

The White Horse, Kimpton

Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment

Listed Building Consent – Roof, Window and Basement Repairs

Job No. 039 | Grade II Listed | Kimpton Village Conservation Area
North Hertfordshire District Council

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Issued for Listed Building Consent

1.0 Introduction

Purpose: This Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment (AHIA) has been prepared by Michael Collins Architects Ltd in support of an application for Listed Building Consent for a programme of repair and restoration works to The White Horse, Kimpton. As set out in BS 7913:2013, the purpose of a heritage impact assessment is to gain an understanding of the effect of proposed works on a historic asset and how that impact might be avoided, minimised or mitigated. The level of detail is intended to be proportionate to the importance of the asset and sufficient to understand the impact of the proposals on its significance, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The asset: The White Horse is a Grade II listed former public house occupying the central part of a terrace on the northern side of High Street, at the eastern approach to the village of Kimpton, Hertfordshire. It lies within the Kimpton Village Conservation Area, designated by North Hertfordshire District Council. The building is a composite, multi-phase structure of approximately 300 years' evolution, incorporating remnants of a late 17th / early 18th century timber box frame of exceptional significance, an 18th century re-fronting and king-post roof structure, and 19th and 20th century additions to either side (Nos. 24 and 20 High Street).

Condition and need: The building has lain redundant and unused for a number of years and is in poor and deteriorating condition. The accompanying Statement of Heritage Significance and Condition Survey record extensive water ingress, slipped and broken roof coverings, failed flashings and rainwater goods, decayed external joinery, rising and penetrating damp to basement and ground-floor walls, and the partial collapse of the eastern roof ceiling. The Statement of Heritage Significance identifies that, if the present cycles of degradation remain unaddressed, the damage is likely to become irreversible – with the exceptional significance of the 17th century frame remnants placed directly at risk. The works the subject of this application are therefore primarily a holding and repair operation intended to arrest decline, restore weather-tightness and secure the fabric of the listed building.

Scope of this application: This assessment addresses a discrete package of repair, restoration and associated internal alteration works comprising: (1) stripping, repair and re-covering of the roofs; (2) structural repair of the collapsed eastern roof over the former hayloft, retaining the existing rafters; (3) removal of the redundant attic/second-floor ceiling structure to the western portion, retaining the historic trusses; (4) new timber-framed fire-compartmentation partitions to the opened-up loft areas; (5) introduction of new conservation rooflights and ventilation to the western and eastern roofs; (6) repair-led upgrading of the front elevation windows and replacement of the decayed rear yard gate; (7) repair and renewal of the lead roof coverings to the front bay windows; (8) first-floor internal alterations to the eastern hayloft (removal of modern partitions, a new ensuite and a vaulted ceiling); (9) a new timber louvred elevation to the rear of the eastern hayloft; (10) first-floor internal alterations to the western office (removal of a Victorian spine wall, a new ensuite and insulated linings); (11) repair, floor-lowering, damp-proofing and tanking works to the existing basements; and (12) external masonry repairs, including lime repointing, brick indenting and a selective breathable brick treatment. The wider mixed-use conversion of the building, including the rear elevation and any new-build elements, is not part of this application and is not assessed here.

Documents: This AHIA should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Statement of Heritage Significance (MCA, Job 039), the Headland Archaeology archaeological building report,

the Condition Survey, the structural engineer's information, and the application drawings prepared by Michael Collins Architects Ltd (existing drawings 001–004 and 01; proposed drawings 019, 021, 022 and elevations/sections 027–030 and 035).

Methodology: Following the approach adopted in BS 7913:2013 and Historic England's Good Practice Advice Note GPA2, 'Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment' (2015), each principal intervention is assessed under the following headings:

- **Proposal** – a description of the works and confirmation of whether sufficient information exists to understand their impact.
- **Impact** – the effect of the works on the authenticity and integrity of the heritage values of the asset.
- **Reversibility** – the extent to which the works could be reversed without prejudice to the asset or to future solutions.
- **Mitigation** – measures to mitigate any loss of significance, including recording and archiving.
- **Compensation** – any consequential conservation benefit arising from the works.
- **Outcome** – an overall evaluation of the proposal on the information available.

2.0 Overview of the Proposals

The proposals comprise a conservation-led package of repairs designed to halt the deterioration of the listed building and return it to a sound, weather-tight and stable condition. The driving philosophy is one of minimum intervention, maximum retention of significant historic fabric, honest and legible repair, and reversibility wherever practicable. The works have been developed in direct response to the threats to significance identified in the Statement of Heritage Significance, and in accordance with Historic England's 'Energy Efficiency and Historic Buildings' (2018) guidance where thermal upgrading of fabric is involved.

The overarching objectives of the works are:

1. To arrest the active decay of the building fabric and restore weather-tightness, thereby safeguarding elements of exceptional and considerable significance, in particular the 17th century timber box frame and the 18th century king-post roof structure.
2. To undertake repair on a like-for-like basis using matching traditional materials, retaining the maximum quantity of original fabric and securing the building's long-term physical viability.
3. To address the principal sources of moisture ingress – defective roof coverings, failed rainwater goods, and rising/penetrating damp at basement level – which are the root cause of ongoing fabric decay.
4. To carry out sensitive, breathable thermal upgrading appropriate to a building of traditional construction, where this can be achieved without harm to significant fabric.

The works engage fabric ranging from 'low' to 'exceptional' significance, but the interventions have been calibrated so that the most extensive physical change occurs only in areas of low significance, while works to the most sensitive fabric (the front elevation and the historic roof structure) are repair-led and conservative. The table below summarises the relationship between each element of the works and the significance of the fabric it affects, as graded in the Statement of Heritage Significance.

Element affected	Significance (per SoS)	Sensitivity to change	Nature of works
Roofscape – front clay pitch & rear/eastern slate	Low / Moderate / Considerable	Moderate / High	Strip, repair and re-cover; like-for-like reclaimed/matching materials
Eastern roof structure (former hayloft over carriage entrance, No. 20 range)	Low	Moderate	Existing sawn rafters retained; new ridge & spliced rafters; warm-roof insulation
Attic / second-floor ceiling structure, western portion	Low	Moderate	Lath-and-plaster ceilings removed, void opened up; historic trusses retained
Loft fire-compartmentation partitions	Low (new-build in low-significance space)	Moderate	New timber-framed plastered stud fire barriers; lightweight, reversible
Roofscape – rooflights	Low / Moderate	Moderate	New flush conservation rooflights and tile/ridge vents
Front elevation windows & rear yard gate	Exceptional (front); Moderate (rear gate)	Very High / Moderate	Repair-led re-glazing; decayed bays & rear gate replaced to match; slimline units
Front bay windows – lead roofs	Exceptional (elevation)	Very High	Lead coverings repaired/renewed in Code 5 to match; new cast-iron RWG
First-floor eastern hayloft – internal	Low / no significance (modern partitions)	Moderate	Modern partitions removed; minimal new ensuite; ceiling vaulted to reinstate loft volume
Rear elevation – eastern hayloft louvres	Moderate (rear elevation)	Moderate	Recent domestic window replaced with dark-stained vertical timber louvres (agricultural vent)
First-floor western office – internal	Considerable (plan form); wall is Victorian	Moderate / High	Victorian spine wall removed (beam over); new ensuite; breathable insulated linings
Western basement (No. 24)	Moderate	Moderate	Floor lowered, concrete slab removed, solum revealed/retained, new slab, underpinning, chemical DPC & tanking; walls and stone steps retained

Eastern basement	Low	Moderate	Floor lowered, concrete slab removed, solum revealed, new slab, underpinning, chemical DPC & tanking
External masonry / brickwork	Low – Exceptional (front elevation)	Very High (front) / Moderate	Lime repointing, brick indenting to match; selective breathable brick treatment (subject to trial)

Note on the central roof structure: The 18th century king-post trusses and the catslide roof over the central section – the elements of considerable and exceptional significance – are expressly excluded from the structural works in this application. They are retained in situ and unaltered, save for repair on a like-for-like basis as part of the general overhaul. No new structural load is transferred to them.

3.0 Assessment of Interventions

A. Roof Stripping, Repair and Re-covering

Proposal: Stripping of the existing roof coverings; overhaul and repair of the roof structure; straightening of the ridge lines; replacement of decayed battens, tiles and slates on a like-for-like basis; and re-covering. The front (south) clay-tile pitch is to be re-covered using reclaimed clay tiles to match the existing; the slate pitches are to be repaired and re-slatted to match. New dry-fixed ventilated ridges are introduced, defective lead flashings renewed, and decayed cast-iron rainwater goods replaced with painted cast iron to match existing. As noted on the proposed elevations and section, the roof level is raised by approximately 70–90mm to accommodate the new insulated build-up (battens, counter-battens and breathable insulation between and under the rafters).

Impact: The roofscape is graded in the Statement of Heritage Significance as ranging from low to considerable significance, with a moderate-to-high sensitivity to change. Its significance derives principally from the material consistency of the front clay-tile pitch with the wider Conservation Area, the legible demarcation between the clay tiles of The White Horse and the slate of Nos. 20 and 24, and the historic roof timbers beneath. The condition of the coverings is poor: the Statement and Condition Survey record widespread slipped and fractured clay tiles, sagging timbers, failed flashings and decayed rainwater goods, with associated water ingress driving the decay of significant fabric below. The proposal involves the loss of those coverings that are already broken or beyond serviceable life, but retains and re-uses sound historic material wherever possible, and re-covers in matching traditional materials. The visual character of the roofscape, its materiality and the legibility between phases are therefore preserved. The proposed 70–90mm increase in roof level to achieve a warm, breathable build-up is a minor dimensional change which maintains the existing pitch, ridge alignment and eaves relationship and is not readily perceptible within the streetscape or the Conservation Area; it will be assessed by the local planning authority on site.

Reversibility: Re-covering in matching materials is, in principle, a repeatable and reversible maintenance operation. The introduction of insulation between and under the rafters is a standard, removable warm-roof construction. The loss of already-broken coverings is not

reversible, but their replacement with matching material is consistent with good conservation practice.

Mitigation: Sound historic tiles and slates are to be salvaged and re-used, with new matching reclaimed material making up the shortfall. Roof timbers are to be retained and repaired in situ wherever possible, with replacement confined to demonstrably decayed members (see intervention B). The works are to be carried out in accordance with a schedule of repairs agreed with the local planning authority, and the breathable insulation specification follows Historic England's 'Energy Efficiency and Historic Buildings' (2018) guidance.

Compensation: Re-establishing a sound, weather-tight roof is the single most important conservation benefit available to this building. It removes the primary mechanism of decay – water ingress – that currently threatens fabric of exceptional and considerable significance below, including the 17th century frame remnants and the 18th century king-post trusses. The works also remove the accretion of ill-considered services, aerials and cabling noted in the Statement as detracting from the roofscape, and reinstate appropriate cast-iron rainwater goods.

Outcome: The re-roofing is a like-for-like repair operation that arrests active decay and preserves the materiality and legibility of the roofscape. The minor increase in roof level is outweighed by the conservation benefit of a properly insulated, weather-tight and breathable roof. The proposal is considered acceptable and to result, on balance, in a beneficial effect on the significance of the heritage asset.

B. Structural Repair of the Eastern Roof (Former Hayloft over the Carriage Entrance)

Proposal: Structural repair of the collapsed roof over the former hayloft above the carriage/gate entrance to the rear yard, within the 19th century range forming an integral part of No. 20 High Street. The existing sawn rafters – of late-Victorian or Edwardian date – are to be retained and exposed; a new structural ridge (steel) is introduced, bearing onto padstones built into the masonry gables to either side of the bay; new rafters are spliced between the existing members; and the roof is insulated between and under the rafters to form a warm roof, with the vault expressed internally where the collapsed flat ceiling has been lost. The external ridge height is retained (subject only to the general 70–90mm build-up addressed under intervention A), and the bay is re-covered to match.

Impact: The eastern roof structure is graded as being of low significance. The archaeological building report and site inspection confirm it to be a later, altered element formed of sawn (rather than hand-converted) timbers, most likely late-Victorian or Edwardian, and its ceiling has already collapsed. It does not form part of the 18th century king-post structure or the 17th century frame, which are of considerable and exceptional significance respectively and are expressly excluded from these works. The proposal retains the bulk of the existing rafters in situ, introducing new timber only where members are decayed or structurally inadequate, and transfers the new ridge load onto the flanking gable masonry rather than onto any historic roof structure of higher significance. The intervention into historic fabric is therefore limited to localised pockets formed in the gable masonry to receive the new bearings. The internal expression of the rafters as an exposed vault is a legible, honest treatment consistent with the loss of the original ceiling.

Reversibility: The retention of the existing rafters and the use of an independent new ridge and spliced members mean that the historic timber is conserved rather than replaced. The new structural ridge and insulation could be removed in the future without prejudice to the retained fabric. The localised gable bearings are not reversible but are minor and confined to masonry of lower significance.

Mitigation: A detailed condition survey and timber-by-timber record of the eastern roof is to be undertaken prior to and during the works, in accordance with the methodology set out in intervention L. Replacement is to be confined to demonstrably decayed members, with the cut positions and profiles recorded. The detailing of the new bearings is to be agreed with the structural engineer to ensure that the adjoining gable masonry, and the central roof structure beyond, are not disturbed.

Compensation: The works reinstate a weather-tight, structurally sound roof over a part of the building that is currently open to the elements following the collapse of its ceiling, arresting an active and accelerating mechanism of decay. The retention and exposure of the existing rafters preserves and reveals the tectonic character of this part of the building, and the re-use of the space supports the wider objective of returning the redundant building to viable use.

Outcome: Properly understood, this is a retention-and-repair proposal rather than a demolition: the existing rafters are conserved, new structure is introduced sympathetically and the load is taken into low-significance gable masonry, with no impact on the king-post or framed structure of higher significance. The harm is at the lowest end of less than substantial and is decisively outweighed by the benefit of securing a currently collapsed and exposed structure. The proposal is considered acceptable.

C. Removal of the Attic / Second-Floor Ceiling Structure to the Western Portion

Proposal: Removal of the redundant lath-and-plaster ceilings and ceiling/floor structure within the attic of the western portion to open up the roof void, with the historic roof trusses retained, made good and exposed. New fire-compartmentation partitions (see intervention D) and flush rooflights (see intervention E) are introduced.

Impact: The attic is graded in the Statement of Heritage Significance as being of low significance, its value attributed largely to overall plan form, with historic gable truss timbers noted as visible from the staircase. The lath-and-plaster ceilings are recorded as being in poor condition, fractured and bowing, as a consequence of the historic removal of the bottom chords from two of the king-post trusses. The proposal removes ceiling fabric of low significance but expressly retains the historic trusses themselves – the proposed second-floor plan confirms that the existing trusses are to be made good and retained. The overall plan form of this part of the building, which is the primary driver of its significance, is preserved. Given their condition and the structural repairs required to the trusses, retention of the ceilings in situ is not realistically achievable.

Reversibility: The removal of the lath-and-plaster ceilings is not reversible. However, the retention of the historic trusses and plan form means that the significance of the space is not materially diminished, and the new partitions are demountable and could be removed in the future.

Mitigation: The construction of the ceilings is to be recorded photographically during the strip-out works to provide archive information for future reference. The interface between the new partitions and the historic trusses is to be detailed so as to achieve clear legibility between historic fabric and contemporary intervention, with the trusses left exposed and read as the primary historic elements.

Compensation: Opening up the roof void and exposing the retained trusses reveals and celebrates the tectonic character of the historic roof structure, which is currently concealed above failing ceilings. The repair of the trusses (whose bottom chords were historically removed)

addresses a long-standing structural defect that has caused the ceilings below to fail. The works support the return of the redundant upper floors to viable use.

Outcome: The proposal results in the loss of ceiling fabric of low significance but retains the historic trusses and the plan form that carry the significance of this part of the building. The harm is at the low end of less than substantial and is outweighed by the structural repair and the revealing of historic fabric. The proposal is acceptable, subject to the detailing of the new partitions and their junctions with the retained trusses.

D. New Fire-compartmentation Partitions to the Opened-up Loft Areas

Proposal: In conjunction with the opening-up of the first-floor roof spaces (intervention C), the introduction of new timber-framed, plastered stud partitions to form fire-compartmentation barriers within the loft areas, providing separation between the different use areas of the building and protection to the means of escape.

Impact: The partitions are new-build elements required to achieve compliant fire compartmentation between the residential, office and public-house uses and to protect escape routes, following the removal of the failing lath-and-plaster ceilings and the opening-up of the roof void. They are lightweight timber-framed and plastered stud constructions inserted into spaces graded as being of low significance, and involve no loss of historic fabric. Their principal potential effect is on the legibility of the opened-up roof structure; they are therefore to be positioned and detailed so as to read as clearly contemporary, subordinate insertions that do not obscure or conflict with the retained historic trusses and roof timbers.

Reversibility: The partitions are lightweight, demountable stud constructions that could be removed in the future without prejudice to the historic fabric, and are therefore reversible.

Mitigation: The partitions are to be located and detailed to minimise their interface with historic roof timbers, meeting the structure cleanly and legibly, and are to be finished so as to be distinguishable as modern insertions. Junctions with retained trusses are to be detailed to avoid damage to, or concealment of, significant fabric.

Compensation: The compartmentation enables the safe, compliant occupation of the building under its proposed mixed use, which is central to securing its optimum viable use and thereby its long-term conservation. By allowing the roof structure to be opened up and the trusses exposed while still achieving fire separation, the partitions support rather than compromise the revealing of significant fabric.

Outcome: The new fire-compartmentation partitions are lightweight, reversible insertions into spaces of low significance, involving no loss of historic fabric and necessary to the safe use of the building. The proposal is acceptable, subject to the detailing of their junctions with the retained historic roof structure.

E. New Rooflights and Roof Ventilation

Proposal: Introduction of new flush-fitted conservation rooflights with lead flashings, together with flush tile vents and dry-fixed ventilated ridges, to the roof slopes over both the western portion (serving the opened-up western loft and office spaces) and the eastern portion (serving the former hayloft), as shown on the proposed plans and elevations (drawings 021, 022, 029 and 030). The units comprise flush conservation rooflights to the principal pitches and, where required by the internal layout, aluminium-framed linear rooflights to the less prominent slopes, providing daylight and the ventilation required by the warm-roof construction.

Impact: The roofscape is of low-to-moderate significance with a moderate sensitivity to change. The introduction of rooflights is a new element on the roof slopes to both the western and eastern portions, but the units serving the principal and more visible pitches are flush-fitting conservation rooflights detailed to sit within the plane of the covering, minimising their visual prominence, while the larger aluminium-framed linear rooflights are confined to the less prominent and rear-facing slopes. They are located so as to serve the internal spaces while limiting impact on the principal public views of the roofscape from High Street. The Statement records that the existing roofscape is already compromised by an accretion of ill-considered services, aërials, ducting and extraction units; the rationalised, flush approach proposed is a material improvement on that condition.

Reversibility: Rooflights and vents are removable; should they be taken out in the future, the roof covering could be made good with matching material with little residual impact.

Mitigation: Rooflights are to be flush, conservation-pattern units with a slim profile and lead flashings, and are to be positioned to minimise prominence in views from the public realm. The number and location are to be agreed with the local planning authority, with preference given to the less prominent and rear pitches where practicable.

Compensation: The works provide the ventilation necessary to the health of the upgraded breathable roof construction, and form part of a wholesale rationalisation of the roofscape that removes existing clutter and reinstates a coherent appearance.

Outcome: The new rooflights and vents are a minor, reversible addition, sensitively detailed and outweighed by the benefit of a rationalised, well-ventilated roofscape. The proposal is acceptable, subject to agreement of the final pattern and positions.

F. Windows and Doors – Front Elevation Windows and Replacement of the Rear Yard Gate

Proposal: Conservation-led repair and upgrading of the windows to the principal south (street-facing) elevation. The strategy is repair-first: existing timber frames are to be retained and repaired with new spliced timber sections, and re-glazed with slimline double-glazed units with astragals and profiles to match the existing. Sashes are to be replaced with new double-glazed timber units to match only where more than 50% of the existing frame fabric is found to be decayed beyond viable repair. The existing ground-floor projecting timber bay windows to the front elevation, which the Condition Survey confirms to be decayed beyond viable repair, are to be wholly replaced with new timber windows and framing to match the existing in profile, proportion and detail, incorporating slimline double glazing. A dark blue paint finish is proposed, with replacement lead coverings and cast-iron rainwater goods to the bays, and associated brickwork repointing and chimney repairs. In addition, and to the rear, the existing timber gate to the carriage archway giving access to the rear yard – which is decayed – is to be replaced with a new timber gate of triple-leaf (bi-folding) configuration, matching the existing in timber, finish and character, as shown on drawing 028.

Impact: The principal south elevation is graded in the Statement of Heritage Significance as being of exceptional significance with a very high sensitivity to change – the highest gradings applied to any element of the building – owing to its contribution to the streetscape and Conservation Area, its rhythmic fenestration, projecting window bays and the legible demarcation of the former public house from its residential neighbours. The Statement and Condition Survey record decay to the external joinery, including timber cills, and note that the original fenestration pattern to the projecting bays has been lost. The proposal is deliberately conservative: it prioritises the in-situ repair and retention of historic joinery, with wholesale sash replacement

restricted to a defined, evidence-based threshold (more than 50% decay) and only then on a strictly matching basis. The projecting ground-floor bay windows are an exception to this repair-first approach: the Statement of Heritage Significance records that the original fenestration pattern and fabric to these bays has already been lost, and the Condition Survey confirms the existing units to be decayed beyond viable repair. Their wholesale replacement with new timber windows and framing accurately matching the existing in profile, proportion, glazing pattern and detail is therefore justified by condition, and reinstates a sound and consistent appearance to this characterful feature of the elevation without loss of significant historic fabric. The proportions, profiles, glazing pattern and overall composition of the elevation are preserved, and any surviving historic glass (such as crown glass) is to be assessed and retained in accordance with Historic England guidance before any re-glazing. The introduction of slimline double glazing in matching timber sections is a like-for-like upgrade that does not alter the appearance of the elevation in public views. The rear carriage archway gate is a functional timber element to a subservient elevation of moderate significance; the existing gate is decayed, and its replacement with a new timber gate of triple-leaf configuration matching the existing in material and character involves no loss of significant historic fabric, while the carriage-arch opening itself – a key feature of the building's former use – is retained unaltered.

Reversibility: Slimline glazing within repaired or matching timber frames is a like-for-like substitution that maintains the established appearance. Where original frames are retained and repaired, the historic fabric is conserved. Where sashes must be replaced, the matching replacement preserves the design intent, though the loss of the original timber in those specific units is not reversible.

Mitigation: A detailed, window-by-window condition survey is to be undertaken to establish the extent of decay and to confirm which frames can be retained and repaired and which (if any) exceed the 50% replacement threshold. Splicing repairs to joinery are to maximise retention of historic fabric. Historic or culturally significant glass is to be assessed and retained where present, with the removal of crown glass specifically discouraged. Profiles, glazing bars and sections of any replacement units are to match the existing, and a photographic and drawing record is to be made of any joinery removed.

Compensation: The works restore decayed external joinery that is currently a source of water ingress and accelerating fabric decay, and reinstate appropriate lead coverings and cast-iron rainwater goods to the bays. The thermal performance of the building is improved in a manner consistent with its traditional construction, supporting its return to viable use, while the exceptional significance of the elevation is preserved.

Outcome: The proposal is a carefully calibrated, repair-led intervention to the most significant elevation of the building, prioritising retention of historic joinery and restricting replacement to an evidence-based threshold on a strictly matching basis. The appearance and significance of the principal elevation are preserved, and any harm is at the lowest end of less than substantial and outweighed by the restoration of decayed fabric. The proposal is acceptable, subject to the window-by-window survey and the retention of any significant historic glass. The replacement of the decayed rear carriage gate with a matching triple-leaf timber gate is likewise acceptable, involving no loss of significant fabric and retaining the carriage-arch opening.

G. Repair and Replacement of the Lead Roof Coverings to the Front Bay Windows

Proposal: Repair and, where necessary, replacement of the lead roof coverings to the projecting timber bay windows on the principal (front) elevation, using new Code 5 milled lead to match the existing, together with associated new rainwater goods in painted cast iron to match.

Impact: The projecting bay windows are an important and characterful feature of the principal south elevation, which is graded in the Statement of Heritage Significance as being of exceptional significance. The Condition Survey records the existing lead coverings and rainwater goods to be decayed and a source of water ingress. The lead coverings are utilitarian, weathering elements with a finite lifespan that are periodically renewed as part of the ordinary maintenance of such a feature; their repair and like-for-like renewal in Code 5 lead involves no loss of significant historic fabric and preserves the appearance and detailing of the bays. The works arrest an active source of water ingress affecting the joinery and masonry below.

Reversibility: The renewal of lead coverings is a repeatable maintenance operation; the works are inherently reversible in the sense that the detailing and appearance are maintained on a like-for-like basis.

Mitigation: Lead is to be dressed and detailed to traditional standards and to match the existing profiles. Sound existing lead is to be retained where serviceable, with renewal confined to decayed areas.

Compensation: The works remove an active source of water ingress at the base of the bays and reinstate appropriate cast-iron rainwater goods, contributing to the weather-tightness and long-term conservation of the exceptional front elevation.

Outcome: The repair and renewal of the lead bay roofs is a like-for-like maintenance operation involving no loss of significant fabric and of clear conservation benefit. The proposal is acceptable.

H. First-Floor Internal Alterations to the Eastern Hayloft – Partition Removal, New Ensuite and Vaulted Ceiling

Proposal: Within the first-floor former hayloft area to the eastern portion, removal of existing internal partitions and formation of a new, minimal ensuite bathroom, together with the vaulting of the ceiling to the underside of the roof (see intervention B).

Impact: The partitions to be removed in this area are recent additions, formed of modern sawn timber studwork with plasterboard finishes dating from the last century, and are identified in the Statement of Heritage Significance as unsympathetic later interventions of no significance. Their removal therefore involves no loss of historic fabric. The new ensuite is deliberately minimal in extent and, in conjunction with the vaulting of the ceiling to the exposed roof structure, has the positive effect of reinstating something of the original volume and character of the former hayloft, which had been lost through the insertion of the modern partitions and the (now collapsed) flat ceiling. The intervention thereby improves the legibility of the historic plan form and the reading of this space as a loft.

Reversibility: The removal of the modern partitions is not reversible but entails no loss of significance. The new ensuite is formed with lightweight, demountable construction that could be removed in the future, and the vaulted ceiling is a retention-and-exposure of existing roof structure rather than a new-build element.

Mitigation: The construction of the removed partitions is to be recorded during strip-out works for the archive. The new ensuite and any associated partitions are to be detailed as clearly contemporary, lightweight insertions that read as subordinate to, and legible against, the exposed historic roof structure.

Compensation: The works remove unsympathetic modern fabric, reinstate a sense of the original loft volume and plan form, and return a redundant space to viable use, all of which are of benefit to the significance of the heritage asset.

Outcome: The proposal removes modern fabric of no significance and, through the minimal ensuite and the vaulted ceiling, reinstates something of the lost character of the former hayloft. The proposal involves no harm to historic fabric and is, on balance, beneficial. It is acceptable, subject to the detailing of the new insertions.

I. New Timber Louvred Elevation to the Rear of the Eastern Hayloft

Proposal: Replacement of the existing window to the rear (north) elevation of the eastern hayloft with a new timber louvred elevation, formed of vertical hardwood fins in a dark stain to match the existing external timberwork, as shown on drawings 021 and 029.

Impact: The rear (courtyard) elevations are graded in the Statement of Heritage Significance as being of moderate significance, subservient to the principal frontage and making no contribution to the High Street streetscape. The existing window in this location is a relatively recent, domestic-pattern insertion that sits at odds with the historic character of the space as a former hayloft over the carriage entrance. The proposed louvred treatment is a considered response to that history: rather than introducing either a pastiche of horizontal weatherboarding or perpetuating the incongruous domestic window, it employs a simple vertical louvred screen that reads as an agricultural vent, alluding to the former loft use and the utilitarian character of the rear range. The dark-stained hardwood matches the existing external timber, and the louvres provide privacy to the new ensuite behind while maintaining ventilation. The intervention affects fabric of moderate significance on a subservient elevation, involves no loss of significant historic fabric, and is legibly contemporary.

Reversibility: The louvred screen is a self-contained joinery element that could be removed or altered in the future without prejudice to the surrounding masonry, and is therefore reversible.

Mitigation: The proportions, depth and spacing of the louvres are to be detailed so as to read as a coherent, legible element subordinate to the historic elevation, and the dark stain is to match the existing external timberwork. Final details are to be agreed with the local planning authority.

Compensation: The proposal replaces an incongruous domestic window with a treatment that better reflects the agricultural, utilitarian character of the former hayloft and rear courtyard, enhancing the legibility of the building's evolution, while providing the privacy and ventilation required by the new use.

Outcome: The new louvred elevation affects a subservient rear elevation of moderate significance, involves no loss of significant fabric, and offers a considered, non-pastiche response that references the former loft use. Any harm is at the lowest end of less than substantial and is outweighed by the improvement to the character of the rear elevation. The proposal is acceptable, subject to agreement of the louvre detailing.

J. First-Floor Internal Alterations to the Western Office – Removal of Victorian Spine Wall, New Ensuite and Insulated Linings

Proposal: Within the first-floor western portion (No. 24), removal of an internal central spine wall to form an office space, formation of a new ensuite, and the application of insulated plasterboard linings on battens to the external walls to improve thermal performance.

Impact: This is the most sensitive of the internal alterations proposed, as it alters the historic plan form of the building – the significance of the western first-floor rooms being, per the

Statement of Heritage Significance, largely attributed to overall plan form. The spine wall to be removed is, however, a Victorian element rather than part of the primary late-17th / early-18th century structure, and it lies within No. 24 – a formerly separate dwelling that was amalgamated into The White Horse and has been subject to a number of changes of use and repeated adaptation over its history. Its removal therefore continues a long-established pattern of adaptation in this portion of the building rather than erasing an original or pristine layout. Critically, the primary evidential fabric of exceptional significance – the remnants of the 17th century timber frame within the north wall – is unaffected. The new ensuite and the insulated linings affect fabric of low significance. The insulated linings are a breathable, reversible thermal upgrade applied on battens, retaining the underlying masonry.

Reversibility: The removal of the spine wall is not reversible, and this is acknowledged as the principal irreversible plan-form change in this package. The line of the wall can, however, be retained in legibility through the expression of a structural beam over. The insulated linings and the ensuite are demountable and could be removed in the future without prejudice to the historic fabric behind.

Mitigation: The spine wall is to be recorded photographically and by measured drawing prior to removal, to provide archive information. A structural beam is to be expressed over the line of the removed wall so that the historic sub-division remains legible in the plan. The insulated linings are to follow a breathable specification in accordance with Historic England's 'Energy Efficiency and Historic Buildings' (2018) guidance, with hygrothermal assessment where appropriate, and the ensuite detailed as a lightweight, legible insertion.

Compensation: The alterations enable the delivery of a viable office use within the western portion, which is central to securing the optimum viable use of the redundant building and thereby to arresting its decline. The thermal upgrading extends the life of the fabric, and the retention of the wall line in the structural expression preserves the legibility of the historic plan.

Outcome: The proposal results in a change to historic plan form through the removal of a Victorian spine wall, amounting to less than substantial harm. That harm is at the lower end of the spectrum – given the Victorian date of the wall, the already much-altered character of this formerly separate dwelling, the retention of the primary evidential fabric, and the legible expression of the wall line – and is outweighed by the public benefit of securing a viable use for the building. The proposal is considered acceptable, subject to recording and the expression of the structural beam.

K. Basement Repairs – Floor Lowering, Underpinning and Tanking

Proposal: Repair and stabilisation of the existing basements, comprising the lowering of the existing earth/brick floor level; the removal of the existing (later) concrete floor slab; the careful revealing and investigation of the existing solum beneath, to be retained where possible with new footings formed only as required to the structural engineer's design; the casting of a new slab; localised underpinning of the existing foundations; the insertion of a chemical damp-proof course (DPM slurry) to the existing perimeter and internal walls below DPC level; and the installation of a breathable free-draining wall tanking system with sump and ventilation. The existing perimeter and internal basement walls are retained and repaired; the historic stone steps from the rear yard are retained, repaired and reinstated; and new periscopic vents and air grilles are introduced.

Impact: The western basement (formed in the 19th century with the construction of No. 24) is graded as being of moderate significance, retaining evidential value through its historic brick fabric, barrel chute and the patina of its stone steps; the eastern basement is a 20th century addition of low significance. Both are recorded as being in poor condition, with hygroscopic salts,

efflorescence, fungal growth and advancing rot to ceiling joists resulting from prolonged damp and neglect. The proposal involves the loss of the historic brick/earth floor surfaces, and the removal of the existing later concrete slab, to facilitate the new floor and damp-proofing. The existing solum beneath is to be carefully revealed and investigated, and retained in situ where its condition allows, with new footings formed only where required; this affords an opportunity to record any archaeological interest at floor level, consistent with the archaeological potential identified in the Statement of Heritage Significance. The insertion of a chemical damp-proof course to the base of the walls is a localised, concealed intervention that does not affect the legibility or appearance of the historic wall fabric. The proposal expressly retains the basement walls and their evidential fabric, and – unlike earlier iterations of the scheme – retains and repairs the historic external stone steps in situ. The barrel chute and other historic features are conserved. The works address the root cause of damp-driven decay affecting the basement and the fabric above it.

Reversibility: The loss of the historic floor surfaces is not reversible. However, the tanking system is to be detailed so as to retain the evidential fabric of the historic walls, and the retention of the walls, steps and chute means that the principal evidential value of the basements is preserved.

Mitigation: A detailed survey and record of the basement areas is to be undertaken prior to the works. The existing solum is to be revealed and recorded on exposure, with the opportunity for archaeological watching-brief or investigation agreed with the local planning authority given the archaeological potential of the floor levels, and retained in situ where practicable. The specification of the chemical damp-proof course and tanking is to be compatible with the breathable performance of the traditional wall construction, and the tanking and underpinning are to be designed to ensure the stability and retention of the existing walls and their evidential fabric. The historic stone steps are to be retained and reinstated. Detailed proposals are to be agreed with the local planning authority and the structural engineer.

Compensation: The basements are presently little-used, damp and decaying service spaces whose historic fabric is actively deteriorating. Addressing the ingress of moisture and returning them to dry, usable condition is of substantial benefit to the long-term conservation of the heritage asset as a whole, removing a major source of the damp that affects the historic fabric above. The retention and repair of the stone steps and barrel chute preserves the legibility of the basements as historic service spaces.

Outcome: The basement works result in the loss of historic floor surfaces of moderate and low significance, but retain the walls, steps and chute that carry the principal evidential value, and address the root cause of damp-driven decay throughout the building. The harm is at the low end of less than substantial and is outweighed by the conservation benefit. The proposal is acceptable, subject to detailed survey and the agreement of tanking and underpinning details.

L. Remedial Works to Historic Timber and Breathable Thermal Upgrading (General)

Proposal: Across the works, remedial repair of historic timbers affected by water ingress, fungal attack and historic insect (deathwatch beetle) activity, together with breathable thermal upgrading of roof, wall and floor elements where this can be achieved without harm to significant fabric.

Impact: The works have the potential to affect historic timber of varying significance, including (in adjacent retained elements) fabric of considerable and exceptional value. However, the methodologies adopted seek to maximise the retention of significant fabric and, where loss is unavoidable, to undertake honest repair that maintains legibility. Thermal upgrading follows

Historic England's 'Energy Efficiency and Historic Buildings' (2018) guidance and respects the breathable, moisture-buffering behaviour of the traditional construction.

Mitigation: An initial detailed recorded survey is to identify individual timber components, their character and significance, and a schedule of defects and proposals on a timber-by-timber basis. The methodology for assessing and treating timber decay follows the principles set out in Brian Ridout's 'Timber Decay in Buildings and its Treatment' (2019), with the overarching principle of maximising retention of significant fabric and removing the sources of moisture that cause decay. Where masonry-wall thermal upgrades are proposed, hygrothermal assessment (WUFI simulation to BS EN 15026) is to be undertaken to confirm the absence of interstitial condensation risk.

Compensation: Honest, sensitive repair of historic timber offers the opportunity to retain and express fabric of significance, while breathable upgrading, correctly executed, extends the lifespan of the building and protects its historic fabric for the future.

Outcome: Subject to the detailed survey, recording and methodology described, the remedial and thermal upgrading works are acceptable and are, on balance, of benefit to the conservation of the heritage asset.

M. External Masonry Repairs and Breathable Brick Treatment

Proposal: Repair of the external brickwork across the building, comprising repointing in matching lime mortar, brick indenting and localised replacement of decayed or spalled bricks with reclaimed bricks to match, the making-good of decayed sills and lintels, and the removal of redundant cabling and vegetation. In addition, the application of a transparent, breathable (hygroscopic) water-repellent brick treatment is proposed to areas of exposed masonry, as indicated on the proposed elevations (drawings 027–030).

Impact: The external brickwork – in particular the flush-pointed Flemish-bond front elevation with its burnt headers and dentil eaves course – is a key element of the building's significance and of its contribution to the Kimpton Village Conservation Area, the principal elevation being graded as exceptional. The Statement of Heritage Significance and Condition Survey record decayed pointing, spalled and fractured bricks, and moisture ingress associated with high external ground levels and past cement repairs. Repointing in matching lime mortar and like-for-like brick indenting are conservation-standard repairs that retain the maximum of historic fabric and reinstate the correct breathable behaviour of the wall, and are wholly beneficial. The proposed transparent breathable brick treatment is a more sensitive matter: surface water-repellent treatments to historic brickwork carry a recognised risk of trapping moisture and causing spalling, and of altering appearance, if incorrectly specified. It is therefore proposed only as a vapour-permeable (hygroscopic) treatment that maintains the breathability of the wall, applied selectively where justified by exposure, and is not a substitute for the primary lime-based repairs.

Reversibility: Lime repointing and brick indenting are inherently repairable and consistent with the reversible, breathable behaviour of the historic wall. The breathable brick treatment is a surface application which, by its nature, is not readily reversible; this reinforces the need for it to be justified, trialled and correctly specified before any wider application.

Mitigation: Repointing is to use a lime mortar matched to the original in composition, colour, texture and joint profile, with hard cement mortars avoided. Brick replacement is to use reclaimed bricks matching the existing. The breathable brick treatment is to be confirmed as fully vapour-permeable and compatible with the traditional construction, subject to sample panels and trial areas, and its extent and specification agreed with the local planning authority before application;

it should be regarded as a measure of last resort where lime repair alone cannot address exposure, rather than a default treatment.

Compensation: The masonry repairs arrest the decay of significant external fabric, reinstate the breathable performance of the walls, and – through the removal of redundant cabling, vegetation and inappropriate past repairs – enhance the appearance and legibility of the elevations and their contribution to the Conservation Area.

Outcome: The lime-based repointing and brick indenting are conservation-standard repairs of clear benefit to the significance of the heritage asset. The breathable brick treatment is accepted in principle as a vapour-permeable, selectively-applied measure, but is subject to trial, confirmation of compatibility and agreement of extent with the local planning authority. On this basis the masonry repairs are acceptable.

4.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

The White Horse is an important local landmark and national heritage asset, listed at Grade II, lying within the Kimpton Village Conservation Area and listed as an Asset of Community Value. It has been redundant for a number of years and is in poor and deteriorating condition, with the Statement of Heritage Significance identifying that continued decay places fabric of exceptional significance at risk of irreversible loss.

The works the subject of this application are a conservation-led package of repairs intended to arrest that decay and secure the building. They have been developed in accordance with the principles of minimum intervention, maximum retention of significant fabric, honest and legible repair, and reversibility. The most extensive physical change is confined to fabric of low significance (the collapsed eastern hayloft roof, the redundant attic ceilings and the basement floor surfaces), while works to the most sensitive elements – the principal elevation windows and the historic roof structure – are repair-led and conservative. The one exception to this repair-led pattern is the removal of a Victorian internal spine wall in the western portion to deliver a viable office use, which alters historic plan form; this is addressed as the most sensitive item in the package and is mitigated by the expression of a structural beam over the wall line. The 18th century king-post trusses and the 17th century timber box frame, the elements of considerable and exceptional significance, are retained in situ and unaltered save for like-for-like repair.

Taken individually and cumulatively, the proposals are assessed to result in no more than less than substantial harm to the significance of the listed building, at the lower end of that spectrum – the removal of the Victorian spine wall in the western office being the element of greatest sensitivity, and several elements (the re-roofing, the lead bay repairs, the basement repairs, the reinstatement of the hayloft volume, the masonry repairs and the timber repairs) being, on balance, beneficial. The only elements attracting a specific caveat are the removal of the Victorian spine wall and the proposed breathable brick treatment, the latter being accepted in principle but subject to trial and to agreement of its extent with the local planning authority. In each case the limited harm is clearly and convincingly outweighed by the public benefit of securing the optimum viable use of a redundant designated heritage asset and arresting its ongoing deterioration.

This conclusion is reached having regard to the statutory duty under section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building and its features of special architectural or historic interest, and to the relevant policies of the NPPF, including:

5. The great weight to be given to the conservation of a designated heritage asset (NPPF paragraph 205), reflected in the repair-led, retention-first approach adopted throughout.
6. The requirement, where a proposal results in less than substantial harm, to weigh that harm against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use (NPPF paragraph 208).
7. The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation, and of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (NPPF paragraph 197 and Chapter 16).

The public benefits in this case are substantial: the arrest of active decay threatening fabric of exceptional significance; the restoration of a weather-tight, structurally sound and dry building; the repair and retention of significant historic fabric; and the securing of a long-term viable future for a redundant building held in genuine affection by the community as an Asset of Community Value.

It is the author's opinion that the proposals preserve the significance of the listed building and the character and appearance of the Kimpton Village Conservation Area, and satisfy the principles of minimum intervention, reversibility and legibility. It is recommended that, should consent be granted, it be subject to robust and achievable conditions – including detailed survey, recording and the agreement of repair schedules and material samples – and that the Conservation Officer be invited to remain actively engaged in the resolution of detailed conservation matters as the works proceed.

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