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Professional Archaeological Services

No. 3 Water Lane, Castle Combe, Wiltshire, SN14 7HX

Heritage Impact Assessment

04 December 2023

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Heritage Planning Services Ltd

35 Dallas Road, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 1LE

Sam Driscoll (m) 07825 550271 (e) sam@heritageplan.co.uk

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Non-Technical Summary

Heritage Planning Services has been commissioned to prepare a Heritage Impact Assessment of the project site, No. 3 Water Lane, Castle Combe, Wiltshire, SN14 7HX, at National Grid Reference ST 841 771.

No. 3 Water Lane is a Grade II listed cottage, forming a pair with No. 2, which are described as 18th century stone-built cottages with stone roofing slates. The project site is part of a group of seven Grade II listed buildings fronting Water Lane, which lies within the Castle Combe Conservation Area and within the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

It is proposed to make alterations to the interior and the rear of No. 3 Water Lane. A ground floor kitchen extension to the rear of the cottage will be demolished and replaced with a larger ground floor kitchen extension. It is also proposed to install an air sourced heat pump to the rear of the cottage, but the exact external location has yet to be confirmed.

Internally it is proposed to remove soft partitions between the two small upstairs bedrooms at the front. This will create a single front bedroom. The partitions are thought to be later additions and not part of the historic fabric of the cottage. While a downstairs toilet and washbasin will be retained, the back bedroom will be converted to an *ensuite* bathroom; the single first floor dormer window to the rear will be infilled and replaced with two dormer windows to provide extra light to the new bathroom.

This project was commissioned to assess the impact of these proposals on the historic fabric of the project site, as well as the impact to adjoining properties and the wider Conservation Area.

Views to the front of the project site will not be impacted by the proposed changes. There are limited views to the rear of the project site from adjoining properties. Demolition of the present kitchen extension is unlikely to damage historic fabric, however the proposed kitchen extension is longer and will obscure one ground floor rear window and some of the exposed stonework on the corner of the cottage. Soft partitions on the first floor are demonstrably additions of the later 20th century and their removal is unlikely to do harm to the historic fabric. All these proposals are likely to do less than substantial harm to the historic fabric of the projects site and the wider study area.

The proposal to replace the single first floor rear window with two windows at new locations, is likely to involve the removal of historic fabric from the first-floor rear wall. Without further information on the nature of that fabric, this proposal could constitute substantial harm to the historic fabric. While views to

the rear of the project site are unlikely to be substantially impacted by the proposals, a permitted loss of historic fabric could have implications for other Grade II listed buildings within the Conservation Area.

Further information is required before the impact of a proposed air sourced heat pump can be properly assessed.

1. Introduction

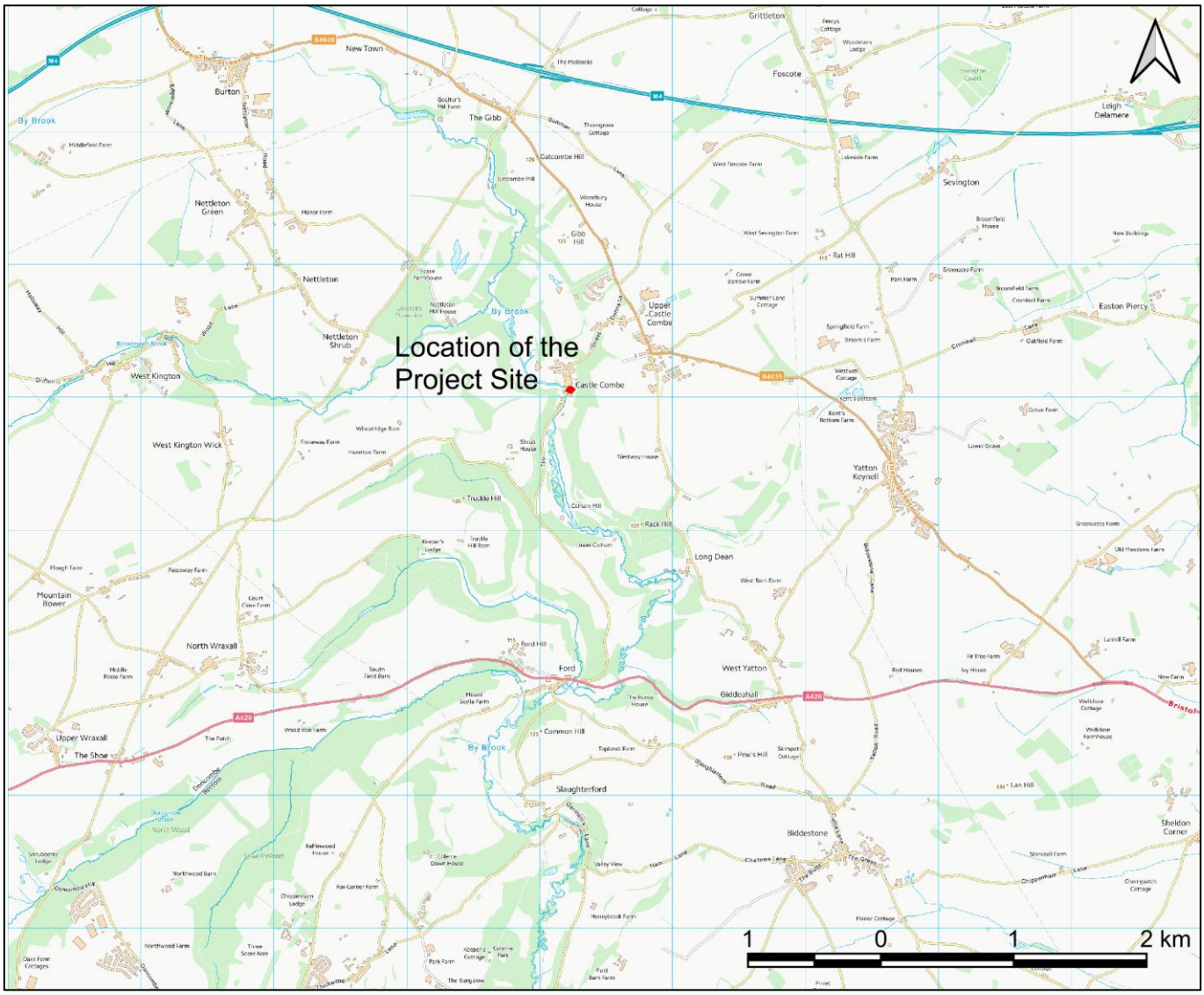


Figure 1: Location of the Project Site. Contains OS data © Crown Copyright 2023.

1.1. Heritage Planning Services has been commissioned to prepare a Historic Environment Impact Assessment for No. 3 Water Lane, Castle Combe, Wiltshire, SN14 7HX (the Project Site).

1.2. It is proposed to demolish a single-storey kitchen extension to the rear of the cottage and replace it with a larger single-storey kitchen extension. It is also proposed to remove first floor partitions between the two front bedrooms and create a new bathroom in what is now the back bedroom. Proposals also include the installation of an air sourced heat pump.

1.3. This report has been commissioned to assess the impact of these proposals on the historic environment. It has been prepared by David Etheridge, BA, MPhil, FSA Scot, for Heritage Planning Services Ltd.

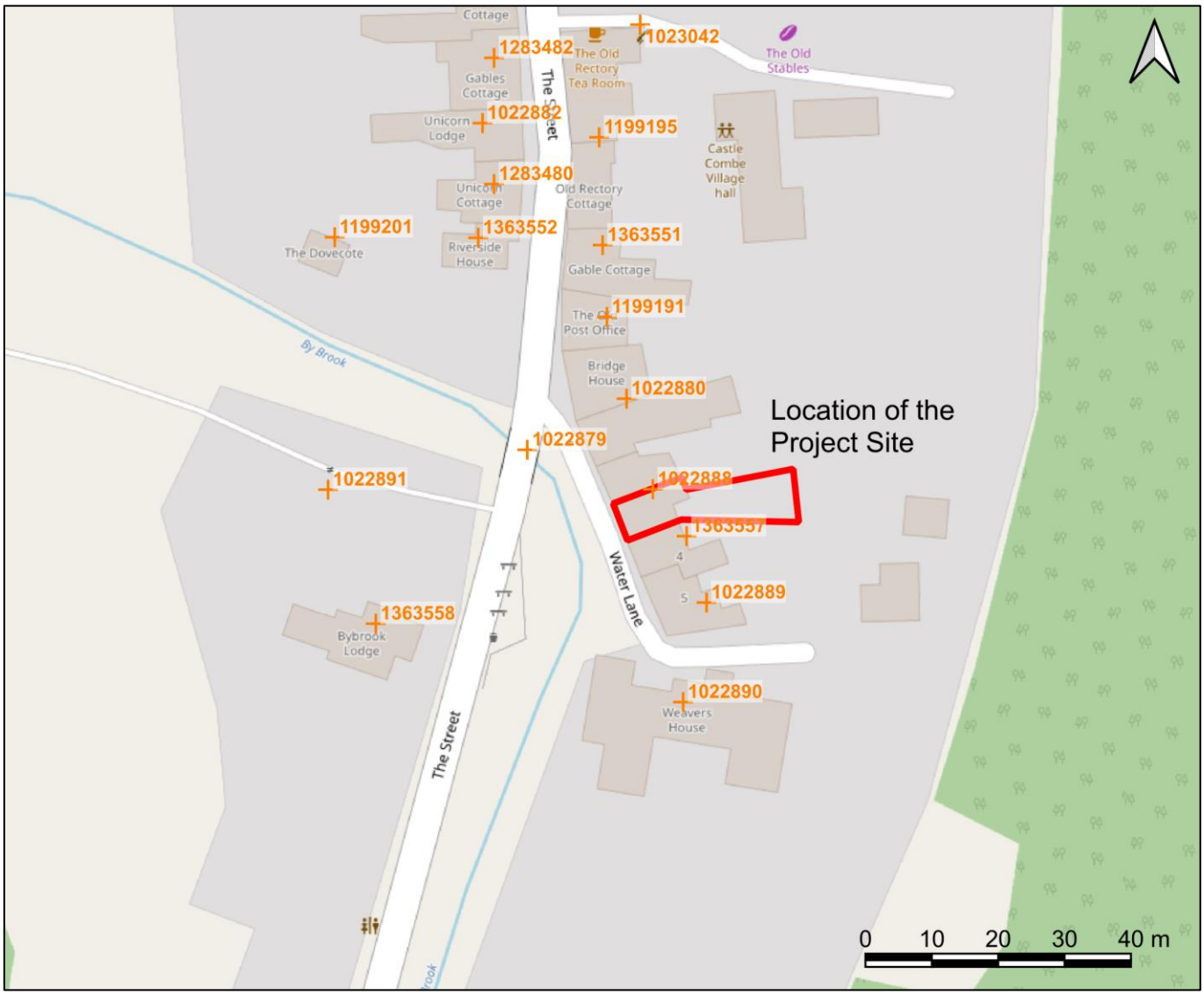


Figure 2: Detail of the project site (outlined in red) with Grade II listed buildings indicated by orange crosses. Listed building data from Historic England, Crown copyright and database right 2023; uses OpenStreetMap.

2. The Project Site

2.1. A site visit was carried out on the 26/7/2023. The property lies within the village of Castle Combe, which is located in the upper valley of the southerly flowing By Brook, c. 6.6km north of Corsham. The underlying geology consists of alluvial deposits overlying Fuller's Earth sedimentary bedrock (BGS, 2023).



Photo 1: The Project Site (rendered with red door) with nos. 1, 2, and 4, viewed from the west bank of the By Brook.

2.2. No. 3 Water Lane is situated on the east side of Water Lane (at c. 77-78m aOD) which runs south from the *The Street*, the main north-south throughfare through the village.

2.3. Water Lane is short, 62m in length, running for 40m in a southerly direction before turning east in front of *Weavers House*, where it ends abruptly. There are no properties on the west side of the lane, as it adjoins the brook, but a total of six properties front the east side of the lane. From north to south these are: *Bridge House* and nos. 1 to 5 Water Lane.



Photo 2: the project site frontage in detail.

2.4. The project site comprises the cottage and rear garden of No. 3 Water Lane; the cottage forms one of a pair with No. 2 Water Lane. All the properties on the lane form a terrace that ends with No. 5, but they are not all in the same style, suggesting they were added or modified at different dates.

2.5. Currently the only rendered and painted frontage on Water Lane is the project site; the rear is also rendered. The frontage rendering has the effect of obscuring all the stonework beneath it; only the moulded Cotswold stone of the door and window frames is left exposed.

2.6. The cottage frontage is characterised by a central rectangular doorway with moulded stone surround. There are two windows on the ground floor frontage and two dormer windows on the first floor. Three of the windows are double lights with roughly equal proportions, but the ground floor

window on the south side of the door is only a single light. Guttering and drainpipes of late 19th or early 20th century design collect the water from either side of each dormer.

2.7. The main roof appears to be a simple gable-ended structure, continuous between nos. 2 and 3; it is covered with rough-hewn Cotswold stone slates. The only marker of the join between nos. 2 and 3 is the moulded stone chimney on the western side of the roof. The front dormers are also roofed in the same material.



Photo 3: rear view of the project site from the garden.

2.8. The main gable-ended roof only appears to cover the extent of the front bedrooms. The rear bedroom, which in plan extends slightly to the south beyond the width of the frontage has a lean-to roof covered with Welsh slate tiles at a pitch that is less steep than that of the main roof.

2.9. It is therefore possible that the present rear wall of the cottage represents a later extension. Architects plans of the project site (AA.23.09) indicate the walls of the back bedroom are of an equivalent thickness to the front wall of the cottage. It seems likely that what is now the dividing wall between the front and back bedrooms was once the rear wall of the cottage.

2.10. It might be possible to ascertain the likely date of the rear wall by exposing portions of the impacted fabric and comparing them with exposed portions of the other structural walls. However, the thickness of the rear wall and the presence of 'long and short' ashlar quoins on the southeast corner would suggest it was constructed of rubble and therefore added in the earlier 19th century at the latest.



Photo 4: detail of the 'long and short' quoins on the southeast corner of the project site.

2.11. At present the rear wall is heavily rendered. There is one ground floor window onto the downstairs bathroom, this has a moulded stone surround, possibly in Bath stone. The window to the first-floor rear bedroom is a flat-roofed dormer with three lights.

2.12. The ground floor kitchen extension is located along the northern side of the rear wall. The north wall and parts of the east wall of the kitchen form the boundary with No. 2. Therefore, the kitchen door is located in the southern wall. A short, frosted window opens out of the east wall while a larger window adjoins the door in the southern wall. The roof is a lean-to with ceramic tiles and a skylight.

2.13. Internally no historic features were visible in the kitchen or bathroom. The fireplace in the front room is constructed of limestone ashlars. The main historical feature of note is the wooden staircase from the front room to the first-floor landing; this has a cupboard style wooden door into the front room.

2.14. Examination of the partition wall between the two front bedrooms was undertaken by Armstrong Architects. This indicated the partition was constructed of sawn timber uprights with horizonal laths fastened on either side using galvanised iron nails before the wall was plastered over.

3. Development Framework

3.1. With regards to the relevant policy and development framework, the following are considered appropriate to the current proposal:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2023;

16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

189. Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

190. Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:

a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and

distinctiveness; and
d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

194. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

195. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

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

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

Considering potential impacts

199. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

200. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or

destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.*

202. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

203. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

206. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011

POLICY HE1: Development in Conservation Areas

In Conservation Areas, proposals for development, advertisements and other works will only be permitted where the proposal will preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area. Open spaces, village greens, gaps between buildings, fields, gardens and trees that provide attractive views and vistas to, from and within public areas will be protected from development that would fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. When permitting development in Conservation Areas, the established historic streets, building lines and frontages, burgage plots and boundaries, the plan form of buildings, and other historic physical and landscape features will be conserved and incorporated into the proposal where appropriate.

7.3 In order to protect the special character and appearance of Conservation Areas, there is a need for strict control over development, this does not preclude the possibility of new development, but any development should be designed to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the area.

7.4 Existing open spaces, village greens, fields, gaps between buildings, private gardens, and other parcels of land can make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of Conservation Areas in particular, and such features often need to be preserved. The loss of just one site to development in environmentally sensitive areas can make it extremely difficult to resist further development in an area, resulting in the loss of an attractive setting or feature, and can erode the rural and open character of an area. Care will also be taken to ensure that views and vistas, including familiar and cherished scenes such as open views of a church tower, the local village green, any surrounding hillsides and river valleys, remain unspoilt.

7.5 In preserving and enhancing the townscape of areas, regard will be had to the historic layout and building lines which provide the opportunity to maintain a record of the evolution of such areas and which endow such areas with a special character of their own, in relation to the spaces between buildings, as well as the buildings themselves. Retention of burgage plots, historic street patterns, plot boundaries, building frontages, and the plan form of buildings, is considered particularly important. New development in streets with a continuous frontage of buildings, situated with their front walls on the back edge of the pavement, needs to respect established building lines and avoid incongruous gaps and set-backs. Where such considerations are not satisfactorily dealt with, in connection with a particular proposal, the development will not normally be permitted, whether or not the proposal complies with any other policies as set out in the Development Plan.

POLICY HE2: Demolition in Conservation Areas

Development will not be permitted involving the demolition of buildings or structures that make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. Development involving the demolition of buildings, including parts of buildings and structures, such as boundary walls, will only be permitted in conservation areas where:
i) The proposals would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area, such as removing unsightly, alien and modern features; and
ii) The form of any necessary replacement has been approved, and where a contract has been made for the carrying out of the works of redevelopment.

7.6 Conservation Area Consent is required in general to demolish or remove buildings (including parts of buildings), or walls in a Conservation Area. Unlisted buildings in Conservation Areas will be assessed against the same criteria as listed buildings. Consideration will be given to the desirability of retaining any building or site as existing. Buildings and features of value, either in their own right, or because of the contribution they make to a pleasant townscape or village scene, cannot be replaced once lost.

POLICY HE4: Development, Demolition or Alterations Involving Listed Buildings

Development or alteration affecting a listed building will only be permitted where it preserves or enhances the building, its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses.

7.10 Listed Building consent is required prior to executing, or causing to be executed, any works for the demolition, alteration or extension of a listed building which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest. A listed building includes any object or structure within its curtilage and any object or structure fixed to the building. PPG15 (Planning Policy Guidance Note 15) [Author's note, replaced by the NPPF, see above] sets out the considerations relating to demolition and alterations of listed buildings.

7.11 Where a planning application is made for development within the curtilage or vicinity of a listed building, the planning authority will take into account the effect of the proposal on the setting of the listed building.

4. Overview of known Heritage Assets

4.1. The information presented here is derived from sources including the Wiltshire Historic Environment Record (Know Your Place), the National Heritage List for England (NHLE), the Historic England Archive, and surviving cartographic resources, along with other published or documentary sources.

Designated Assets

4.2. Trawls of the NHLE and the Wiltshire HER have revealed there are no Registered Battlefields or Registered Parks and Gardens within the wider study area. However, the project site is a Grade II listed structure that lies within the Castle Combe Conservation Area. For its size, there are an exceptionally large number of listed buildings and structures in Castle Combe (73 in an area of less than 7ha), including buildings immediately adjacent to the project site.

Scheduled Monuments

4.3. Within Castle Combe there is one Scheduled Monument, the upstanding medieval market cross; this has also been Grade II listed (Historic England, 2023g).

4.4. About 600m northwest of Castle Combe are the standing remains of a 12th century motte and bailey castle (Historic England, 2023h); excavations in 1991 and clearance work in 2005 indicated the presence of stone walls and a shell keep (Wiltshire and Swindon HER, 2023). This suggests occupation of the castle continued into the 13th century.

Conservation Area

4.5. Although the extent of the Castle Combe Conservation Area is known and published, there is currently no available appraisal document.

AONB

4.6. Castle Combe lies within the Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Natural England explain that a local planning authority has a duty to regard an AONB as part of the decision-making process (Natural England, 2010).

Listed Buildings

4.7. There are a significant number of listed structures within a 500m radius of the project site, so only those immediately pertinent to this investigation will be detailed here.

4.8. The project site is part of a short terrace of 18th century structures, built on the east side of Water Lane – all the buildings of this terrace are listed. The terrace is effectively a southward continuation of a row of listed buildings on the east side of *The Street*, with *Bridge House* forming the link between the two streets.

4.9. Grade II listed *Bridge House* is described as a 17th century house, with walls built of rubble and a roof of stone tiles (Historic England, 2023e).

4.10. The listing for Bridge House includes *The Porch House*, No. 1 Water Lane, described as mid-18th century (Historic England, 2023e). Dendrochronological analysis of samples taken from the surviving principal rafters of No. 1 were submitted for dendrochronological analysis; the results indicated a felling date for both timbers of between 1455 and 1465 (Arnold and Howard, 2012). This is significantly earlier than the date given in the listing.

4.11. No. 1, Water Lane, stands opposite the Grade II listed late 19th century stone bridge (Historic England, 2023i) that carries *The Street* over *By Brook*.

4.12. The project site is officially listed as 2 and 3 Water Lane, Grade II, which includes the adjoining property on the north side; they are described as late 18th century cottages with a roof of stone tiles (Historic England, 2023a).

4.13. The adjoining structure to the south is the Grade II listed No. 4, Water Lane, described as a late 18th century house with stone tiled roof (Historic England, 2023b). The last structure at the southern end of the row is No. 5, Water Lane, another Grade II listed house with stone tiles (Historic England, 2023c).

4.14. At the southern end of Water Lane stands the Grade II listed *Weavers House*; this is described as an 18th century house with earlier origins, formerly three cottages, heavily modified in the 20th century (Historic England, 2023l).

4.15. Other listed structures of particular note within Castle Combe include the Grade I listed church of St Andrew (Historic England, 2023f), located 148m northwest of the project site; the Grade II* listed *Old Court House* (Historic England, 2023k), 97m north of the project site; and the Grade II* listed *Dower House* (Historic England, 2023j), c. 200m north of the project site.

4.16. Grade II listing is applied to 65 other structures within Castle Combe.

Non-Designated Assets

4.17. No non-designated heritage assets have been identified in the study area.

Conclusions

4.18. Based on the dates assigned in the NHLE, Numbers 1 to 5 Water Lane represent a mid to late 18th century extension of properties fronting the east side of The Street. This appeared to have been initiated with the construction of No. 1 in the mid-18th century, while nos. 2-5 were supposedly added a few decades later.

4.19. However, the later 15th century date for No. 1 Water Lane suggests the row (or parts of it) may have had earlier origins in the later Middle Ages, but this hypothesis has yet to be tested.

4.20. All are stone-built houses and cottages with stone tiled roofs (see above). Their construction probably represents a period of growth and relative prosperity in Castle Combe. It was not unusual in the 18th century for medieval buildings to be given a fashionable Georgian frontage (e.g., Ludlow).

4.21. To date, no investigations of the kind carried out at No. 1 have been published for any other property in the row.

5. Historic Overview of the Project Site

5.1. The project site lies in the lower settlement of Castle Combe, within the core area of the historic village. The earliest mention of Castle Combe appears to be in Domesday (1086), where it was held by Humphrey de l'Isle; thirty-three heads of household were listed, including five villagers and three burgesses, but the estate was mainly rated for arable land and there was no direct mention of a town (Palmer and Powell-Smith, 2018).

5.2. The motte and bailey castle was probably constructed in the 12th century, possibly during the war of Stephen and Mathilda (Scrope, 1852, p. 22; Historic England, 2023h). There appears to be no mention of a settlement before an Exchequer Roll of 1177 '"Cumbe, which was lately Earl Reginald's town" paid 4/'; the town also acquired the right to hold a market during the reign of Henry II (Scrope, 1852, p. 33). Since this roll was a specific assessment of towns and burghs in Wiltshire (ibid.), it seems likely that Castle Combe was established as a planned market town in the later 12th century.

5.3. During the 13th century there was little mention of the settlement (Crittall, 1959c), in 1291 the church was rated for tax to the value of £8 (Scrope, 1852, p. 360). In 1334 Castle Combe paid 60 shillings in tax (Crittall, 1959a) and by 1340 a fulling mill had been established there (Crittall, 1959c), indicating Castle Combe participated in the wool trade and was probably already making cloth. By the end of the 14th century Castle Combe had become a prosperous and growing settlement off the back of the medieval wool trade; principal activities were fulling, weaving and dyeing – the

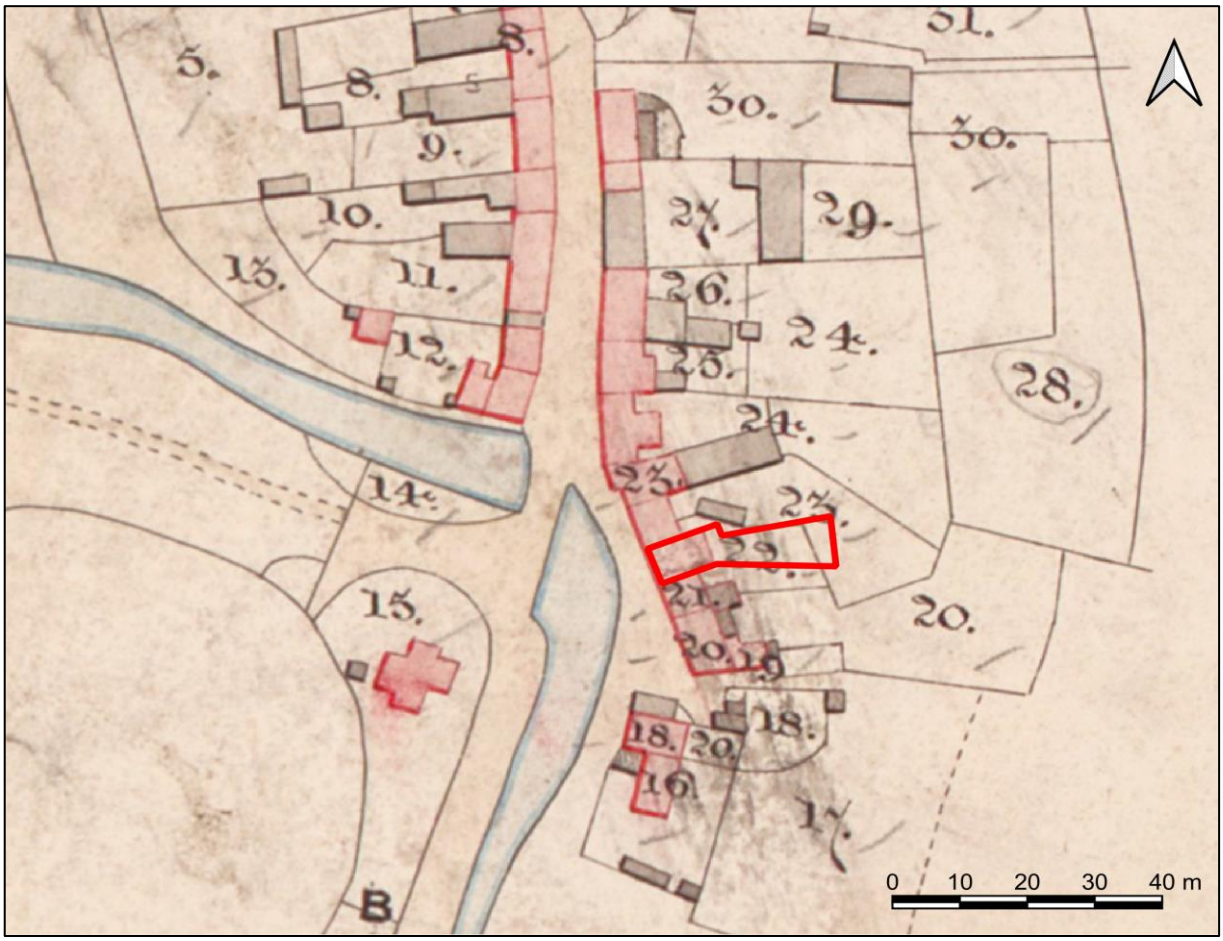


Figure 3: extract from the 1841 Tithe Map of Castle Combe (Wiltshire & Swindon HER 2023).

settlement was known in particular for its scarlet cloth (Crittall, 1959c). Fulling and dyeing require water, and fulling also requires waterpower to drive a fulling mill, a task for which the By Brook was well suited (Crittall, 1959c).

5.4. The settlement appears to have thrived under the patronage of Sir John Fastolf, who was lord of the manor in the later 14th and early 15th centuries; records of expansion survive with the construction of 50 new houses for workers, merchants and clothiers (Scrope, 1852, pp. 249–250; Crittall, 1959c).

5.5. After the death of Sir John the settlement continued to thrive throughout the 15th century and into the earlier 16th; however, by the mid-16th century there were signs the English wool industry had peaked (Crittall, 1959c).

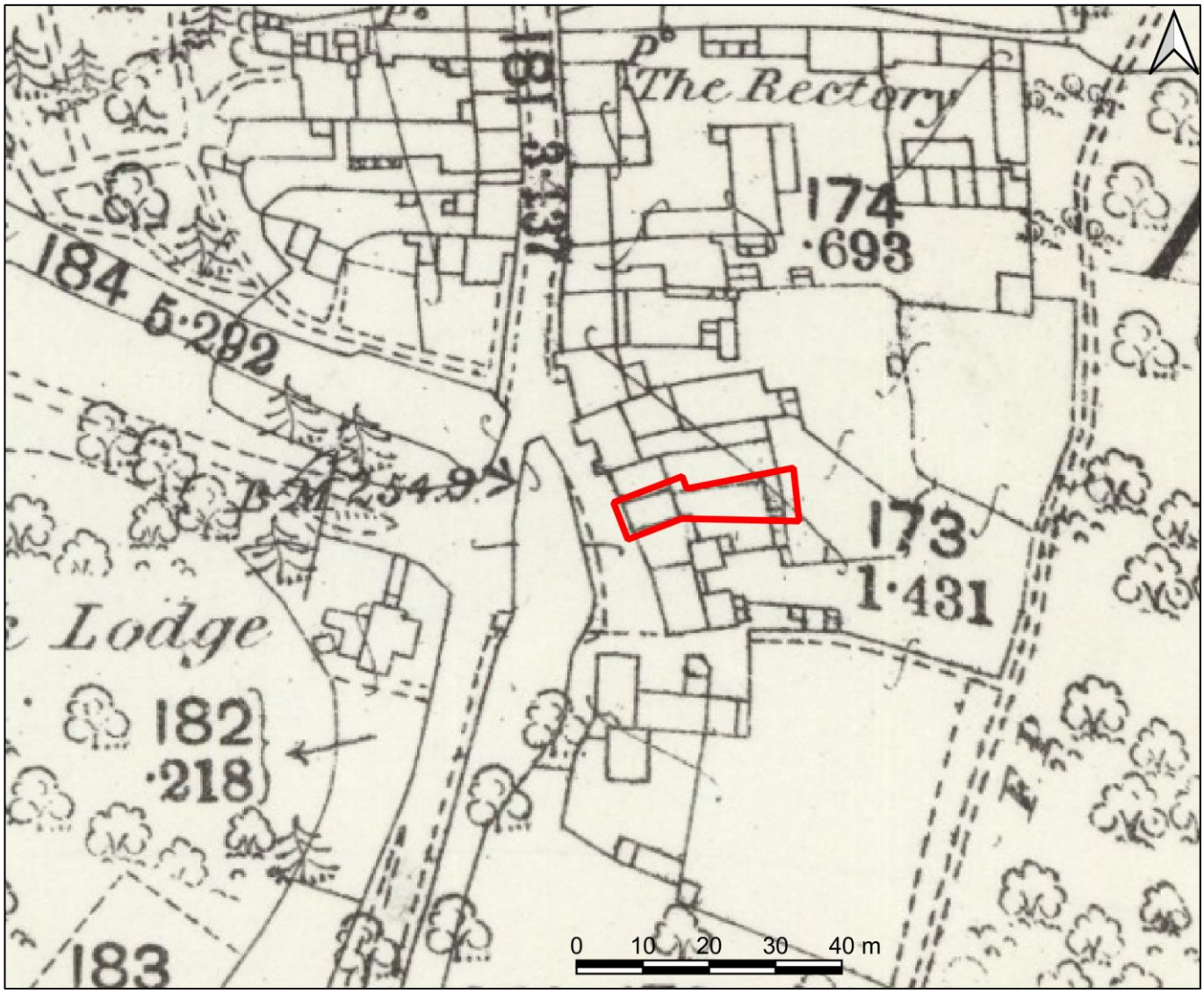


Figure 4: extract from the Ordnance Survey map of Wiltshire 1886, with the approximate location of the project site outlined in red.

5.6. The woollen industry slumped in the latter half of the 16th century, but rapidly revived in the 1630s with the advent of new products, mainly from the switch to using wool dyed before weaving (Crittall, 1959c, 1959b). The market appeared to be thriving in the first half of the 17th century, but by 1670 it was barely functioning and had probably ceased altogether by 1700. In 1711 Castle Combe was one of the few manufacturers in Wiltshire that still produced white cloth for dyeing in London; the settlement does not feature in the history of Wiltshire textile manufacture after that date (Crittall, 1959b). Scrope states that cloth was still being made in the village c. 1750, but by 1830 all the mills and dye houses had been demolished (Scrope, 1852, p. 3). With the passing of the wool trade Castle Combe appears to have lost its status as a town and reverted to an agrarian economy.

5.7. It is possible to make out Water Lane on a map of Wiltshire dated 1773, but not at such a scale that individual properties can be identified (WSHC, 2023b). Detail on the 1841 Tithe Map suggest the project site was probably located in either plots 21 or 22. On the Tithe Award plot 21 is listed as a

house and garden of two perches, lifehold to William Taylor and let to Phillip Whitcomb; plot 22 is the property of William Scrope (Lord of the Manor), consisting of a house and garden of four perches, in a shared let between George Stickler and Mary Farr.

5.8. Detailed Ordnance Survey mapping commences in the 1880s. All the properties on Water Lane were treated as one for land registry purposes; this continued for some time on later OS maps. The present kitchen extension is not shown on maps published before 1940, which also show no formal garden boundary between No. 3 and No. 4.

5.9. Oblique and vertical aerial photographs of Castle Combe are available on Historic England's Aerial Photo Explorer (Historic England, 2023d). Views from 1949 indicate the present kitchen extension had not yet been built, and that the present dormer window replaces an earlier one with a hipped roof resembling the two dormers at the front (Historic England, 2023d, figs EAW014926 & EAW027305).

5.10. Population statistics for Castle Combe start with the first national census in 1801, where it was recorded at 567. This rose to a maximum of 600 in 1851, before falling to a low of 322 in 1931 (WSHC, 2023a). Population has risen to the 400s since then, but subsequently fallen back to the 300s, despite the population of Wiltshire more than doubling between 1931 and 2011 (ibid.).

5.11. Postcards from the late 19th century onwards illustrate the rise of Castle Combe as a tourist destination (Davis, 2014; Wilkinson postcards, Tomkins & Barrett postcards Wiltshire & Swindon HER, 2023). This probably accelerated after WWII, with more leisure time and greater ownership of the motor car.

6. Setting Assessment & Significance

6.1. The presence of the project site, itself a Grade II listed building and part of a Grade II listed terrace, within a conservation area located in the Cotswold AONB, should be a material consideration in the planning process.

6.2. The high concentration of listed buildings and structures within the conservation area adds significance to the project site. Conversely, loss or damage to one heritage asset diminishes the value of the group as a whole.

7. Proposed Development

7.1. The following abstract of the proposed development is based on plans drawn up and supplied by Armstrong Architecture on behalf of their client, specifically drawings AA/22/09/01-05 & 11-15.

7.2. It is proposed to demolish the rear kitchen extension and replace this with a single storey extension of similar height. The replacement extension will also function as a kitchen. It will have a larger footprint than the present kitchen, with additional area provided mainly to the south; this would obscure the bathroom window.

7.3. Inside the ground floor bathroom, the bath would be removed and replaced with a partition for an air sourced heat pump (ASHP).

7.4. It is proposed to convert the cottage from a three bedroom to a single bedroom property. On the first floor, the partition between the two front bedrooms and the staircase would be removed to create a single master bedroom. A new bathroom would be created within what is now the first-floor rear bedroom and airing cupboard. As part of this the present rear dormer would be removed and replaced with two new dormers to provide additional light to the bathroom.

7.5. There are no proposed changes to the ground floor living room and staircase, the gable roof or frontage.

8. Impact Assessment

8.1. The existing kitchen to the rear of the project site appears to be a late 20th century extension and is unlikely to preserve any historic fabric, while partially obscuring some of the historic fabric of the cottage at ground floor level. The proposal to replace the existing kitchen with a single storey extension of similar height will not have an impact on the historic fabric of the adjoining buildings and should not have a visual impact upon them.

8.2. The proposed new kitchen extension will have a larger footprint than the current extension and will therefore obscure part of the historic fabric of the east face of the project site, including fabric not presently obscured. This includes the moulding around the present bathroom window and most of the exposed quoins on the southeast corner of the building.

8.3. Demolition and replacement of the kitchen should not result in the loss of historic fabric; this will therefore cause negligible harm to the historic fabric of the project site. Views of the rear (east) face of the project site will be negatively impacted, but this impact is most likely restricted to the grounds of the project site and the grounds of the adjoining properties.

8.4. It is not possible to assess the impact of the proposed installation of an air sourced heat pump without further details of the proposal, e.g., location of the external unit and any associated cabling and feeds.

8.5. At first floor level it is proposed to remove the partition between the two front bedrooms, together with partitions around the first-floor landing. Internal examination of the partition between the two front bedrooms has demonstrated it is of lath and plaster construction, utilising modern galvanised nails. This partition is therefore not part of the historic fabric of the building. These internal proposals will have no visual impact on the exterior and will have a negligible impact on the historic fabric.

8.6. The proposal to convert the rear bedroom to a bathroom would appear to have no exterior visual impact, and disturbance of historic fabric is likely to be minimal or negligible.

8.7. However, proposals to remove the present rear dormer and replace it with two new rear dormers, to allow more light into the bathroom, are likely to have both a visual impact and a negative impact on the historic fabric. Aerial photographs from 1948-9 suggest the present dormer is on the location of a previous dormer with a hipped roof, in keeping with the two dormers on the frontage. It is possible that historic fabric relating to the earlier dormer is retained in the present one. Inserting two new dormers will involve some removal of the historic fabric of the rear wall. Although this wall appears to be a later addition to the cottage, the exposed quoins suggest it is 18th or 19th century in date. The new dormers would also have a visual impact, visible from the rear and surrounding properties.

8.8. The current proposals outline no physical change to the west facing street frontage of the project site, neither do they extend above first floor level of the project site. It is therefore concluded the proposals will have no material or visual impact beyond the rear of the properties fronting Water Lane.

9. Conclusion

9.1. At ground floor level, increased obscuration of historic fabric of the east face of the project site, while not desirable, can be mitigated by establishing a programme of monitoring and recording of

the affected historic fabric prior to and during the proposed works. This can be implemented by means of a suitably worded condition should planning and listed building consent be approved.

9.2. The proposed removal and insertion of internal partitions is likely to have a negligible impact on the historic fabric of the project site but could also be monitored in case historic fabric is exposed.

9.3. The proposed conversion of the rear bedroom to a bathroom is likely to have a negligible impact on the historic fabric.

9.4. The removal and infilling of the present first floor rear dormer may disturb historic fabric, while the proposal to insert two new dormers in the same wall will lead to some permanent loss of historic fabric. This will have a localised visual impact on views of the rear of the project site.

9.5. It has not been possible to assess the impact of the proposed air sourced heat pump.

9.6. There are no proposals to alter the historic frontage of the project site.

9.7. The overall impact is judged to be less than substantial harm. The level of harm may be further assessed once detailed plans of the air sourced heat pump are forthcoming, however this is still likely to be less than substantial. This should be weighed against the benefits of the scheme with regards to securing the long-term care and upkeep of one of Castle Combe's prominent heritage assets.

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Heritage Planning Services Ltd
35 Dallas Road, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 1LE
M: 07825 550271 E: info@heritageplan.co.uk www.heritageplan.co.uk

Registered in England No: 09583997 VAT Registration No: 216388107