~ OLD SCHOOL HOUSE ~

STEYNING ROAD, WISTON, STEYNING, WEST SUSSEX, BN44 3DD

Alterations and replacement of existing fenestration, reconfiguration of internal layout and replacement of ceiling with mezzanine.
Replacement of existing lean-to and shed with single-storey side extension.

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT INCORPORATING HERITAGE STATEMENT







Prepared by Roberto Prieto-Labrador MA, PCIfA ~ Reviewed by Ben Kirk MSc, IHBC

July 2024

MANORWOOD
building on tradition

ABOUT MANORWOOD

Manorwood is a small team of historic building professionals with varied skills across different areas of the historic environment.

This report has been prepared by Senior Historic Building Consultant and Researcher Roberto Prieto-Labrador and reviewed by Director Ben Kirk

Roberto holds a MA in English Building History, awarded with Distinction by the University of York. His field of expertise is domestic vernacular architecture, specialised in material culture and domestic life during the late medieval and early modern periods.

Roberto is a Practitioner member of the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists (PCIfA), as well as an Affiliate member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC). He is also a member of The Domestic Buildings Research Group (DBRG) and the Wealden Buildings Study Group (WBSG).

As a Senior Historic Building Consultant and Researcher at Manorwood, Roberto is responsible for in depth research into building records, mapping, and physical evidence to help inform proposals and for preparing Heritage Statements and Statements of Significance to support applications for alteration or redevelopment of historic buildings and areas, as well as surveying and recording historic buildings.

Ben holds an MSc in Timber Building Conservation, completed at the Weald and Downland Museum, and validated by Bournemouth University, and is a full member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) and a recognised Historic Environment Service provider under the well-established HESPR scheme.

Ben is a member of various groups including the Vernacular Architecture Group (VAG), The Domestic Buildings Research Group (DBRG), and the Wealden Buildings Study Group (WBSG).

Ben has been actively working in the historic environment industry for 15 years on numerous heritage asset projects which include surveying of historic buildings (both domestic and agricultural), preparation of schedules of works and detailing of repairs. Ben oversees numerous applications for Planning permission and Listed Building Consent and has built solid working relationships with Conservation Officers at a number of Authorities across the South East.

As a company Director at Manorwood, Ben has overseen works to historic buildings carried out by a skilled network of sub-contractors including the timber restoration at Charleston Farm barns in Firle and the re-erection of historic buildings at the Weald and Downland Living Museum near Chichester, both which received awards from the Sussex Heritage Trust.

As a company Manorwood have provided various historic environment services to a number of Country Estates across the South East including the Lydhurst Estate, the Borde Hill Estate, the West Dean Estate and a number of projects on the Wiston Estate where Manorwood continue to provide consultancy advice on redevelopment and reuse of various areas.

Most recently Manorwood completed the sensitive restoration and conversion of the magnificent 15th century barn for Nyetimber Vineyards in West Sussex.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

About Manorwood 2
Table of contents 2
Introduction 3
Heritage Assets and Designations 4
Proposals 5
Historic Context 6
Assessment of Significance 10
Impact Assessment 11
Conclusion 15
Appendix: Legislation and Policy Context 16

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Roberto Prieto-Labrador MA, PCIfA on behalf of Manorwood to accompany an application relating to a proposal at The Old School House, Wiston.

1.2 The Old School House is located on the north side of Steyning Road, to the southeast edge of Wiston. The property is a Grade II listed building and forms part of a pair of cottages, which were originally a single building used as the village's school and master's house.

1.3 The building has been used as residential dwellings since the mid-20th century. This early conversion resulted in a number of external changes and, particularly, internal alterations to the building's layout.

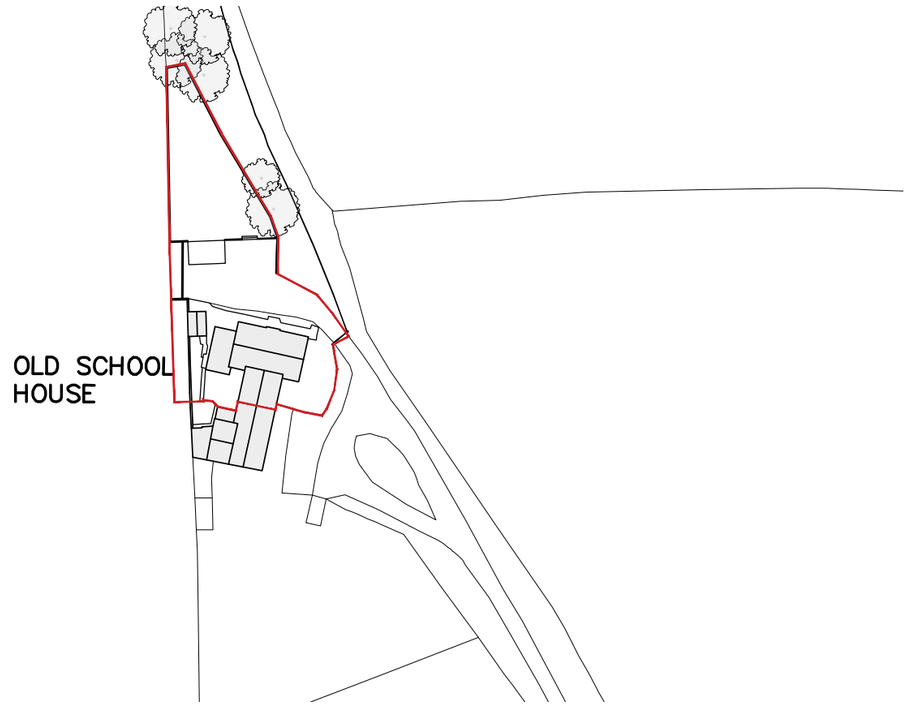
1.4 In February 2023 Listed Building Consent was granted under application DC/22/2146 to carry out a number of external and internal modifications, including the replacement of the existing ground-floor ceiling with a new mezzanine.

1.5 The building has recently been taken over from the Wiston Estate by the applicants on a long lease with the intent to undertake the repair and improvement works that the building requires. The applicants, however, wish to make amendments to the previously approved scheme and include elements, which were not part of it.

1.6 This report, therefore, accompanies an application seeking Listed Building Consent carry out a number of external and internal modifications, including the replacement of the existing ground-floor ceiling with a new mezzanine, the reconfiguration of the ground-floor layout and the alteration of the building's fenestration. The scheme also proposes the removal of the existing side lean-to and detached shed to be replaced with a new single-sorey extension.

1.7 Historic mapping has been consulted to help understand the development of the building as its immediate environs, as well as its wider setting. The maps are included in section 4 of this report.

1.8 This Heritage Statement includes a Significance Assessment, which identifies the relative heritage value of the identified heritage assets. It also includes an Impact Assessment, which considers the potential impact of the proposed scheme on the significance of the heritage assets identified, including the contribution made by their setting. This approach to impact-assessment is required in order to satisfy the provisions of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Local Planning Authority.



Location of The Old School House.

MANORWOOD
building on tradition

2.1 The Old School House is a statutory Listed Building designated in May 1980. The listing reads:

THE OLD SCHOOL

Location Wiston, West Sussex, BN44 3DD

District Horsham (District Authority)

Date Listed 9th May 1980

List Entry No 1284545

Grade II

Description Formerly the school of Wiston parish with the school-master's house attached. Now a house. Mid C19. Faced with flints with long and short stone window surrounds and quoins. Tiled roof. Casement windows. T-shaped building. The school comprised the north end of the building. One storey. Brick bell turret above the gable end of the east wing. The school-master's house was the south end of the long wing. Two storeys. Five windows in all and one gabled dormer facing east.



The Old School House in 2022.

3 PROPOSALS

3.1 The proposal comprises a number of external and internal alterations to the building to make better use of the domestic space and reinstate part of the building's original character. The changes can be summarised as follows:

External

- Conversion of window into door (west elevation).
- Enlargement of gable window (east elevation).
- Insertion of 4no new conservation type rooflights.
- Replacement of existing modern fenestration.

Internal

- Reconfiguration of existing layout (replacement of existing modern partition walls)
- Removal of the existing modern ceiling and replacement with new mezzanine.

3.2 The scheme also includes the removal of the existing side lean-to and detached shed to be replaced with a new single-storey extension.

3.3 Further details of the proposals are included in the accompanying plans, which should be read in conjunction with this report.

3.4 The proposals and their potential impact on the significance of the Listed Building are discussed in Section 6 of this report.

4.1 The Victoria County History (*A History of the County of Sussex: Volume 6 Part 1, Bramber Rape (Southern Part))* provides the historic context for the education and school in Wiston:

4.2 The earliest reference to education in Wiston dates from 1571, when a curate was giving lessons. By 1800 there was a school attended by approximately thirty children in a building next to the old rectory, southeast of the church. In 1818, when it was being supported entirely by Charles Goring, about fifty children attended on weekdays and fifty-eight on Sundays. This early school continued to flourish during the 1830s.

4.3 The existing building known as The Old School House was constructed in 1844. The Tithe Map of Buncton Parish of 1843, shows the plot where the new school was to be built further north from the previous school, in the chapelry of Buncton. The new school was an H-shaped building which comprised a school hall and nursery in the northern half and the master's house in the southern half. The school which was leased by the year from the Gorings at a peppercorn rent, was known as Wiston and Buncton parochial school.

4.4 In 1847 it was said to be supported by subscriptions alone; a master and mistress were paid £77 and £20 respectively. Sixty-six children attended during the day, and nine boys in the evening only, and sixteen boys and girls on Sundays only. In 1871 labourers' children paid no fees and during the late 19th century the school was often called the "free school". It was receiving a government grant by 1871. Average attendance then was eighty-one, and in 1893, sixty-seven. Thereafter it fell to fifty-one in 1906, forty-three in 1932, and thirty-six in 1938. The school was closed soon afterwards, and in 1977 the children of the parish went to school in Steyning and Washington.

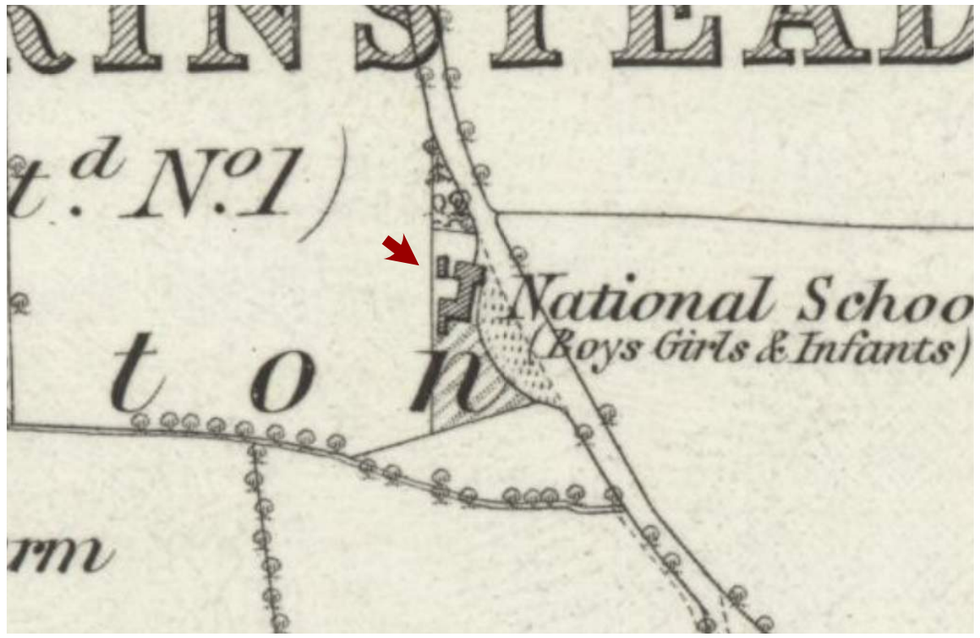
4.5 Following the closure of the school, the building was converted into two residential dwellings, resulting in alterations to the building's original fenestration and internal layout.



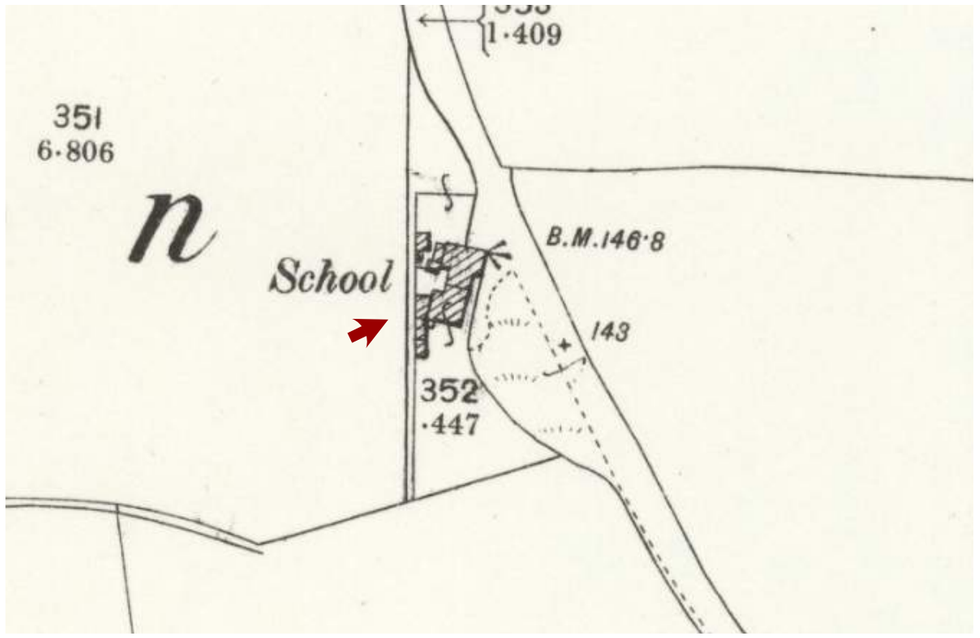
The Old School House, late 1910s.



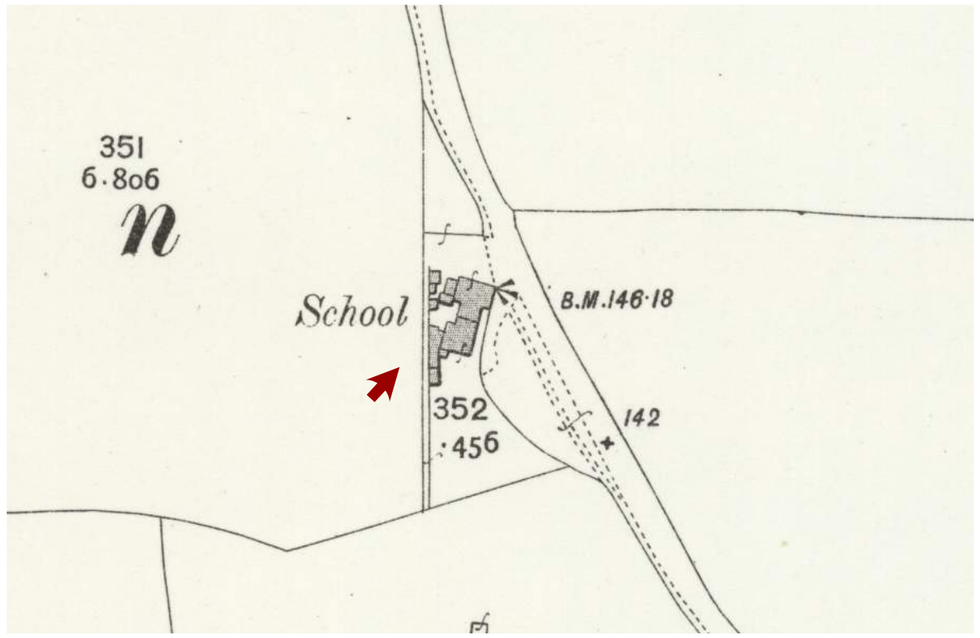
Detail of Buncton Tithe Map showing the future location of the Old School House, 1843 (TheGenealogist).



Detail of Ordnance Survey showing the Old School House, 1875 (National Library of Scotland).



Detail of Ordnance Survey showing the Old School House, 1896 (National Library of Scotland).



Detail of Ordnance Survey showing the Old School House, 1909 (National Library of Scotland).



Detail of Ordnance Survey showing the Old School House, 1948 (National Library of Scotland).

MANORWOOD
building on tradition



Satellite view of The Old School House, 2012 (© Google Earth).



Satellite view of The Old School House, 2022 (© Google Earth).

5.1 The following is an assessment of the significance of the Old School House according to the range of heritage values as outlined in Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance published by Historic England in 2008. These values are distilled under the following headings: evidential value, historical value, aesthetic value and communal value.

5.2 This assessment of significance has been used to inform the proposals in order to minimise the impact on the special interest of the building, and where possible to take opportunities to enhance its special interest.

EVIDENTIAL VALUE

5.3 Evidential value is described by Historic England as “physical remains” and “evidence of past human activity” and is derived from one’s ability to interpret the history and historic evolution of a building through visible and tangible features.

5.4 The Old School House possess significant evidential value, which relates to the evolution of the educational system in small rural communities. The original double use of the building as a school and master’s house is considered clear evidence of past human activity, which contributes significantly to the building’s evidential value. The Old School House is also a good example of a High Gothic revival building, as evidenced by its form and detailing.

HISTORICAL VALUE

5.5 Historic England considers that historic value “derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present”. This is generally regarded as either illustrative value whereby the site can be perceived to represent a period in history, or associative value, where a connection with an event or person can contribute to the historic significance of a site.

5.6 The relatively short lifespan of the building means that there is enough documentary evidence (in the form of mapping and records) to follow the building’s history since its construction in 1844. The adoption of the Gothic style for the construction of the Old School House is also intrinsically related to its socio-historical context, as the revival of the Gothic style reached its peak in the 1840s as evolution and free interpretation of the historicist rules imposed by Ruskin and Pugin during the first decades of the 19th century. The use of the Gothic style for a school building was also a common practice during the 19th century and different buildings within the same areas tend to share similar designs and features (i.e., the old school in Washington).



North and west elevations.



East elevation.



Interior.



Loft space and blocked staggered window.

AESTHETIC VALUE

5.7 Aesthetic value according to Historic England "derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place". This value can be attributed to conscious design whether it be predetermined by an architect or the work of a craftsman and can also encompass historic and evolutionary changes to a building.

5.8 The building possesses great aesthetic value as it is a good (and virtually intact) example of a High Victorian Gothic school building. Despite the horizontal nature resulting from its original use as a school building, the architect a general sense of verticality by introducing sharp vertical elements such as steeply pitched gables and lancet staggered windows. This original sense of verticality, however, was diminished significantly when the building was converted into residential dwellings and the windows' height had to be reduced to accommodate the new ceiling.

5.9 The 20th century conversion of the building has also diminished the internal character of the building, particularly in the former hall, the open nature of which has been obscured by modern partitions. The roof structure, however, is considered an attractive feature that (when exposed) contributed significantly to the internal character of the building.

COMMUNAL VALUE

5.10 Communal value "derives from the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory". This can be divided into commemorative and symbolic values, where the place may invoke emotion or contribute to an individual's or community's sense of place or social values, where a place can be a form of catalyst for memories associated with it.

5.11 The Old School House is considered to possess great communal social value as it was originally used as the parish school. As such, the building is directly related to the people of Wiston and the surrounding hamlets and villages.

6.1 This section appraises the impact of the proposed works on the Grade II listed building known as The Old School House.

6.2 As mentioned in Section 3 of this report, the conversion of the school building into 2 residential dwellings resulted in several modifications which have diminished the original character of the building and, by extension, its special interest. Changes in domestic ways of life have made these alterations obsolete to comply with modern domestic standards and necessities.

6.3 The scheme, therefore, proposes a number of internal and external alterations to improve the usability of the building as a residential dwelling and enhance the original character of the building where possible. The proposed changes have been grouped into external and internal alterations for clarity:

EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS.

6.4 External changes are limited to the building fenestration and include three elements: the enlargement of a gable window and the conversion of a window into a door (east elevation), the replacement of the existing modern windows and the insertion of 4nos conservation-type rooflights (southern and northern slope).

Alterations to existing fenestration

6.5 The scheme proposes the enlargement of the existing gable window and the conversion of a ground floor window into a door, both in the east elevation.

6.6 The desire for this alterations is to provide the building with additional natural light, as well as to provide rear access to the property's garden.

6.7 These alterations will result in the loss of a small amount of historic fabric but given the age of the building and the ubiquitous nature of the material to be affect, such loss is considered to be minimal and not to harm the special interest of the Listed Building.

6.7 The fenestration proposed for these two openings consist of aluminium window and door matching the style of the windows proposed to the new extension (see below). This approach will ensure the enlarged openings remain visible as later interventions, whilst establishing a visual link between the new extension and the host building.

Replacement of modern windows.

6.8 The existing fenestration consists of 20th century timber transom windows. An early photograph of the building (see Section 4), however, indicates that the building had originally stone mullioned windows with leaded-light casements.

6.9 The existing windows are decayed and compromise the thermal efficiency of the building. The modern profile and, particularly, the thickness of the framing are also considered to be at odds with the Gothic revival appearance of the building.

6.10 The scheme, therefore, proposes to replace the existing windows with new double-glazed casements of traditional style with horizontal glazing bars to improve the character of the building, whilst improving its thermal efficiency. The use of casements with horizontal glazing bars was common during the late 19th century, particularly in school buildings,



Gable window to be enlarged.



Window to be turned into a door.





Example of modern windows to be replaced.



School in c.1900 displaying windows with horizontal glazing bars similar to the proposed windows.

meaning the new windows will sit comfortably within the context of the building. Furthermore, the horizontal glazing bars will be reflective of the saddle bars of the original leaded windows, establishing a visual narrative with the past appearance of the building.

6.11 Whilst the installation of double-glazed windows (even those of slim profile) is usually considered an unacceptable intervention in old buildings, Historic England in its guidance for *Traditional Windows: their care, repair and upgrading*, recognises that slim-profile double glazing can be considered

> *"in cases where the significance of a building has been harmed by the installation or replacement of windows of non-historic design"*

and where

> *"the new windows are of a more sympathetic design and the net impact on significance will be neutral or positive"*

and

> *"no incidental damage to the building fabric will result from the removal of the existing windows".*

6.12 The modern origin and form of the existing fenestration means that their removal and replacement with new windows of a more traditional design will fall within the exceptions highlighted by Historic England, as there will be no harm to the building's historic fabric, and they will result in a positive impact on the significance and special character of the listed building.

6.13 Full details of the fenestration are provided in the accompanying plans.

Insertion of new 4nos rooflights.

6.14 The scheme proposes to insert new 4nos conservation rooflights in order to provide the building with additional ventilation and natural light.

6.15 The insertion of the rooflights will result in a small loss of original fabric (common rafters) but will be carefully positioned to avoid the principal frames and purlins.

6.16 The new rooflights will be placed in pairs on the northern and southern slope of the roof. They will be high-quality metal conservation rooflights sat flush with the roof surface to replicate early metal rooflights. This design is also considered to sit comfortably with the historic context of the building as they were common in 19th century buildings.

INTERNAL ALTERATIONS

6.17 Internal alterations include the removal of the existing modern partitions to reconfigure the building's internal layout, as well as the removal and replacement of the existing ceiling with a mezzanine.

6.18 The northern crossing range was originally the school's hall, and it was designed as an open space with the roof structure exposed above (the original ceiling was located at collar level).

The conversion of the building obscured the open nature of the former hall by the introduction of several partition walls to create four rooms and an en-suite. The openness of the hall was further diminished by the construction of the existing ceiling which now conceals the roof structure.

6.19 It is, therefore, proposed to remove the existing modern partitions to allow for a better configuration of the domestic space and reinstate the original character of the hall as far as possible. As a result, only two new partitions are proposed within the former hall to create a snug, whilst the rest of the space remains as an open kitchen/dining/living area. Further domestic facilities which will require a higher degree of subdivision will be located within the proposed site extension (see below).

6.20 The existing modern ceiling will also be removed to expose the original roof structure and ceiling. The modern ceiling will be replaced with a new mezzanine over the western end of the hall to provide the property with additional living space, whilst reinstating part of the hall's openness. In order to enhance this openness, the mezzanine has been designed as a minstrel's gallery so the roof can be fully appreciated from the ground floor.

6.21 Taken as a whole and on balance, the proposed changes will enhance the aesthetic value of the building both externally and internally, as well as its usability as a modern residential dwelling. The proposals, therefore, are considered to enhance the special interest of the listed building.



Loft space.

REMOVAL OF EXISTING LEAN-TO AND CONSTRUCTION OF NEW EXTENSION.

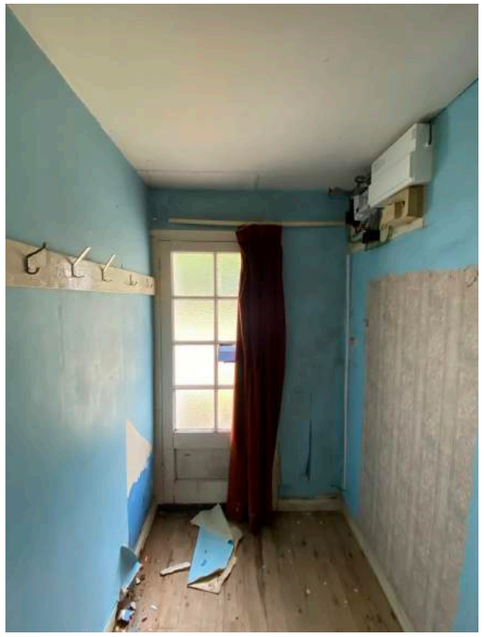
6.22 The proposal is the removal of the existing lean-to to the west elevation of the building to be replaced with a new one single-storey extension.

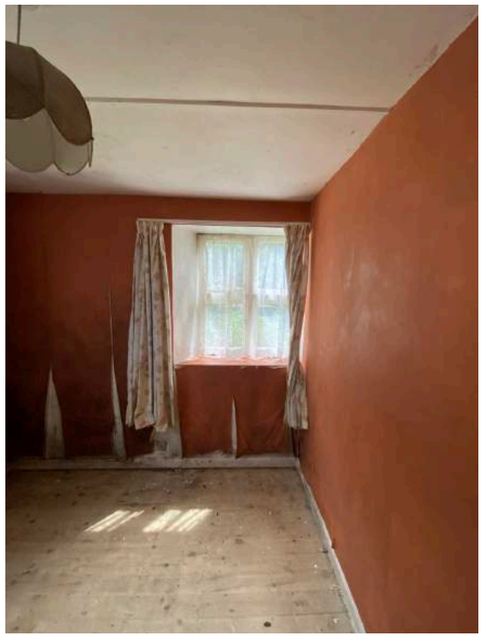
6.23 The existing lean-to is not part of the original building; it was added at some point between 1875 and 1896. Its replacement with a new extension will provide the building with the necessary facilities so it can operate as a modern residential dwelling. Due to its utilitarian nature and later construction, the lean-to is considered to be the least significant part of the building, meaning that its loss will be negligible and offset by providing the building with a continuous and viable use.

6.24 The proposed extension will consist of a single-storey structure to the side of the building, providing it with a utility room, en-suite master bedroom and shower room.

6.25 The design for the new extension will follow a contemporary approach but one that incorporates slightly traditional elements to ensure it harmonises with the traditional character of the host building, whilst remains legible as a later addition.

6.26 The walls will be entirely clad with vertical cladding over a low profile brick plinth. The roof will be double-pitched and of the corrugated metal, providing the extension with a lightweight appearance. The roof will also include photovoltaic panels, which will be located on the southern slope to ensure they are not seen in context with the host building's front elevation.





Modern partitions to be removed.



Lean-to to be replaced.

6.27 Fenestration will consist powder-coated aluminium finished externally with timber finish internally, matching the new gable window in the host building.

6.28 Access to the proposed extension from the host building will be via the existing doorway leading to the lean-to to be removed. The opening, however, will be slightly enlarged, allowing for a better flow through the building.

6.29 It is, therefore, considered that through appropriate design and the subservient nature of the extension, the proposal results in an extension that has minimal impact on the character and special interest of the Listed Building.

7 CONCLUSION

7.1 The proposed scheme of works and alterations is based on a thorough understanding of the listed building, its historic development and significance and has been informed by desk-based research and on-site assessment of the surviving historic fabric.

7.2 The alteration and replacement of the existing fenestration will result, as a whole, in a positive intervention which will contribute to the character of the building.

7.3 The new proposed rooflights will provide the area over the new mezzanine with additional ventilation and natural light. Their design as a conservation type rooflights will ensure the special interest of the building is preserved.

7.4 The internal reconfiguration of the building's layout, as well as the replacement of the existing ceiling with a mezzanine, are considered to result in a very positive impact on the significance of the building, as part of the original openness of the former hall will be reinstated.

7.5 The removal of the existing side lean-to and its replacement with a new extension will provide the building with the necessary domestic facilities to function as a modern residential dwelling.

7.6 The proposed extension, by virtue of its design and subservient nature is considered to preserve the character and special interest of the building.

7.7 As a whole and on balance, the proposals are considered to enhance the character and special interest of the listed building.

7.8 The proposals are compliant with respect to the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 insofar as the special interest of the listed building will be preserved and enhanced.

7.9 In summary, the proposed works to the Listed Building are considered to be proportionate and in accordance with the requirement of the Act, the NPPF and the Horsham District Planning Framework – Horsham District's Local Plan.

APPENDIX: LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

The primary legislation relating to Listed Buildings and their settings is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990:

> *Section 16(2) states "In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses."*
>
> *Section 66(1) reads: "In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses."*

In relation to development within Conservation Areas, Section 72(1) reads: "*Special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area*."

Policy relating to the historic environment is set out at national level within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Policy relating to the historic environment is set out at local level within the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF).

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF)

Chapter 16 (Paragraphs 195 to 214) of the NPPF updated and adopted in December 2023 constitute the Government's national guidance and policy regarding development relating to the historic environment.

The NPPF is a material consideration and states that applications are to be determined in accordance with the local framework unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The NPPF seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment with much emphasis on "significance", defined in Annex 2 as:

> *"The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance."*

Setting is defined in Annex 2 as:

> *"The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral."*

Annex 2 defines Conservation (for heritage policy) as:

> *"The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance."*

This definition is important as it distinguishes conservation from preservation and puts an emphasis on proactively managing change rather than reactively resisting it.

LOCAL POLICY – HORSHAM DISTRICT COUNCIL

The site lies within the boundary of the Horsham District Council Authority. The Horsham District Planning Framework – Horsham District's Local Plan is the overarching planning document for Horsham district outside the South Downs National Park (SDNP) and replaces the Core Strategy and General Development Control Policies documents which were adopted in 2007. This document was adopted in November 2015 and sets out the planning strategy for the years up to 2031.

Policy 34 of the HDPF relates to the Historic Environment:

> **Policy 34 – Cultural and Heritage Assets**
>
> The Council recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, and as such the Council will sustain and enhance its historic environment through positive management of development affecting heritage assets. Applications for such development will be required to:
>
> 1. Make reference to the significance of the asset, including drawing from research and documentation such as the West Sussex Historic Environment Record;
> 2. Reflect the current best practice guidance produced by English Heritage and Conservation Area Character Statements;
> 3. Reinforce the special character of the district's historic environment through appropriate siting, scale, form and design; including the use of traditional materials and techniques;
> 4. Make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the area, and ensuring that development in conservation areas is consistent with the special character of those areas;
> 5. Preserve, and ensure clear legibility of, locally distinctive vernacular building forms and their settings, features, fabric and materials;
> 6. Secure the viable and sustainable future of heritage assets through continued preservation by uses that are consistent with the significance of the heritage asset;
> 7. Retain and improves the setting of heritage assets, including views, public rights of way, trees and landscape features, including historic public realm features; and
> 8. Ensure appropriate archaeological research, investigation, recording and reporting of both above and below-ground archaeology, and retention where required, with any assessment provided as appropriate.

MANORWOOD
building on tradition

SURVEY & DOCUMENTS BY:

MANORWOOD

SUITE 114
26 THE HORNET
CHICHESTER
WEST SUSSEX
PO19 7BB

T: +44 (0) 1243 201102
M: +44 (0) 7725 023213

E: ENQUIRIES@MANORWOOD.CO.UK