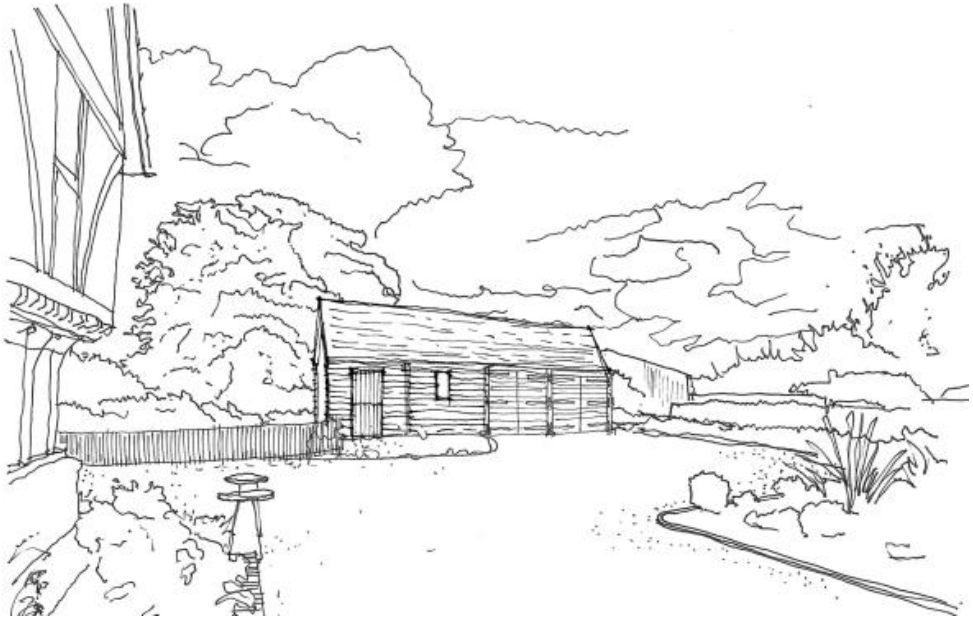


# Design, Access and Heritage Statement

**IN SUPPORT OF A SUBMISSION FOR**

## Planning Application

**PREPARED BY**

## Mr and Mrs Ronz

**FOR**

**The Construction of:**
**A single storey oak framed building to provide garaging and Home Office/Gym.**

**The conversion of:**
**A mobile 3 bay stables into a permanent 2 bay stable & log store.**

13 November 2023

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## 1.0 SUBMISSION

This Design, Access and Heritage Statement should be read in conjunction with the following drawings and documents as submitted.

Application Form

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Application Drawings**: | 274 P01 | Location Plan |
| | 274 P02 | Existing Block Plan |
| | 73833 | Proposed Block Plan |
| | EOB 100 | Proposed garage/home office/gym floor plan |
| | EOB 101 | Proposed garage/home office/gym elevation |
| | 274 PO5 Rev F | Proposed 2 Bay stable and Log Store |
| | 274 P06 | Existing Views – The Sanctuary |
| | 274 P07 Rev B | Proposed Views – The Sanctuary |
| | 274 P08 | Proposed Pergola Design |
| | Annex 1 | Pictorial submissions |

**Relevant Planning Policies**

- Wiltshire Farmsteads Assessment Framework
- The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
  - Section 66 & 72
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF (2021)) Planning
  - Section 16
- Historic England's Advice Note 2 & 3
- Historic England's "Conservation Principles"
- Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) adopted 2015
  - CP57
  - CP58

**Planning Considerations**

- Impact on the preservation of the listed building or its setting or any features of special architecture and/or historic interest.
- Impact on the character and appearance of the Steeple Ashton Conservation Area.

Design, Access and Heritage Statement

## 2.0 INTRODUCTION

This document has been prepared by the homeowners Mr and Mrs Ronz following pre-application advice from both the Local Planning Authority and Historic England with regards to proposed plans at The Sanctuary, Dark Lane North, Steeple Ashton. The advice gained during this process is reflected in these proposals which seek to meet the needs of modern family living whilst introducing no harm to the setting of The Sanctuary.

The basis of these proposals refers to Wiltshire Council's Farmsteads Assessment, a suite of documents produced by Historic England, that provide advice and guidance when drafting proposals that involve the development, adaptation and reuse of historic farmsteads or development within their settings. The emphasis of the assessment is to refer to historic maps to understand the evolution and layout of historic farmsteads, thereby providing a degree of evidence for the reinstatement of suitably designed buildings in a pattern or arrangement within often very sensitive settings.

## 3.0 LOCATION AND CONTEXT

The origins of Steeple Ashton itself date back to before the Dissolution of the Monasteries when it was a manor of Romsey Abbey. Steeple Ashton was once a Market Town, having been granted a right to hold a market twice weekly in 1266. The Town prospered until a great fire in the early 16th Century which virtually destroyed its cloth industry which was subsequently rebuilt in the nearby town of Trowbridge. The town retained some commercial activity being on the main route between Trowbridge to the north and Eddington to the south east but when this fell out of use in the later 18th Century, the village began to lose its commercial significance and over the next two centuries became what is in effect a commuter village to the surrounding large market towns.

The village has a wealth of surviving historic structures many of which are listed as illustrated in Figure 1 and has an expansive Conservation Area which covers a large proportion of the village's settlement boundary. A regression study of this area shows the entire paddock was covered in woodland as of the early 19th century, which receded to an area just covering the northern corner of the land in the early 20th century which was then also lost during the latter half of the century turning the area into its current state.

The Grade II* Listed property is located to the east of the village of Steeple Ashton but the only access is through the heart of the village via Dark Lane North. The heritage asset including its garden forms the north eastern corner of the Steeple Ashton Conservation Area. There are a number of trees which protected by Conservation Area onsite but none effect the proposals as submitted.



Figure 1: Key Policy Constraint Mapping (Black Outline – Listed Building / Blue Mesh – Conservation Area / Purple – Scheduled Ancient Monument).

## 4.0 LISTING DETAILS (from Historic England website accessed 07.11.23)

### The Sanctuary

### Overview

Heritage Category: Listed Building
Grade: II*
List Entry Number: 1252506
Date first listed: 29-Jan-1988
Statutory Address: THE SANCTUARY, 9, DARK LANE NORTH

### Details

STEEPLE ASHTON DARK LANE NORTH ST 9056 (north side) 13/228 No 9 (The Sanctuary) GV II*

*Detached house. C15 with early C16 cross wing. Square-panelled timber-framing on rubble stone plinth, painted brick nogging, Bridgwater tiled roof with axial stone stack to cross range, external brick stack to hall range. Three-bay cruck-built hall range with 3-bay cross*

*wing added at right angles. Two-storey, 3- window north west front. Ledged door in porch to right end of hall range, 2-light and 3-light leaded casements to left; gable end of wing to right has 2-light and 3-light leaded casements. First floor has two 2-light casements and one single-light casement, 2- light wood mullioned casement to attic gable of wing. Single-storey C19 addition attached to left of hall range; leaded casements and single-roman tiled roof. Right return, cross wing, has 2-light and single-light diamond leaded casements and pair of trefoil-headed wooden lancets, two 2-light first floor leaded casements. East gable end of cross wing has dressed stone plinth, small oriel to ground floor, jettied timber-framed first floor with one casement. Rear of hall range has 3-light and 2-light leaded casements, external brick stack. Rear of jettied wing has 6- panelled door to left, 2-light first floor casement. Interior: Hall range has full crucks on stone pads, open fireplace to north gable end with chamfered lintel, deep chamfered beam with incised date 1687 to inserted first floor. Stairs against rear wall with plank and muntin, inserted lateral stack with Tudor- arched stone fireplace. Truss dividing north bay from middle has chamfered arch-braced collar to cruck, formerly open. Cross wing has parlour with Tudor-arched stone fireplace at west end, moulded plank and muntin against timber-framed partition, moulded ceiling beams and exposed joists. First floor jettied room has exposed deep arch-braced collar truss roof with curved windbracing, west room has chamfered tie-beam to plainer roof truss, exposed rafters, open fireplaces, C17 cupboard beside west fireplace. Fine unaltered example of cruck-built C15 hall house with equally good early C16 wing; indicative of Steeple Ashton's late Medieval prosperity.*

Listing NGR: ST9084356954

**Site Description**

The house itself is a former medieval hall house, internally an open structure, with the first floor and sub-division of spaces, along with the addition of fireplaces and chimney stacks, in the 17th century. In 1844, the house, garden, farmyard and orchard were owned by Mr Walter Long, and tithed to William Oxford. The current paddock was originally a cherry orchard, also owned by Mr Long, but tithed to Moses Butcher. The house has evolved over time, with a much larger cruck-frame element, with the later jettied 'wing' added c.1500.

Although the range of farm buildings no longer survives and some of the land was sold off for development in the later 20th century (for a single dwelling to the south-east of the site) the main house and rural setting in which it sits has not significantly changed over the centuries.

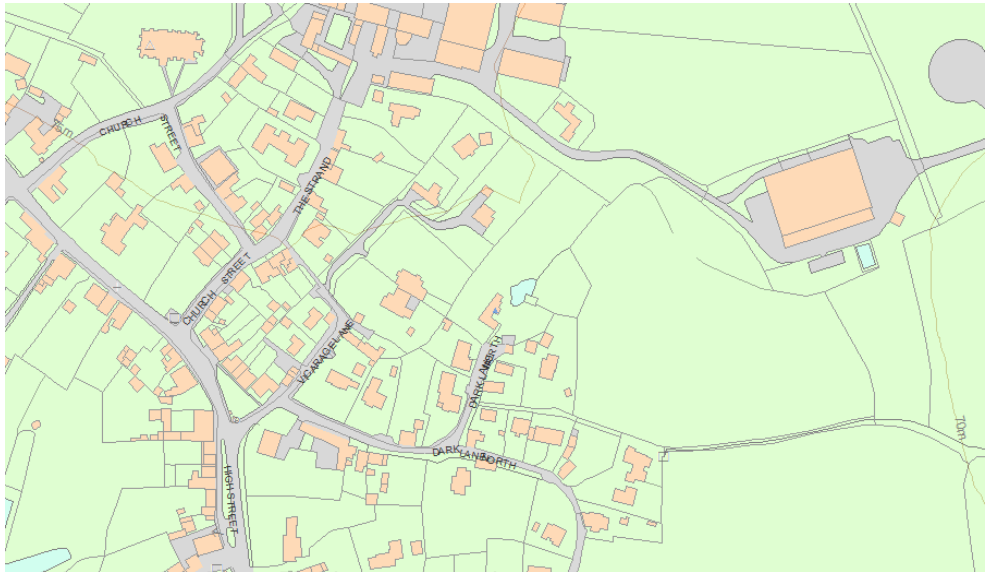


Figure 2. Historic England Asset map

Statutory Address: THE SANCTUARY, 9, DARK LANE NORTH
District: Wiltshire (Unitary Authority)
Parish: Steeple Ashton
National Grid Reference: ST 90843 56954

**5.0 REGRESSION STUDY**

As part of understanding a clear picture of the sites historical development a regression study has been undertaken. The Main House can be clearly seen in all 4 maps with the major alterations being to the northern range where the building was original extended as can be seen in comparison of the Tithe map and 1st Edition OS.

The extent of the Main House remains similar in the 2nd Edition OS. However, the northern extension has been either reduced in scope or demolished and replaced with a smaller structure by the time of the 3rd Edition OS.

All 4 maps confirms the presence and siting of earlier, albeit lost, farm buildings forming a typical yard arrangement of farm buildings situated at a practical distance from the dwellinghouse. Recorded as an 'L' form building of similar footprint to the Main House in the Tithe Maps, this building range had expanded westward to the edge of the pond and southwards to the original boundary line by the mid to late C19 as illustrated in the 1st

Edition OS. This enlarged range of buildings is illustrated in a similar configuration in the 2nd and 3rd Edition OS' but were subsequently demolished at some point during the C20 as they are no longer present onsite. At the time of the 3rd Edition OS there was a also a small structure in front of the Main House to the south of the pond. Again, this been subsequently demolished.

There are also further changes associated with the broader gardens that form the extent of the existing property. The Tithe Map clearly shows a distinction between garden land to the west of the Main House (area 267 in figure 3) and wooded area to the north beyond (area 275 on the same figure). The differentiation between the less organised mixed tree symbols on parcel 267 and the single style more ordered symbols on are 275 may suggest that this was an area of orchard. Whether this was directly connected with The Sanctuary at this stage is unclear. By the time of the 1st Edition OS a number of small structures are located along the boundary division of the garden and wooded area which may illustrated small garden structures which may well relate to small scale food production which would perhaps support the idea the area to the north was an orchard. As part of this grouping a single structure is located south of this line in the approximately location of the outbuilding as can be found onsite today although it is not suggested that this is 'original'. This grouping can also be found in a similar pattern on the 2nd Edition OS.

As described in the listing, the earliest sections of The Sanctuary are C15 which marginally postdate the larger vicarage to the west whose earliest sections date back to C14. Whilst we have not been able to access earlier maps, it is possible that The Sanctuary formed a group with the Vicarage or was at least accessed via or past it which is why the main entry is on the west elevation, completely at odds with the modern access from the south. This may have been created as the entrance to a working courtyard and to serve later dwellings such as the cruck frame cottages occupying area 271 and 277 on the Tithe Maps (Figure 3) and the associated historical agricultural land to the east and south.

The footprint of an earlier outbuilding, the smaller grey area shown on the maps adjacent to the pond/cart wash, exists, but is modern concrete. Whilst the abstract of Title form from the 1933 Rood Ashton Estate Sale states the sale of "barn yard buildings and pastureland" alongside the main dwelling. No other evidence of the form of the farm buildings is available. Yet two barns, an open fronted cart shed and pigsties within the orchard are evident from the historic maps.

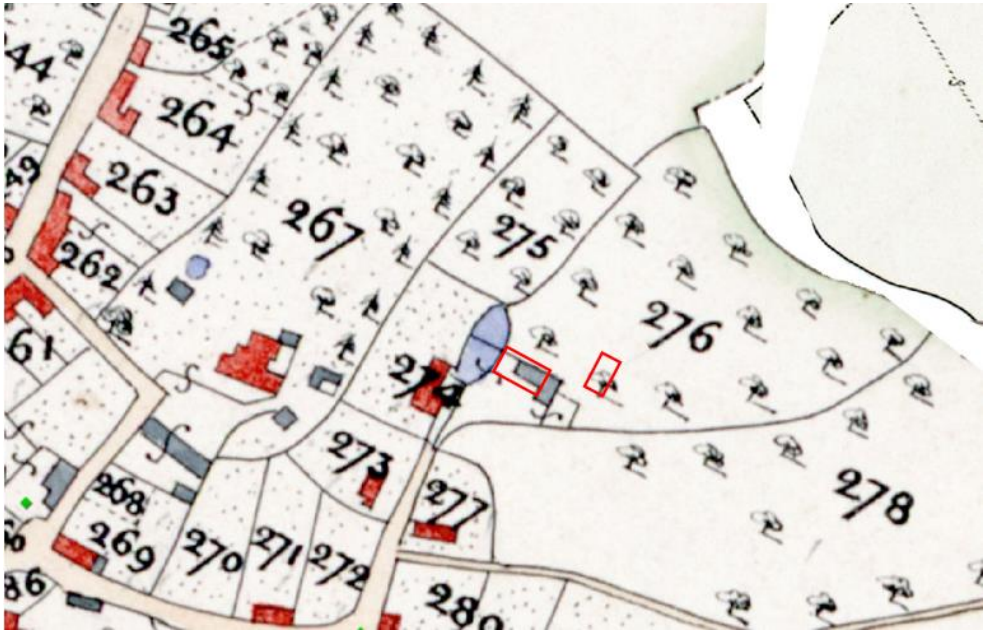



Figure 3. Wiltshire Tithe 1840's

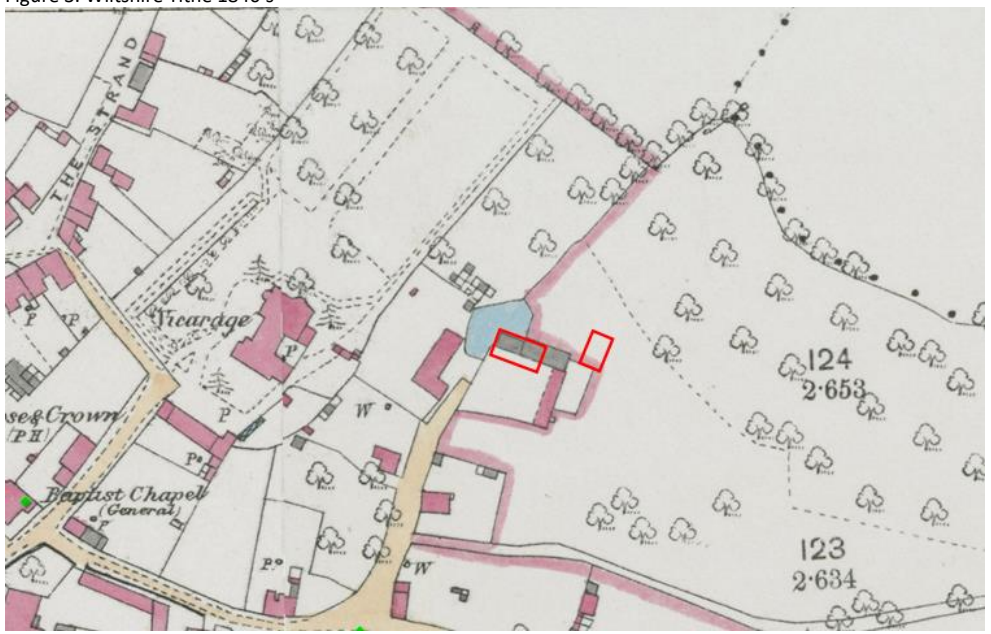



Figure 4. 1st Edition OS 1844-88



Figure 5. 2nd Edition OS 1894-1903

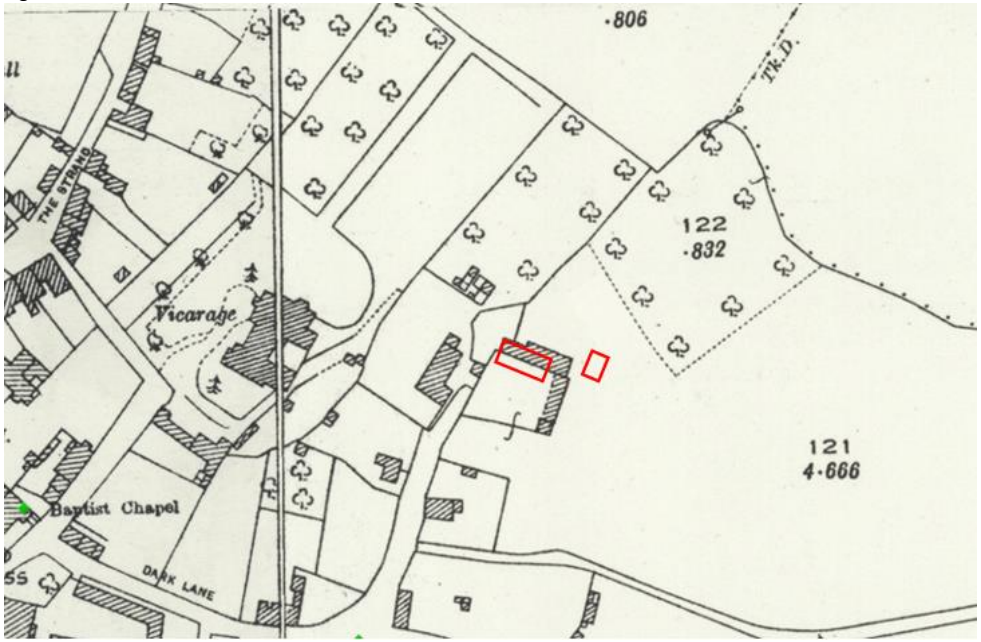


Figure 6. 3rd Edition OS 1898-1939

## 6.0 MODERN HISTORY AND EXISTING SITE

In recent times, The Sanctuary and its environs has suffered greatly from being in a state of abandonment. The property was purchased in the mid 2000's and the new owners went to great lengths to gain both Planning and Listed Building Consents to bring the building back into active use. Much of the structural works, works to the envelope and other alterations Approved at this time were undertaken however we are informed that spiralling costs halted the project around 2010 and the site once again became abandoned. Given its significance and chequered immediate past, the building had become a source of great concern in terms of its dilapidation for both the local community and the Conservation Team at Wiltshire Council.

The building was again sold in 2019, at the point of sale, the condition of the building was mixed. The major works undertaken to the original C15 hall and C16 cross wing had been completely to a standard that had protected the building to a significant extent. The area of greatest concern was the later northern extension which connects with the original C15 hall. Works had been abandoned at such a stage that the envelope was not weather tight and the temporariness of the covering intended to protect this area mid construction had completely failed. Significant water ingress followed and resulted in water damage to this section of the building. This included the partial collapse of sections of external walling.

Beyond the extent on the main house, the grounds were equally abandoned and generally overgrown including the pond which is a significant feature of the setting of the building and overall site. Hidden within the overgrown garden, to the north of the house and alongside the pond, an abandoned timber frame outbuilding had also been left to ruin, with a partially collapsed roof and failing sections of wall.

Since 2020, the Main House and garden have undergone a significant scope of repair and restoration and the building is now back in full use as a single residential dwelling.

A 2022 application by the previous owner to retain an altered outbuilding within the building's curtilage was refused.[1]

The current owners bought the house in 2022 and chose not to appeal the decision. **The Annexe was dismantled and removed in June 2023.**

**7.0 PROPOSALS**

The extent of the proposals can be found on drawing 73833 (Proposed Block Plan), EOB 100 (proposed floor plans), EOB 101 Proposed elevations, 274 PO5 Rev F (Proposed 2 Bay stable and Log Store) and 274 P08 (Proposed Garden Pergola Design).

The guidance within the Wiltshire Farmsteads Assessment Framework supports informed and sensitive reinstatement of historic farm buildings. Evidence of these buildings highlighted in our regression study has been used as a starting point. Rather than build the new outbuilding outside of the historic farmstead we seek to reinstate an appropriate building on the existing concrete pad, as this is the site of an historic farm building.

The scope of this building is primarily two fold; firstly the provisions of 2 garage parking spaces; secondly a residential section for home office/gym use. Both of these uses are entirely subservient to the use of the Main House and grounds as a single dwelling house.

This design has been influenced by the historic use of the site (i.e historic farmstead) and therefore is more agricultural in character as opposed to overtly residential consisting of a rectilinear single storey 4 bay structure with a traditional 35 degree gable roof. This is similar to surviving farm buildings within the wider Steeple Ashton Conservation Area which have been used as a point of local reference.[2] The primary structure is an exposed oak frame which is then infilled in oak cladding. The roof will be of Double Roman clay tile to match the house. These materials have been chosen for their connection to, but also their subservience to the Main House which shares some of the same material and aesthetic approaches. Where possible we are committed to the use of products and materials that are environmentally sound and sustainable.

A modern take influenced by the historic character of the setting is represented by some glazing on the NW Gable end exposing the Oak A Frame as a nod to the Oak frame that that supports the 16th Century Cross Wing of the main dwelling. This glazing has been significantly reduced in scope from original designs following pre-application advice from Historic England[3]. These additions are discreet from the public realm and do not take away from the overall agricultural appearance and character of the building.

The proposed Stables envisages the moving of a currently "mobile" 3 bay stable structure from the Paddock (outlined in blue on the location plan) to sit within the curtilage bdry. This building is of a humbler construction in both design and materials consummate with it's primary use. One 'loose box' is to be removed from the three stables to create a covered store area and two stables, which is an improvement on the existing stable block and softens it's character. The siting of this building in the back corner of the site is practical as this sits next to the gate for the adjoining paddock and also limits any potential visual impact by ensuring that it sits within the wider grounds in as neutral a manner as possible. The re-using an existing building also has significant environmental benefits as no additional carbon footprint will be generated by its inclusion in the plans.

Within the wider grounds a Garden Pergola is proposed on the site of the now removed annexe. This will be constructed from native hardwood (option of local stone pillars ) covered in native English roses and wisteria adding a verdant natural haven to compliment the existing cart pond.

**8.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT (excluding heritage matters).**

In terms of general Planning Policy, the proposed ancillary buildings present no materials issues of concern and is supported by local and national planning policy.

**9.0 HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

The Sanctuary is Grade II* Listed building and set within a Conservation Area and as such, due regard has to be taken as to the impact that any changes may have on it, directly or in its setting.

The following text assess the proposals in terms of heritage matters and the impact of the proposals on the significance of the asset.

The proposals as submitted have no direct impact on the material fabric of the heritage asset and so in this regard there is nothing further to consider. However, the sanctuary sits in a large domestic setting and has a history of a number of ancillary outbuilding which are no longer evident onsite but form part of its development history. The

[1] PL/2022/00485
[2] Examples of surviving single storey farm buildings within 250m of the site are captured in Annex A.
[3] Glazing reduced by circa 45% from original proposal following Historic England pre-application advice to ensure that the overall building retained a "robust appearance, congruent with the functional, agricultural forms the scheme conceptually refers".

landscape itself also provides an import setting and back drop to the Main House, as does the broader Conservation Area.

It is presumed that any work to a Listed Building, its curtilage structures or setting will impact on the significance of the asset. The siting of the principal structure is considered to be a positive evolution of the historic layout of the setting by re-instating lost farm buildings forming a typical yard arrangement of farm buildings situated at a practical distance from the dwelling house. Therefore development is not speculative and by reinstatement of historic layouts, provides a degree of historic influence to new design irrespective of whether evidence of the actual building type and form is available.

The form and materials are both vernacular and reference the Main House, the buildings scale is such that they have only a small impact on the view. It is also clear from the visual assessment that in the most part when viewed from the main dwelling or front gate the proposed (main) structure simply partially replaces the existing view of a much larger and less sensitive aircraft hangar (now converted to a retail distribution hub) located in the agricultural landscape beyond. In this respect, this can be considered an improvement to the setting of the Main House.

The Stable is sighted as far away from the Main House as practically possible which increases the subservient nature of the structure. In, addition, this area of the site is virgin green field land and was recorded as woodland prior to its modern use as agricultural / equestrian land. Any outbuilding constructed and recorded on the regression maps are a significant distance away from the proposals. It is therefore considered to be an area of low archaeological significance in relation to the Main House. Furthermore by moving the ”mobile” stable inside the domestic curtilage it will allow the paddock to revert to full agricultural use.

On balance, it is suggested that the form and scale of these proposals, along with their muted agricultural character should sit within this sensitive setting relatively neutrally, visual impact wise. Additionally recreating ancillary structures where proposed may carry some potential benefit by accommodating modern functions away from the main house thereby reducing the pressure on the historic fabric. This is not to say there is no impact, but based on the historic evidence and the form of development, this is unlikely to introduce harm to the building’s setting, rather we hope this promotes a positive response to character and significance of the building’s setting.

**10.0 CONCLUSIONS**

The works as proposed in this application have been carefully considered in relation to the site and relevant local and national policies. The proposals are considered to constitute an appropriate form, scale, location, and design of development in the context of the site, built forms and heritage setting.

Mr and Mrs Ronz

13 November 2023

## Annex 1 – Pictoral submissions



**Picture 1**. View of existing courtyard, concrete pad and large aircraft hanger (now converted to retail distribution hub).



**Picture 2**. View of existing mobile stable in adjoining paddock. Proposal would reduce this from 3 bays to 2 bays + log store and move this inside curtilage (wooden fence in foreground).



**Picture 3**. Wider Conservation area reference - Historic barn building located at Grade 2 listed "Old Chesils" on Dark Lane North 75m from site within Steeple Ashton Conservation Area. (Angle 1)



**Picture 4**. Wider Conservation area reference - Historic barn building located at Grade 2 listed "Old Chesils" on Dark Lane North 75m from site within Steeple Ashton Conservation Area. (Angle 2)



**Picture 5.** Wider Conservation area reference - Grade 2 Historic barn located at number 46 on the High Street 100m from site within Steeple Ashton Conservation Area. (Angle 1)



**Picture 6.** Wider Conservation area reference - Grade 2 Historic barn located at number 46 on the High Street 100m from site within Steeple Ashton Conservation Area. (Angle 2)