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HERITAGE, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

FOR
THE THATCHED COTTAGE,
SMITHS END LANE,
BARLEY,
ROYSTON,
SG8 8LH



Image 1. The Thatched Cottage - Front Road view

Site

THE THATCHED COTTAGE,
SMITHS END LANE,
BARLEY,
ROYSTON,
SG8 8LH

Compiled by Agent

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ARCHITECT ACCREDITED IN BUILDING CONSERVATION

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1. Introduction

This Heritage, Design and Access Report is written in support of a combined Householder and Listed Building Consent application for proposed works to The Thatched Cottage, which is a Grade II Listed Building.

The submitted design and this report have been carefully produced in an informed way by Kay Pilsbury Thomas Architects, who are Conservation Accredited Architects. This is to ensure the conservation and proposals to the listed building are sympathetic with its significance and take a conservation lead, balanced approach.

The proposals are also the result of a thorough pre-application consultation process with the Council.

The house is a Hall house with the oldest ranges to the front road/side. It has a typical East Anglia Hall arrangement with the taller Cross gable on the South side, with the Pantry and Solar Bedroom being at this end and the double height Hall to the centre. This house still has its vaulted Hall. The partition between the cross gable and hall has since been removed though. There is a later C17th inglenook chimney stack in the former cross passage (which was a common later alteration) where the front door would have been, but the rear door opening from the Cross Passage is still there and leads to the extension. The end sitting room in the historic range, would have originally been the Buttery and Pantry with dry store above accessed via a ladder. The staircase to the Solar bedroom is C20th and now at the front but would have been to the rear.

There is a Victorian C19th lean-to on the front of the cross wing, which old photos show originally had a slate roof. This was a service range. Two of the Victorian C19th historic casement windows still existing on the South side of the Cross wing.

The historic house has an oak frame close studded on a brick plinth and internally the daub is still visible in places. The crown post roof is visible in the vaulted Hall. The roof is thatched with a steep pitch.

In the 1970s the house was remodelled and the rear wing was added that contains the Kitchen. At this time the historic walls on the front range had brick outer facing walls constructed, retaining the inner oak frame. An enclosed large porch was also added in the 1970s to the front onto the Victorian lean-to and its roof was reclad in pantile. The rear Kitchen wing is clad in feather edge and is masonry construction with a thatched roof and curved eaves for the first floor windows.

The proposal is a balanced approach, of conservation enhancements and minor alterations that affect the C20th fabric without harm to the historic building. The conservation benefits included the removal the 1970s front porch and two facing walls with the reinstatement of the external lime plaster to the front range and reinstatement of the slate roof to the lean-to. The modern fanlight windows are to be replaced with historic flush, integral bar, timber casements and slim glazing to match the two older side windows.

The 1970s rear wing is to be remodelled internally to reposition the Kitchen to the rear garden and a subordinate single storey slate roofed, lightweight glazed extension on a brick plinth, added on the far end of the 1970s range, to provide a Dining space off the Kitchen. The side porch on the 1970s range is to be replaced with one that is more sympathetic with an oak frame and slate roof.

Adjacent to the house is to be a new building timber frames, black weather-boarded two bay garage with slate roof to match the other roofs on the house.

A full list of the proposals is contained within this report, and they are illustrated on the accompanying submission drawings

PLEASE NOTE: Please can any conditions be elemental rather than 'pre-commencement'.

2. Understanding The Thatched Cottage:

The history is as described above.

Aerial and Old O/S maps of the house:



Image 2: Aerial photo

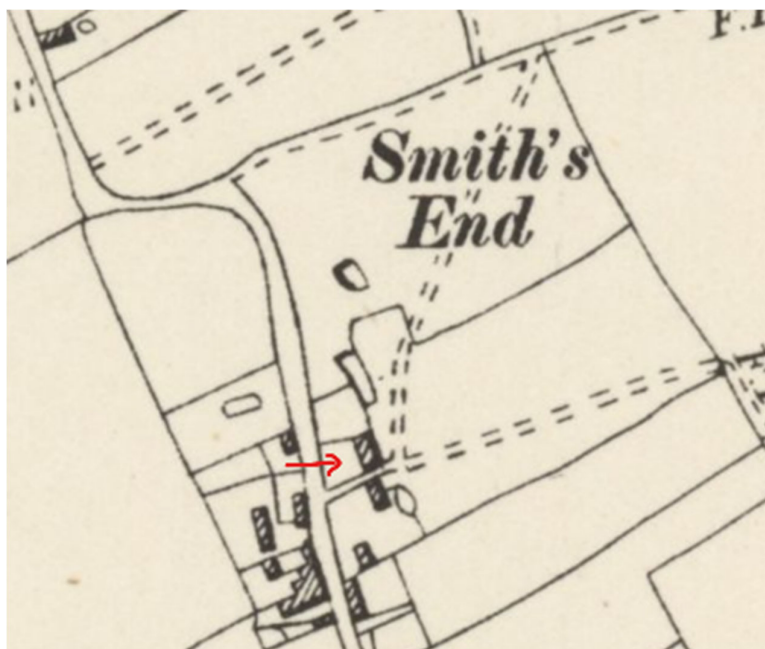


Image 3: OS map 1896



Image 4: OS Map 1919 (front lean-to is present) (above)

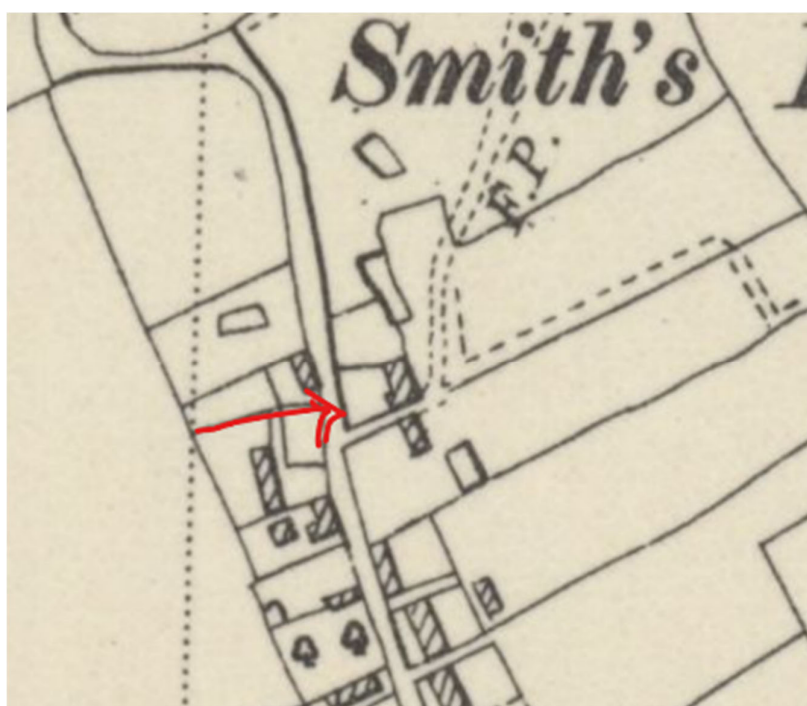


Image 5: OS map 1946 (above)



Image 6 1970s photo of the front range prior to the 70s renovations.

3. Designation records for the Heritage Asset

a. Listing

Grade II Listed on 3rd June, 1987.

“House. C16, altered C17. Refronted, extended and altered C20. Timber frame. Weatherboarded with red brick refronting. Thatched roofs with some pantiles. Originally probably a small single-ended hall house. 3 hall bays now 1 storey and attic with 2 bay 2 storey crosswing to right. C20 casements to front, 1 dormer in steeply pitched thatch. C17 ridge stack to left of centre. Crosswing to right has a taller ridge with steeply pitched gable to front with a small pane casement. Projecting forwards a pantiled lean-to addition with a 2 light casement, entrance in left return. Right return of wing has a horizontal sliding sash and casements, half hip to rear. Hipped roof to left front returns to later 2 storey wing with scattered casements and an eyebrow dormer. Interior: exposed framing, altered and partially rebuilt. Curved tension braces. Jowled posts with arched braces to cambered tie beams. Curved windbraces.”

Listing NGR: TL4006737774

b. Local Area Maps

On Heritage gateway there are 12 listed buildings within 500m of the house.
There is 1 archaeological record within 500m.

The property is located within the village Conservation area.

The site is in Flood zone: low and has a low probability of flooding from rivers and seas.



Image 7: North Herts Local Plan Policy Map – showing it is just a conservation area

c. Heritage Environment Records

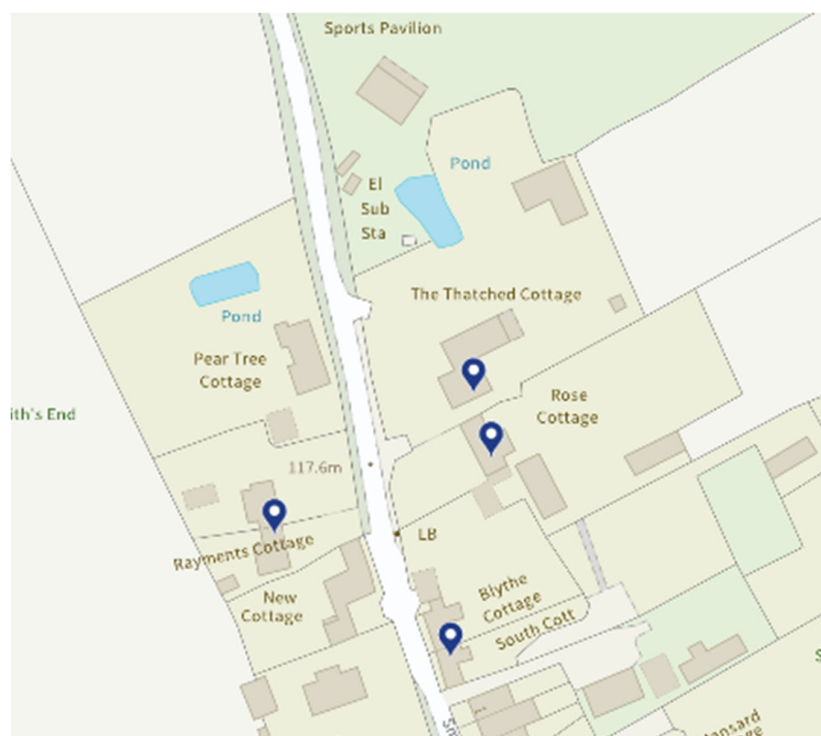


Image 8: Listed buildings nearby
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Statutory Data -The National Heritage List for England – Nearby listed buildings:

On the listed buildings map. The nearest listed building is adjacent to the South and is Rose Cottage

GV II House, at one time 2 dwellings. Late C17 or early C18, altered C20. Timber frame. Rendered and weatherboarded. Steeply pitched machine tiled roof. 4 bays, originally a lobby entry plan. 2 storeys. Ground floor rendered with a recessed entrance to left, small lattice light casements. First floor weatherboarded with two 2 light small pane flush frame casements. Rebuilt central ridge stack. Half hip to right end. Exposed plates to left end. Rendered to rear with casement windows. Interior: some exposed framing with tension braces.

Scheduled / Archaeology Monuments:

There are no scheduled Monuments. The site is not an archaeological site

4. Approach & Methodology

The approach was first to understand the history and construction of the house.

The assessment of significance has also been carried out using client information, historic map evidence, visual site assessment and desktop sources. Documentary sources referred to include:

- Heritage Gateway, Historic England List Entries, Historic OS maps, Local Planning Authority Appraisals and Planning History

The format of this Statement follows the advice contained within Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets Historic England Advice Note 12. The Statement provides analysis of the significance of the asset and its setting, and, where relevant, how this has informed the development and design of the proposals.

This study identifies areas of the buildings of historic and architectural significance and those where there had been subsequent changes and extensions. The Council was consulted at an early stage to agree significance and the principles of the approach. The aim is always to maintain as much historic fabric as possible whilst doing works and avoiding harm wherever possible.

The proposed works then look to conserve the historic fabric of the house and undo some of the 1970s works which are causing harm and reinstate and conserve the historic materials as well as allowing the evolution of the house to the rear for the Kitchen, which is now the most important room in a house.

5. Assessment of Significance - Plans of Heritage Significance / Phasing Plans

• Historic and Archaeological Interest

The house is a typical example of C16th Hall house in East Anglia. The cross wing, with the high end and Solar bedroom and parlour room below, with the perpendicular hall and its crown post roof, is still legible today. It describes how people lived in the C16th and that the bedroom was communal and meals were taken in a vaulted hall, with the services adjacent. The addition of the chimney stack then show the evolution of construction and the increased comfort in houses. The oak frame and crown post roof also informs us of the methods of timber frame construction at that time.

• Architectural and Artistic Interest

The building is also typical of the C16th hall houses in East Anglia and the appearance of the Cross wing and perpendicular hall a strong characteristic of this period. The remaining thatched roof on the hall is quite rare, as so many were changed for peg tile in the C17th, so the fact this still survives is significant.

Plan of Significance



6. Proposals

The works to the Front, West Face are all conservation benefits. They include the removal of the 1970s brick liner wall and replacing with lime plaster to the exterior. The frame and plinth appear good on the interior, but if any repairs are required we will be use conservation splice techniques and the plinth will be repointed. The exterior will then we lime-hair plastered on a wood-wool board.

The 1970s fanlight windows to the front elevation will be replaced with traditional flush casements with integral bars to match the remaining historic windows on the South-East side elevation.

The front 1970s Porch is being removed as it currently hides much of the hall historic front wall, so it removal reveals the front elevation of the Hall house. The late C19th lean-to is to have the 1970s pantiles removed and the natural slate reinstated as per the old photo above. The black feather edge boarding is then being reinstated on the range as it was.

The side elevation North-West: The North end of the Hall will have the 1970s cladding replaced with lime plaster to reinstate the lime to the end of the service wing clearly.

The cottage boarded solid door to the front on the house into the C19th service wing it to be reinstated, not the overlapping porch is removed at the front. It has a small pentice board over the head and the feather edge traditional boarding reinstated.

The fanlight windows again will be replaced with traditional flush casements

The Porch that is there has manmade tiles and is unsympathetic. The replacement porch s oak frame and has lime plastered sides with mullions to provide space for wellies etc.

The Rear North-East Face is where the new extension is being placed, so that it only touches the 1970s wing and doesn't impact the historic fabric. The desire if doe this to read as a lightweight structure. The balcony is being removed from this end, which helps re-establish the proportions of the cottage architecture. The roof is slate and sit under the adapted bay/oriel window above. The walls are elegant steel frames with glass doors and windows, on a red brick plinth with lime mortar.

The rear wall of the historic cross wing is having the brick liner removed and the line plaster reinstated on the wall, with the gable above wall-plate feather edged. The fanlight windows are being replaced with the historic flush casements and the 1970s door replaced with a lightweight steel and glass door to match the extension.

The South-East side of the 1970s wing is having the windows replaced with traditional flush casement with integral bars to match the old windows with some door positions altered and replaced with lightweight steel doors to match the extension.

The side of the historic Cross wing is to have the 1970s boarding replaced with lime hair plaster to re-establish this historic range and differentiate it from the later additions.

The internal alternations to the 1970s rear range only affect insignificant fabric and the adjustments, albeit fairly minor to partitions allow for a Kitchen to the rear garden next to the extension. The side entrance/boot room and WC created are more practical. Whilst a corridor is created through to the old house which is more practical than walking through the Playroom. None of these internal changes affect any historic fabric.

7. Pre-application Advice from Mark Simmons

25/03094/PRE2: 4 February 2026

Garage: *"I confirm that the garage will require Householder Planning Permission. This would still be a reasonably significant addition to the site, and I have considered its size and precise location in terms of its impact upon the setting of The Thatched Cottage (Section 66(1) of the P (LB & CA) Act 1990). I advise that in my considered opinion, the siting of this building will not adversely affect the listed building's setting and consequently will not harm the listed building's significance."*

Internal Alterations: *"I have considered the proposed ground and first floor layouts, and I have no adverse comments to make other than to question the removal of the post and beam toward the bottom centre of the plan extract below. I have no photos to understand as to whether this has significance or not"*

We Confirm the entire rear wing is late C20th/C21st. So that post isn't of any significance.

Side North-West Elevation:

***Please noted we've kept this as the side elevation, as the historic range is to the front and still feels like the front of the house. Also the side facing the neighbour is definitely a side elevation and not a rear elevation. So we felt best to leave as is.**

"The removal of the enclosed lobby/porch to the right-hand lean-to is positively supported and a relatively small but positive improvement would be replacing windows where there are top-hung vent style openings with side hung casements. The shortening yet widening of the left-hand ground floor window to the kitchen is unobjectionable.

The porch has been redesigned with queen struts and mullions on the side, with lime lower panels on a brick plinth. We have kept the roof slate, as historic photos show the front slope slate and the new rear roof is also slate as it is a shallow pitch too, therefore it makes sense for them all to be the same.

“What is proposed for the Dining Area addition is generally what was discussed on site and I consider that this sits reasonably well against the listed building. I also note that as discussed on site previously, the left-hand section that was part-boarded and part-facing brickwork is proposed to be lime rendered and is considered unobjectionable.”

“Finally, as stated above I find the siting of the proposed garage unobjectionable, and whilst natural slate enables the roof pitch to be kept relatively low (which is unobjectionable) I would not be opposed to a clay plain tile roof should this come forward in the formal submission. Although not clear on the submitted drawing below I would welcome an open eaves detail that expresses the rafter feet and with rainwater goods fixed by brackets to these rafter feet or onto a narrow fascia board.”

The garage has been kept as slate to match the historic slate to the front which is the tile that's been used in this context historically.

8. Photographs



Image 9: Front South –West (Road facing) Elevation



Image 10: Side North-West Elevation



Image 11: Rear North-East elevation & Side South-East Elevation



Image 12: Rear North-East elevation of old range - S.E. to the right.



Image 13: Garden, where Garage is proposed



Image 14: Existing Kitchen



Image 15: Existing Playroom



Image 16: Existing Drawing Room (Former Hall) – shows frame to interior



Image 17: Existing Snug – shows frame in interior

9. Proposal & Impact Table

Impact table for the proposals:				
	Proposal	Significance of affect material	Impact	Reason, approach and mitigation
External Changes				
1	All Elevations: Replace the C20th fanlight modern (1970s) windows (apart from the two historic South-East facing casements) to traditional flush casements with integral bars and slim double glazing to match the C19th old casements on the SE elevation.	Fabric – Low significance.	Positive. Conservation improvement	The windows are not sympathetic and were nearly all replaced in the 1970s (apart from two). The 1970s windows will all be replaced with a traditional, narrow, integral bar casements to match the remaining two C19th flush casement windows. With slim double glazing, which gives them the opportunity to be upgraded at the same time. This will be an improvement.
2	South-West Elevation (Front) and North-East (rear): Remove the exterior liner brick wall. The timber frame is there and can be clearly seen on interior. Clad with wood wool and lime hair plaster.	Fabric – Low significance. High significance behind	Positive conservation	The low level brick liner wall to the front and rear were added in the 1970s and perform no purpose and should be removed. The plinth can be repaired (it is visible on the inside) and timber-frame will then be clad in woodwool board and lime-hair plaster as original.
3.	SW Elevation: Demolish the 1970s porch	Fabric – Low Significance.	Positive	This porch overlaps the front of the house and its removal will help the cross gable read as it should. The removal is a benefit.
4.	Insulate (breathable) the timber frame on the front C19th lean-to (utility) and replace the painted feather edge board,	Fabric – Low Significance.	Positive thermal improvement	This lean-to is cold and the sheep's-wool insulation will improve thermal performance
5	SW Elevation (side) Replace the 1970s boarding on the oldest part of house with lime-hair plaster to differentiate this range and give it importance.	Fabric – Low Significance.	Positive conservation	. This wall looks long because the old range has been clad in white boarding. By introducing the lime plaster – this range is redefined as more important and will be a positive conservation of the timber frame and lime plaster helps with capillary removal of moisture as well as being vapour permeable.

6.	SW Elevation: Demolish the C20th North Porch which sits against the modern C20th/C21st rear range and replaces the porch with a traditional oak framed Porch that is more attractive with a slate roof, side mullions and side lime plaster/brick plinth.	Fabric - Low Significance.	Neutral	The existing porch has man made tiles and is very ugly. Its replacement with a well designed porch is a positive enhancement. The roof is slate as the front lean-to was historically slate and the new rear lean-to will also be slate- so this matches.
7.	SW Elevation: insert new single window to WC to right of porch in C20th wall.	Low Significance	Neutral	This window is in modern fabric and will cause no harm. It will balance with the existing single window on the other side of the porch.
8.	Insulate the rear range and replace and redecorate the painted feather edge.	Low significance fabric	Neutral	Positive thermal improvement
9.	SW: Replace the side facing door into the Utility room lean-to which sits to the front of the house. This will be a cottage style door with small pentice board.	Low significance pantry. High significance wall that it's attached to.	Neutral	
10.	NE (Rear elevation) & SE & NW – Rear single storey extension with slate roof, steel and glazed doors, brick plinth (in lime mortar). Removal of C21st balcony doors and shorten to a window.	Low Significance	Visual change	The very rear of the building is a C21st addition. The removal of the balcony doors into a casement window is an improvement as it is more in-keeping with cottage architecture. The proposed rear extension is modest and subordinate and the lightweight nature of the design and slate roof, provide a reduction in scale to the end of the building and echoes the C19th roof lean-to. This provide a much needed dining space off the Kitchen and access to the garden.
11.	NE: Replace the 1970s glazed door on the rear of the old range with a timber glazed door that is more in-keeping to match the windows.	Low significance	Positive	The door there is not right and this will match the old window on the historic range of the cottage.

12.	South-East Elevation: This wing and its windows and doors are all late C20th. The proposed doors and windows are to suit the new layout internally and compliment the extension design.	Low Significance	Neutral	The new windows and doors simply relocate other windows and doors in this elevation which are late C20th and no old fabric is effected and the proportion of solid wall to fenestration is in keeping.
13.	South-East Elevation: The boarding on the side of the old cross wing is to be removed. The walls insulated with breathable insulation where possible and the walls will have a wool/wood board and lime hair plaster finish.	Low significance of fabric removed and high significance of frame behind.	Positive	This wall is clad in the 1970s board and by replacing it with lime plaster the frame can be upgraded thermally, but also allow the historic range and solar to read as more important than the modern rear range.
Internal Changes (proposals)				
14.	Kitchen: Open C21st wall between extension and Kitchen	Low Significance	No fabric harm	This wall is C21st – there is no harm in opening it up to the extension.
15.	Kitchen: Wall between the Kitchen & Boot room: open up end of C20th wall and infill a doorway	Low Significance	No fabric harm	This wall is C20st – there is no harm in opening it up to the side or infilling the opening.
16.	Boot room and Playroom/ Corridor wall: open up end of C20th wall, infill doorway and create 2 new doorways	Low Significance	No fabric harm	This wall is C20th– there is no harm in opening it up to the side, infilling the door or creating the new doorways.
17.	WC and Playroom: Create new timber partitions within this 1970s range to form WC and Playroom	Low Significance	No fabric harm	This range is C20th– there is no harm in creating the new spaces and they will allow the a more practical house in the modern part.
18.	Playroom: Remove the timber faux chimney surround.	Low Significance	No fabric harm	This chimney surround is C21st (it has no stack above) – there is no harm n removing it.

19.	Drawing Room: Remove the C21st unsympathetic shiny timber floor and replace with a wide oak floor board	Low Significance	No fabric harm – Positive improvement	This floor is C21st and its replacement with a wide oak floor board will make a huge improvement to this significant room
20.	New Garage: A new garage is proposed to the side of the house. It is single storey only 2 bays and has a shallow slate roof and black feather edge boarded walls.	Low significance	Neutral Visual impact	The garage is small and is a good distance from the house and tucked into the corner. It does not impact the view of the house. The materials are suitable for an outbuilding in a historic context.
21.	Removal of the oil tank and replace New ASHPs behind the shed to the east (rear) of the site	Low significance	No Impact	The oil tank to the side (north) of the house is to be removed and replaced with ASHP behind the shed to the rear of the site. This is an improvement and will allow a renewable energy to run the house going forward.

22. Planning Policy

11.1. Statutory context

The Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires a local planning authority to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area (Section 72) and a Listed Building or its setting (Section 66).

11.2. National Policies

Relevant National Policies and Guidance referred to include:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024
 - Section 12: Achieving well-designed places
 - Section 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- National Planning Policy Guidance for Historic Environment (2024)

NPPF

These proposals have been informed by the relevant policy considerations in the NPPF as set out below: -

Proposals affecting heritage assets NPPF 207.

“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. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.”

This Heritage Report describes the significance of the heritage asset in detail and has been written by a practice that specialises in Conservation Architecture.

NPPF 209.

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

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

The proposals are positive as a whole and make the building more desirable and viable in its optimal use. Positive contributions and enhancements include:

The removal of the brickwork liner walls and replacement of lime hair plaster. Replacing fanlight thick glazing bar windows with ones that match the two historic flush casements with narrow glazing bars and slim double glazing. Replacing the pantiles to the front lean-to with slates to reinstate the historic front view. Removal of the front porch with covers and obscures the historic front range.

NPPF Considering potential impacts 212.

"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 above table describes in detail the impact of all the proposals. There is no harm to the fabric of the historic house range. The additions and works are all reversible and subordinate to reduce any impact.

NPPF 213.

"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."*

There is no harm or loss and therefore the tests under NPPF 200 are not applicable.

NPPF 215

"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."

There is no harm and therefore the tests under NPPF 213 are not applicable.

The approach is balanced, never the less. Public benefits are understood to include conservation benefits to a domestic listed building (as given on the .GOV website).

Therefore, the conservation benefits include: replacing the unsympathetic windows and reinstating historic flush side hung casements, introducing lime hair plaster to the front range and replacing the pantiles and reinstating the slate. These help balance the rear extension proposal.

23. Access

Not applicable – The extension will have level access.

24. Trees

There are three small hawthorn trees being removed to make way for the garage.

25. Ecology

An ecology Report is included and enhancement ecology boxes, positions and orientations are all included on the block plan.

26. Summary and Conclusions

- The extension is small, lightweight, subordinate and located on the rear of the house. It is attached to a C20/21st wall/range and no old fabric will be affected by its construction. Its materials are lightweight/elegant and the slate roof echoes the C19th front lean-to.
- The changes proposed to the rear range only impact late C20th and cause no harm.
- There are many benefits which include: The 1970s fanlight windows being changed to reinstate the older style side hung flush casements with narrow integral glazing bars and slim double glazing. Introducing lime hair plaster to allow the historic front range to read as more important and older, whilst conserving the old frame. Removal of the front porch which covers the hall range will also be a great benefit, as will reinstate the front slate roof.
- The proposed garage is very modest, low in height, with a small footprint and is a good distance away from the house. Its materials of black feather edge and slate roof are appropriate to an outbuilding in this historic context.