



**The White Horse, Kimpton
Statement of Heritage Significance**

December 2024

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Terms of Reference

The Statement of Heritage Significance for The White Horse was commissioned by the project client. The Statement has been prepared by Collins + Bell Architects LLP who were appointed in August 2020 in partnership with Michael Collins Architect LLP. The Statement is supported by a Condition Report which is contained within the appendices.

1.2 The Site

The White Horse is a Grade II listed public house set within the Kimpton Conservation Area and is located at the eastern end of Kimpton, on the northern side of the High Street (B652). Kimpton is located midway between Welwyn Garden City to the East and Luton to the West. It is linear in form, with historic properties located along the High Street. It is mostly residential in character, with newer houses set back behind the High Street, particularly on the northern side. There is one other pub 'The Boot' located toward the eastern side of High Street, other landmarks along the high street include The Lady Dacre Hall, Kimpton Primary School and at the post office at the eastern corner with Claggy Road. The Parish Church and Methodist church halls are located off the High Street via Church Lane.

The White Horse is a two storey. It forms the central part of a terrace, with dwellings on either side. The western "dwelling" is currently a part of the pub. The pub has access off the High Street; a gated archway to a rear courtyard. The pub retains residential use class at the first floor level.

1.3 The Scope of the Statement

The objective of the Statement of Heritage Significance is to provide an understanding of the significance of The White Horse through detailed investigation and research. It highlights potential threats to this significance and aims to highlight and enhance these special qualities so that they can be retained for future generations. The findings of this Statement will provide an objective framework to guide decisions on the future management of the building, from its use, repair and general maintenance.

1.4 Methodology

The following methodology was adopted in preparation of the Statement of Significance:

- Understanding the site: In-depth inspection of the building; compilation of photographic record; assessment of current physical condition; including review of previous condition.
- Assessment: Identification and presentation of the significances, vulnerabilities, constraints and gaps in knowledge and understanding of the site; threats to significance; analysis of conflicting views.

1.5 Design Team

The consultancy team is comprised of:

Michael Collins Architect LLP - Lead Consultant and Architect
 Collins + Bell Architects LLP - Conservation Specialists
 Osborne Edwards - Structural and Civil Engineering
 Headland Archaeology - Archaeological Consultancy Services
 Planning Consultants - Peter George Town Planning
 Quantity Surveyor - Baqus Group Ltd
 Principal Designer- Baqus Group Ltd

1.6 Legislative and Guidance Context

This appraisal has been conducted in accordance with the general guidelines set out in British Standard 7913:2013 'Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings' and also the Historic England publications 'Informed Conservation' and 'Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance,' 2008 and in particular responds to policies outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In respect of information requirements, it sets out 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."

Guidance on the implementation and interpretation of historic environment policy has been provided by the following Historic England publications:

- Enabling Development and Heritage Assets Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 4, 2020
- Historic England 2015: GPA2 (Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment)
- Historic England 2017: GPA3 (The Setting of Heritage Assets)
- Historic England 2019: HEAN12 (Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets)
- ClfA 2014 (Updated 2020): Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment

Although non-statutory, there are several key international charters which guide best practice in terms of protecting cultural heritage, as follows:

- Venice Charter, 1964, Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites
- Grenada Charter, 1985, Charter for the Protection of Architectural Heritage of Europe
- Burra Charter, 1988, Australia ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance

Further guidance:

BS 7913: 2013 Guide to the conservation of historic buildings (adopted Dec 2015)

2.0 UNDERSTANDING OF PLACE

2.1 Sources

The primary sources for understanding the history and development of The White Horse is the physical fabric of the building itself, with evidence of original fabric prevalent despite being subject to alteration and modernisation. In addition to review of historic maps that illustrate the building sequence, an archaeological study by Headland Archaeology was undertaken of the existing materials and detailing of the boundary walls, and outbuildings along with the study of trial pits in order to make this assessment. The physical evidence has been recorded and documented in the Condition Survey and is elaborated upon within this document. This physical evidence is supported by historic photographs and maps; notably the Tithe maps and deed plans.

Printed sources are primarily contextual with reference to Kimpton in both the Pevsner Architectural Guide to Hertfordshire, 2019 and A History of the County of Hertford: Volume 3, 1912. In addition, a local historical society provides a valuable record of both photographs and anecdotal evidence of the evolution of the village with specific reference to The White Horse.

2.2 Topography and Setting

The White Horse is located on the North side of High Street, Kimpton; a village in Hertfordshire. Kimpton Village lies in a valley between Luton and Welwyn. The Conservation Area is bounded to the West by 20th century housing and to all other sides by open fields. North-east of the Conservation Area is the Registered Park and Garden of The Hoo, its estate house now demolished, the lodge of which sits within Kimpton Village Conservation Area.

Occupying a rectangular plot the principal elevation faces south and is a prominent feature to the eastern approach to the village. The elevation to the West, predominantly formed by the gable of no. 24 High Street and boundary wall, faces onto the boundary with No. 26 High Street with the East elevation forming a party wall condition with No. 20. The White Horse is a two storey building forming the central part of a terrace, with dwellings on either side. The western portion, originally a dwelling, is currently a part of the pub.

Set within a rural village context predominantly of red brick and clay or slate roof tile palette, the main elevation is set back from High Street with three projecting square window bays and a carriage arch gaining access to the rear yard providing articulation to the brick facade.

Principal access is provided via the most eastern projecting ground floor bay. Another former entrance door to No. 24 is disused, and is bounded by a low brick wall with glazed tile cope. The topography is fairly level across the length of the front elevation and to the rear courtyard with bitmac hardstanding covering both.

Around Kimpton Village Conservation Area, the predominant building material is red brick, although this encompasses a range of building types and uses, from the re-fronting of timber-framed buildings to 19th century terracing. There are a number of timber-framed buildings in Kimpton Village. The Little Priory and Brewers Cottage on High Street has later alterations including a 19th century brick front but has exposed timber-framing on its west side. North of this, on Church Lane, Number 2 is a 17th century timber building with all of its framing exposed. This has two brick outhouses to its rear, also listed the Bakehouse, and the Slaughterhouse, which are in brick, but with weatherboarding and some timber features. Other timber buildings are rendered with pargetting on their principal elevations, for instance the 16th century, 46 High Street and The Old White House, of roughly the same date. At the east end of the Conservation Area, the 16th century Ballslough Farm has an impressive double gable to High Street with exposed studwork and 19th century red brick infill. West of this are several farm buildings with black-painted weatherboarding.

Red brick buildings span the whole visible development of the village and the earlier ones frequently are built in Flemish bond with burnt brick headers contrasting with red brick stretchers while 19th century buildings tend to be plain, though this is not a clear distinction. At the east of the Conservation Area are two pairs of farm cottages which are in brick but pebble-dashed, which somewhat masks their historic character. In the north part of the Conservation Area, west of Church Lane and facing onto what is now a small green space but which was historically allotments, are a series of small brick buildings which are potentially former squatters' cottages. Notably different is the 19th century chapel on the village green which is built in a dark blue/purple brick with red/orange brick detail.

2.3 Designations

The White Horse is designated Grade II Listed Building by Historic England and as such is one of the 92% of listed buildings in England recognised for its national importance and special interest and is protected under the legislation set out in the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The Act prohibits any unauthorised works to the listed building or curtilage, including those resulting in demolition, alteration or extension, which would affect the character as a building of special architectural or historic interest. Works must be authorised through the application and granting of Listed Building Consent, which is administered by the North Hertfordshire District Council Planning Authority, under the advice of Historic England.

The heritage asset lies within the Kimpton Village Conservation Area under the jurisdiction of North Hertfordshire District Council. Kimpton Village Conservation Area was designated by North Hertfordshire District Council in 1969 and its boundary was amended in 1990. The boundary includes all of the historic settlement of Kimpton and the lodge of nearby estate The Hoo.



Fig 1. Existing Front Elevation

2.4 Historical Overview

Kimpton is a medieval village that appears mainly to be a linear development along High Street, although there is a village green north of the High Street of uncertain date. The Church of St Peter and St Paul probably has 12th century origins although the remainder of the buildings in the village appear to be post-medieval.

Across the Conservation Area there is evidence of early post-medieval building, expansion in the 18th century, and further 19th century development. The village remains essentially unchanged on Ordnance Survey maps from the late 19th to mid-20th century, except for the appearance of housing developments west of the village between the two World Wars. Post-war, there has been a large amount of modern development in and around the village, greatly expanding its size.

The White Horse is a composite, multiphase building which has undergone stages of extension, alteration, internal subdivision and change in use over its c. 300 year history. This analysis, undertaken by Headland Archaeology, has been based on the results of a site inspection, including observation of open structural interventions and visible building materials, structural relationships between adjoining fabric, and information visible in the historic map sequence.

In 1837, the building is described as being a cottage and garden, one of a row of three, owned by John Marshall; a brewer from Hitchin.

In its current state the site incorporates three separate buildings now joined to form a single property:

- 1) The White Horse- the central, earliest section dating from the late 17th – early 18th century, recorded as 22 High Street. This comprises three structural bays; in the 19th century the western bay formed part of 24 high street (Forge View) and was also a separate property in the later 20th century (24a). The building was extended to the north in the 18th century and again in the early 20th century (including the addition of a basement);
- 2) A two-storey 19th extension to the west of the White Horse (24 High Street) with basement and 19th and 20th century outbuildings to the rear; and
- 3) A 19th century carriage entrance with single storey accommodation above to the east of the White Horse, forming an integral part of 20 High Street which is located beyond the site boundary to the east.

In its earliest incarnation the building was a standalone two-storey cottage (or row of cottages) fronting High Street, which appears to have have been timber framed and was one room (4.07m) in depth. The timber framing may date to the late 17th or early 18th century and is most clearly evident in the upper storey, notably the beams and floor joists exposed in the ceiling above ground floor in the western half of the building, the loft space to the rear of the first floor rooms, and partitioning between the western upstairs living rooms.

The exposed timber framing in the loft space incorporates a lower rail, braces and studs which formed a rear elevation. The wall plate at the top of this frame is a later insertion and includes redundant mortise joints which have no corresponding timbers or joins elsewhere in the frame. The lower rail also has redundant pegged joints along its northern edge, likely to mark the position of removed struts relating to a later 18th century catslide roof, later removed and reconstructed in the late 19th century. The frame has no infill, exposing the rear of the plaster and lath wall on its southern face.

It is possible that elements of this framing extend to ground floor level, a vertical timber in the wall behind the present bar is visible in a void containing modern electrical services.

Between the western two living rooms at first floor level are two timber-framed partitions, likely to have formed the original stair enclosure but now used as a cupboard, with a modern inserted staircase to the rear.

The eastern and western walls of the earlier building have been lost following extensions to either side in the 19th century.

The western and northern boundaries are formed by flint walls which are likely to be 18th or early 19th century in date. The walls are constructed using uncoursed field flints which have been repaired and repointed in localised areas. Piers and coping are brick.

Within the western boundary is a zone of infill brickwork which marks the position of a removed 19th century outbuilding. The northern wall also contains features at the western end indicating the position of removed outbuildings which are visible in the historic map sequence. These include horizontal timbers set into the wall and horizontal bands of repair in brick which may indicate the position of further removed timbers.

A detailed breakdown of the genesis of the building by Headland Archaeology is contained in Appendix B.

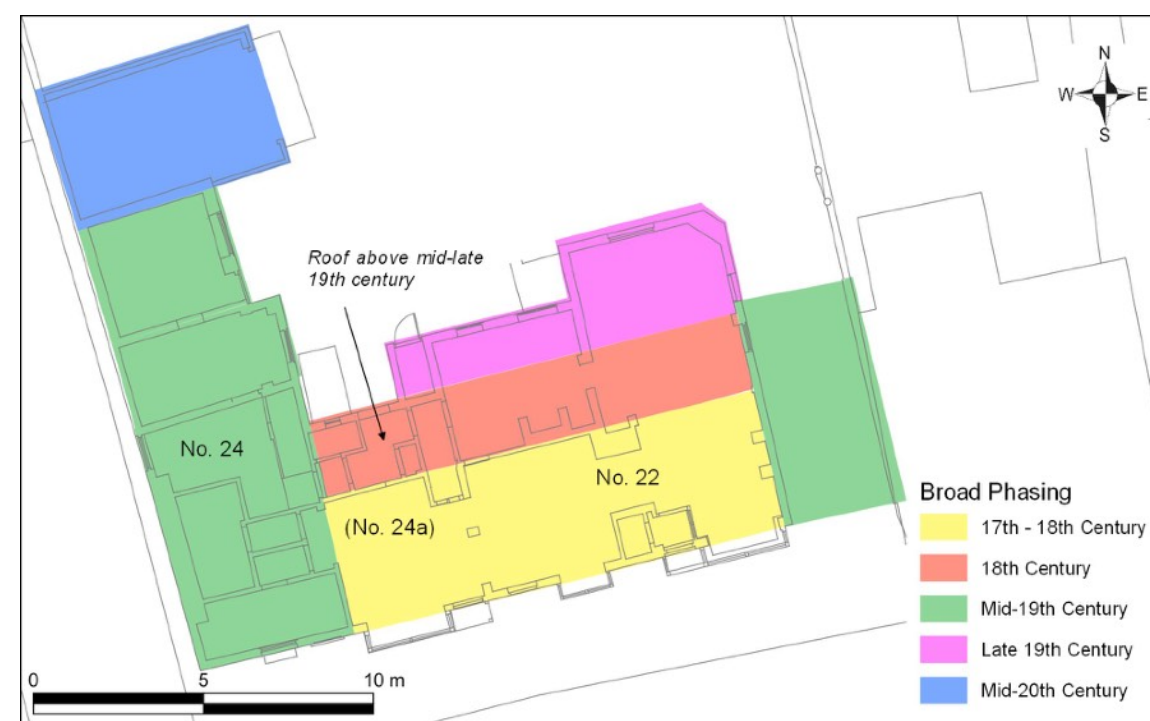


Fig 2. Broad Phasing Diagram as taken from Headland Archaeology Report

2.5 Access

The White Horse is located on a public bus route with a bus stop outside No. 24 High St. There are a number of bridleways and public footpaths leading from Kimpton Village that provide bicycle and pedestrian access from the surrounding area. Car access is not ideal, as the building is sited directly on a busy thoroughfare and parking is currently limited to nearby residential streets.

Universal access is currently provided via a concrete ramped access to the eastern entrance to the public house. Numerous level changes occur throughout the building and there is currently no lift provision to the upper floors which are currently used as an office and private residence. The building is currently closed to the public.

2.6 Condition

The building is currently in poor condition and it is crucial that works are carried out relatively quickly to prevent further decline. A condition survey was carried out and the report is contained in Appendix 02.

2.7 Gaps in Knowledge

Historic photographic evidence is limited and surviving architectural and construction drawings could not be sourced. While the detailed on-site survey and careful investigation uncovered much information regarding the original function and appearance of both the external envelope and each of the internal spaces, some information remains unclear without further invasive means of investigation.

Following analysis and investigation by Headland Archaeology, the following elements have been identified as being areas of uncertainty:

1.) The staircase at ground floor level in the rear of no. 24 has clearly been inserted after construction of the extension between 1837 and 1881, as the staircase passes in front of a sealed former window. The date of this alteration is unknown. It has provisionally been dated to the early 20th century.

2.) In the southern half of the bar area there is a composite structure which comprises a modern and earlier brick wall, steel RSJ and timber upright- it is likely this structure incorporates part of the earlier timber frame, however there is a considerable degree of alteration.

3.) The outbuilding to the north the scullery of No 24 incorporates a flint wall which may have been part of an earlier outbuilding visible on the 1837 tithe map.

3.0 APPROACH TO SIGNIFICANCE

3.1 Approach to Significance

The basis of protection for buildings of cultural heritage significance is understanding their unique identity, expressed as a collection of values that can be enshrined by a place – in other words, what is important, and what aspects of the building contribute to that importance.

The White Horse embodies a range of values relating to historic, cultural, social and associational aspects of its past, present and potential future use. An overview of these helps define what makes the building special, and is therefore essential to making informed decisions about future levels of intervention, management and interpretation.

The following assessment of significance is laid out in accordance with the documents Historic England Conservation Principles, 2008 and British Standard 7913: Conservation of Historic Buildings, 2013, which acknowledge that understanding both the tangible and intangible significances of a historic building enables effective decision making about its future. The principles state that sustainable management of a heritage asset must begin with gaining an understanding of its cultural heritage values, and then by setting out its significance, in order to guide appropriate conservation decision making which seeks to sustain those values. Further, The ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Significance (1988, also known as The Burra Charter), lays down the principles for assessing cultural significance, defined as “the aesthetic historic, scientific or social values for past, present and future generations.”

Historic England Conservation Principles, 2008, clearly states, “A ‘statement of significance’ of a place should be a summary of the cultural and natural heritage values currently attached to it and how they interrelate, which distils the particular character of the place. It should explain the relative importance of the heritage values of the place (where appropriate, by reference to criteria for statutory designation), how they relate to its physical fabric, the extent of any uncertainty about its values (particularly in relation to potential for hidden or buried elements), and identify any tensions between potentially conflicting values. So far as possible, it should be agreed by all who have an interest in the place. The result should guide all decisions about material change to a significant place.”

Note that the following Summary Statement of Significance (Section 3.2) is likely to change with time, as new information becomes available.

3.2 Assessment of Cultural Values

BS Standard 7913 identifies four categories of primary values, paraphrased as follows:

1. Evidential value

An element of an historic asset that provides evidence about past human activity, including standing structures that are easily visible, as well as those that may be hidden below ground or under water. This aspect of value is strongly related to physical remains, but may also include documentary sources, pictorial records and artefacts.

2. Historical value

These aspects of significance are often less tangible than physical evidence, including associations with notable people, or historical events or developments. They often connect past people, events and aspects of life with the present, and are likely to have changed with time of shifting perspectives. Historical values are less vulnerable to change than evidential values.

3. Aesthetic value

This is derived from the way in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from an historic asset, including its appearance and how it lies within its setting. As such, this aspect of value is more subjective than the preceding classifications, being particularly sensitive to change over time and subject to fluctuations depending on many factors.

4. Communal value

This element of value derives from the meanings an historic asset holds for those who relate to it, or for whom it forms part of a collective experience, or memory. This may include emotional links, and aspects of the site that people can relate to their collective history and heritage. It is important to remember that not all aspects of communal value are positive, and can often relate to uncomfortable experiences and events. Aspects of social value are included in this category. Communal value will change over time.

3.3 Summary Statement of Significance

The White Horse is a building of special interest and local significance, as reflected in its designation as a Grade II listed building under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

The building is, unfortunately, suffering from ongoing deterioration that is directly affecting historic fabric. If remedial work is not undertaken, this decline will only accelerate.

The heritage asset has been subject to pronounced change since its inception as a single-room width 17th century cottage or row of cottages. As a consequence, much of the original evidential fabric has been lost with the primary exception of remnants of the timber box frame which are of exceptional significance. With the exception of the ‘book-ending’ of the two dwellings in the 19th century, many of the other historic interventions do not retain their integrity due to their subsequent major alteration from later phases. Of importance is the asset's place as part of a suite of nearby buildings within the Kimpton Village Conservation Area that retain evidence of timber box frames with subsequent brick infills and which are reflective of the greater tectonic development of the English rural vernacular.

The White Horse's contribution to the streetscape and Kimpton Village Conservation Area, are of moderate historical significance. Its genesis can be clearly charted through a series of historic maps, notably the Tithe map, forming a key point of orientation to those travelling from the east into the village. It is an important and distinctive element with its distinctive late-addition square projecting window bays forming an important feature in a streetscape largely dominated by residential buildings of a similar materiality. This common palette of clay tile and red brick, though reflective of varying architectural periods, is a key contributor to the significance of the Kimpton Village Conservation Area.

It is noted that the asset has socio-communal value by its very nature of being a public meeting place and, based on a historic community campaign, is held in genuine affection by the residents of Kimpton.

Summary of Key Significances

- The White Horse is designated Grade II Listed Building by Historic England and as such is one of the 92% of listed buildings in England recognised for its national importance and special interest and is protected under the legislation set out in the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
- The White Horse is a composite, multiphase building which has undergone stages of extension, alteration, internal subdivision and change in use over its c. 300 year history.
- The buildings evolution from single-span domestic dwelling to public house is primarily represented through the evidential fabric of the 17th century timber box frame.
- The overall plan form of the building, notably the identification of the original rear single-span wall (now internal) and distinction between the central section and late 19th century additions of No. 20 and No. 24 High Street.
- The White Horse, in line with other listed buildings within the Conservation Area, demonstrate evidence of timber box frames with subsequent brick infills and which are reflective of the greater tectonic development of the English rural vernacular.
- The building is a key contributor to the socio-communal dynamic of Kimpton through its role as a public gathering place; a role it had played for approximately 200 years prior to its recent closure.
- The White Horse is a key contributor to the built environment of Kimpton and its current aesthetic value both enlivens the streetscape and sets it apart as a public building.

3.4 Discussion of Primary Significances

Evidential

The evidential value of The White Horse is considerable. Although there has been some loss and alteration of questionable architectural quality, a proportion of the original fabric remains internally, albeit concealed in some places, with original clear uses still legible, particularly when considered in plan form.

In its earliest incarnation the building was a standalone two-storey cottage (or row of cottages) fronting High Street, which appears to have been timber framed and was one room in depth. The timber framing may date to the late 17th or early 18th century and is most clearly evident in the upper storey, notably the beams and floor joists exposed in the ceiling above ground floor in the western half of the building, the loft space to the rear of the first floor rooms, and partitioning between the western upstairs living rooms.

The exposed timber framing in the loft space incorporates a lower rail, braces and studs which formed a rear elevation. The wall plate at the top of this frame is a later insertion and includes redundant mortise joints which have no corresponding timbers or joins elsewhere in the frame. The lower rail also has redundant pegged joints along its northern edge, likely to mark the position of removed struts relating to a later 18th century catslide roof. The frame has no infill, exposing the rear of the plaster and lath wall on its southern face.

Between the two western rooms at first floor level are two timber-framed partitions, likely to have formed the original stair enclosure but now used as a cupboard.

In the later 18th century the building was widened with a single-storey outshoot 2.1m to the north, and the southern elevation was re-fronted in red brick in a Flemish bond. It is probable that a catslide roof was added above the northern extension at this point.

On the southern elevation the bricks used include variously vitrified examples which are also present in the dentil brickwork at eaves level, indicating this feature is contemporary with the re-fronting. It is possible that elements of earlier timber framing are present within this wall.

On the northern elevation the only remaining evidence for the widening of the building is a short section of wall on the western side, constructed using the same brick as the southern elevation. This wall has been lost to the east due to further northward extension in the 20th century. Internally the southern wall of the kitchen includes a brick-built fireplace and chimney above, which relates to this phase. While the roof above the extension on the western side still retains the catslide form, the roof timbers visible in the loft space indicate that this has been replaced, potentially in the later 19th or early 20th century. The eastern side of the roof was re-profiled in the early 20th century as part of later extension.

There is evidence that an inglenook fireplace was present between the central and eastern bays. At ground floor level this has been removed, however an RSJ spanning the ceiling at ground floor level supports a brick-built chimney above, which continues through the loft and emerges at the roof ridge. It is possible that this fireplace was originally positioned at the eastern end of the building and that the eastern bay is a later addition. This potential relationship is not currently obvious, however there is a slight misalignment between the eastern bay and the western and central bays, and it is notable that end-stacks are prevalent elsewhere in Kimpton.

To the west a two-storey cottage (No 24 High Street) plus basement was constructed, slightly deeper in plan to the north than the White Horse. The 1881 OS map depicts this extension with a brace, indicating that it was connected internally to the older portion of the building on its eastern side. During this period No 24 was also extended further to the north in two separate stages, with the addition of a single storey scullery abutting the northern elevation, and a second outbuilding abutting the scullery, at each stage the brickwork clearly a later addition. As noted above, the second outhouse may incorporate part of an earlier flint wall, otherwise the external walls of each of these buildings are mid-late 19th century. The scullery incorporates a single chimney in the north east corner, with the base of a brick-built washing 'copper' beneath.

In the early part of the 20th century the north east corner of the White Horse was extended at ground floor level in red brick to create a larger ground floor plan, a beer cellar beneath with barrel chute, a flat-roofed extension which now forms the northern half of the kitchen, and a re-profiled catslide roof with an additional room beneath at first floor level.

The extension included modifications to the eastern wall of the White Horse within the cart entrance to create a window and door in the North east corner.

The beer cellar is whitewashed brick with painted brick floor, and painted brick barrel chute which opens to the rear yard to the West. A timber staircase rises from cellar to the South and opens out through a hatch behind the bar.

Photographs of the White Horse in the late 19th and early 20th century indicate that from at least this date the front of the pub included the existing three flat-roofed window bays at ground floor level. These are all of timber construction. The more substantial eastern and western bays are set on dark brown glazed brick plinth walls, and incorporate door openings. The smaller central window is set on a rendered plinth wall.

The main roof above the front rooms of the White Horse is an amalgam of timbers of differing dates and does not easily fit within the phasing of the buildings below. The primary trusses are king-post form with pegged joints and are most likely 18th century in date. The lower tie beams have been removed with the result that the ceilings below are sagging, and there are no principal rafters as such. The roof is further supported with intermediate pairs of curving braces. On the southern flank the single purlin is a substantial sawn timber and the rafters are robust square-section timbers. By contrast single purlin on the northern flank of the roof is a roughly shaped roundwood timber with less substantial rafters, the lower ends of which are supported by additional upright struts.

Modifications are present towards the western end of the roof at the junction with the brick gable of No. 24, with the addition of a number of struts and diagonal braces likely to date to the construction of No 24 itself (Phase 4a). Even more extensive modifications are present on the northern flank of the roof at the eastern end, where a shallow pitch catslide roof has been added during the extension of the pub in the early 20th century (Phase 6). This latter change comprises a row of raised rafters supported with struts connected to the original rafters.

The catslide roof to the North which leans against the northern side of the White Horse had an earlier precursor, but the existing fabric is most likely 19th century and has been altered in the 20th century. At the point of attachment to the timber framing at the rear of the Phase 1 structure, the rafters of this roof rest on the wall plate.

In addition to the designed fabric, the building bears a distinctive patina of use which is significant to the evidential value as it relates to the history of heavy use over a sustained period. Informal signs of the history of everyday usage, although perhaps seemingly innocuous, add a further layer of interest in terms of the social history and use patterns of the building.

The detailed evolution of the building, as analysed by Headland Archaeology, surviving historic maps and photographs provide a sound base from which to make a range of conservation decisions.

In determining whether the evolution of this building is deemed to contribute to its significance, it is important to note that much of the evidential fabric as a result of later additions are either of questionable heritage quality or have been so altered by subsequent works i.e. readjustment of the rear roof pitch. However, the plan form, delineated by the single span rear wall (now internal), and formation subsequent 19th century dwellings to either side, are a strong contributor to evidential value.

Historical

The White Horse is of moderate historical significance, providing valuable socio-historical context within the village of Kimpton and wider rural landscape of North Hertfordshire, notably in its evolution from 17th century dwelling to public house reflected within its current plan form.

Historic research indicates that the village once had a prevalence of ale houses, mostly arising in the 17th-18th century due to its proximity to St Albans and The Great North Road. As such, buildings such as this were once fairly common in rural England, but as social and cultural values have evolved, many have become redundant and have subsequently been significantly altered beyond recognition or lost altogether. The White Horse now remains as only one of two public houses in the village.

Of key historic significance is the original 17th century timber box frame and its relationship to later phases of construction. The availability of good quality timber for building varied both through time and regionally. Its availability fundamentally influenced the way buildings were constructed, and typically only in densely wooded parts of the country did the availability of better quality timber make possible larger and better carpentered structures in villages and on farms. Oak is the principal timber used although elm appears occasionally. The use of soft woods such as pine generally indicates a date in the eighteenth century or later. From the eighteenth century timber-framing was increasingly confined to dwellings of the lowest status. In general, considerable chronological and geographical structural variations occur in timber construction. The re-use of external timbers brought from dismantled buildings elsewhere was also fairly common, can often be identified by fine surface soft-rot, and is evident in some of the timbers within building. Historic evidence of Deathwatch beetle damage indicates that the frame may be oak.

Aesthetic

The aesthetic significance of The White Horse is moderate. While it cannot be claimed to be an architectural masterpiece, the building presents a pleasant and well proportioned front facade from the western approach to the village along the High Street. Of particular note is the three square, projecting window bays with flat hoods which set the heritage asset somewhat apart from its more domestic neighbours and provide a level of engagement with the street. While the building has played no role in public life for a significant period of time, it forms part of a composition of period buildings along High Street, that contribute to the cohesive aesthetic of the village. These include the Stone House, 1-3 High Street, The Brewers Cottage and Little Priory. and 30, 32 and 34 High Street. These buildings present, for the most part, a consistent two-three storey aesthetic and scale with repeated use of clay roof tiles, plain or chequered red brick with burnt headers and timber casement windows of varying configurations. It could be argued that the preservation and continued use of these buildings creates a civic pride that in turn creates a sense of community within the village itself.

Communal

The communal value of The White Horse is moderate. The Save the White Horse Campaign, instigated in 2017, saw concerned villagers instigate a campaign and business plan to retain the building under community ownership and successfully get the building listed as an Asset of Community Value. The history of the asset as a public house for gathering, sets it within the collective memory of the community, which, in turn, provides a sense of ownership.

3.5 Relative Significance

As identified by BS 7913, where changes to the fabric or use of a historic building or its setting are planned, the potential impact of that change on its significance should be identified and quantified. The impacts from change can either be direct (i.e. affecting the fabric or character of the historic building), or indirect, (i.e. altering spatial qualities or relationships within its setting). Change that protects or reveals the historic building’s significance should be encouraged, whilst change that has the potential to be detrimental to the significance of the historic building should be avoided where possible.

The various spaces or elements within The White Horse have been assessed and graded, based upon the contribution they make to the overall significance of the building. This will assist in the future conservation and management of the building, to protect and enhance the significance. A guide to the grading levels is outlined below;

Exceptional Significance

A space or element of the building, which is of great importance, and is integral to the overall significance and character of the building. Layout and original fabric are intact, and the space or element is a strong example of a particular period or style.

Considerable Significance

A space or element of the building, which makes an important contribution to the significance and character of the overall building. Layout and original fabric are substantially intact, and the space or element is a good example of a particular period or style.

Moderate Significance

A space or element of the building which contributes to the overall significance of the building but is not a key component.

Neutral Significance

A space or element which neither contributes, nor detracts from the significance of the building.

Negative

A space or element which detracts from the significance of the building.

3.6 Table of Relative Significance

The various spaces or elements within The White Horse have been assessed and graded in the table below, based upon the contribution they make to the overall significance of the building. This will provide an objective framework to assist in the future conservation and management of the building, to ensure the special qualities are retained over the various phases of works. A guide to the grading levels is outlined below and highlighted on the accompanying colour coded floor plan;

Exceptional Significance

A space or element of the building, which is of great importance, and is integral to the overall significance and character of the building. Layout and original fabric are intact, and the space or element is a strong example of a particular period or style.

Considerable Significance

A space or element of the building, which makes an important contribution to the significance and character of the overall building. Layout and original fabric are substantially intact, and the space or element is a good example of a particular period or style.

Moderate Significance

A space or element of the building which contributes to the overall significance of the building but is not a key component.

Low Significance

A space or element which makes little or no contribution to the significance of the building.

The elements or spaces have been subsequently graded according to their sensitivity to change, as outlined below;

Very High

Even minimal change or alteration has the potential to negatively impact upon the significance of the building.

High

Some small degree of change or alteration is possible, without having negative impact upon overall significance.

Moderate

A reasonable degree of change is possible.

Low

The space is not of special importance and a considerable degree of change is possible.

This process has identified that the following elements (which were graded either ‘negative’ or ‘low’ significance) can be changed without harming the overall significance of the structure; the Eastern Basement, the Northern portion of the Ground Floor Plan, No. 24 High Street Ground Floor, the external shed, the First Floors of No. 20 and No. 24 High Street, First Floor Kitchen, the Second Floor of No. 24, Flat Felt Roof and Catslide Roof to the Rear and Roofs of the existing outshoot to No. 24. In those rooms or spaces deemed to be of low significance, a considerable degree of change is considered possible. In such instances, as is specified by the Historic England Conservation Principles, original fabric or significant elements, such as the original timber frame, should ideally be retained in place in order to maintain authenticity and avoid dislocation of historic fabric from its contextual setting. However, where this is not feasible or the space is of minimal significance, a record of the space/element should be created and the materials or elements should be reused elsewhere in the building, particularly in areas considered to be of considerable or exceptional significance.

3.6 Table of Significance

EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS AND ELEMENTS					
AREA	SIGNIFICANCE	CONTRIBUTION TO OVERALL SIGNIFICANCE	SENSITIVITY TO CHANGE	KEY ELEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
Principal South Elevation	3no. Projecting flat headed window bays to central section allude to the public/ commercial nature of the building and enrich the streetscape. - Form, massing and well-balanced rhythmic fenestration conveys modest but well-proportioned nature of the building. - Building reflects the consistent material approach of red brick and clay and slate tiles to the Kimpton Conservation Area although this encompasses a range of building types and uses, from the re-fronting of timber framed buildings to 19th century terracing - Building retains a prominent position, located within a cluster of other Grade II listed buildings, to the Eastern approach to the Conservation Area.	EXCEPTIONAL	VERY HIGH	- Massing - Brick Detailing, including flush pointed Flemish brick bonds and dentil course with 19th century burnt headers. - Rhythm of openings including relieving brick arches to upper windows - Painted timber casement and 8/8 sash windows - Projecting square window bays - Clear delineation between 17th century central section and No. 20 and No. 24 19th century additions via form, scale and detailing i.e burnt headers, rubbed brick lintols. - Potential to contain 17th century timbers.	- Condition of much of the building fabric is poor, with a prevalence of fracturing to clay roof tiles and evidence of decay to external joinery such as timber window cills. - Photographic evidence suggests original fenestration pattern and fabric to projecting flat headed window bays has been lost. - Poor quality existing external surfacing and high ground level to external area is accelerating building fabric decay - Proliferation of ferramenta and loose cabling detracts from the overall aesthetic with unconsidered fixing points providing potential ingress points for accelerated weathering of fabric. - Consideration should be given to achieving level access in a sympathetic manner. - Alterations should be minor in nature and undertaken in a manner sympathetic to the original composition. - Bowing to facade to be sensitively addressed through remedial structural work.
West Elevation (Gable)	- Gable of original 19th century dwelling demonstrates clear delineation from other elements and provides an aesthetic 'end stop' to the overall composition. - Painted timber sash and case window with brick relieving arch. - Brick Detailing, including flush pointed Flemish brick bond burnt headers - Brick chimney breast with clay pots	CONSIDERABLE	HIGH	19th century brick detailing - Painted timber sash and case window - Divergence from ridge height and roof slope of 18th century central section marks a clear delineation in construction period.	- Limited scope to undertake alterations to existing fabric given the proximity of the gable to the site boundary. - Alterations should be undertaken in a manner sympathetic to the original composition.

3.6 Table of Significance

EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS AND ELEMENTS					
AREA	SIGNIFICANCE	CONTRIBUTION TO OVERALL SIGNIFICANCE	SENSITIVITY TO CHANGE	KEY ELEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
North Elevation (Rear Courtyard)	- Evidence of significant alteration and modification spanning over an extensive time period - Subservient to front elevation with no contribution to the streetscape - Building overall reflects the consistent material approach of red brick and clay and slate tiles to the Kimpton Conservation Area although this encompasses a range of building types and uses, from the re-fronting of timber framed buildings to 19th century terracing - Historic cellar access and evidence of stone steps allude to historic use as an ale house.	MODERATE	MODERATE	- Clear delineation between 17th century central section and 18th century additions via historic map sequencing. - Clay tile roof - Idiosyncratic quality of the shed dormer to accommodate an internal stair. - Brick chimney breasts with clay pots.	- Condition of much of the building fabric is poor, with water ingress evident in multiple locations due to poor quality workmanship and lack of maintenance. - Evidence that the roof has been subject to predominantly modern unsympathetic alterations and modification over time. - Projecting felt, flat roof extension and later period stretcher bond brickwork indicates reasonably recent poor quality intervention. - Poor quality existing external surfacing and high ground level to external area is accelerating building fabric decay with excessive vegetation prevalent. - Opportunity to reconsider the overall composition of this elevation, specifically the central 17th century section where removal of modern interventions would be beneficial to overall significance.
East Elevation (Rear Courtyard)	- Gable of 19th century No. 24 demonstrates clear delineation between single storey rear off-shoot and outbuildings - Painted timber sash and case window with brick relieving arch. - Brick Detailing, including flush pointed Flemish brick bond burnt headers - Brick chimney breast with clay pots - Slate roofs	MODERATE	MODERATE	19th century brick detailing - Painted timber sash and case window - Single storey buildings	- Opportunity to reconsider the overall composition of this elevation. - Timber boarded outbuilding of little or no significance. It's removal would improve legibility. - Historic significance of original outbuildings as evident from historic maps and later alterations to accommodate 19th century brick extensions.

3.6 Table of Significance

EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS AND ELEMENTS					
AREA	SIGNIFICANCE	CONTRIBUTION TO OVERALL SIGNIFICANCE	SENSITIVITY TO CHANGE	KEY ELEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
Boundary Walls	- Materiality of red brick and portions of flint. - Clear boundary delineation that has been subject to historic sub division according to historic maps.	LOW/ MODERATE/ CONSIDERABLE	MODERATE	- Evidence of remaining flint walls to Western boundary - Predominantly flush pointed stretcher bond red brick with matching cope.	Significance largely attributed to flint walling
Rear Courtyard	- Historic mapping indicates that this area may have once been a midden for cottages that sat on the original site and may merit archaeological investigation. - Footings of historic outbuildings remain evident - Historic mapping indicates the early presence of an outbuilding to the Western edge, corresponding with sections of flint boundary wall	LOW	LOW	- Footings of historic outbuildings - Archaeological potential as a result of historic map sequence study	Existing hardstanding surface of no significance
Roofscape	- Combination of hand-made clay tile and natural slate with bedded clay ridge tiles. - Front pitch of clay tile demonstrates a material consistency with surrounding heritage assets and overall Conservation Area character. - Clear demarcation between the clay roof tiles of The White Horse and slate of No.20 and No.24 provides legibility via varying periods of construction.	LOW/ MODERATE/ CONSIDERABLE	MODERATE/ HIGH	- Combination of hand-made clay tile and natural slate with bedded clay ridge tiles - Brick chimney breasts with clay pots of varying periods, heights and detailing	- Significance of roofscape, particularly the rear clay tile pitch, affected by ill considered placement of services i.e aerials, ducting, extraction units that have compromised the overall aesthetic quality and historic fabric. - Rear pitch to the central section has been subject to varying qualities of historic intervention; notably the cat-slide slate roof to the East and slated shed dormer to the West. - Condition of much of the building fabric is poor, with a prevalence of fracturing to clay roof tiles, sagging to roof timbers, loose and poorly installed lead flashings and decay of cast iron rainwater goods with a prevalence of vegetation.

3.6 Table of Significance

INTERIOR ELEMENTS: GROUND FLOOR					
AREA	SIGNIFICANCE	CONTRIBUTION TO OVERALL SIGNIFICANCE	SENSITIVITY TO CHANGE	KEY ELEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
Front of House Area & Main Bar	- Existing entrance point significant as initial public entry point into building - Evidence of historic ceiling timbers. - Evolution of building evident via uncovering of North historic masonry wall.	LOW/ CONSIDERABLE/ MODERATE	MODERATE/ HIGH	- Overall plan form - Historic ceiling timbers - Retained sections of lath and plaster ceilings - Historic masonry wall uncovered as part of investigative work between F.O.H and kitchen.	- Significance largely attributed to overall plan form, retained lath and plaster ceilings and ceiling timbers. 20th century additions of wainscoting, bar and flooring are of no interest. - Timber suspended floor constructed from sleeper walls appears to be of 20th century construction and has little value. - Ingress of moisture and blooming of fungal growths to external walls demonstrate decay of original fabric and linings. - Evidence of inglenook
Ancillary Areas: Kitchen, WC's, Utility Annex & Stair (No. 24)	- Historic mapping indicates a merging of these buildings between 1837-1871. - Areas have been subject to predominantly unsympathetic intervention over the years. - Fireplace within kitchen	LOW	LOW	- Retained sections of lath and plaster ceilings - Existing fireplace within kitchen 19th century timber floor below no. 24 uncovered as part of investigative work	20th century additions of partitioning and flooring are of no interest. - Rear stair to Utility Annex is a later intervention of low significance.
Scullery	- Evidence of timber framing within brick wall to the South. 19th century copper boiler on brick base - Single storey ancillary nature of space indicates a clear hierarchy between it and the two-storey building to the front.	MODERATE	LOW	19th century water boiler on brick base - Subservient scale and nature to No. 24.	Ingress of moisture and efflorescence and delimitation of brick walls indicate decay of original fabric and failure of modern tanking membranes

3.6 Table of Significance

INTERIOR ELEMENTS: FIRST FLOOR					
AREA	SIGNIFICANCE	CONTRIBUTION TO OVERALL SIGNIFICANCE	SENSITIVITY TO CHANGE	KEY ELEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
Room 1	- Overall contribution to plan form of First Floor - Remnants of historic timber frame within North wall - Historic timbers within floor	CONSIDERABLE	MODERATE	- Overall contribution to plan form to First Floor - Fireplace - Lath and plaster ceiling and wall finishes	- Significance largely attributed to overall plan form - Sagging to lath and plaster ceilings - Ingress of moisture and blooming of fungal growths to external walls demonstrate decay of original fabric and linings.
Stair Lobby	- Overall contribution to plan form of First Floor - Evidence of historic timber frame to area between offices and lobby - Remnants of historic timber frame within North wall - Historic timbers within floor	CONSIDERABLE	MODERATE	- Overall contribution to plan form to First Floor - Fireplace - Lath and plaster ceiling and wall finishes	- Significance largely attributed to overall plan form - Sagging to lath and plaster ceilings - Ingress of moisture and blooming of fungal growths to external walls demonstrate decay of original fabric and linings.
Ancillary Areas: WC, Bathroom, Kitchen	Areas have been subject to predominantly unsympathetic intervention and sub-division over the years.	LOW	LOW	n/a	Ingress of moisture and blooming of fungal growths to external walls demonstrate decay of original fabric and linings.
Room 2	- Areas have been subject to predominantly unsympathetic intervention over the years. - Overall contribution to plan form of First Floor - Historic timbers within floor	LOW	MODERATE	Overall contribution to plan form to First Floor	
Rooms 3 and 4	- Overall contribution to plan form of First Floor - Historic timbers within floor	LOW	MODERATE	Overall contribution to plan form to First Floor	Ingress of moisture

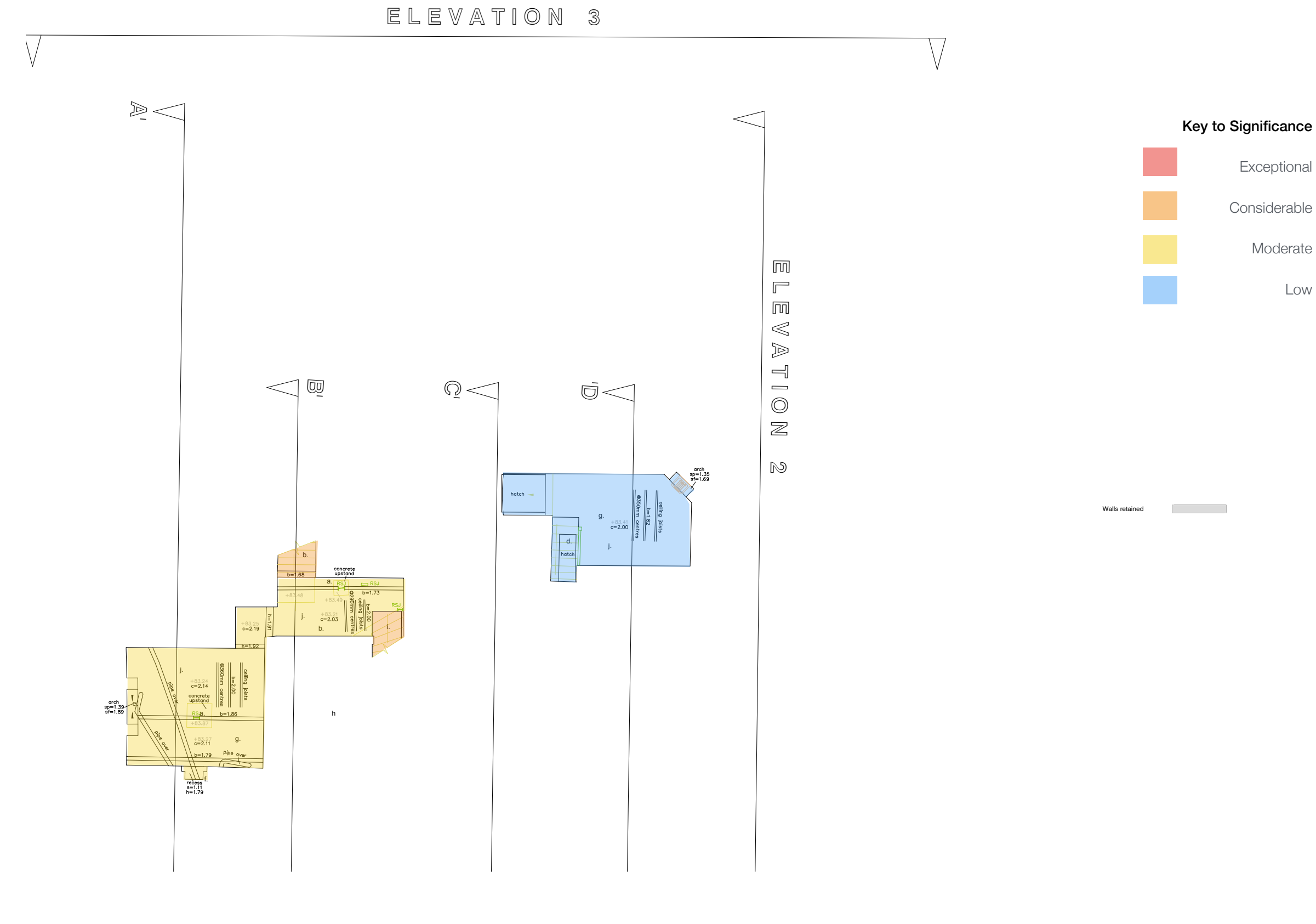
3.6 Table of Significance

INTERIOR ELEMENTS: SECOND FLOOR & ROOFSpace					
AREA	SIGNIFICANCE	CONTRIBUTION TO OVERALL SIGNIFICANCE	SENSITIVITY TO CHANGE	KEY ELEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
Attic	Minimal.	LOW	MODERATE	Historic gable truss timbers visible from staircase	- Significance largely attributed to overall plan form - Sagging to lath and plaster ceilings - Ingress of moisture
Roofspace	- The main roof above the front rooms of the White Horse is an amalgam of timbers of differing dates. - Evidence that the rear clay tile roof has been subject to predominantly modern unsympathetic alterations and modification over time - Contribution of differing ridge heights, scale and form of overall composition creates a pleasant aesthetic from High Street with differing materiality and ridge height demonstration varying construction periods between The White Horse, no. 20 and no. 24 High St. - Brick chimneys with clay pots.	LOW/ MODERATE/ CONSIDERABLE	MODERATE/ HIGH	- The main roof above the front rooms of the White Horse are king-post form with pegged joints and are most likely 18th century in date. - Modifications are present towards the western end of this roof at the junction with the brick gable of No. 24, with the addition of a number of struts and diagonal braces. - Extensive modifications are present on the northern flank of the roof where a shallow pitch catslide roof has been added during the extension of the pub in the early 20th century. - The catslide roof to the north had an earlier precursor, but the existing fabric is most likely 19th century and has been altered in the 20th century.	- Bottom chords removed from king post trusses causing sagging to lath and plaster ceilings - Evidence of slipped and broken clay tiles to external surfacing as well as poorly installed lead flashings. - Evidence of significant alteration to roof timbers within lower northern pitch of central section. - Evidence of potentially historic fungal and insect attack.

3.6 Table of Significance

INTERIOR ELEMENTS: BASEMENT					
AREA	SIGNIFICANCE	CONTRIBUTION TO OVERALL SIGNIFICANCE	SENSITIVITY TO CHANGE	KEY ELEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE	ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
Western Basement	Reflects serviced nature of public house	MODERATE	MODERATE	- Historic floor timbers visible from underside - Steps accessed from rear yard display patina of use	- Significance largely attributed to overall plan form and 'service' nature of basement - Ingress of moisture and blooming of fungal growths to external walls demonstrate decay of original fabric and linings..
Eastern Basement	- Reflects serviced nature of public house. - Believed to be a later addition circa. early 20th century.	LOW	MODERATE	- Historic floor timbers visible from underside - Steps accessed from rear yard display patina of use	- Significance largely attributed to overall plan form and 'service' nature of basement - Ingress of moisture and blooming of fungal growths to external walls demonstrate decay of original fabric and linings..

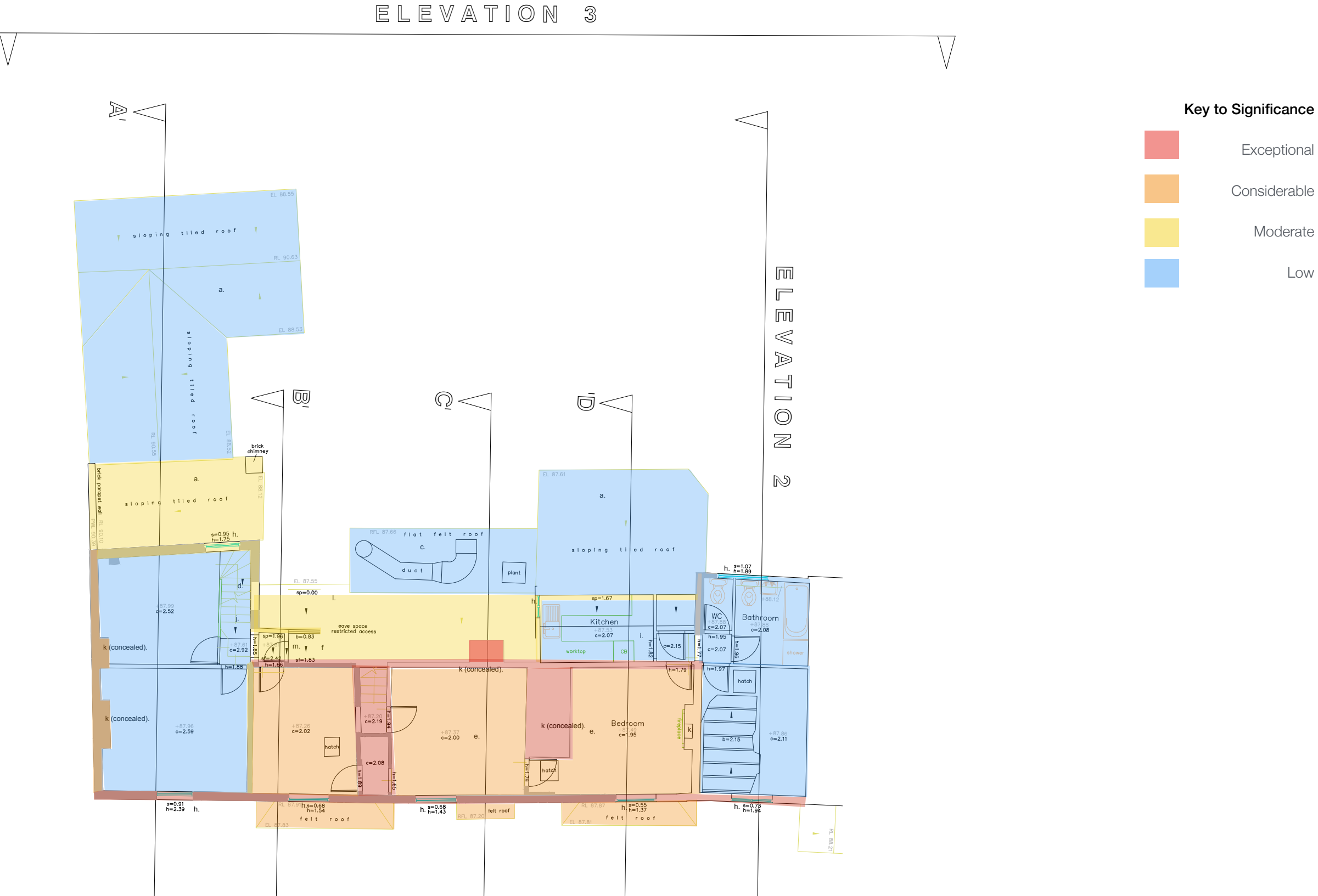
3.7 Plans Illustrating Significance



Existing Basement Plan

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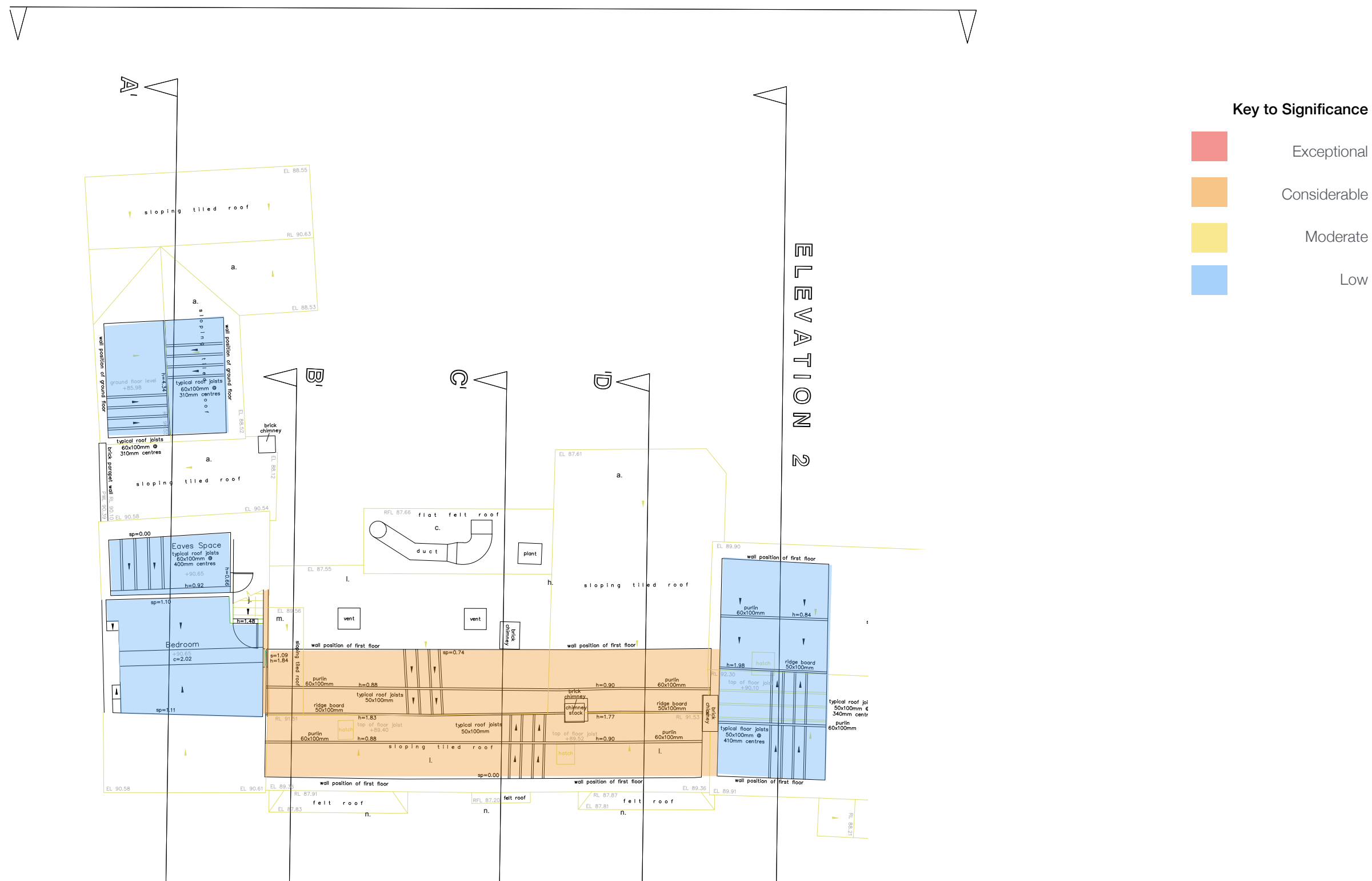
3.7 Plans Illustrating Significance



Existing First Floor Plan

3.7 Plans Illustrating Significance

ELEVATION 3



Existing Second Floor Plan

ELEVATION 3



3.8 Threats To Significance

There are currently a number of issues which threaten the significance of the building.

Deterioration of the Building Fabric

The building remains in a fragile physical condition, resulting from a long history of lack of repair and maintenance, and continues to deteriorate.

Evidence of failure to existing flashings, and rainwater goods is an area of concern, with evidence of water ingress and damp to internal timbers and masonry. Several slipped and broken clay tiles were observed to both front and rear pitches of the central section with evidence of broken tiling on the surrounding hardstanding. It is recommended that netting is erected in the interests of public safety.

Of particular concern is the relationship of the existing ground and floor levels with evidence of efflorescence, hygroscopic salts and ingress of moisture present within the internal masonry wall footings.

Internally, historic works to remove bottom chords of king post roof trusses within the central section of the building have resulted in the fracturing and sagging of lath and plaster ceilings.

If the cycles of degradation remain unaddressed, it is likely that the damage will be irreversible. This is of particular concern given that the exceptional significance of the 17th century frame remnants could be lost and thus the overall significance of the building reduced.

Securing Appropriate Uses & Conflicting Values

The best way of safeguarding the heritage values of a building is to keep it in use. The core of successful conservation of buildings is the management of change in a sustainable manner to pass on cultural value to future generations and, in this regard, good conservation practice comes from an open, flexible and forward-looking approach, based on an informed understanding of the site and buildings.

At present, it is evident that the building is not commercially viable as a public house due to cessation of trading and subsequent closure. This, unfortunately, is a common sight within rural England and it is acknowledged that the notion of the local, village pub is a key cultural and social contributor to rural village life.

It is abundantly clear that the successful future of the heritage asset will require a degree of flexibility and innovation in order to balance both its regeneration and restoration of its historic fabric as well as recognition of its contribution to the social and communal structure of Kimpton Village.

Access

Due to the limitations of the existing layout a number of routes and openings do not meet current standards. Without careful consideration, compliance with DDA requirements (Disability Discrimination Act), has the potential to damage historic fabric and the integrity of the existing layout.

Conversely, failure to adequately meet the DDA requirements would result in failure to meet statutory requirements and making parts of the building inaccessible to those with limited mobility.

One must also consider the more holistic aspect of access in terms of a greater capability to view and understand the cultural heritage building, including aspects of evidential value.

