shown in the 1873 map (plate 2.10), when there were greenhouses in the same location. The principle of a new garden building is considered uncontentious.

The proposed building is modest in size, of high design quality, and set well away from the house so that it will not have a harmful impact on the significance of the house or its setting. Neither will it harm to setting of the listed garden wall and the scheduled monument to the west. [Plate 5.3].



5.3 The proposed boathouse (Studio Stassano)

## 6.0 Justification of the Proposals and Conclusion

The current proposals represent a carefully considered, high quality design solution for the future of Grandpont House. They meet the clients requirements of providing additional accommodation and improved facilities, whilst respecting the significance of the listed building and its setting. The proposals have evolved, taking into account advice from Oxford City Council and Historic England.

The proposals may be considered to cause a low level of less than substantial harm to parts of the building, including:

- The demolition of the extensions on the north side of the house.
- The sub-division of the rear rooms at second floor level in the main house.
- The internal alterations to the west wing.

However the scheme offers a number of important heritage benefits which far outweigh that harm identified:

- Improving the quality of accommodation and giving the building a new lease of life for the future
- Extending the building in a sensitive manner, which respects its significance, with high quality modern architecture
- Repair of the facades including the render on the east and south facades
- The addition of a traditional mansard roof on the out-buildings and the reinstatement of the missing gable
- Recovering the roof slopes with Welsh slate

- The repair of the facades of the derelict cottages
- The removal of unsightly modern pipework from the exterior
- The restoration of the first floor south principal room, following the removal of the chapel
- The installation of appropriate chimneypieces where these are missing
- Improvements to the setting of the building by enhancing the appearance of the courtyard
- The improvement of the environmental performance of the building
- The addition of solar panels on the inner slopes of the roof of the main house
- Improvements to the setting of the building by enhancing the garden to improve its biodiversity.

The listed building makes a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the Central (City and University) Conservation Area. The enhancements to the listed building will also enhance that character and appearance. The views of the building from the river and from Abingdon Road will be greatly improved by the repair of the rendered front facade and by the high quality new buildings within the courtyard.

As explained in Section 1.2, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan applicable to the site comprises the Oxford Local Plan (2016-2036). The proposals have been developed to comply with these local plan policies. In accordance

with policy DH1 the proposal is for a development of high quality design that creates and enhances local distinctiveness. The proposals comply with policy DH3 as overall they will preserve and enhance the significance of the listed building and the Central (City and University) Conservation Area.

The proposals would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building and its setting and would enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area, in accordance with the statutory duty imposed by Sections 16, 66 and 72 (l) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

In terms of the NPPF assessment of harm, the proposals do involve some works which would cause a low level of 'less than substantial harm' in accordance with the terminology of the NPPF. The NPPF makes it clear that great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, irrespective of whether the harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. Paragraph 208 of the NPPF states that any less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. It is considered that in this case, the low level of 'less than substantial' harm to the listed building resulting from the proposals would be far outweighed by the public benefits set out above.

## Appendix I - Statutory List Descriptions

### **Official list entry: Grandpont House, Abingdon Road**

Heritage Category: Listed Building  
Grade: II\*  
List Entry Number: 1299941  
Date first listed: 12-Jan-1954  
Statutory Address 1: GRANDPONT HOUSE, ABINGDON ROAD  
Location  
Statutory Address: GRANDPONT HOUSE, ABINGDON ROAD  
County: Oxfordshire  
District: Oxford (District Authority)  
Parish: Non Civil Parish  
National Grid Reference: SP 51503 05450

#### Details

ABINGDON ROAD

1. 1485 (East Side) Grandpont House SP 50 NW 24/605 12.1.54. II\*

2. Built circa 1785 for Elias Taunton. 3 storeyed stuccoed brick with a moulded cornice and parapet and bands at the 1st and 2<sup>nd</sup> floors. The side stacks are stuccoed. L-shaped plan with a North West wing projecting on the back. The East elevation, facing the river, has 2 3-storeyed 3-sided bays with tall sash windows. In between the bays is a doorway with a late C18 semi-circular fanlight; above this in the 1<sup>st</sup> floor is a tall Venetian window and above that a 3-light sash window. The North-West wing has a 3-storeyed stuccoed front with a Welsh slate hipped roof and sash windows. The North sides of the main block and of

the North-West wing are in red brick and the windows in the wing are blind. The house is constructed on a 2-arched stone bridge and there was once a mill here. Listing NGR: SP5150305450

### **Official list entry: Wall of Grandpont House, Abingdon Road**

Heritage Category: Listed Building  
Grade: II  
List Entry Number: 1369699  
Date first listed: 28-Jun-1972  
Statutory Address 1: WALL OF GRANDPONT HOUSE, ABINGDON ROAD  
Location  
Statutory Address: WALL OF GRANDPONT HOUSE, ABINGDON ROAD  
County: Oxfordshire  
District: Oxford (District Authority)  
Parish: Non Civil Parish  
National Grid Reference: SP 51450 05466

#### Details

ABINGDON ROAD 1. 1485 (East Side) Wall of Grandpont House SP 50 NW 24/605A II 2. C18. Stone wall fronting Abingdon Road.

Listing NGR: SP5145005466

#### Legacy

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

### **Official list entry: Folly Bridge Causeway, Abingdon Road**

Heritage Category: Listed Building  
Grade: II  
List Entry Number: 1046595  
Date first listed: 28-Jun-1972  
Statutory Address 1: FOLLY BRIDGE CAUSEWAY, ABINGDON ROAD  
Location  
Statutory Address: FOLLY BRIDGE CAUSEWAY, ABINGDON ROAD  
The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.  
County: Oxfordshire  
District: Oxford (District Authority)  
Parish: Non Civil Parish  
National Grid Reference: SP 51439 05478

#### Details

1. ABINGDON ROAD 1485 (East Side) Folly Bridge Causeway SP 50 NW 24/652 II 2. C18. Causeway on South side of main bridge. 2 stone arches with stone walls on either side of the road.

Listing NGR: SP5143905478

### **Official list entry: Grandpont Causeway**

Heritage Category: Scheduled Monument  
List Entry Number: 1007486  
Date first listed: 19-Jul-1994  
Location  
The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.  
County: Oxfordshire

District: Oxford (District Authority)  
Parish: Non Civil Parish  
National Grid Reference:  
SP 51448 05457

#### Reasons for Designation

Although a basic network of roads was already in existence as part of the Roman road system, new towns and communication needs led to the construction of an extensive network of new roads throughout England during the medieval period. This network, much of which has now been disturbed or obscured by the modern road system, included causeways, fords and bridges. The Grandpont represents an example of a causeway, few of which now survive in their original form. Although this example has been obscured by later alterations and additions, original fabric is visible from the river whilst partial excavation has demonstrated the survival of substantial archaeological remains beneath the modern road surface. The causeway is thought to have its origins in the Saxon or early Norman period and represents an important element in understanding the layout of early medieval and medieval Oxford. It is one of the very few examples where both detailed archaeological and documentary records are available.

#### Details

The monument includes a 500m-long section of the Grandpont causeway which crosses the Thames floodplain to the south of Oxford. The causeway is buried beneath the modern line of the Abingdon Road and is encased in later widening and revetting. However, exposed sections of the Norman stonework, forming several of the arches and piers which make

up the causeway, can be seen from the river beneath. The earliest phase of the ragstone causeway was between 3.9m and 4m wide and was constructed as a continuous linear structure with arches set along its length where river channels or drainage needs dictated. Within the section of the causeway south of Folly Bridge and north of White House Road there are eleven arches, six of which are visible, while the rest have been filled in over the years. The causeway has been widened on at least two occasions, giving it a modern width of c.12.5m. It is likely that evidence survives for earlier Saxon or Norman wooden bridges beneath the Grandpont, while it is known from excavation at 33 St Aldates that a Saxon ford, which preceded the causeway, went out of use and silted up to the extent that by the late 12<sup>th</sup> century it was covered with 1.25m of accumulated silt. It is believed that the Grandpont is part of the 'Great Bridge' built by Robert d'Oilly who also built Oxford Castle. The Folly Bridge, located midway along this section of the Grandpont, also known as 'Friar Bacon's Bridge', is a later medieval feature and included a six-sided tower with portcullis, drawbridge and heavy gates which provided a barrier to any enemy approaching the South Gate of the city along the causeway. This was partially demolished and rebuilt in 1826 having become 'so decayed' by the time of Waterloo (1815) that it was no longer safe. The tower foundations survive in the river bed. The bridge is listed Grade II. In addition to the remains visible from the river, evidence for the survival of the Grandpont has been provided by a number of excavations and observations using existing manholes and during essential works on service trenches. These have provided evidence that the structure survives along this 500m section and beyond, although the

majority of observations and the visible remains are contained in this stretch. Although the original core only measures c.4m wide, the preservation of the monument depends upon the entire width of the carriageway (c.12.5m) being included in the scheduling. Excluded from the scheduling are the 19<sup>th</sup>-century reconstructed elements of the listed Folly Bridge, the modern road carriageway and its make-up as well as the drainage culvert and all existing service trenches which run along the causeway, although the ground beneath all these features and beneath and around the service trenches is included in the scheduling.

#### **Official list entry Holy Rood Church, Abingdon Road, Oxford**

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1466650

Date first listed: 27-Jan-2020

Statutory Address 1:

Abingdon Road, Oxford, Oxfordshire, OX1 4LD

Location

Statutory Address:

Abingdon Road, Oxford, Oxfordshire, OX1 4LD

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

County: Oxfordshire

District: Oxford (District Authority)

Parish: Non Civil Parish

National Grid Reference: SP5150105384

Summary

Roman Catholic Church dating to 1961 designed by Gilbert Flavel.

## Reasons for Designation

Holy Rood Church, Abingdon Road, Oxford, built in 1961 to the designs of Gilbert Flavel, is recommended for listing at Grade II for the following principal reasons:

### Architectural interest:

\* as a largely intact example of a 1960s church designed to meet the changing worship practices of the period;

\* for its carefully considered interior, with high quality, designed fixtures and fittings, many of which are original.

### Historic interest:

\* illustrative of the proliferation in post-war churches, to serve the increasing number of Roman Catholics in England in the post-war period, designed to the principles of the Liturgical Movement.

### History

Holy Rood Church was endowed by Father Reginald Schomberg (1880-1958), who entrusted Father John Crozier, the North Hinksey parish priest, to find a site for a church for Oxford Roman Catholics living south of the river, in the Hinkseys, Boards Hill and Kennington. In 1959 a site was acquired off the Abingdon Road, between Grandpont House and Brasenose College playing fields.

The architect Lawrence Dale initially submitted a design for the church in 1958 in the Renaissance style. However, Father Crozier had studied church design in relation to the Liturgical Movement during his travels

abroad and had admired James Gardener's British Pavilion at the World Fair in Brussels in 1958, part of which he believed could form the basis of the church.

The Liturgical Movement was central to church construction during this period. It caused a radical reassessment on how churches should reflect the new way of celebrating the Word of God. It focussed on the Eucharist, and the relationship of the congregation to each other and to God. This movement was ultimately accepted by the Roman Catholic Church through the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), although its importance was evident as early as 1947 with Pope Pius XII's 1947 Mediator Dei et Hominum and the 1955 De musica sacra encyclical. By the mid-1950s architects were starting to seriously explore centralised and circular church plans, moving away from traditional longitudinal plans. By 1962, the Catholic Herald published a list of more than a dozen British churches conforming to this plan form, which were recently completed or being planned.

In light of this movement and its architectural effects, in 1959 Gilbert Flavel was chosen to design the church due to his appreciation of the changing liturgical tradition and his previous work for the London College of Divinity at Norwood. His design took inspiration from the contemporaneous St Paul's, Bow Common (1958-1960) by Maguire and Murray (UID 1241881), particularly externally.

Construction of the site began on Michaelmas (29 September) 1960, costing £35,000. It was constructed by Bartlett Brothers of Witney and was dedicated by Bishop Holland on 16 December 1961. It was

consecrated by Bishop Worlock on 5 February 1962.

In 1963 the contents of Eric Gill's chapel at Piggotts, Buckinghamshire, were given by Gill's daughter. A stone carving of Christ on the Tree of Life was installed above the tabernacle in The Blessed Sacrament Chapel.

### Details

Church built 1960-1961 to the designs of Gilbert Flavel.

**MATERIALS:** steel framed construction with yellow stock brick walls externally, rendered internally. The roof is surmounted by a glass, steel and copper helm roof lantern.

**PLAN:** the church is broadly rectangular in plan within which is set an octagonal worship space. The triangular corners are used as further spaces for the sacristy, storage, reception room and lodge, with an entrance hall on the western side which includes the font. The Blessed Sacrament Chapel is set off to the right of the main worship space, outside of the main rectangular plan.

**EXTERIOR:** the exterior is formed of yellow brick, laid in Sussex bond. The western (front) elevation is formed of a central double height section, within which is the entrance hall/narthex and church, with two single storey ancillary areas, broadly triangular in form on either side. Both the single storey and double height elements have flat roofs, with a glazed steel and copper helm roof lantern surmounted by a cross rising from the centre of the double height roof. A rectangular, glazed, double-height entrance sits centrally within the main elevation, projecting slightly. A large blue

and white metal cross divides the glazing and the set of two double doors. A further two sets of two small rectangular windows are situated on either side of the main entrance forming a clerestory. The two ancillary areas have two steel-framed windows on either side of the main entrance. The north elevation is blank save for a long rectangular window which illuminates the altar and a projecting single storey, flat-roofed room currently used as storage. The east (rear) elevation is entirely brickwork with a raised Greek cross. The south elevation comprises a projecting, rectangular, single storey element which forms The Blessed Sacrament Chapel. This is illuminated by two stained glass windows. On the right hand side of this is the triangular, single storey sacristy, which is lit by a single window. Above this is a further long rectangular window which illuminates the altar. To the left of the chapel is another single storey, triangular ancillary space, used as an office and storage, which is lit by a further steel framed window.

INTERIOR: the entrance doors lead directly into the narthex, with ancillary spaces to the left and right (reception room, kitchen, WCs, and administration and storage respectively). At the centre of the narthex is a large circular granite font on a square base. 'FONS VITAE AETERNAE' is incised around it. It was carved by Kevin Cribb, the son of Laurie Cribb, an assistant to Eric Gill. The main body of the church is accessed through glazed double doors behind the narthex.

The sanctuary is placed directly opposite the main entrance with a series of three wooden steps leading up to it. The altar sits forward of the east wall with a bronze statue of the Christ of the Cosmos

(pantokrator) by Michael Murray hanging high on the eastern wall behind it. The altar is made of granite and inscribed with lettering by Kevin Cribb: 'DUX VITAE MORTUUS REGNAT VIVUS'. Above the sanctuary is the corona, also by Michael Murray. This symbolises the twelve gates of Jerusalem, with the lights symbolising the twelve apostles. To the left and right behind the altar are doors leading to a storage area and the sacristy respectively.

To the right of the nave is the Blessed Sacrament Chapel. This rectangular, single storey space is illuminated by abstract stained glass windows by Charles Ware. The pews face forward to a small altar placed directly against the wall. On the wall above the tabernacle and altar is the Holy Rood statue carved by Eric Gill. Commemorative tablets to Father Crozier and Father Schomberg hang on the south wall.

The free-standing benches in the nave were originally set at an angle at the sides to face towards the sanctuary, but now largely face forward. An organ is located to the left of the sanctuary within the nave. To the right, between the sanctuary and the Blessed Sacrament Chapel hangs the theotokos, a bronze replica of the Romanesque Relief of Our Lady and the Christ child in York Minster which was damaged in the Reformation. It was created by Michael Murray, based on evidence published in Eric Maclagan's British Academy lecture. The bronze Stations of the Cross hang on the walls of the nave, lit by conical lights.

To the left of the entrance is the corner stone with the inscription '1961' and 'HUIUS ECCLESIAE / LAPIDEM ANGULAREM / IECIT + RR DD / THOMAS HOLLAND /

EPISCOPUS ETENNAE'

To the right of the entrance is a spiral staircase to a choir gallery fitted with further pews for the choir and an organ.

Sources

Books and journals

Crozier, John, Holy Rood Church Oxford, (1968)

Proctor, R, Building the Modern Church: Roman Catholic Church Architecture in Britain, 1955

to 1975, (2014)

Harwood, E , 'Liturgy and Architecture: The Development of the Centralised Eucharist Space' in Twentieth Century Architecture, , Vol. 3, (1998), 49-74

Websites

Taking Stock Catholic Churches of England & Wales North Hinksey - Holy Rood , accessed 05 September 2019 from [taking-stock.org.uk/building/north-hinksey-holy-rood/](http://taking-stock.org.uk/building/north-hinksey-holy-rood/)

Other

Architectural History Practice, 'Twentieth-Century Roman Catholic Church Architecture in England. A Characterisation Study' (2014) <http://www.hrballiance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/RC-C20-Characterisation-Final-July-2014.pdf>

Derrick, A, 'Taking Stock Report. Holy Rood North Hinksey.' (2007)

## Appendix II - Planning Policy and Guidance

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

The Act is legislative basis for decision making on applications that relate to the historic environment.

Sections 16, 66 and 72(l) of the Act impose a statutory duty upon local planning authorities to consider the impact of proposals upon listed buildings and conservation areas.

Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states that:

*[...] in considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.*

Similarly, section 66 of the above Act states that:

*In considering whether to grant permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority, or as the case may be the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.*

Similarly, section 72(l) of the above Act states that:

*[...] with respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.*

### Local Policy - Oxford City Local Plan 2036

#### Policy DH1: High quality design and placemaking

Planning permission will only be granted for development of high quality design that creates or enhances local distinctiveness.

All developments other than changes of use without external alterations and householder applications will be expected to be supported by a constraints and opportunities plan and supporting text and/or visuals to explain their design rationale in a design statement proportionate to the proposal (which could be part of a Design and Access Statement or a Planning Statement), which should cover the relevant checklist points set out in Appendix 6.1.

Planning permission will only be granted where proposals are designed to meet the key design objectives and principles for delivering high quality development as set out in Appendix 6.1.

#### Policy DH3: Designated heritage assets

Planning permission or listed building consent will be granted for development that respects and draws inspiration from Oxford's unique historic environment

(above and below ground), responding positively to the significance, character and distinctiveness of the heritage asset and locality.

For all planning decisions for planning permission or listed building consent affecting the significance of designated heritage assets, great weight will be given to the conservation of that asset and to the setting of the asset where it contributes to that significance or appreciation of that significance.

An application for planning permission for development which would or may affect the significance of any designated heritage asset, either directly or by being within its setting, should be accompanied by a heritage assessment that includes a description of the asset and its significance and an assessment of the impact of the development proposed on the asset's significance. As part of this process full regard should be given to the detailed character assessments and other relevant information set out any relevant conservation area appraisal and management plan.

The submitted heritage assessment must include information sufficient to demonstrate:

- a) an understanding of the significance of the heritage asset, including recognition of its contribution to the quality of life of current and future generations and the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits they may bring; and

b) that the development of the proposal and its design process have been informed by an understanding of the significance of the heritage asset and that harm to its significance has been avoided or minimised; and  
 c) that, in cases where development would result in harm to the significance of a heritage asset, including its setting, the extent of harm has been properly and accurately assessed and understood, that it is justified, and that measures are incorporated into the proposal, where appropriate, that mitigate, reduce or compensate for the harm.

Where the setting of an asset is affected by a proposed development, the heritage assessment should include a description of the extent to which the setting contributes to the significance of the asset, as well as an assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the setting and its contribution to significance.

Substantial harm to or loss of Grade II listed buildings, or Grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional. Substantial harm to or loss of assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, Grade I and II\* listed buildings, Grade I and II\* registered parks and gardens, should be wholly exceptional. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to or loss of the significance of a designated heritage asset, planning permission or listed building consent will only be granted if:

- i. the harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm or loss; or all of the following apply:

- ii. the nature of the asset prevents all reasonable uses of the sites; and
  - iii. no viable use of the asset itself can be found in the medium term (through appropriate marketing) that will enable its conservation;
- and
- iv. conservation by grant funding or similar is not possible; and
  - v. the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use;
  - vi. a plan for recording and advancing understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost, including making this evidence publicly available, is agreed with the City Council.

Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to a designated heritage asset, this harm must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Clear and extensive justification for this harm should be set out in full in the heritage assessment.

Conservation areas are listed in Appendix 6.2 and defined on the Policies Map.

### **National Planning Policy Framework**

Any proposals for consent relating to heritage assets are subject to the policies of the NPPF (July 2021). This sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. With regard to ‘Conserving and enhancing the historic environment’, the framework requires proposals

relating to heritage assets to be justified and an explanation of their effect on the heritage asset’s significance provided.

Paragraph 7 of the Framework states that the purpose of the planning system is to ‘contribute to the achievement of sustainable development’ and that, at a very high level, ‘the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs’.

At paragraph 8, the document expands on this as follows:

*Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives:*

*a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*

*b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed,*

*beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and*

*c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.*

and notes at paragraph 10:

*10. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 11).*

With regard to the significance of a heritage asset, the framework contains the following policies:

*195. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.*

In determining applications local planning authorities are required to take account of significance, viability, sustainability and local character and distinctiveness. Paragraph 197 of the NPPF identifies the following criteria in relation to this:

*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*

With regard to potential 'harm' to the significance designated heritage asset, in paragraph 199 the framework states the following:

*...great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.*

The Framework goes on to state at paragraph 200 that:

*Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:*

*a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional; b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II\* listed buildings, grade I and II\* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.*

Where a proposed development will lead to 'substantial harm' to or total loss of significance of a designated heritage asset paragraph 201 of the NPPF states that:

*...local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply: a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use*

With regard to 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of a designated heritage asset, paragraph 202 of the NPPF states the following;

*202. 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.*

The Framework requires local planning authorities to 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. Paragraph 206 states that:

*... 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.*

Concerning conservation areas and world heritage sites it states, in paragraph 207, that:

*Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 200 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 201, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.*

## **National Planning Practice Guidance**

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) was published on 23 July 2019 to support the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the planning system. It includes particular guidance on matters relating to protecting the historic environment in the section: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment.

The relevant guidance is as follows:

### **Paragraph 2: What is meant by the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment?**

Conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change. It requires a flexible and thoughtful approach to get the best out of assets as diverse as listed buildings in everyday use and as yet undiscovered, undesignated buried remains of archaeological interest.

In the case of buildings, generally the risks of neglect and decay of heritage assets are best addressed through ensuring that they remain in active use that is consistent with their conservation. Ensuring such heritage assets remain used and valued is likely to require sympathetic changes to be made from time to time. In the case of archaeological sites, many have no active use, and so for those kinds of sites, periodic changes may not be necessary, though on-going management remains important.

Where changes are proposed, the National Planning Policy Framework sets out a clear framework for both plan-making and decision-making in respect

of applications for planning permission and listed building consent to ensure that heritage assets are conserved, and where appropriate enhanced, in a manner that is consistent with their significance and thereby achieving sustainable development. Heritage assets are either designated heritage assets or non-designated heritage assets.

Part of the public value of heritage assets is the contribution that they can make to understanding and interpreting our past. So where the complete or partial loss of a heritage asset is justified (noting that the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted), the aim then is to:

- capture and record the evidence of the asset's significance which is to be lost
- interpret its contribution to the understanding of our past; and
- make that publicly available (National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 199)

### **Paragraph 6: What is "significance"?**

'Significance' in terms of heritage-related planning policy is defined in the Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework as the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.

The National Planning Policy Framework definition further states that in the planning context heritage interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. This can be interpreted as follows:

- **archaeological interest:** As defined in the Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework, there will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
- **architectural and artistic interest:** These are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skill, like sculpture.
- **historic interest:** An interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history, but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

In legislation and designation criteria, the terms 'special architectural or historic interest' of a listed building and the 'national importance' of a scheduled

monument are used to describe all or part of what, in planning terms, is referred to as the identified heritage asset's significance.

#### **Paragraph 7: Why is 'significance' important in decision-taking?**

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.

#### **Paragraph 13: What is the setting of a heritage asset and how should it be taken into account?**

The setting of a heritage asset is defined in the Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework.

All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not. The setting of a heritage asset and the asset's curtilage may not have the same extent.

The extent and importance of setting is often expressed by reference to the visual relationship between the asset and the proposed development and associated visual/physical considerations. Although views of or from an asset will play an important part in the assessment of impacts on setting, the way in which we experience an asset in its setting is also influenced by other environmental factors such as noise, dust, smell and vibration from other land uses in the vicinity, and by our understanding of the historic relationship

between places. For example, buildings that are in close proximity but are not visible from each other may have a historic or aesthetic connection that amplifies the experience of the significance of each.

The contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights of way or an ability to otherwise access or experience that setting. The contribution may vary over time.

When assessing any application which may affect the setting of a heritage asset, local planning authorities may need to consider the implications of cumulative change. They may also need to consider the fact that developments which materially detract from the asset's significance may also damage its economic viability now, or in the future, thereby threatening its ongoing conservation.

#### **Paragraph 15: What is the optimum viable use for a heritage asset and how is it taken into account in planning decisions?**

The vast majority of heritage assets are in private hands. Thus, sustaining heritage assets in the long term often requires an incentive for their active conservation. Putting heritage assets to a viable use is likely to lead to the investment in their maintenance necessary for their long-term conservation.

By their nature, some heritage assets have limited or even no economic end use. A scheduled monument in a rural area may preclude any use of the land other than

as a pasture, whereas a listed building may potentially have a variety of alternative uses such as residential, commercial and leisure.

In a small number of cases a heritage asset may be capable of active use in theory but be so important and sensitive to change that alterations to accommodate a viable use would lead to an unacceptable loss of significance.

It is important that any use is viable, not just for the owner, but also for the future conservation of the asset: a series of failed ventures could result in a number of unnecessary harmful changes being made to the asset.

If there is only one viable use, that use is the optimum viable use. If there is a range of alternative economically viable uses, the optimum viable use is the one likely to cause the least harm to the significance of the asset, not just through necessary initial changes, but also as a result of subsequent wear and tear and likely future changes. The optimum viable use may not necessarily be the most economically viable one. Nor need it be the original use. However, if from a conservation point of view there is no real difference between alternative economically viable uses, then the choice of use is a decision for the owner, subject of course to obtaining any necessary consents.

Harmful development may sometimes be justified in the interests of realising the optimum viable use of an asset, notwithstanding the loss of significance caused, and provided the harm is minimised. The policy

on addressing substantial and less than substantial harm is set out in paragraphs 199-203 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

**Paragraph 18: How can the possibility of harm to a heritage asset be assessed?**

What matters in assessing whether a proposal might cause 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.

Proposed development affecting a heritage asset may have no impact on its significance or may enhance its significance and therefore cause no harm to the heritage asset. Where potential harm to designated heritage assets is identified, it needs to be categorised as either less than substantial harm or substantial harm (which includes total loss) in order to identify which policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 199-203) apply.

Within each category of harm (which category applies should be explicitly identified), the extent of the harm may vary and should be clearly articulated.

Whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision-maker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the

adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed. The harm may arise from works to the asset or from development within its setting.

While the impact of total destruction is obvious, partial destruction is likely to have a considerable impact but, depending on the circumstances, it may still be less than substantial harm or conceivably not harmful at all, for example, when removing later additions to historic buildings where those additions are inappropriate and harm the buildings' significance. Similarly, works that are moderate or minor in scale are likely to cause less than substantial harm or no harm at all. However, even minor works have the potential to cause substantial harm, depending on the nature of their impact on the asset and its setting.

The National Planning Policy Framework confirms that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). It also makes clear that any harm to a designated heritage asset requires clear and convincing justification and sets out certain assets in respect of which harm should be exceptional/wholly exceptional (see National Planning Policy Framework, paragraph 200).

## **Paragraph 20: What is meant by the term public benefits?**

The National Planning Policy Framework requires any harm to designated heritage assets to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.

Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental objectives as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 8). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits, for example, works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit.

Examples of heritage benefits may include:

- sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting
- reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset
- securing the optimum viable use of a heritage asset in support of its long term conservation

## **Other Relevant Policy Documents**

*Historic England: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning (March 2015)*

*Historic England: Conservation Principles and Assessment (2008)*

## Appendix III - Planning History

2022 22/00808/FUL

Refurbishment of Grandpont House (listed Grade II) and erection of a new extension to create additional bedrooms, lift, chapel, dining facilities and meeting rooms.

Withdrawn 17 Aug 2022

2022 22/00863/LBC

Refurbishment of Grandpont House including rebuilding of the existing outbuilding range to the west of the existing house and works to the boundary wall along Abingdon Road including the formation of a new entrance through that wall.

Withdrawn 1 Sept 2022

2021 21/02064/CAT

Works to various trees as specified by Barrell Tree Consultancy in the Central conservation area.

Raised no objection 18 Aug 2021

2000 00/00901/L

i) Demolition of single storey extensions on north & west, removal of floors & chimney stack internally in west wing (leaving stack externally above roof), & former cottages adjoining former stable block.

ii) Extension with single storey wing on north connecting to former stable block and glazed link covered way to proposed new building on south.

(iii) Internal alterations to main house and stable block to improve accommodation. (iv) New vehicular entrance through arch in boundary wall to Abingdon Road.(Amended plan)

Application withdrawn 13 Feb 2008

2000 00/00902/NFZ

i) Erection of 3 storey building with glazed link to Grandpont House to provide 10 study bedrooms, oratory, library, conference room & ancillary facilities.

ii) Erection of new single storey service range between Grandpont House and former stable block to provide staff accommodation. (iii) Formation of new vehicular entrance from Abingdon Road to give access to parking area for 10 cars. (iv) Remodel garden through reinstatement of pound and erection of 2 footbridges.

Erection of canoe store.(Amended plans)

Application Withdrawn 13 Feb 2008

1998 98/01820/L

Listed Building consent to reinstate the east and south elevations.

Approved 25 May 1999

1997 97/01658/NFH

Part 3/part 4 storey building linked to Grandpont House for 12 study beds, Chapel, lecture room, common room & facilities. Entrance & footbridge over backwater.

Closure of access. New vehicular access to garage (5 spaces). (Scheme 2)

Refused 11 May 1999

1997 97/01657/L

Demolish 1 storey service buildings along north & outbuildings & walls etc along southern back water.

2 access openings. Alterations to Grandpont House including reconstruction of South & West facades of 3 storey rear block (Scheme 2)

Refused 11 May 1999

1997 97/01656/NFH

Erection of 2 & 3 storey buildings linked to Grandpont House to provide 12 study bedrooms, Chapel, lecture room, common room & ancillary facilities with reconstruction of south backwalks, riverside wall, railings & steps.

Refused 11 May 1999

1997 97/01655/L

Listed Building Consent to demolish rear block & range along North backwater, outbuilding & riverside walls along South backwater. 2 new access openings. Alterations to Grandpont House & staircase link to new building. (Scheme 1)

Refused 11 May 1999

1996 96/00286/BH

Application to determine whether prior approval is required for siting and design of ComTel cabinets.

Prior app request – siting & design accept 20 Mar 1996

1995 95/00518/P

Replace length of fencing

Permission not required 1 Jun 1995

1977 77/00261/A\_H

Change of use and alterations to form Boys' Club

Approved 5 May 1977

1976 76/00008/A\_H

Change of use from stables to Boys' Club

Approved 3 Mar 1976

1958 58/00766/D\_H  
Demolition of existing house and building  
and redevelopment  
Refused 11 Nov 1958

1958 58/00759/D\_H  
Change of use from house to student hostel and staff  
accommodation. Erection of Chapel in stable block and  
building on land adjoining  
Approved 9 Sept 1958

1958 58/07058/A\_H  
Change of use from store and garage and  
dwelling house to administrative office and  
staff accommodation  
Refused 30 Jun 1958

1951 51/02030/A\_H  
Change of use of 3 rooms to school  
Approved 27 Nov 1951

1927 Oxford Corporation New  
Buildings plans no. 3923  
Building of motor house to west of house,  
in stable yard.  
From 1958 plans it would appear that  
this was approved.

1911 Oxford Corporation New  
Buildings plans no.1903  
Demolition of rooms along north wall of west wing,  
changes to wall height, insertion of ground floor toilet,  
reinsertion of oeil-de-boeuf window, demolition of  
existing bathroom, changes to servants sitting room  
and insertion of larder.  
Appears to have been approved

## Appendix IV - Georgian Joinery in the West Wing

