# ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In respect of:

**HATT HOUSE, HATT LANE, BOX, CORSHAM, SN13 8DH**

On behalf of:

**Mr B Lobo & Ms R Hill**

March 2021



ELAINE MILTON
HERITAGE & PLANNING LIMITED
t: 07979 942042
e: emilton@emhp.co.uk
w: www.emhp.co.uk

## CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION .....3

2.0 HERITAGE DESIGNATIONS .....5

3.0 DESCRIPTION .....6

4.0 HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT .....19

5.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE .....25

6.0 CONCLUSION .....28

SOURCES USED IN THE REPORT .....31

APPENDIX 1: PHASING PLAN FOR HOUSE .....33

**LIST OF FIGURES**

Fig.1: *Site location plan*
Fig.2: *Front of Hatt House*
Fig.3: *West side of house*
Fig.4: *French doors within single-storey addition on west side of house*
Fig.5: *Rubble stone walls on rear of house*
Fig.6: *Three-light mullion window on rear of house*
Fig.7: *Garden store within rear garden*
Fig.8: *South side of gym building*
Fig.9: *North side of gym building with pool in front*
Fig.10: *Former coach house within lower yard to east of house*
Fig.11: *Open-fronted cart shed to left of former coach house*
Fig.12: *Stone outbuilding on west side of yard*
Fig.13: *Entrance hall with modern fireplace and tiled floor*
Fig.14: *Fireplace with sitting room*
Fig.15: *North wall of study with central niche and fitted shelves to either side*
Fig.16: *Drawing room to left of entrance hall*
Fig.17: *Kitchen fireplace*
Fig.18: *Damage to lath and plaster ceiling within kitchen*
Fig.19: *Masonry pier within playroom*
Fig.20: *North wall of Bedroom 2*

Fig.21: *South wall of Bedroom 3*
Fig.22: *Door within north wall of Bedroom 3 into en-suite bathroom*
Fig.23: *Built-in cupboards within bathroom on second floor*
Fig.24: *Andrews and Dury's map of 1810*
Fig.25: *Tithe map of 1840*
Fig.26: *Enlargement of 1840 Tithe map*
Fig.27: *Ordnance Survey map of 1886*
Fig.28: *Ground floor plan in 1929*
Fig.29: *First floor plan in 1929*
Fig.30: *Second floor plan in 1929*
Fig.31: *Example plan of a standard 18th or early 19th century double-pile house*

COPYRIGHT: The contents of this statement must not be copied or replicated in part or in whole without the express written consent of Elaine Milton Heritage & Planning Limited

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 This assessment of significance accompanies a **pre-application enquiry** for alterations to Hatt House, a Grade II listed building.

1.2 Hatt House is a country house situated within the small hamlet of Old Jockey, to the south of the village of Box and south-west of Corsham, just west of the A365 Devizes Road (shaded pink on the plan below).




*Fig.1 Location plan*

1.3 The report was commissioned by the owners, Mr B Lobo & Ms R Hill, and has been prepared by Elaine Milton BSc (Hons) MSc DipArchCons MRTPI IHBC. A site survey was undertaken on 2 February 2021.

1.4 The report describes the heritage significance of Hatt House to help inform proposed development in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF, February 2019).

1.5 The significance of Hatt House was identified using the guidance contained within the Historic England documents *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance*

(2008), *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets* (GPA3, December 2017) and *Statements of Heritage Significance: Historic England Advice Note 12* (October 2019).

1.6 Information on the history of the site has been drawn from several sources including historical map regression. The list of sources used in the preparation of the report is presented on p31.

## 2.0 Heritage Designations

2.1 **Hatt House** was added to the *List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest* at **Grade II on 24 July 1985**. It is therefore deemed by Historic England to be a designated heritage asset of national importance and of special interest. The list entry for the property reads as follows:

> *'House, c1820, ashlar fronted with hipped slate roof and 2 ashlar stacks to rear. Three storeys, 3-window range with raised first floor sill band, moulded cornice and parapet. Three attic 6-pane square windows, first floor centre 9-pane sash flanked by tripartite 3-9-3 pane sashes. Ground floor centre 12-pane sash, right side tripartite 4-12-4 pane sashes and left side 4-panel door with side-lights in Roman Doric projecting porch, paired front columns and single column responds. Single storey addition at left side with cornice, parapet and 2 large 16-pane sashes. Taller Cl9 addition behind.'*

2.2 To the west of the house and beyond the grounds, is a late medieval and rubble stone cottage, which is also listed at Grade II.

2.3 Approximately 160m south-west of the house is a **scheduled ancient monument** (SAM) comprising three Bronze Age bowl barrows, i.e., funerary monuments that date from 3000-1200 BC, which were scheduled on 8 October 1981 and amended on 16 July 1999. Two of the barrows are buried and lie outside the grounds of the house. The third one, immediately north-east, is within the grounds and survives as a low earthwork. The list entry reads:

> *'The monument includes three Bronze Age bowl barrows situated to the south of Hatt House on Oolitic limestone, south of the village of Box. The barrows are set below the crest of the north east facing slope of a steep river valley. Two of the barrows are buried beneath the spoil of a covered reservoir and are no longer visible. Previous records show that these are flat topped, 2.5m high and up to 8.5m in diameter. A third bowl barrow to the north east has a mound 20m in diameter and 2.5m high surrounded by a ditch from which material was quarried during its construction. This has been partially infilled over the years and survives as a low earthwork, 5m wide and up to 0.5m deep apart from on the north side where it survives as a buried feature. To the north west the ditch extends at a tangent to the barrow in a north easterly direction for 2m. There is a local tradition in Box that there are three kings buried in these barrows'.*

## 3.0 Description

### Exterior

3.1 Hatt House comprises a three-storey dwelling constructed in rubble limestone with a limestone ashlar finish to the front and a smooth light-coloured render to the east side. The house has an evenly spaced three-window frontage with a raised, first floor cill band and a moulded cornice and parapet. Windows are multi-pane vertically sliding sashes, three of which are tripartite. To the left-of-centre is a four-panel door with side-lights in a Doric porch having paired columns. The roof is a double-pile hipped, covered in Welsh slate. There are two chimney stacks within the valley between the front and rear roofs.



*Fig.2 Front of Hatt House*

3.2 To the left side is a single-storey addition with hipped roof behind a parapet. It has two multi-pane sash windows on the front and multi-pane French doors to the side (in poor condition).



*Fig.3 West side of house*



*Fig.4 French doors within single-storey addition on west side of house*

3.3 To the rear of the single-storey addition is a gabled two-storey range. It has square profile ashlar stone mullion windows with leaded lights.

3.4 The back of the house has exposed rubble stone walls and an irregular window pattern. The windows are plain profile two-light or three-light stone mullions, with the three-light windows having vertical sliding sashes in the centre.



*Fig.5 Rubble stone walls on rear of house; two-storey projection on left*



*Fig.6 Three-light mullion window on rear of house with vertical sliding sash window in centre*

3.5 Attached to the back of the of the house on the left side is a two-storey addition with a half-hipped slate roof. A break line in the stone work at the rear indicates two phases of construction (break line to the right of the soil pipe in Fig.5 above).

3.6 Within the garden to the north of the house are two outbuildings constructed in rubble stone with double Roman clay tiled roofs. The smaller outbuilding (the one to the west) is a garden store. The outbuilding to the east has been converted to a gym, and to the north of that building is an outdoor swimming pool. The gym building has side-hung timber plank doors on the south side (in poor condition) and modern timber-framed glazing to the north side.



*Fig.7 Garden store within rear garden*



*Fig.8 South side of gym building*



*Fig.9 North side of gym building with pool in front*

3.7 To the east of the house, and at a lower level, separated by stone boundary walls is a yard. There is a former coach house on the east side of the yard. It has a wide centrally placed garage door and elliptical arched openings to either side (the right one partially filled in).



*Fig.10 Former coach house within lower yard to east of house*

3.8 To the left of the coach house is an old open-fronted cart shed.



*Fig.11 Open-fronted cart shed to left of former coach house*

3.9 There is a small stone outbuilding, possibly a former stable, on the west side of the yard (adjacent to the east end of the gym building). To the rear is a recent timber-framed garage.



*Fig.12 Stone outbuilding on west side of yard (note the recent garage beyond)*

**Interior**

3.10 The front door leads into a wide entrance hall featuring a modern fireplace on the north wall and modern tiled floor. To the right and rear is the main staircase, comprising a closed string straight-flight with a slender mahogany handrail and stick balusters.



*Fig.13 Entrance hall with modern fireplace and tiled floor; main staircase to right*

3.11 The ground floor layout within the main house is quartered: entrance hall front to left, dining room to front right, study to rear right and sitting room to rear left. The rooms are served by six-panel doors and there are fireplaces within each of the rooms. The sitting room has a large, ashlar stone fireplace with a keystone.



*Fig.14 Fireplace with sitting room (to the rear left of the house)*

3.12 The north wall of the study has a central door-height niche with inset fitted shelves to either side.



*Fig.15 North wall of study with central niche and fitted shelves to either side*

3.13 To the west of the entrance hall (within the single-storey addition) is the drawing room featuring full-height wall panelling, a deep cornice to the ceiling and a fireplace with an eared surround.



*Fig.16 Drawing room to left of entrance hall*

3.14 To the west of the sitting room is the kitchen (within the rear two-storey projection). It has a shallow arched ashlar stone fireplace and a polished flagstone floor. There is a large hole in the lath and plaster ceiling.



*Fig.17 Kitchen fireplace*



*Fig.18 Damage to lath and plaster ceiling within kitchen*

3.15 A door at the end of the main hallway leads to the secondary staircase comprising a pine winder stair. To the right of the staircase is the playroom and alongside, a WC. The playroom has a modern slate floor, skirting and plasterboard ceiling. There is a masonry pier south-of-centre within the room, supporting a narrow timber beam.



*Fig.19 Masonry pier within playroom*

3.16 The rooms at first floor within the main part of the house generally mirror those at ground floor. There is an interconnecting door between Bedroom 1 and the bathroom to the rear. There are cupboards built into the walls to the west sides of the fireplaces in Bedrooms 2 and 3, each with plain six-panel doors.



*Fig.20 North wall of Bedroom 2 with six-panel door to built-in cupboard to left of fireplace*



*Fig.21 South wall of Bedroom 3 with built-in cupboard to right of fireplace*

3.17 There is a narrow door opening in the north wall of Bedroom 3 leading into an en-suite bathroom within the rear two-storey projection. The wall separating the en-suite and the bathroom to the west of it is cranked and cuts across the mullion window at the rear.



*Fig.22 Door within north wall of Bedroom 3 into en-suite bathroom*

3.18 There are three bedrooms at second floor level. The room to the right-hand rear has been subdivided with a stud partition to form a bathroom and an en-suite. There are cupboards built into the south wall of the bathroom, which cover up a redundant fireplace.



*Fig.23 Built-in cupboards within bathroom on second floor – blocked fireplace within left cupboard*

## 4.0 History and Development

4.1 The name Hatt derives from Reginald de Hatt who in the 13th century lived in what was a minor manor. The winding road through the area is probably the oldest in Box as it is part of a ridgeway that links the Cotswold Ridgeway with the ancient Harroway on the Dorset border. Today, only Hatt House and Hatt Farm sustain the old name.

4.2 Hatt House is believed to have been built on the site of an earlier house, which existed from at least 1695 according to a lease from Richard Long within the Wiltshire and Swindon Records Office (WSRO). Close by, there were several small dwellings and an inn. The road to Bath was turnpiked in 1713, and as the popularity of that City grew, the old ridgeway became part of a main coaching route. A new inn was built alongside the old one to cater for the additional trade and together they traded as The Horse and Jockey Inn.

4.3 No plans or images survive of the original Hatt House, but it is understood to have been accessed from a track to the west at Blue Vein Turnpike.




*Fig.24 Andrews and Dury's map of 1810*

4.4 The house is understood to have been rebuilt in the 1820s and a new drive to the south laid, probably by George Pinchin, a brewer and part-owner of the Northgate Brewery in Bath, said to be one of the largest breweries in the south-west at the time. Brewing was a respectable business and George would have been considered well-to-do and employed several servants, butler, cook and coachman. The new house had a symmetrical four-square layout typical of the period.

4.5 The earliest available map for the area showing the new house is the Tithe map of 1840. The house is shown roughly square-shaped with a carriage turning area to the south. The original front door would have been to the right of the current entrance as evidenced by the stone infill below the window. Two outbuildings are shown to the rear of the house and two further, larger outbuildings to the east.



*Fig.25 Tithe map of 1840*



*Fig.26 Enlargement of 1840 Tithe map*

4.6 By the time of the Ordnance Survey map of 1886, the south-west drawing room seems to have been added along with the porch, presumably to try to maintain a sense of symmetry. The large L-shaped outbuilding to the east of the house has gone and the outbuilding to the north appears to have been rebuilt or partly widened.

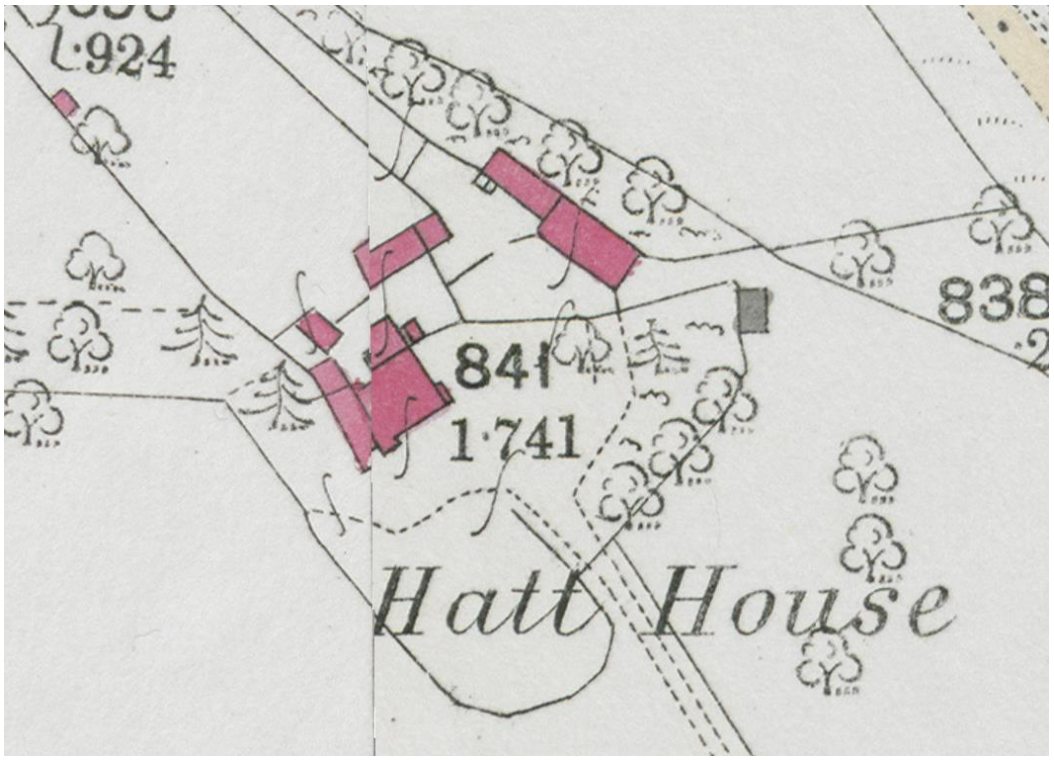


*Fig.27 Ordnance Survey map of 1886*

4.7 A documented owner of the house between the 1920s and 1958 was Miss Doris Chappell, who lived there at first with her mother and later alone. She had several staff including servants, a gardener and a chauffeur.

4.8 Plans deposited at the WSRO show improvements made to the house by Miss Chappell in 1929. These included the extension of the rear two-storey range (itself probably an addition to the original house) to provide a secondary service staircase and for internal works within the rear range involving subdivision at ground floor to provide a back kitchen and a WC, and subdivision at first floor to create two bathrooms (insertion of the cranked wall, splitting the rear window). One new window was added to the west side of the house at second floor level.

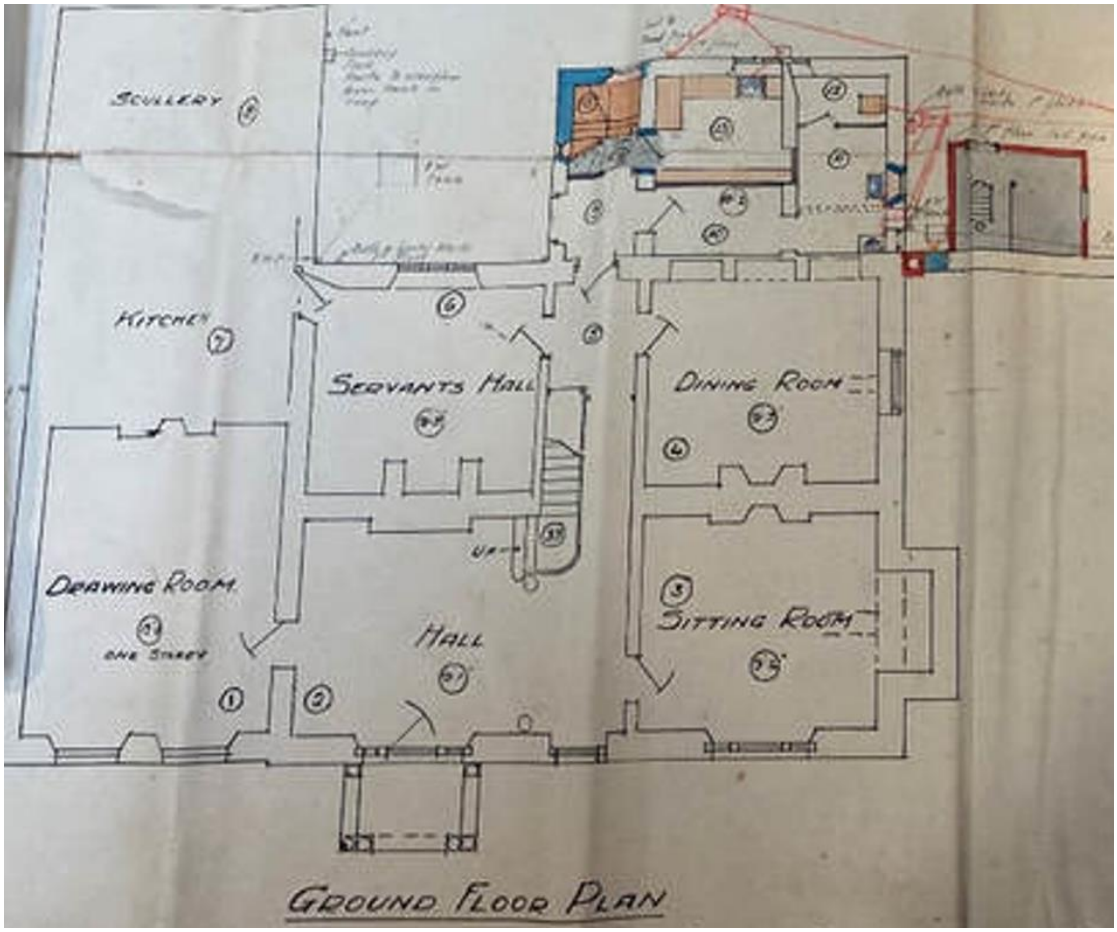


*Fig.28 Ground floor plan in 1929 (WSRO: G3/760/739)*

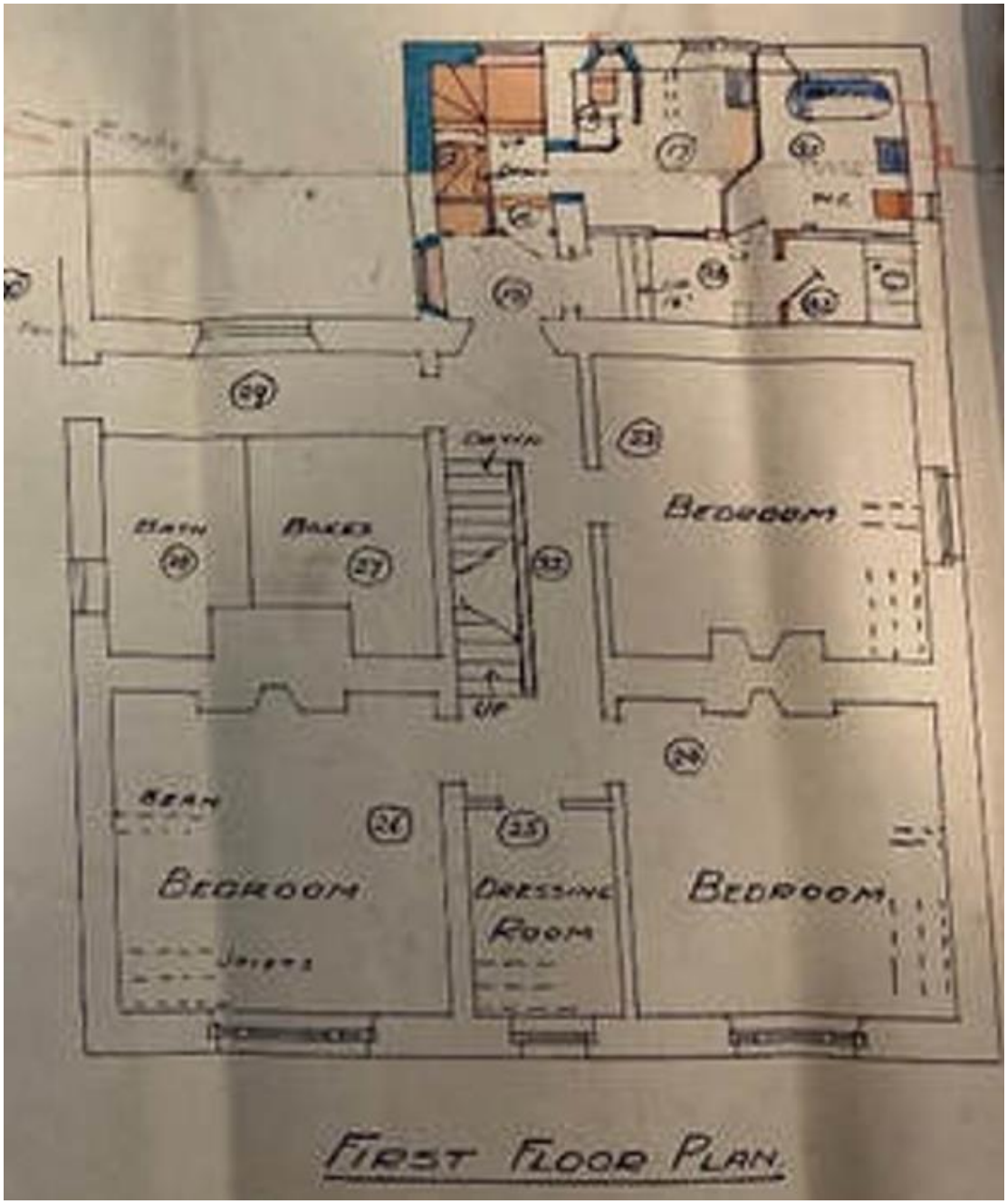


*Fig.29 First floor plan in 1929 (WSRO: G3/760/739)*

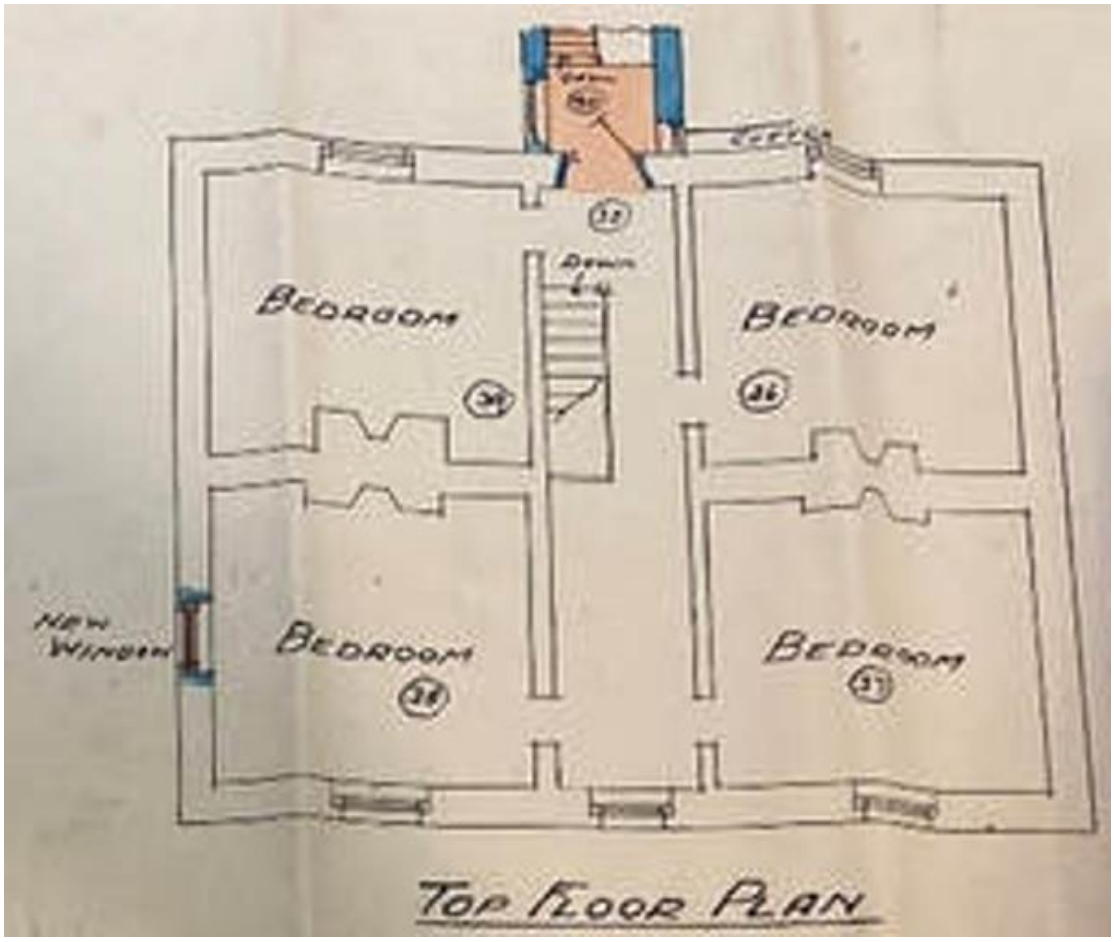


*Fig.30 Second floor plan in 1929 (WSRO: G3/760/739)*

4.9 Permission was obtained for minor alterations within the north-western corner of the house in 1996 (with the insertion of a staircase and partitions to form a pantry, home office and shower room). Planning history records also indicate the conversion of one of the outbuildings to form a gym (in 1999) and the erection of a garage (in 2000). An application to replace two metal windows with wooden ones in 2005 was withdrawn prior to determination.

| Application | Address | Proposal | Registered | Decided | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| N/05/01739/LBC | Hatt House , Old Jockey, Box, Corsham, Wiltshire, SN13 8DH | Replace Two Metal Windows with Two Wooden ones | 14/09/2005 | 08/11/2005 | Withdrawn |
| N/00/00365/FUL | Hatt House , Old Jockey, Box, Corsham, Wiltshire, SN13 8DH | ERECTION OF GARAGE | 18/04/2000 | 06/06/2000 | Approve with Conditions |
| N/99/00574/LBC | Hatt House , Old Jockey, Box, Corsham, Wiltshire, SN13 8DH | CONVERSION AND EXTENSION TO OUTBUILDING TO FORM GYM | 02/03/1999 | 15/06/1999 | Unknown |
| N/99/00573/FUL | Hatt House , Old Jockey, Box, Corsham, Wiltshire, SN13 8DH | CONVERSION AND EXTENSION OF OUTHOUSE TO FORM GYM | 02/03/1999 | 15/06/1999 | Unknown |
| N/96/01382/LBC | Hatt House Hatt Lane Old Jockey BOX | INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS ALTERATIONS | 18/07/1996 | 12/09/1996 | Unknown |

## 5.0 Assessment of Significance

### Hatt House - General

5.1 Hatt House is a Grade II listed building of special architectural and historic interest as a well-preserved early 19th century country house. The property is of significance for the following reasons:

**Architectural Interest**

- The house retains a large proportion of its original details including windows, main staircase, fireplaces and panelled doors
- It has an imposing frontage with a formal arrangement of multi-paned sash windows, moulded cornice and parapet, and a hipped and slate-covered roof typical of the period
- The use of local limestone for the walling is typical of the region
- The welsh slate roofs indicate the status of the house at a time when such materials were difficult to transport and were costly
- There is good survival of the original symmetrical four-square layout

**Historic Interest**

- Hatt House is a good example of an early 19th century small country house
- The building type and architectural treatment provide an illustration of the status of its original occupant
- The layout and architectural treatment reflect the historic uses and hierarchy within the house, with the superior materials, proportions and detailing of the 'front-of-house' and modest character of the 'back of house' service areas
- There is a descending hierarchy in detail and proportions from ground to second floor illustrating the historic functional importance of the rooms
- The evolution of the house is evident in the alterations to fabric, e.g., later openings, and the variation in the architectural language, e.g., side additions; the evolution illustrates the changing architectural tastes and fortunes of the occupants
- The former coach house is of interest for its historic function and association with the house

**Group Value**

- The house and contemporaneous outbuildings are of group value for the evidence they provide of the scale and workings of a small early 19th century country house estate

**Contribution Made by Setting**

- The isolated, rural setting of the house within its own small parkland is an important contributor to its significance
- The orientation of the house and its elevated position within the parkland and with the drive in front contribute to its grandeur
- The natural stone boundary walls and ancillary outbuildings contribute to the setting of the house

**Commentary on Plan Form**

5.2 The original house would have been considerably smaller than it is today having consisted of a four-square layout of two 'living' rooms at the front and two service rooms at the rear (see phasing plan in Appendix 1). The stone fireplace in the north-west room of the main house suggests this was originally the kitchen prior to the mid-19th century addition to the west.

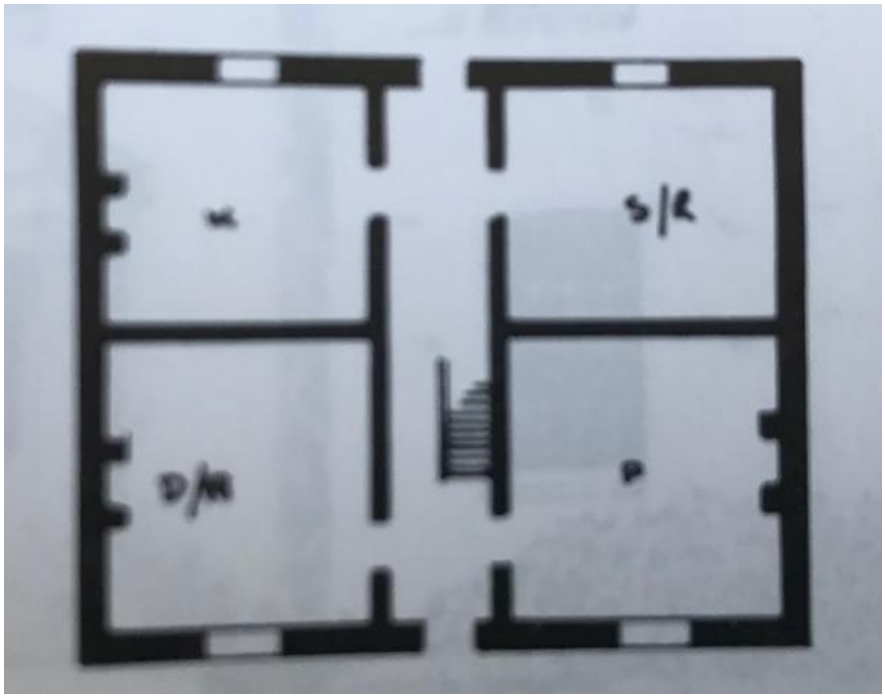

*Fig.31 Example plan of a standard 18th or early 19th century double-pile house from RJ Brown's 'English Farmhouses'*

5.3 The plan form has been compromised at ground floor as a result of later alterations, with the relocation of the front door and the removal of the wall that existed to the west of that door thus creating an open-plan layout with the stair hall. This has diminished the significance of the listed building.

5.4 Prior to the two-storey rear addition, it is likely the dining room had a window at the rear, conforming to one of the standard layouts of an early 19th century 'double-pile' house (see plan presented above) and matching the rear window to the former kitchen to the west.

5.5 The rear addition was significantly altered in 1929 with the provision of a secondary service staircase and for internal works within the rear range involving subdivision at ground floor to provide a back kitchen and a WC, and subdivision at first floor to create two bathrooms (insertion of the cranked wall, splitting the rear window). The works undertaken reflect the improvements in sanitary provision and staff accommodation in the early 20th century. The subdivision of the spaces paid little respect to the architectural features, particularly the cranked wall, which cuts across a mullion window and has reduced the significance of the former service area.

5.6 The 1929 plans are of interest at first floor level as they show there was no door opening between the north-east bedroom and the bathroom within the two-storey addition. The main door to the north-east bedroom was further north on the landing. There were also no cupboards to the side of the chimney breasts in the eastern bedrooms.

## 6.0 Conclusion

**General Guidance to Development**

6.1 Hatt House is a Grade II listed building that possesses architectural and historic interest as a good early 19th century country house. To the south-west of the house is a scheduled ancient monument comprising the remains of three Bronze Age bowl barrows

6.2 Statutory duties exist under sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 ('the Act') for the local planning authority in considering whether to grant listed building consent or planning permission for development that affects a listed building or its setting to 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.

6.3 National planning policy relating to the historic environment is provided within section 16 of the NPPF (February 2019). It advises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

6.4 Paragraph 193 of the NPPF advises that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater the weight should be. Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within its setting. Any harm or loss to a heritage asset's significance should require clear and convincing justification, and needs to be weighed against identifiable public benefits. Substantial harm or loss of a Grade II listed building should be exceptional.

6.5 Paragraph 195 of the NPPF advises where proposals would lead to substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the proposals should be refused unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of four listed criteria therein apply.

6.6 Paragraph 196 advises that where proposals would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposals, including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

6.7 Paragraph 200 of the NPPF advises that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance.

6.8 It is advisable that proposals for repair, restoration and alteration to heritage assets should follow the guidance within the Historic England document *Advice Note 2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets* (February 2016). The document acknowledges (paragraph 3) that the best way to conserve a building is to keep it in use, and that a reasonable and proportionate approach to owner's needs is therefore essential.

6.9 As a general principle for adaptation, the Historic England document advises as much of the historic fabric and plan form that contributes to the significance of a heritage asset should be retained as possible, with new work ideally being reversible. Harm to significance may be justified on grounds of overriding public benefit that may accrue, including maintaining the building in its optimum viable use.

6.10 The document also advises that some of the issues to consider in respect of new additions are proportion, height, massing, bulk, materials and setting, and new work should not dominate the existing in terms of scale, material or siting. The guidance advises an assessment of the asset's significance will usually suggest an appropriate form of any extension.

**Specific Guidance for Hatt House**

6.11 The assessment for Hatt House identifies its significance derives mainly from its age, architectural treatment and plan form.

6.12 It has been identified that several elements have diminished or detracted from the significance of the asset, such as the opening up of the entrance hall at the front of the house and the alterations to the layout within the rear two-storey service range.

6.13 Future proposals offer the opportunity to reinstate the building's plan form but should also be mindful of surviving original fabric and layout to minimise further loss of significance.

6.14 Removal of the early 20$^{th}$ century partitions that have been inserted at first and second floors within the rear service area would restore the former plan form and help reveal the significance of that part of the house.

6.15 Retaining the outbuildings in use would help secure their future conservation. Any proposed alterations to the buildings should seek to minimise the impact on the group, preserve as much historic fabric as possible, preserve the evidence of their original function and maintain their ancillary character.

6.16 Proposed development needs to be respectful of the scheduled monument and its setting.

## Sources Used in the Report

### Publications

*Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance*, English Heritage, April 2008.

*Designation Listing Selection Guide: Domestic 1 – Domestic Houses,* Historic England, December 2017.

*Statements of Heritage Significance: Historic England Advice Note 12*, Historic England, October 2019.

*Historic England Advice Note 2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets (HEAN2)*, Historic England, February 2016.

*Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets,* Historic England, December 2017.

Brown, R J., *English Farmhouses* (Robert Hale, London, 1993).

### Wiltshire and Swindon Records Office

Lease from Richard Long of Hatt House, 1695, reference WSRO 947/1717.

1929 plans for house: Alterations to Hatt House, Box for D Chappell, 1929, reference WSRO G3/760/739.

### Websites

Box People and Places – Issue 30, Winter 2020-21: Hatt House (article by Claire Dimond-Mills)
http://www.boxpeopleandplaces.co.uk/hatt-house.html
Date accessed: 20 February 2021.

### Mapping Consulted

Andrews and Dury's map of 1810.

Tithe map of 1840.

Ordnance Survey maps: 1886, 1901, 1921, 1973.

## APPENDIX 1: PHASING PLAN FOR HOUSE

