RIDGEWAY
HERITAGE CONSULTANCY

LOWERHOUSE FARM, LOWER CHUTE, WILTSHIRE SP11 9DX

A Heritage Statement



Client: Andrew Wheatley-Hubbard,

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Lowerhouse Farm, Lower Chute, Wiltshire SP11 9DX

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Front cover: View, looking south-west, of the east and north elevations of Lowerhouse Farm.

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SUMMARY

The Grade II-listed Lowerhouse Farm originally comprised a modest, timber-framed farmhouse of seventeenth-century date, which was re-clad and partly rebuilt in the eighteenth century. It is of three bays and two storeys, with a rear wing. The house was restored and enlarged in the early 1980s, with the addition of a two-storey brick extension on the northern side. It retains important heritage values which principally relate to its surviving historic fabric, and to the eighteenth-century adaptation of an earlier vernacular building.

Proposed internal alterations would principally affect the ground floor of the modern extension. These include the blocking-in of a passageway and changes to doorways on the south side of the kitchen, to create a larder. The removal of an open porch on the northern side of the extension, with new internal walling, would enlarge the kitchen. Remaining space within the former porch would be enclosed to create a boot room, with a new external doorway on the northern side. New utility and plant rooms would be created to the west of this, with an intervening new wall.

The kitchen and adjoining dining room would be integrated by removal of an intervening partition, and the dining room floor raised. Further changes would include the modification of existing openings on the south side, to enable installation of a new window and French doors. Limited first-floor alterations would include the replacement of casement windows on the west and south sides, and dormers, with examples of historic pattern. Internal changes would be made to bathroom doorways, with studwork partitions to create cupboard spaces. It is also proposed to apply lime render to the external brickwork of the modern extension.

The proposed alterations to Lowerhouse Farm would have minimal effect on surviving historic fabric, and on the plan-form and external appearance of the historic parts of the house. They would principally affect modern fabric and plan-form, which make no contribution to overall significance. Proposed external alterations would relate to window openings, and would result in no appreciable change to the historic character of the house, while some changes would be offer clear heritage benefits. Lowerhouse Farm is set back from the road frontage, and is visually enclosed by mature vegetation and by surrounding farm buildings on its boundaries. Visual connections with adjoining parts of the Conservation Area are very limited. The proposed alterations would principally affect the north elevation, which faces away from the road and neighbouring properties. For this reason, these would have very limited visibility within the Conservation Area, and the overall effect of such changes on the appearance and character of the Conservation Area, and on the settings and significance of neighbouring heritage assets, would be minimal.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In December, 2023, Ridgeway Heritage Consultancy was commissioned by Fowler Architecture and Planning Ltd, on behalf of Mr Anrew Wheatley-Hubbard, to prepare a Heritage Statement for Lowerhouse Farm, Lower Chute, Wiltshire SP11 9DX (NGR 431221 153204) (Figs. 1, 2 and 3). It is proposed to undertake a series of internal alterations to kitchen, dining and utility areas, and to fenestration. Lowerhouse Farm is an eighteenth-century house of two storeys and three bays, which incorporates earlier timber-framed fabric and a modern extension. It is listed at Grade II (NHLE 1035939), and is located within the Chute Cadley and Lower Chute Conservation Area (Fig. 28).

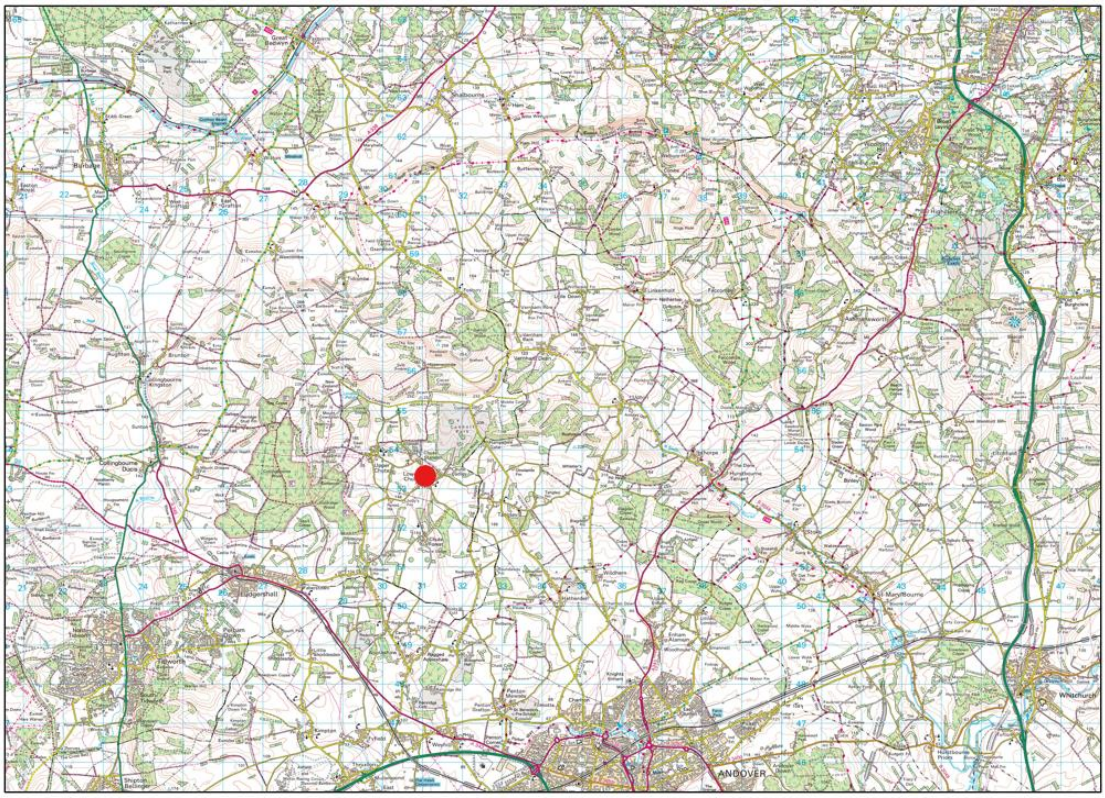


Fig. 1: Location Plan (approximate scale: 1:50,000).

Location and Context

1.2 Lowerhouse Farm is located on the north-western side of the lane which forms the principal thoroughfare through the village. It comprises part of the small, linear settlement of Lower Chute and Chute Cadley, which is effectively a contiguous, low-density arrangement of dwellings running on a south-west/north-east alignment, with no evident distinction between the two small village settlements (Figs. 2 and 28). These are situated within the

confluence of three dry valleys, which have influenced the meeting-points of a number of minor lanes. The junction between Hatchet Hill and Dummer Lane is located 140m to the west (Fig. 2). Elevations within the village range from 145m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), to 150m aOD, with gently sloping valley sides rising to elevations of 220m aOD at locations 1.5km to the north-east. Dwellings within Lower Chute are principally of eighteenth and nineteenth-century date, and are set at single depth along road frontages, with small fields or paddocks behind. The house is set within a spacious curtilage of 0.31ha in area, which is subdivided into a garden on the south-western side and an open, gravelled area and driveway on the north-eastern (front cover and Fig. 3). Andover town centre is located 9.2km to the south-east, and Marlborough town centre 19km to the north-west.

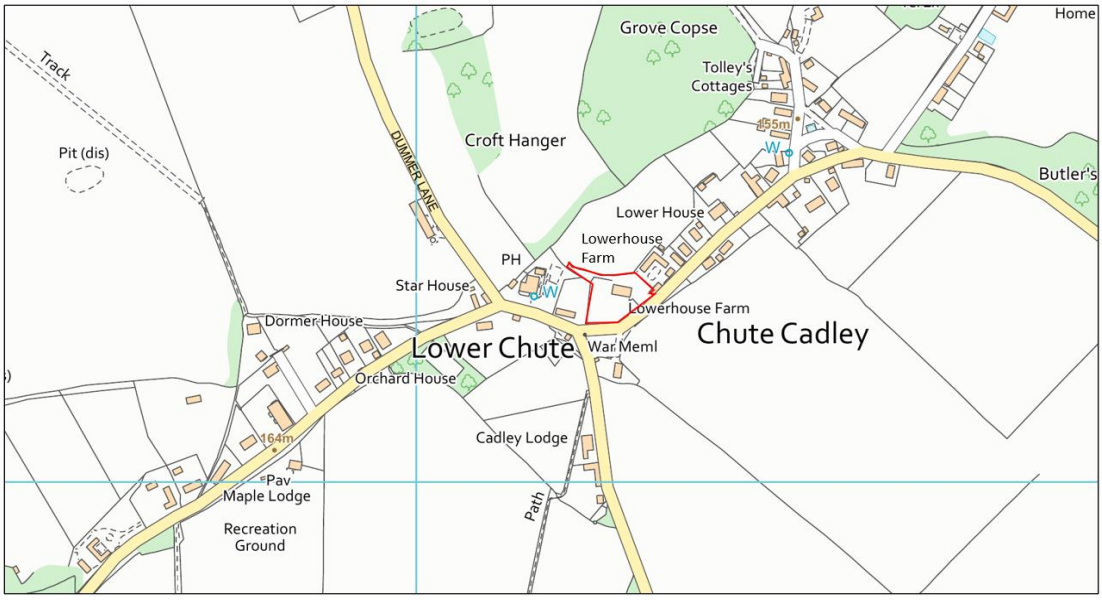


Fig. 2: Location of Lowerhouse Farm within Lower Chute (approximate scale 1: 2000).

Historic Landscape Character

1.3 Lower Chute is located within an area of high chalk downland in eastern Wiltshire, which represents part the former Royal Forest of Chute. This includes a number of areas of former wooded commons, together with assarted settlements of medieval date. The area supports extensive blocks of woodland, and a network of hedgerows and trees. This character largely reflects the extensive overlying deposits of clay-with-flints, which result in a chalkland landscape similar to that of the Hampshire Downs, rather than the more open spaces of Salisbury Plain. This rolling wooded downland, with its mix of pasture and woodland, is dissected by a number of dry valleys, which create an intimate landscape. The remnants of the Royal Forest of Chute are to be found in the typically assarted character of small village

settlements, including Lower Chute, Cadley and Chute Forest, with very little inter-visibility between these. The linear plan of Lower Chute is aligned on a south-west/north-east axis, with little surviving evidence of an earlier enclosure pattern (Figs. 2, 3 and 10-13). Surrounding larger enclosures, which may represent historic amalgamation of earlier fields, appear to be of nineteenth-century, Enclosure Act date. Open arable land is interspersed with extensive areas of mixed woodland and tree-belts on field boundaries. Larger areas of woodland, including Cathanger Wood to the north-east, occupy steeper slopes and higher areas of clay-with-flints deposits. Lower Chute is situated within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The Scope of the Heritage Statement

1.4 It is proposed to partly integrate kitchen and dining areas within Lowerhouse Farm, and to remove an undercut porch to form a boot room, and to enlarge the kitchen. Alterations are also proposed to the adjoining dining room, and to the fenestration of the modern extension, to enable this to conform to the character of historic parts of the house. An external application of lime render to the modern extension is proposed, to fulfil the same function. It has therefore been necessary to provide a detailed description of the affected parts and areas of historic fabric of Lowerhouse Farm, to determine their relative age, historic interest and significance, together with the effects of the proposed alterations on that significance. This has included detailed assessments of the following:

- The historic and architectural interest of the existing Lowerhouse Farm building, and its significance as a designated heritage asset;
- The effects of the proposed alterations on historic fabric and on the appearance and historic character of Lowerhouse Farm;
- The effect of the proposed alterations on the wider settings of neighbouring heritage assets and on the appearance of the Conservation Area;
- An assessment of the overall level of harm resulting from the proposed alterations.

1.5 It is necessary to articulate the significance of affected heritage assets and to assess the impact of the proposed works upon that significance, in accordance with Paragraph 195 of the National Planning Policy Framework:

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.



Fig. 3: Vertical aerial image of Lower Chute, with the context of Lowerhouse Farm (highlighted) (Geoinformation Systems).

1.6 In considering applications for development, the statutory duty, under Sections 16 (2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, is 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". It will also be necessary to articulate the significance of this heritage asset and to assess the impact of the proposed works upon that significance, in accordance with Paragraph 194 of the National Planning Policy Framework:

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.

1.7 A site visit, which included a detailed internal and external assessment of Lowerhouse Farm, was made on December 15th, 2023, in overcast conditions.

2. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT AND GUIDANCE

2.1 This Heritage Statement has been compiled in accordance with the following statutory, planning policy and guidance documents:

- National Heritage Act 1983 (amended 2002);
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990;
- National Planning Policy Framework 2012 (amended 2023);
- National Planning Practice Guidance: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (2016 revised 2021);
- English Heritage guidance: 'Conservation Principles; polices and guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment' (2008);
- Historic England guidance: 'Historic Environment good practice advice in planning: Note 2; Managing significance in decision-taking in the historic environment' (2015a); and
- Historic England guidance: 'Historic Environment good practice advice in planning: Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets' (2015b).

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990)

2.2 The 1990 Planning Act states that:

'in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority shall, or as the case may be, the Secretary of State, shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses (Section 66)*'.*

National Planning Policy Framework (2012, rev. 2023)

2.3 The Framework sets out national planning policy relating to the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. It defines the historic environment as: "all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscape and planted or managed flora." Individual components of the historic environment are considered to constitute heritage assets: "buildings, monuments, sites,

places, areas or landscapes identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of their heritage interest".

2.4 Key tenets of the Framework are that:

- when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset, the greater that weight should be (Paragraph 199).
- heritage significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset, or development within its setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, any harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to, or loss of, a Grade II-listed building, park or garden should be exceptional. Substantial harm to, or loss of, designated assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, Grade I or II*-listed buildings, registered parks and gardens and World Heritage Sites should be wholly exceptional (Paragraph 200).
- where a proposed development 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 (Paragraph 202).
- With regard to non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having due regard to the scale of any harm or loss, and to the significance of the heritage asset affected (Paragraph 203).
- 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 (Paragraph 206)

2.5 Local Planning Authorities are urged to request applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by a proposed development, including any contribution made to significance by their setting. The level of detail required in the assessment should be "proportional to the assets' importance, and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance".

Local Planning Policy

2.6 In Wiltshire, the current *Development Plan* includes the Wiltshire Core Strategy of 2015, and incorporates a number of saved policies from District Local Plans. Within the Core Strategy, relevant provisions for development design are contained within Core Policy 57: Ensuring High-Quality Design and Place-Shaping. Provisions for the conservation of the historic environment are contained within Core Policy 58.

Core Policy 57 Ensuring high-quality design and place-shaping

2.7 A high standard of design is required in all new developments, including extensions, alterations, and changes of use of existing buildings. Development is expected to create a strong sense of place through drawing on local context and being complementary to the locality. Applications for new development must be accompanied by appropriate information to demonstrate how the proposal will make a positive contribution to the character of Wiltshire through:

> i. enhancing local distinctiveness by responding to the value of the natural and historic environment, relating positively to its landscape setting and the existing pattern of development and responding to local topography by ensuring that important views into, within and out of the site are to be retained and enhanced; ii. responding positively to landscape features in terms of building layouts, built form, height, mass, scale, building line, plot size, elevational design, materials, streetscape and rooflines, to effectively integrate the building into its setting;
>
> iii. being sympathetic to and conserving historic buildings and historic landscapes; and
>
> iv. the use of high standards of building materials, finishes and landscaping;

Core Policy 58 Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment

2.8 Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment. Designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance, including:

> i. nationally significant archaeological remains;
>
> ii. World Heritage Sites within and adjacent to Wiltshire;
>
> iii. buildings and structures of special architectural or historic interest;

iv. the special character or appearance of conservation areas;

v. historic parks and gardens; and

vi. important landscapes, including registered battlefields and townscapes.

2.9 Distinctive elements of Wiltshire's historic environment, including non-designated heritage assets which contribute to a sense of local character and identity, will be conserved and, where possible, enhanced. The potential contribution of these heritage assets towards wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits will also be utilised where this can be delivered, in a sensitive and appropriate manner in accordance with Core Policy 57 (Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping). Heritage assets at risk will be monitored and development proposals that improve their condition will be encouraged. The advice of statutory and local consultees will be sought in consideration of such applications.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 The Historic England *Planning Note No 3* (Historic England 2015b) provides key stages of consideration in regard to assessing the impact of a proposal on the setting of a designated heritage asset (listed building or conservation area) as follows:

- Identify the degree to which setting makes a contribution to the significance or the heritage asset or allows its significance to be appreciated;
- Assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance or on the ability to appreciate it;
- Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm; and
- Make and document the decision.

3.2 Paragraphs 9 and 10 of *Note Number 3* also provide an overall and general understanding of 'Setting'. Paragraph 9 states 'Setting is not itself a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation, although land comprising a setting may itself be designated. Its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the heritage asset or the ability to appreciate that significance'. While Paragraph 10 states 'The contribution of a setting to the significance of a heritage asset is often expressed by reference to views, a purely visual impression of an asset or place which can be static or dynamic, long, short or of lateral spread, and include a variety of views of, from, across, or including that asset.'

General

3.3 The methodology employed by this assessment is in accordance with key professional guidance, including the *Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment* (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2014), the Historic England guidance *Conservation Principles* (2008) and Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment* (Historic England 2015). Impacts to heritage settings were assessed using the methodology detailed within the current Historic England guidance *Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: the setting of heritage assets* (2015).

Sources of data

3.4 This Heritage Statement has involved detailed consultation of readily-available historical information drawn from documentary and cartographic sources. The major repositories of information consulted have comprised:

- National Heritage List for England (EH);
- Published and unpublished documentary sources;
- Conservation Area Designation Statements;
- Historic maps and photographs;
- English Heritage Archives (EHA) and AMIE (Archives and Monuments Information, England) data;
- Online sources, including Local Plan policies and information.

3.5 A bibliography of documentary, archive and cartographic sources consulted is included in the References section of this report.

The Significance of Heritage Assets

3.6 Heritage assets are defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (henceforth, 'the Framework'; revision of 2021) as 'a building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions because of its heritage interest'. The term Heritage Asset includes both designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority as possessing heritage significance (including locally- listed structures)'. Designated heritage assets include: World Heritage Sites; Scheduled Monuments; Listed Buildings; Protected Wreck Sites; Registered Parks and Gardens; Registered Battlefields; and Conservation Areas. Non-designated heritage assets include sites held on the Historic Environment Record, in addition to other elements of the landscape understood to have a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions.

3.7 The assessment of the heritage value (significance) of a site determines the ways in which particular aspects of a place and different periods in its evolution contribute to, or detract from, those identified heritage values associated with the asset.

3.8 Heritage significance is defined in Planning Practice Guidance (Annexe 2, 2021) as 'the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical fabric, but also from its setting'

3.9 Current national guidance for assessing the significance of heritage assets is based on the criteria provided by Historic England (formerly English Heritage) in *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment* (English Heritage 2008). Within this document, significance is weighed by the estimated potential for the asset to demonstrate the following criteria:

- Evidential value derives from 'the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity' (ibid, 28). It is primarily embodied by physical remains or historic fabric, but also includes buried archaeology;
- Historical value derives from 'the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present' (ibid, 28). Illustrative historical values depend on visibility in a way that evidential value does not; and 'have the power to aid interpretation of the past […] through shared experience of a place' (ibid, 29). Associative historical values relate to historical connections with a notable family, person, event or movement;
- Aesthetic values derive from 'the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place' (ibid, 30). Aesthetic value might be generated through conscious design and artistic endeavour, fortuitous and organic change, and the relationship of structures and materials to their setting; · Communal value is tied to historical (associative) value and aesthetic value, deriving from 'the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory' (ibid, 31);
- Communal values may be commemorative, symbolic or social. The latter is typically 'associated with places that people perceive as a source of identity, distinctiveness, social interaction and coherence,' and might only be articulated when the resource is under threat (ibid, 32).

3.10 Further information on good practice in implementing historic environment policy in the NPPF is provided within the guidance Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in

Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (Historic England 2015a). This document provides advice on the assessment of the significance of heritage assets in support of applications for planning permission, and emphasises that the information required regarding heritage significance should be no more than would be necessary to inform the planning decision.

Approach to Historic Building Assessment

3.11 The approach to historic building assessment in this report has been based on the current Historic England guidance: *Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice* (2016). While this assessment does not represent a definitive recording or survey of Lowerhouse Farm, it does comprise a description of its architectural form and fabric and, in placing these within an historical context, provides a detailed articulation of the significance of the building. The assessment therefore includes elements of the Level 2 recording defined in Historic England guidance (2016):

Level 2

3.12 This is a descriptive record, which may be made of a building which is judged not to require a more detailed record, or it may serve to gather data for a wider project. Both the exterior and interior of the building will be seen, described and photographed. The examination of the building will produce an analysis of its development and use, and the record will include the conclusions reached, but it will not discuss in detail the evidence on which this analysis is based. A plan and sometimes other drawings may be made.

Assessing levels of Impact

3.13 Impact assessment addresses predicted changes in the existing condition of the environment, as a result of a proposed development. The significance of an impact is generally determined as the combination of the 'sensitivity and/or value' of the affected receptor, and the predicted magnitude of change. In this case, heritage receptors comprise a group of Grade II-listed buildings, which may be considered both as individual structures and as a coherent group of related assets. These are considered to represent receptors of medium to high sensitivity and/or value.

Magnitude of Impact

3.14 The determination of the magnitude of change is based on the current level of survival, or condition, of the receptor. The variable factors which determine the magnitude of change include the vulnerability or sensitivity of the site or feature to change. The criteria commonly used to determine the magnitude of impact are as described in the following table:

Magnitude of Impact	Description
Major	The proposed development would cause a large change to existing environmental conditions. Complete destruction of the site or feature. Change resulting in a fundamental change to the ability to understand or appreciate the asset and its context and setting.
Moderate	The proposed development would cause noticeable change to existing environmental conditions. Change resulting in appreciable change to the ability to understand or appreciate the asset and its context and setting.
Minor	The proposed development would cause small change to existing environmental conditions. Change resulting in small change to the ability to understand or appreciate the asset and its context and setting.
Negligible	The proposed development would result in no discernible change to existing environmental conditions. Negligible change or no material change to the site or feature. No change to the ability to understand or appreciate the asset and its context and setting.

Table 1: Criteria used to determine the level of impact.

Significance of Impact

3.15 The significance of impact and environmental effect is determined by two variables:

- The importance or significance of the receptor; and
- The magnitude of change affecting the receptor.

Environmental effects may be either adverse or beneficial, depending on the nature of the impact.

Receptor sensitivity/value	Significance of Impact			
	Major	Moderate	Minor	Negligible

Very high	Substantial	Substantial	Moderate	Slight
High	Substantial	Moderate	Slight	Negligible
Medium	Moderate	Slight	Negligible	Negligible
Low	Slight	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

Table 2: Criteria used to determine the significance of impact.

4. LOWERHOUSE FARM: ITS HISTORY, FORM AND SIGNIFICANCE

Description of Lowerhouse Farm

4.1 Lowerhouse Farm was added to the National List at Grade II, on August 20, 1981, in view of its architectural and historic significance (NHLE 1035939). The listing description is given as follows:

Farmhouse. C18. Whitewashed flint and chalk, stiffened with timber. Tiled roof. Two storeys, 3 bays with outshut to rear, and rear wing to right bay. Central half-glazed door with curved canopy on brackets. C19 timber windows in segmental headed openings on ground floor. Oculus over door. Stack to left gable, and roof half hipped to right and to wing. Lean-to on side of wing now with main entrance door. Outshut largely rebuilt, and four large hipped dormers.



Fig. 4: The current east elevation of Lowerhouse Farm.

4.2 Lowerhouse Farm originated as a comparatively modest, two-storey farmhouse of seventeenth-century date, which was re-clad and enlarged in the mid- eighteenth century, and further enlarged in the later twentieth century, by the rebuilding of an attached barn or outshut on the western side, to form a prominent two-storey, brick-built extension (Fig. 7). The house is representative of a class of simpler farmhouses which developed within newly-cleared, or assart, areas on the margins of Chute Forest and the large, enclosed landholdings

of the period. It therefore comprises an important element in the early development of Lower Chute village.

East Elevation

4.3 In its current, rebuilt form, the east extension comprises the half-hipped gable end of the the original dwelling, with the roof of the rear wing to the right extending to a low, ground-floor eaves height, and projecting forward of the line of the original east elevation of the early house (Fig. 4 and front cover). The gable end of the main house has a timber-framed four-light casement at the ground floor, and a small circular window to the first floor. This elevation is of modern, block reconstruction, with a painted, rendered finish. To the right, the rear wing features a modern, timber-panelled door, with a small ground-floor casement to the right. The roof of the rear wing is half-hipped, and of plain clay tiles, and there is a brick ridge-stack on this side. This entire elevation was entirely reconstructed, in something approaching its historic form, at the time of the 1980s construction of the brick side extension. Contemporary photographs indicate that the entire eastern side of the house had collapsed (Fig. 5).



Fig. 5: Photograph of Lowerhouse Farm in 1982, looking north-west, with the collapse of the east elevation.

South Elevation

4.4 The south elevation is symmetrical, and of three bays, and amply conveys the character of the eighteenth-century house (Fig. 6). The central front door is part-glazed, and is set beneath a curving canopy, supported by timber brackets. At the ground floor, this is flanked by

identical, three-light timber casements of nineteenth-century pattern, which are set beneath camber-headed openings. The first floor has slightly smaller windows, of similar pattern, within square-headed openings. There is a small circular window at the centre of the first floor, which may be a more recent addition (Fig. 6). This side of the house retains original flint and chalk construction, with a painted lime-render finish. To the left of the main range of the house, and to its rear, is the 1980s brick-built extension, which is of similar scale and form as the earlier house, and features a half-hipped roof (Figs. 6 and 7). On this elevation, there is are glazed French doors, which open onto a small sunken courtyard, with a four-light casement set within a cambered opening to the left (Figs. 7 and 24). The first floor has two square-headed window openings, with four-light casements of similar pattern.



Fig. 6: The south elevation of the original house, with the later twentieth-century brick- built extension to the left.

West Elevation

4.5 The west elevation of the original house is blind, with a gabled roof and a large brick end-stack, which is tapered, in stages, from the ground floor upwards (Figs. 7 and 27). This end of the main range of the house has a painted, rendered finish. Extending from this, is the 1980s brick extension, which comprises the rebuilding of a barn or outshut on this side of the house (Figs. 7, 26 and 27). On this side, there is a flat-roofed connecting structure

between the original house and the extension, which has a painted, rendered finish. On its west elevation, the late twentieth-century brick extension closely reflects the form and style of the original house, with a tiled, half-hipped roof of asymmetrical profile. There are timber-framed casements with camber-headed openings to the ground and first floors (Figs. 7 and 24). The treatment of the brickwork, laid in stretcher bond, is plain, with the splayed brickwork of the window openings representing the only ornamentation.



Fig. 7: View, looking north-east, of the west elevations of the original house and later extension.

North Elevation

4.6 The north elevation of the rear wing of the original house has a plain, painted and rendered finish, and may be partly reconstructed (Fig. 5 and front cover). There is a four-light, timber framed casement, of nineteenth-century pattern, to the ground floor, and a small casement of similar pattern to the first floor. This gable end has roof-lines extending to low ground-floor eaves-heights on both sides. To the right is the 1980s brick-built extension, which on this elevation is of three bays and of a one-and-half-storey form, with four prominent hipped dormers, each incorporating a four-light , timber-framed casement. The ground floor of the extension has four-light casements to right and left, with a recessed central porch, or open lobby, which is enclosed by wrought-iron railings and a gate. There is a brick stack on this

side, with a small, two-light casement set within a camber-headed opening on the east elevation. At ground-floor level, the modern extension engages closely with the western side of the rear wing, although at first-floor level, the respective contrasting roof forms have required the addition of a connecting, gabled structure between the two elements of the house, which incorporates rooflights.

4.7 Internally, the house has undergone considerable rebuilding and alteration, although the extent of surviving timber framing at both ground and first-floor levels clearly suggests the form and plan of the early house (Figs. 8 and 9). Visible timber elements include trusses supported by jowled posts, with straight braces to wall-plates. This exposed fabric may include elements of later date, including eighteenth-century studwork and partitions, but would otherwise be wholly consistent with a seventeenth-century date. This would also be broadly cotemporary with the external brickwork of the end-stack on the western side (Fig. 7). The house therefore appears to have originated as a simple three-bay dwelling, which incorporated two rooms on each floor, which were probably separated by a cross-passage and stairs (Figs. 18 and 23). This modest building was re-clad in masonry, and extended with a rear wing, at a date probably not much later than the mid-eighteenth century. The regular south elevation, and the main front of the house, was constructed at this time (Fig. 6).



Fig. 8: Internal first-floor view, looking south from the landing, with exposed timber construction.



Fig. 9: Internal first-floor view, looking south-east from the landing, with exposed timber construction.

4.8 The structural relationship between the eighteenth-century rear wing and the ground-plan of the earlier house has been partly obscured by the modern reconstruction of the east elevation of the house, and by the internal changes to plan-form required by the modern addition of the large brick extension. A connecting ground-floor corridor leading from the hall and kitchen to the dining room incorporates early fabric within the wall on the south side, but only modern fabric on the north (Fig. 19). All fabric within the ground-plan of the 1980s extension is of modern date.

A Brief History

4.9 William I declared Chute Forest to be a royal hunting ground, and the adjoining settlements of Chute Standen and Chute Forest are both mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086. Chute Forest was enclosed in 1639, before which date parishioners exercised rights of pasture within the common land of the forest. Other common lands were enclosed in 1698 and 1774, with further clearance of woodland. The small settlements of Cadley and Lower Chute developed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries along the southern boundary of the parish, with cottages built on remaining areas of common pasture. Further buildings,

many of which survive, were constructed on the small allotments into which the Common was divided from 1820. By 1809, the holdings of Chute Manor included most of the available arable land of the parish, although a number of smaller independent farms survived, including one of 32 acres in Lower Chute, which may well have been Lowerhouse Farm (Baggs et al. 1999, 112). A nonconformist chapel was built in the mid-nineteenth century, and the north-east/south-west line of settlement was extended in the early twentieth century, including Home Farm, which was built in 1905.

4.10 Andrews and Dury's Map of 1773 is the first of sufficiently large scale and accuracy to enable Lowerhouse Farm to be identified with any degree of confidence (Fig. 10). Individual buildings and plots are clearly depicted along the line of the single street forming much of Lower Chute village, with one conforming closely to the current location of Lowerhouse Farm, which must by this time have been one of the older houses of the settlement, and presumably a well-established farmstead. The village at this time was simply labelled as 'Cadley', with no apparent differentiation between this settlement and that of Lower Chute. The basic plan of the village appears to have changed little since the later eighteenth century, and the layout of roads at this time is clearly recognisable.

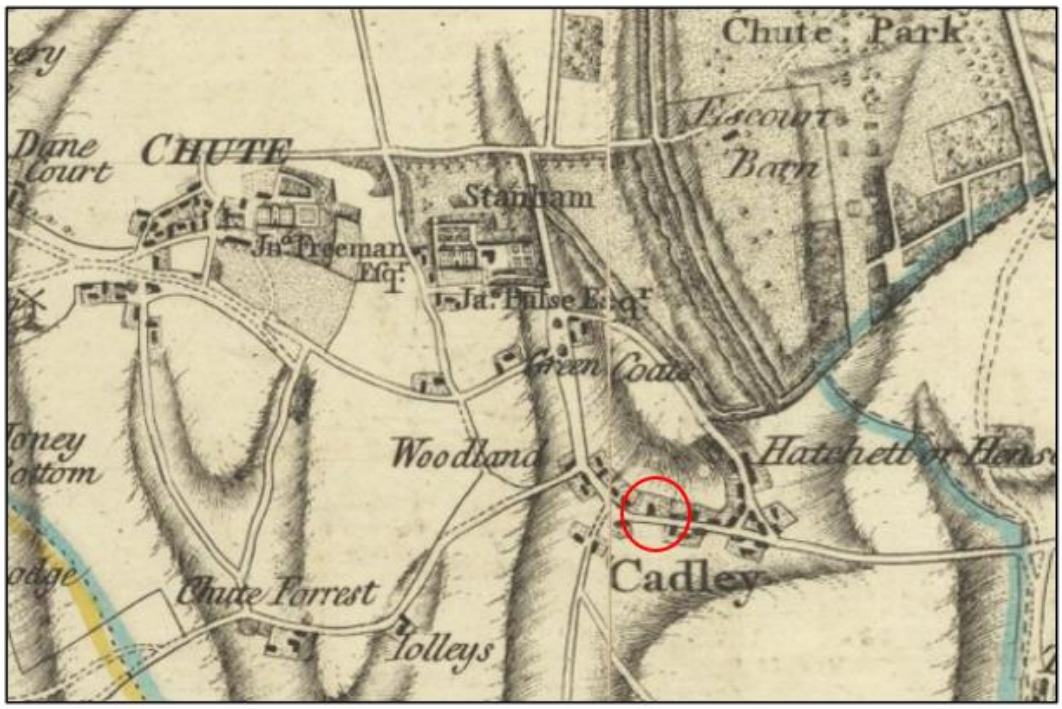


Fig. 10: Extract from Andrews and Dury's *Map of Wiltshire*, of 1773 (McMaster University, Ontario).

4.11 William Stanley's map of *c.* 1810 provides greater scale and detail, with individual buildings and plots depicted (Fig. 11). Again, the form of the village appears to have changed remarkably little since that time. The enclosed plot of Lower House Farm appears to contain three buildings, which must include the house and a number of farm buildings, although these are rendered in a somewhat schematic fashion.



Fig. 11: Extract from William Stanley's *Map of Andover* of *c.* 1810 (British Library).

4.12 The altogether more accurate and larger-scale Ordnance Survey mapping of the later nineteenth century provides a clearer indication of the development of the Lowerhouse Farm site at that time (Figs. 12-14). On the 25-inch Ordnance Survey map of 1878, Lower House Farm is the only property in the village to be clearly labelled, which may imply some degree of status (Fig. 12). The house and farmstead occupy a plot which partly conforms to that of the present. The plan of the house comprises the remodelled seventeenth-century dwelling with its rear wing, with a couple of small square-plan structures depicted to the north-west. The house is accompanied by a large L-plan farm building just to its north-east, which is no longer extant, and may have comprised a barn. The south-easterly part of this building, fronting the roadside, may have survived in the form of existing ancillary buildings in this location. It is also possible that an adjacent roadside building, just to the north-east, may have comprised part of the same farmstead (Fig. 12). This map also depicts a small roadside pond to the south of the house.

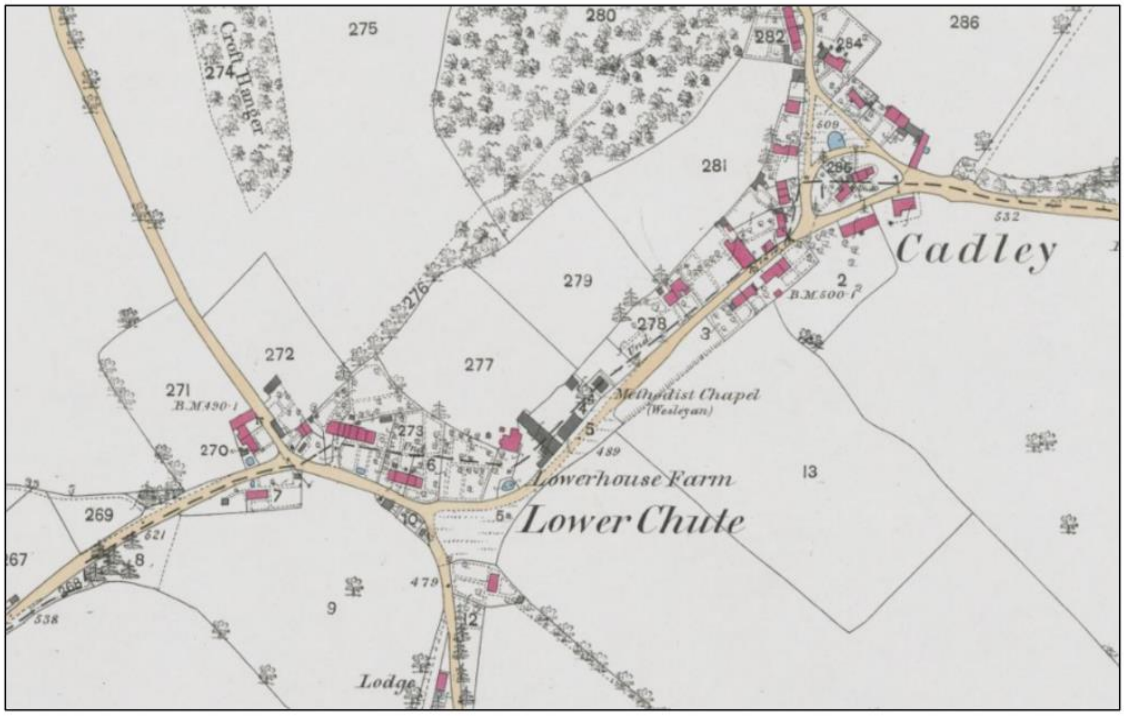


Fig. 12: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 25-inch England and Wales 1842-1952 series map, surveyed in 1878 (National Library of Scotland).

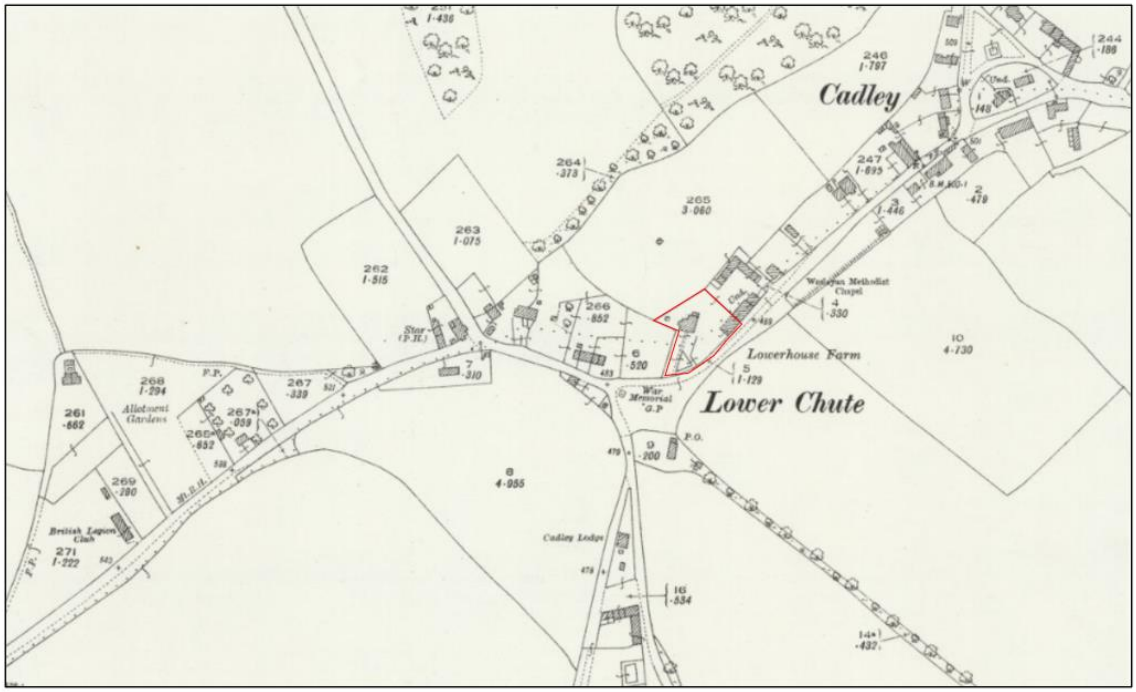


Fig. 13: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 25-inch England and Wales 1842-1952 series map, published in 1924 (National Library of Scotland).

4.13 The plan of the house remained almost unchanged by the time of the Ordnance Survey map of 1924, although there appears to be an outshot or addition on the northern side of the rear

wing, which has not survived and may have been removed at the time of the 1980s rebuilding (Figs. 13 and 14). A small square-plan structure depicted to the west of the house may be a garden shed, or similar. The buildings of the farmstead have undergone considerable change by this time, and now include an elongated range along the road frontage, which may be at least partly represented by existing buildings in this location. There is a large L-plan building to the north of the house, which partly encloses a courtyard arrangement on this side. This is the brick-built stables building which is extant, and comprises part of the current curtilage of Lowerhouse Farm (Figs. 14 and 15).

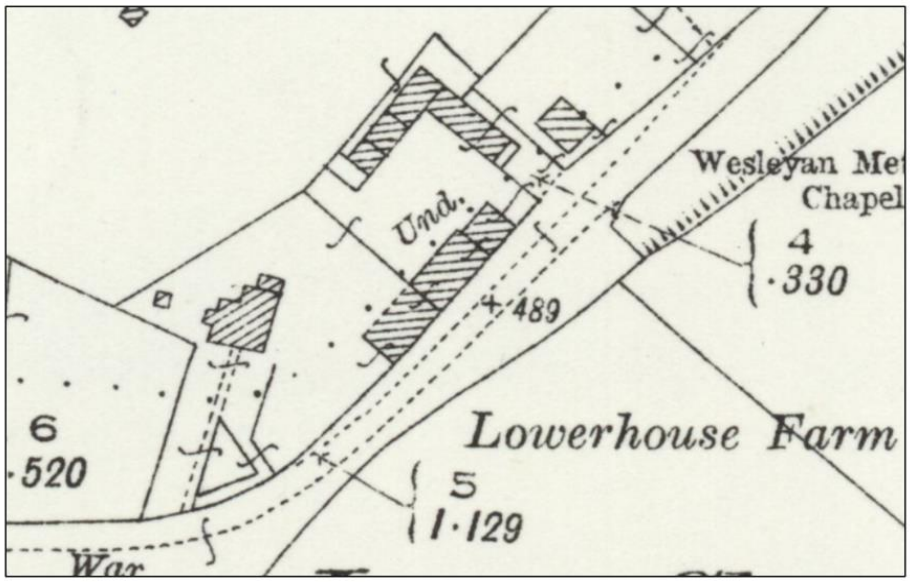


Fig. 14: Enlarged extract from Fig. 14, above, with the plan of the house and associated farmstead in 1924 (National Library of Scotland).



Fig. 15: View, looking north-west, of the stables range and other surviving buildings of the farmstead at Lowerhouse Farm.

4.14 The form and plan of the house at Lowerhouse Farm underwent little change from the mid-eighteenth century until the late twentieth century. A comprehensive scheme of restoration and enlargement of the house was undertaken in the early 1980s, by WJP Chambers, which is commemorated on a plaque attached to the chimney stack on the west elevation (Figs. 16 and 17). The addition of an imposing two-storey range to the western side of the house and the rebuilding of its east elevation, considerably increased the ground-plan of the building, and considerably altered its form, character and plan-form.



Fig. 16: View, looking north, of the restored and enlarged house in 1984.



Fig. 17: A plaque of 1983, commemorating the restoration and enlargement of the house.

The Significance of Lowerhouse Farm

Historical Illustrative Heritage Values

4.15 Lowerhouse Farm is representative of a class of modest rural dwellings of the seventeenth and later centuries. Its scale and mode of construction reflect a modest landholding, together with the need to construct a habitable structure within the constraints imposed by available materials and the form of an earlier, timber-framed house. The mid-eighteenth-century adaptation of a timber-framed house reflects wider changes in rural architecture at this time, which transformed traditional vernacular forms into a distinctly Georgian idiom, which commonly included a balanced scheme of doors and windows and a formal brick or masonry facing (Cook, 1982, 143; Stevens Curl 1993, 15). However, many aspects of the fabric of a rural house of this type suggest the persistence of vernacular modes of construction in more remote rural communities.

4.16 It is difficult to estimate the extent to which the original timber framing survives within the later fabric of the house, although available evidence is sufficient to enable the form and plan of the early house to be ascertained (Figs. 8 and 9). The prominent brick end stack on the western elevation of this phase of the house appears to be early and may represent an addition of later seventeenth or early eighteenth-century date (Fig. 7). The re-clad, eighteenth-century form of the house may therefore be regarded as a somewhat incomplete rebuilding, which may have involved a number of structural compromises. The evident failure of the east elevation of this building may attest to this (Fig. 5). The architectural interest of Lowerhouse Farm therefore relates partly to surviving evidence of an earlier building but also to an eighteenth-century phase of adaptation and rebuilding. The house and farmstead are also illustrative of the development of rural settlement and landscape change in this part of east Wiltshire, and of the effects of enclosure and the establishment and survival of small-scale farming enterprises.

4.17 The cottage also retains historical illustrative heritage values of limited importance which relate to rural domestic life in the Early Modern period, and to evidence for the adaptation of a modest rural dwelling over time. Such values are most applicable to the surviving elements of early timber framing and the replacement of an earlier vernacular dwelling by a fashionable eighteenth-century scheme of rebuilding (Fig. 6). These also relate to the evidence of methods of construction during different phases of the house, and the periods

of agricultural change and prosperity which enabled the rebuilding of the house and the development of its associated farmstead.

Design Aesthetic Heritage Values

4.18 Lowerhouse Farm is associated with Design Aesthetic values of more limited importance, which relate principally to the architectural interest of its regular front elevation (Fig. 6), with its balanced arrangement of windows. In terms of its style and architectural interest, the house is representative of a building-type and style which is well represented within this part of Wiltshire. The design aesthetic values are enhanced by the relatively good survival of internal timber framing and the fabric of the eighteenth-century building, although this has been diminished by later additions and changes. The earlier parts of the house thus retain much of their historic character, although the prominent 1980s extension has considerably diminished the overall scale, character and form of the building.

4.19 Significance in this case attaches principally to the early form of the house, as indicated by historic mapping. This includes the architectural and historic interest of timber-framed construction and the surviving form and fabric of the eighteenth-century house. Very much less significance is attached to the fabric and form of the 1980s brick-built extension, although this is integral to the listing. The setting of Lowerhouse Farm also contributes to its significance, most particularly the surviving elements of the historic farmstead with which the house had an important historical functional relationship.

5. THE PROPOSED ALTERATIONS TO LOWERHOUSE FARM AND THEIR IMPACT

5.1 Proposed alterations to Lowerhouse Farm will principally comprise internal changes to the ground-floor kitchen, dining and utility rooms. Such alterations would principally affect the modern extension to the house, which is of an altogether lower level of architectural and historic interest, and makes a correspondingly smaller contribution to the significance of the house. Changes to the historic elements of the house would be minimal in scope.

Ground-floor alterations

Alterations affecting the earlier part of the house

5.2 Proposed alterations to the earlier parts of the house, which are associated with its primary significance, would be very limited. These would include the removal of existing cupboards at the northern end of the hallway leading from the front door, and the construction of two short sections of walling to create a new doorway (Fig. 18). This would reinstate what was probably an historic doorway opening, and thus restore an earlier aspect of plan-form.

5.3 Within the southern wall of the existing passageway leading from the dining room, ie. the former northern external wall of the historic house, it is proposed to remove an existing doorway leading to the sitting room, and to close-off the resulting opening with dry-lined, timber-stud construction (Fig. 18). This reversible change would retain the existing opening beneath enclosing studwork. There would be no adverse effect on historic fabric.

The Kitchen

5.4 The existing kitchen comprises modern fabric of the 1980s extension and the internal alterations of this time. Within the existing passageway on the southern side of the kitchen, it is proposed to construct two cross-walls to close-off this space, to form a new larder (Figs. 18 and 19). New doorway access from the kitchen would be created in the south wall, which comprises modern fabric (Fig. 20). The creation of the larder would also entail blocking-off the doorway entrance to the dining room at the western end. To the east of this new opening, it is proposed to enlarge an existing doorway between the passageway and the kitchen, to create more open access. This would entail the removal of fabric of modern date, and would result in some limited change to existing plan-form (Figs. 19 and 21).

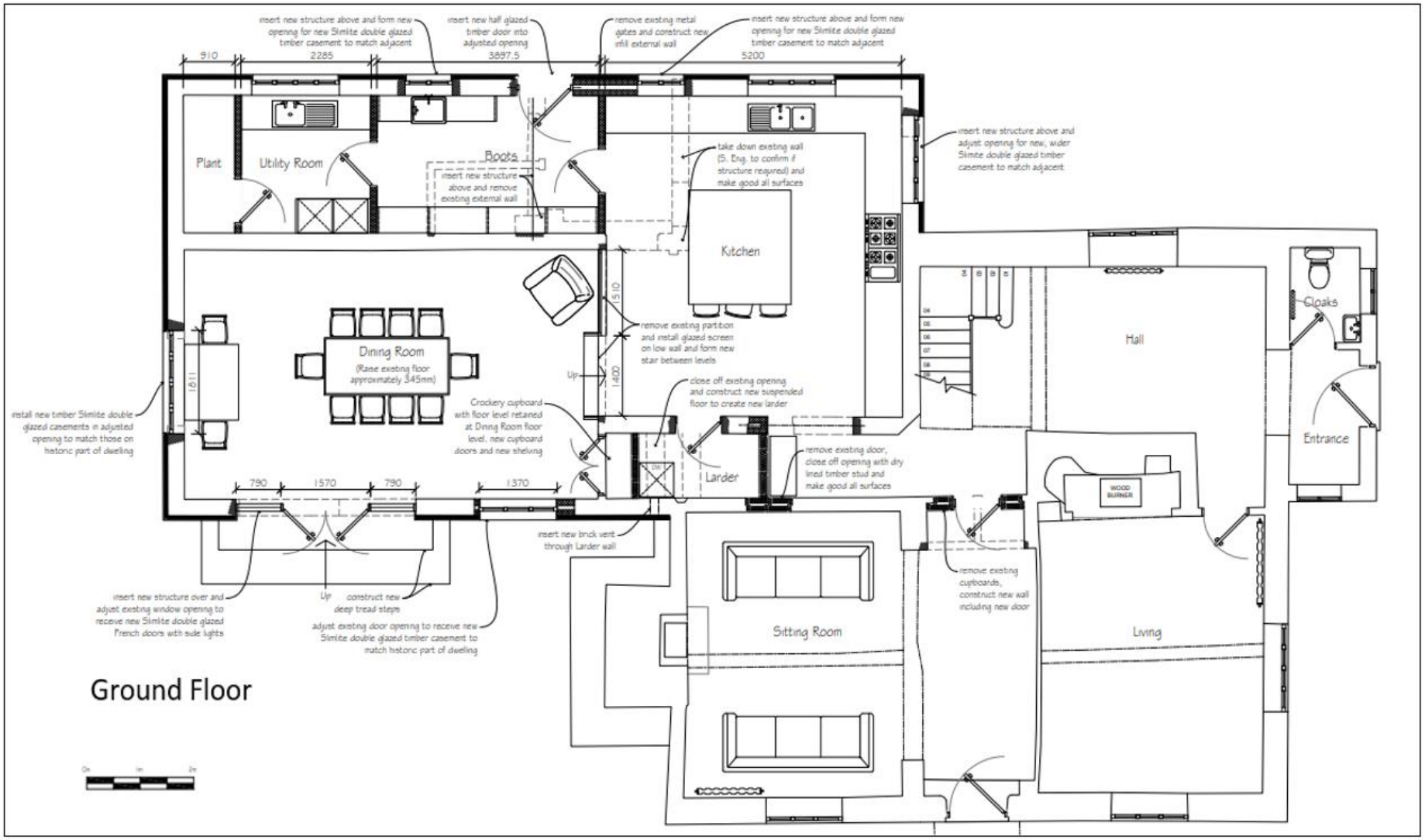


Fig. 18: Ground-floor plan of Lowerhouse Farm, showing extent of proposed alterations (Fowler Architecture and Planning).



Fig. 19: View, looking west, of the passageway to the south of the kitchen, with dining room doorway and space to be blocked-off to form a larder.

5.5 The blocking-off of passageway access between the kitchen and dining room would require an alternative access route between these spaces, and it is therefore proposed to remove the existing intervening partition on the western side of the kitchen, and to install a glazed screen supported by a low wall (Figs. 18 and 22). Immediately to the south of the glazed screen, open, stepped access between kitchen and dining room would be created, which would partly integrate these two spaces.

5.6 The recessed porch or open lobby on the northern side of the 1980s extension would be removed and enclosed, so that the eastern half of this space would be incorporated with the kitchen on its western side (Figs. 18 and 21). This change would entail the removal of the external wrought-iron gates and the infilling of the resulting space with a new external wall. The enlarged kitchen space would be defined by a new internal wall, to divide this

from the proposed adjoining boot room. This would considerably extend the plan of the kitchen on its western side (Fig. 18). To maximise effective use of the enlarged kitchen space, the small window opening on the east elevation of the modern extension would be enlarged to accommodate a timber framed casement to match existing examples (Figs. 18 and 27). A new window opening would be created within the existing northern wall of the kitchen, to accommodate a timber-framed casement to match the adjacent window on this side (Figs. 18 and 26). This opening, and the enlarged opening on the eastern side, would require the insertion of supporting beams or lintels.



Fig. 20: The southern wall of the existing kitchen, with the existing doorway opening to the left to be widened, and the location of the new larder doorway to the right.

The Boot and Utility Rooms

5.7 The removal of the recessed open lobby or porch on the northern side of the modern extension would enable a re-arrangement of plan-form, to create a new boot room immediately to the west of the re-arranged kitchen (Figs 18, 21 and 26). A new utility room and plant room would be located further to the west, on the northern side of the extension. The open lobby would be partly enclosed with new walling on the northern side, and would include a new doorway opening with a half-glazed timber door. The new northern wall of the boot room would include a new window opening, with a timber-framed casement to match the existing, with a supporting lintel above (Figs. 18 and 26).



Fig. 21: View, looking north-west from the existing doorway to the kitchen, of the open lobby on the northern side of the modern extension.

5.8 A new cross-wall on the western side of the new boot room would incorporate a doorway providing access to a new utility room beyond. A new plant room, again defined by a cross-wall with connecting doorway, would be situated beyond that (Fig. 18).

The Dining Room

5.9 Within the dining room, it is proposed to block-off the existing doorway connection to the passageway and kitchen on the eastern side, and to create a new open, stepped connection to the kitchen, within the eastern wall (Figs. 18 and 22). To enable this, it will necessary to partly regularise the difference in floor-levels between the dining room and adjoining parts of the house, and it is therefore proposed to raise the floor-level of the dining room by 345mm. The existing French doors on the southern side of the dining room would be removed, and the opening reduced and modified to create a window opening (Figs. 18, 24 and 25). This would accommodate a new Slimlite double-glazed, timber-framed casement, to match windows in the adjoining historic parts of the house.



Fig. 22: The existing eastern wall of the dining room, which is proposed to be opened up to provide open access to the kitchen, with the door to the right to be blocked-off.

5.10 An existing window opening to the west of the existing French doors on the southern wall of the dining room would be enlarged, to enable the installation of new Slimlite, double-glazed French doors, with glazed side-lights (Figs. 18, 24 and 25). The expansion of this opening would entail the insertion of a supporting beam or lintel. Ancillary to the new French doors would be external deep-tread steps, to enable access to the heightened floor-level of the dining room from the surrounding sunken courtyard.

First-floor Alterations

5.11 Alterations to the first floor of Lowerhouse Farm would be limited, and would include the installation of new Slimlite double-glazed timber casements within existing first-floor window openings on the western and southern sides of the modern extension (Figs. 23, 25 and 27). It is also proposed to fit Slimlite double-glazed timber casements within existing openings in each of the four dormers on the northern side of the extension (Figs. 23 and 27). These would match historic examples on other parts of the dwelling. Internally, it is proposed to form new door openings to Bathrooms 1 and 2, to close-off a door opening on the south side of Bathroom 1, and re-arrange a studwork wall to form a cupboard. A new door opening would be formed into Bathroom 2, and new dry-lined timber stud-walling would be constructed to form a laundry on the south side of Bathroom 2 (Fig. 23)

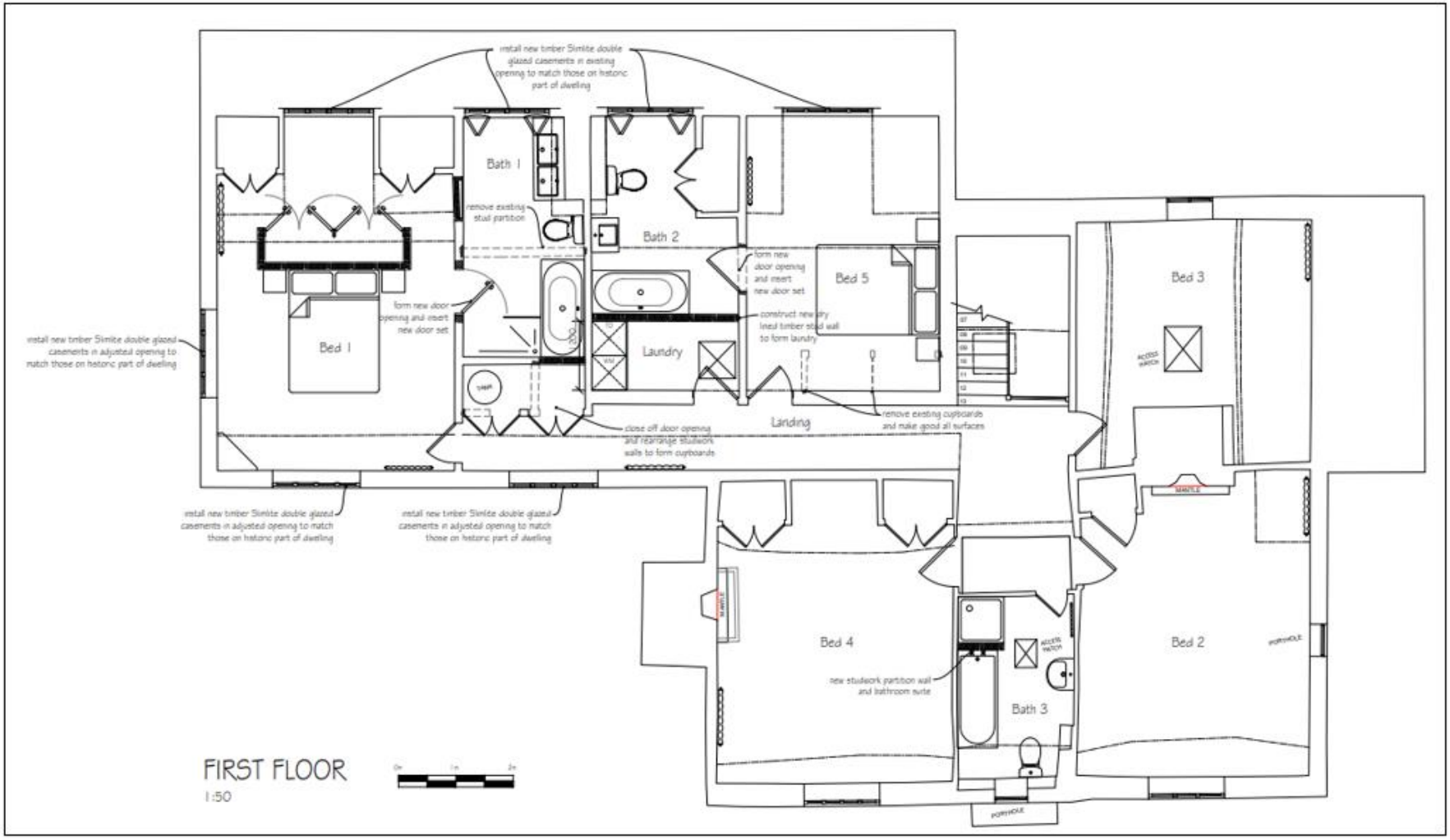


Fig. 23: Proposed first-floor plan of Lowerhouse Farm (Fowler Architecture and Planning).



Fig. 24: View, looking north-east, of the southern wall of the modern extension, with French window and window openings proposed to be modified.

External Alterations

5.12 It is proposed to apply a lime-render finish to the external brickwork of the modern extension, which would be painted to match the appearance of the historic parts of the house. This would enhance the appearance of the extension, and of the house as a whole, and limit the contrasting effect of the extension on its historic character.



Fig. 25: The proposed south elevation of Lowerhouse Farm, with proposed external changes (Fowler Architecture and Planning).

Assessing the Impact of the Proposed Alterations

5.13 The proposed alterations to Lowerhouse Farm would have a very limited effect on the surviving historic fabric of the building. Those limited interventions relating to ground-floor doorway openings would not entail any loss of historic fabric, and in one case would result in the reinstatement of an earlier feature. They would not affect any aspects of historic fabric which contribute to the primary significance of the building, including its masonry and timber-framed construction. Similarly, the proposed alterations would have minimal impact on the plan-form and external appearance of the historic parts of the house (Figs. 18, 23, 25, 26 and 27).

5.14 The proposed alterations would principally concern ground-floor spaces within the modern extension on the northern side of Lowerhouse Farm, which was constructed in the early 1980s (Fig. 18). They would therefore affect built fabric and aspects of plan-form which are of no intrinsic heritage value, and which make no appreciable contribution to the overall significance of Lowerhouse Farm. They are considered to be proportionate and reasonable, in adapting the house to the needs of modern family living and improving the effective use of available room-space. None of the impacts associated with this part of the house are considered to be unacceptable in terms of their effect on heritage values.



Fig. 26: The proposed north elevation of Lowerhouse Farm, with proposed external alterations (Fowler Architecture and Planning).

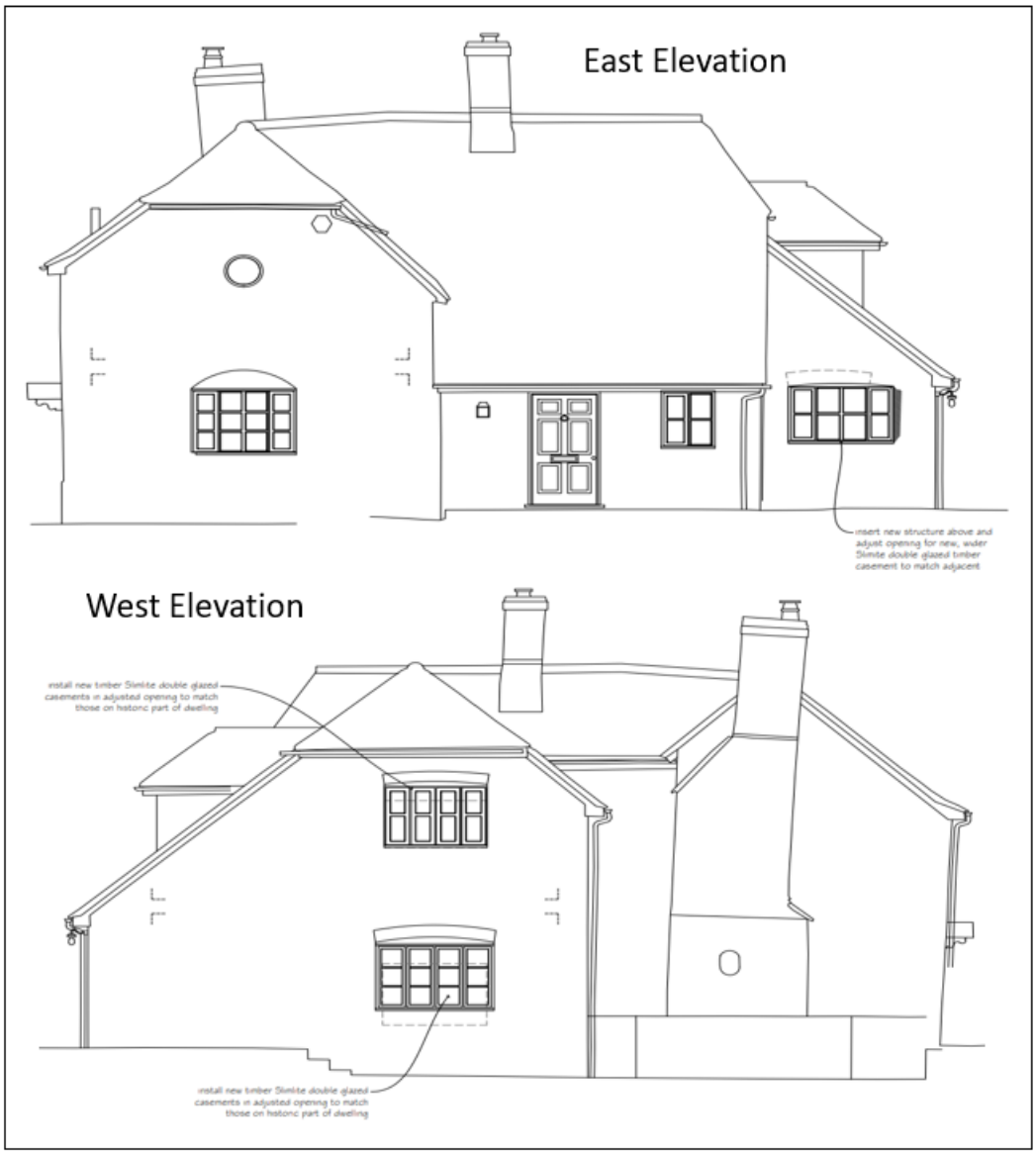


Fig. 27: East and west elevations of Lowerhouse Farm, with proposed alterations (Fowler Architecture and Planning).

5.15 The proposed alterations will result in limited change to the external appearance of the modern extension, but not to the historic parts of the house (Figs. 25, 26 and 27). In the case of the former, such changes would result from the insertion or enlargement of window openings, particularly on the northern and southern sides. While these would affect the size and distribution of window openings on these elevations, such changes would result in very little appreciable change to the external appearance and character of the house. In some cases, including the closing in of the somewhat incongruous open porch on the northern side, such changes would represent a distinct aesthetic improvement. Elsewhere,

the insertion of new timber-framed casements, to match existing or historic examples, would represent an historic benefit (Figs. 25, 26 and 27). This would be particularly the case with the replacement of the first-floor casements on the southern side of the modern extension. The proposed application of lime render to the brickwork of the modern extension will assist in harmonising the appearance and character of the building, and limit the deleterious effects of contrasting construction and materials. This should also be regarded as a potential heritage benefit. The overall magnitude of impact of the proposed alterations on the fabric and character of Lowerhouse Farm is accordingly assessed as Minor, and the resulting significance of impact as Slight to Negligible (Tables 1 and 2).

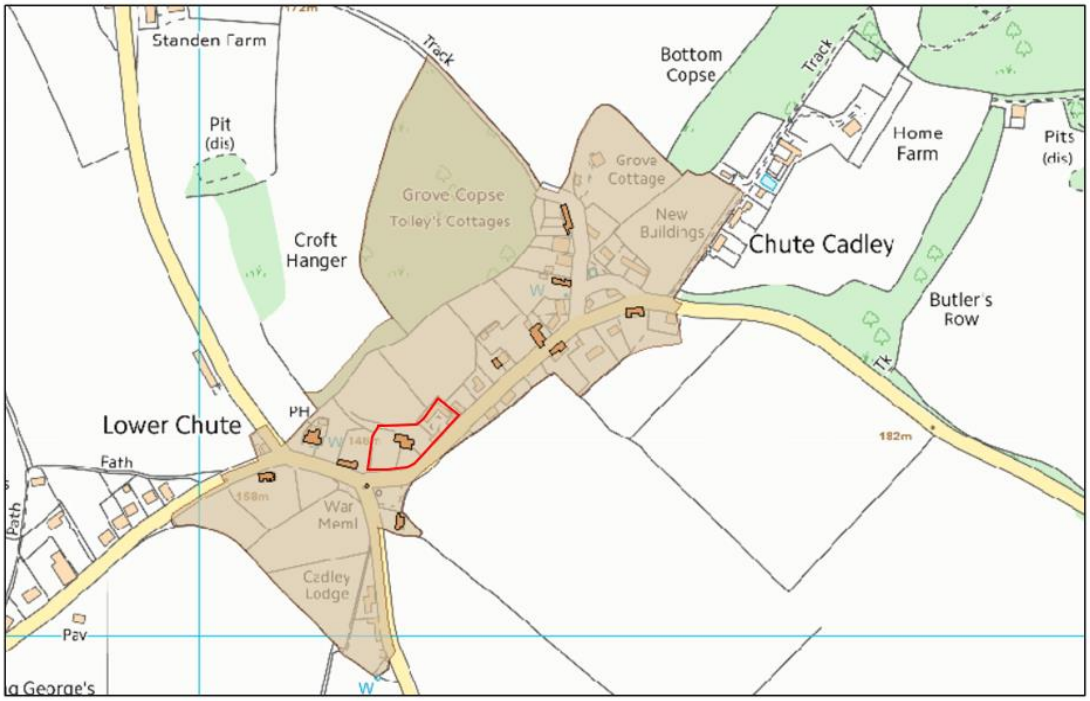


Fig. 28: Plan of the Chute Cadley and Lower Chute Conservation Area (Wiltshire Council).

Effects on Neighbouring Heritage Assets

The Lower Chute and Chute Cadley Conservation Area

5.16 The Conservation Area was designated in 1994, although no Appraisal document is currently available (Fig. 28). Lower Chute is characterised by its linear/ribbon form, with development mostly located on one side of the road, with open fields opposite, and is therefore exposed to the wider landscape. The green by the War Memorial is central to Lower Chute, and represents an important focal point, with the Hatchet Inn providing a social focus. Buildings are generally of modest size, and sited in generous plots. Dwellings are mostly single-storey or of one and a half storeys, with a few modest two-storey

examples. Most buildings are detached, with pitched roofs of slate, tile or thatch. There are some good outbuildings, often with pantiles. Walls are finished in a range of materials including brick, flint, cob and plaster, with examples of timber cladding and hung tiles. Most buildings are well-enclosed with domestic hedging (Chute Parish Council 2005).

5.17 The proposed changes to the external appearance and character of Lowerhouse Farm would have little appreciable effect on perceptions of the form and character of the building. Some of these changes would actually be beneficial in heritage terms, and would enhance the appearance of the house in longer views (Figs. 25, 26 and 27). Lowerhouse Farm is set back from the road frontage, and is visually enclosed by mature vegetated boundaries on its southern and western sides, and by surrounding farm buildings to the north-east (Figs. 2 and 3). Direct visibility of the house from the roadside is very limited, and largely restricted to the entrance driveway to the property. In addition, the proposed alterations would principally affect the appearance of the north elevation of the modern extension, which faces away from the road, and from most neighbouring properties. For this reason, it would have very limited visibility within the Conservation Area, and the overall effect of such changes on the appearance and character of the Conservation Area would be minimal.

5.18 The effects of the proposed alterations on the settings of surrounding Grade II-listed heritage assets within the Conservation Area were assessed. These including Hazel Cottage (NHLE 1180495), located 135m to the south-west; Hatchetts (NHLE 1035947), located 50m to the south-west; and The Elms (NHLE 1180489), located 70m to the south. In each case, any direct visibility of Lowerhouse Farm was obstructed by mature vegetation and intervening built form around site boundaries (Fig. 3 and front cover). The effect of the proposed alterations on the external appearance and character of Lowerhouse Farm would in any case be limited, and a number of such changes would actually enhance the appearance and character of the dwelling. In addition, most external changes would apply to the appearance of the northern elevation of the modern extension, which faces away from the road and neighbouring properties, and would therefore not be visible from them, due to the intervening built form of the house itself. For these reasons, the proposed changes to Lowerhouse Farm would have minimal adverse effect on the settings and significance of surrounding heritage assets.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 The Grade II-listed Lowerhouse Farm originally comprised a modest, timber-framed farmhouse of seventeenth-century date, which was re-clad and partly rebuilt in the eighteenth century. It is situated within the Chute Cadley and Lower Chute Conservation Area, and within the North Wessex Downs AoNB. Historic mapping suggests that this house comprised part of an established farmstead by the mid-eighteenth century, and may have owed its origins to a period of landscape change and enclosure. The historic house is of three bays and two storeys, and incorporates a rear wing which has been partly rebuilt, following collapse of the east elevation in the early 1980s. At this time, the house was restored, and considerably enlarged, by the addition of a two-storey brick extension on the northern side. This partly conformed to the scale and character of the historic house, but has resulted in a considerable increase in its ground-plan and change to its overall appearance and character. The house retains important heritage values which principally relate to its surviving historic fabric, and to the eighteenth-century adaptation of an earlier vernacular building. Lowerhouse Farm also derives significance from its relationship to the historic development of a small village settlement. The house is accompanied by a number of surviving farm buildings which contribute to its setting and historic interest.

6.2 A series of largely internal alterations are proposed, which would principally affect the ground floor of the modern extension to the house, and which are designed to improve the efficient use of room-space and meet the requirements of modern family living. These include the blocking-in of an existing passageway and associated doorway south of the kitchen, to create a larder, with new doorway access from the kitchen. This would be accompanied by the enlargement of an existing doorway into the kitchen on this side. The kitchen would be enlarged by the removal and enclosure of an open porch or lobby space on the northern side of the extension, and the construction of new internal walling. There would be changes to fenestration on the northern and eastern sides of the kitchen. The remaining spaces within the enclosed former open lobby or porch would be enclosed to create a boot room, with a new doorway opening on the northern side, and a new doorway and walling on the western side to create a utility room, with a plant room beyond this.

6.3 The intervening partition between the kitchen and adjoining dining room would be removed, and replaced with a glazed screen and open access between these two spaces, with steps leading down into the dining room. This would effectively integrate the kitchen and dining room, although the floor of the latter would be raised to make it more compatible with floor-levels in the rest of the ground floor. Within the dining room, a doorway which provided access to the passageway on the eastern side would be blocked-off. Very limited proposed changes to the ground floor of the historic part of the house relate to alterations to two doorway openings, and would not result in the removal of historic fabric.

6.4 It is proposed to remove existing French doors on the southern wall of the modern extension, and to modify the resulting opening to accommodate a double-glazed, timber-framed casement window to match historic examples. An existing window opening to the west of this would be enlarged and modified to enable the installation of new Slimlite French doors, with glazed side-lights. This new feature would be accompanied by external steps leading down to the sunken courtyard on this side. Limited proposed changes at first-floor level would include the replacement of casement windows on the south side with double-glazed Slimlite casements of appropriate historic pattern. Internal changes at this level would include changes to bathroom doorway openings and the use of timber studwork to create new cupboard and laundry spaces. All these proposed changes would affect only modern fabric. It is also proposed to apply lime render to the external brickwork of the modern extension, to harmonise the appearance of this addition with that of the historic parts of the house.

6.5 The proposed alterations to Lowerhouse Farm would have a very limited effect on surviving historic fabric, and would not affect any aspects of historic fabric which contribute to the primary significance of the building. Similarly, the proposed alterations would have minimal impact on the plan-form and external appearance of the historic parts of the house. The proposed alterations would principally concern ground-floor spaces within the modern extension, and would therefore affect built fabric and plan-form which make no appreciable contribution to the overall significance of the house. None of the impacts associated with this part of the house are considered to be unacceptable in terms of their effect on heritage values.

6.6 The proposed alterations would result in limited change to the external appearance of the modern extension, but not to the historic parts of the house. In the case of the former, such changes would result from the insertion or enlargement of window openings, which would result in no appreciable change to the external appearance and character of the house. In some cases, such changes would represent an aesthetic improvement and a clear heritage benefit. This would be particularly the case with the replacement of the first-floor casements on the southern side of the modern extension, and the application of lime render to the brickwork of the modern extension.

6.7 Lowerhouse Farm is set back from the road frontage, and is visually enclosed by mature vegetation and by surrounding farm buildings on its boundaries. Direct visibility of the house from adjoining parts of the Conservation Area is very limited, and largely restricted to the entrance driveway to the property. In addition, the proposed alterations would principally affect the appearance of the north elevation of the modern extension, which faces away from the road and from most neighbouring properties. For this reason, these would have very limited visibility within the Conservation Area, and the overall effect of such changes on the appearance and character of the Conservation Area, and on the settings and significance of neighbouring heritage assets, would be minimal.

6.8 The Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires that special regard be given to the desirability of preserving a listed building and any features of architectural or historic interest it possesses. This statutory approach is reflected in Policy CP58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy. Similarly, Paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that, when considering the impact of development on the significance of a listed building, great weight should be given to its conservation. On the basis of the assessment presented in this heritage statement, it is considered that the proposed changes to this Grade II-listed building are proportionate to the scale of the existing house, and would result in an acceptably low level of harm to it significance. Such proposals are in accordance with the statutory requirements stated in Sections 66 of the Planning Act, National Planning Policy Framework and Policies CS57 and CS58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

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