

Heritage Report

Netherby Cottage, Box

Prepared for: Alistair McCormick

Lead architect: Richard Charles-Jones, Artel31

Local Authority: Wiltshire County Council

Written by: Catherine Armstrong BA (Hons) MSc

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Netherby Cottage

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Section 1: Executive summary

- Kinman Conservation has been appointed by Alistair McCormick to undertake a Heritage Assessment of development plans for Netherby Cottage, Wadwick.
- Netherby Cottage is Grade II listed early-mid 18th century house, previously multiple, and now one, dwelling. The property is within the Box Conservation Area.
- The proposals are "reinstating of 1no. window. Removal of Urea-foam insulation from underside of roof tiles. Removal of non-original structure unfit for purpose and replacement with modern structural elements where necessary. Internal reworks to second floor, including re-insulating and refinishing, reflooring and refurbishment of existing second floor space to facilitate a bedroom and ensuite".
- A Pre-Application enquiry was submitted and responded to by the Council in February 2025. Feedback about what would be supportable by the Council has been incorporated into the final proposals accordingly.
- This purpose of a Heritage Report is to assess how the proposals would affect the character and appearance of the listed building in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023), (NPPF), and Wiltshire Council's Local Plan (adopted 2015), as well as relevant Guidance.
- This Statement provides a proportionate appraisal of the site and age is based on desk and archival research and a site visit in October 2024.
- The Impact Assessment reviews the proposals with regard to their affect on the significance of the heritage asset.
- The Report demonstrates to the Council that the significance of the historic environment has been fully assessed and understood, and that the conservation impacts of the proposed scheme have informed the accompanying design process.

Section 2: Site context

2.1. Location

- The property sits at the bottom of Hazlebury Hill, on the corner junction with Quarry Hill.
- Box is a large village and civil parish, about 3 miles west of Corsham and 5 miles northeast of Bath.
- Besides the village of Box, the parish also includes the villages of Ashley and Box Hill;; Hazelbury Manor; and several hamlets.



Location within Wiltshire



Netherby Cottage, in its wider and close-up context

Section 2: Site context

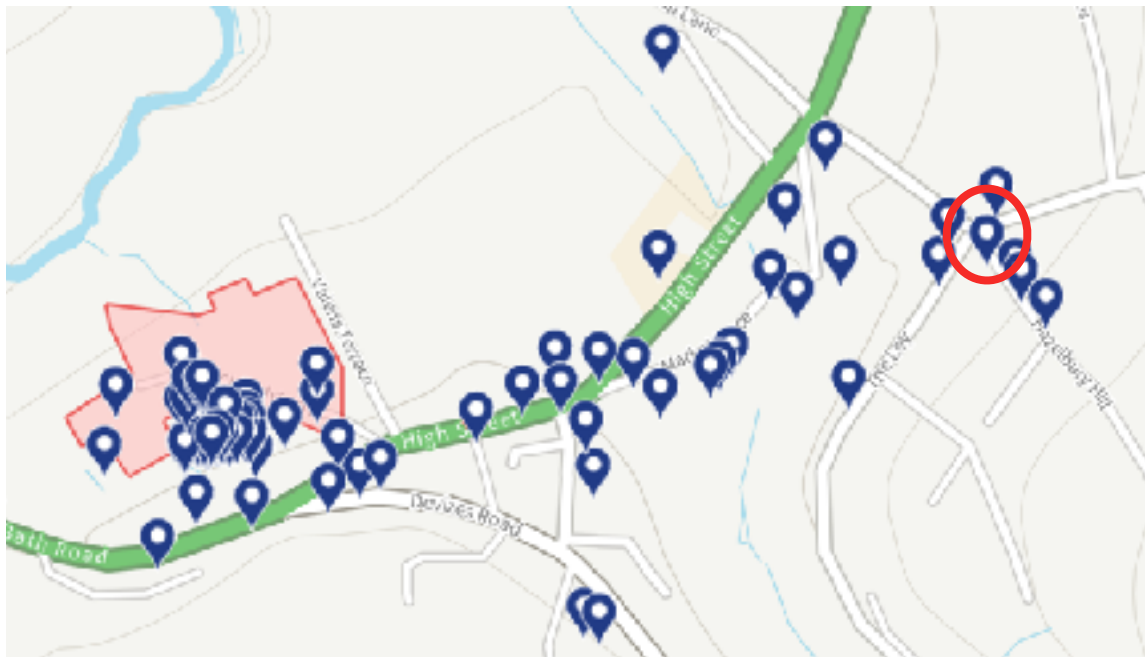
2.2. Designations

- Netherby Cottage is Grade II listed, designated 24th July 1985:
- *"Two houses, now one, early to mid C18. Right side is squared rubble with unusual bands of triangular stones, stone tile roof, coped gables and north end stack. Two storeys and attic. First floor central 3-light recessed cyma-moulded mullion window with flush cyma-moulded single light to right. Ground floor central plank door in chamfered surround with recessed cyma-moulded 3-light window to left and similar 2-light to right, all under continuous hoodmould. End wall has 2-light attic and first floor recessed cyma-moulded windows, hoodmould to first floor window. Left side is ashlar fronted with rubble stone north wall, L-plan with coped east gable and roof hipped at angle. Large ridge stack on rear wing. Front has floor band and 2 flush cyma-moulded 3-light first floor windows and altered ground floor with door, 3-light window under timber lintel and long timber lintel overuc20 bullseye window and 2-light window.*

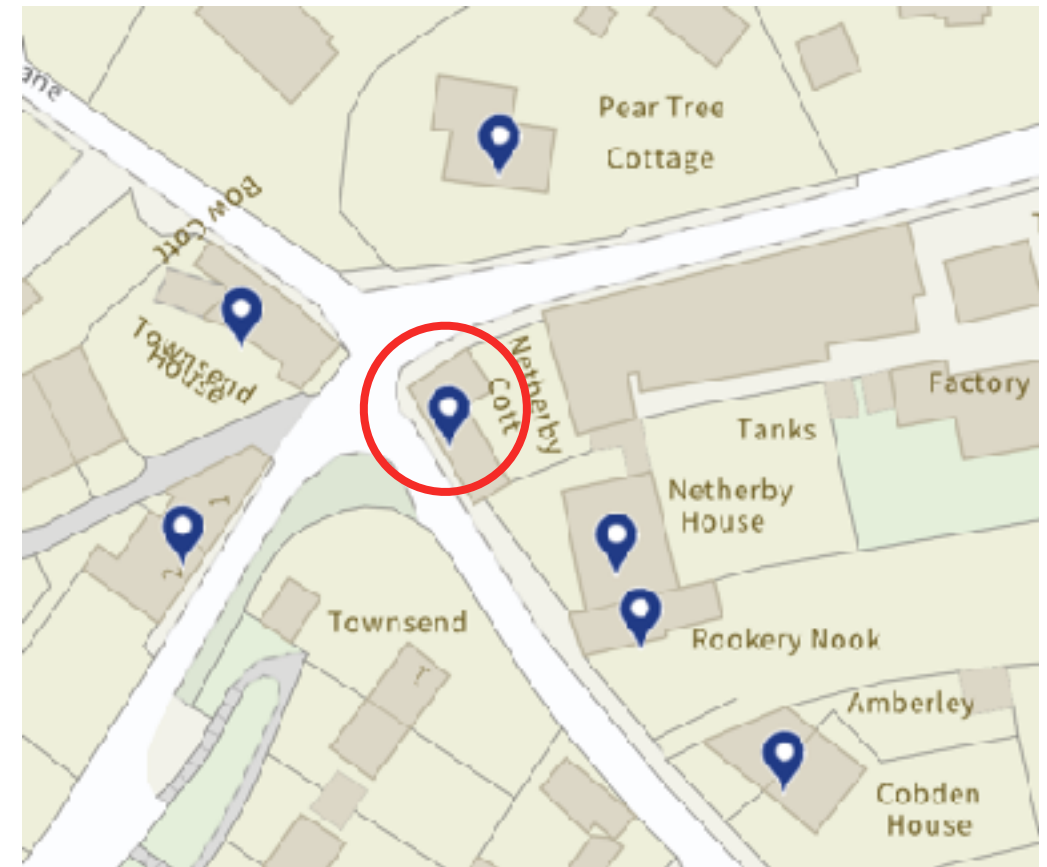
North side has 3-light flush cyma-moulded upper window, ground floor door with inserted window and long 12-pane window under timber lintel. East gable end has attic 2-light recessed ovolo-moulded window with dripstone. Front room has large Tudor-arched stone rear-wall fireplace.se, late Ct." (List entry no. 1181469)

- The site is within the Box Conservation Area in which there is a high density of listed buildings, particularly in the village centre.
- There are two Scheduled Ancient Monuments nearby towards the village centre: The Roman villa and The Round House.
- The site is within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the easternmost part of the Avon Green Belt.

- In close proximity to the property are seven listed assets, all at Grade II. Townsend House has the strongest spatial relationship with Netherby Cottage



Designated assets within the village of Box, including the Scheduled Ancient Monument



Nearby heritage assets

2.3. Historic Development and Map Regression of the area

- Within the village are two identified Roman sites, now Scheduled Ancient Monuments: a Roman Villa and The Round House.
- Originally Netherby Cottage, and Hazlebury Hill was on the outer easterly fringes of the village.
- The Andrews' and Drury map of 1773 were not accurate surveys, but were influenced by the sponsors of the map i.e. the major landowners - including William Northey of Hazlebury Manor. The map is suggestive, rather than literal, in terms of built form. However it suggests the Netherby Cottage buildings.
- The building first appears to any attributable degree on the Tithe map of 1840. It evidences three distinct properties, though part of the same parcel of ownership.
- The Tithe Award shows apportionment no469 to be owned by John Haynes and James Taylor in shared ownership and "in hand", (meaning land that is occupied directly by the landowner(s), rather than being leased or rented out to tenants.)
- The physical form of the cottage shows the earlier (middle) dwelling opening and even suggests a fourth opening on Quarry Hill side, but by early 19th century it is clearly evidenced as three dwellings.



Andrews' and Drury, 1773 (Source: Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre)

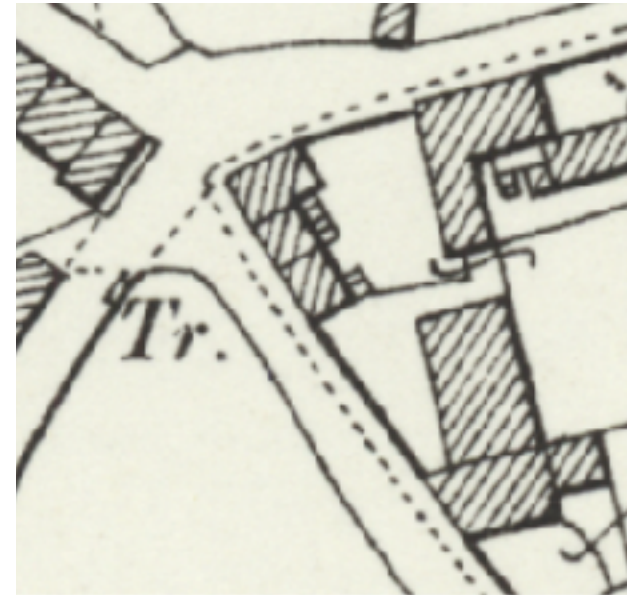


Tithe map, 1840, Wiltshire (Source: Know Your Place)

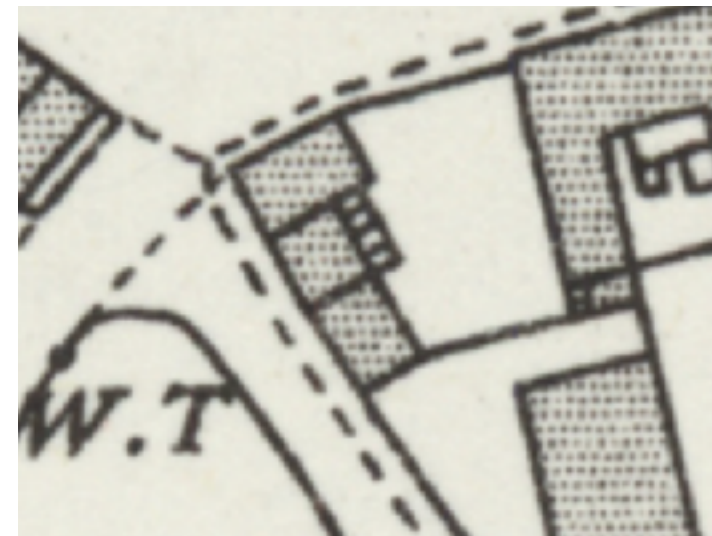
- Nearly half a century later, by the OS 25" 1st Edition 1844-1888 (published 1886), no change is shown to the footprint, but an addition of distinctive highly divided outshots to the rear and south of the properties.
- The neighbouring property facing the rear elevation (the candle factory) has been extended.
- There was little change in the footprint in the OS 25" 2nd Edition (1894-1903) and 3rd edition (1898-1939) - other than a reduction in the attached outshot - and by the 1921-1943 edition the outshots have been further reduced.



OS 1st Edition, 1886 (Source: Know Your Place)



OS 2nd Edition (Source: Know your Place)



OS Rev. Edition 1921-1943 (Source: Know your Place)

- Netherby Cottage was on the easterly fringes of Box until 1960s when modern housing development extended the built form in this part of Box, as rural packages of land were sold off for building.
- Furthermore Hazlebury Hill used to serve as a defined route towards Hazlebury Manor, however, this access route is now severed and the historic physical link with the Manor is no longer prominent.
- Comparison with the contemporary OS Map shows that the footprint has changed little in a century, but we know between this time there has been significant change internally, including its merging into one dwelling (at some point prior to LPA online records from 1987).



Historically outer fringes of village and defined access route towards Hazlebury Manor, OS 1885 (Source: Box People and Places)



Development of Hazlebury Hill; and current road map, with no through road towards Hazlebury Manor (Source: Google Maps)



OS API road map

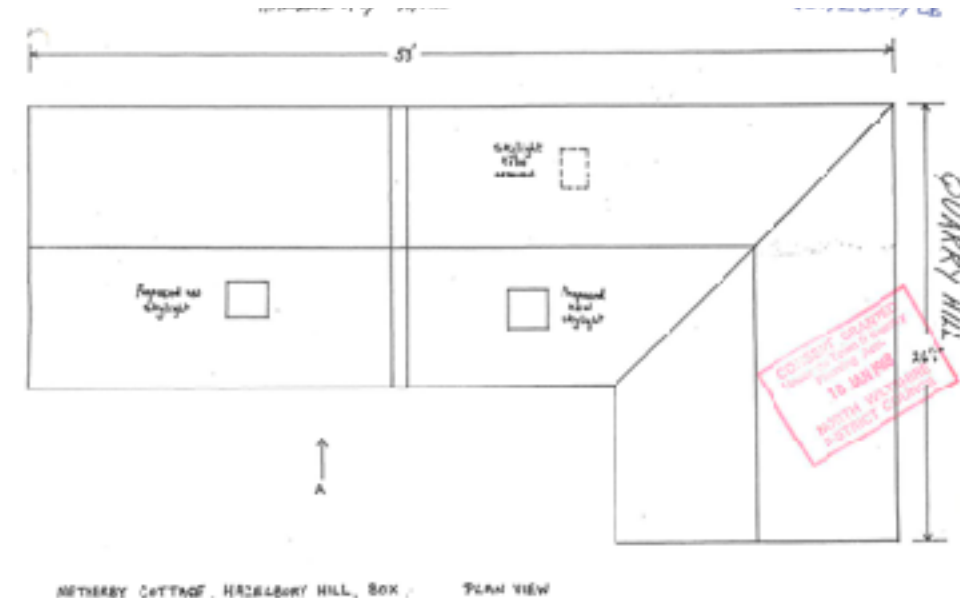
The attic

- The proposals concern the attic of the northerly side of the building, which is an L-shaped space.
- Evidence demonstrates that it was previously habitable space, (although it is currently not habitable).
- An historic window (now partially infilled) is in the north gable. It is a two light, ovolo moulded mullion with dripstone and timber frame. This opening would be contemporaneous with original construction.



2 light window in attic on north gable

- In the mid 20th century there was a skylight insertion on the south side, and later, in the late 1980s, additional roof lights (and the removal of the former roof light) as shown by photographic and planning records.

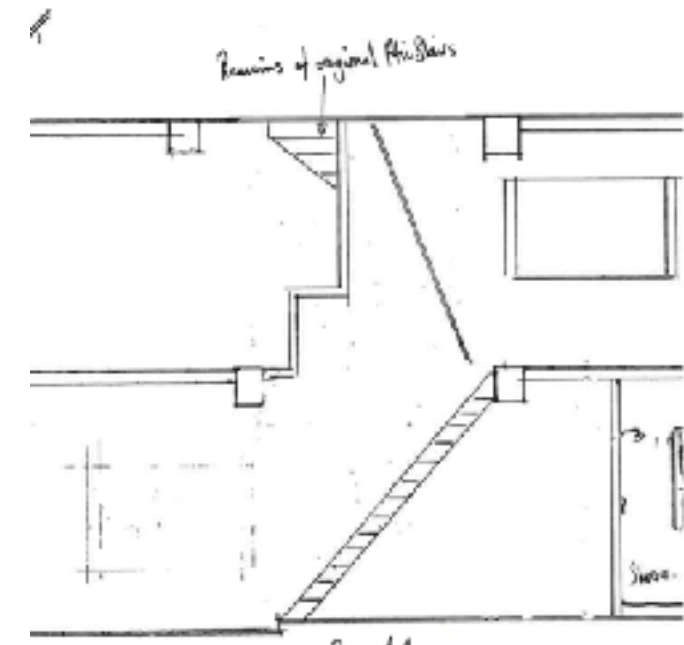


Roof plan from 1987 LBC (Source: wiltshire.gov.uk)

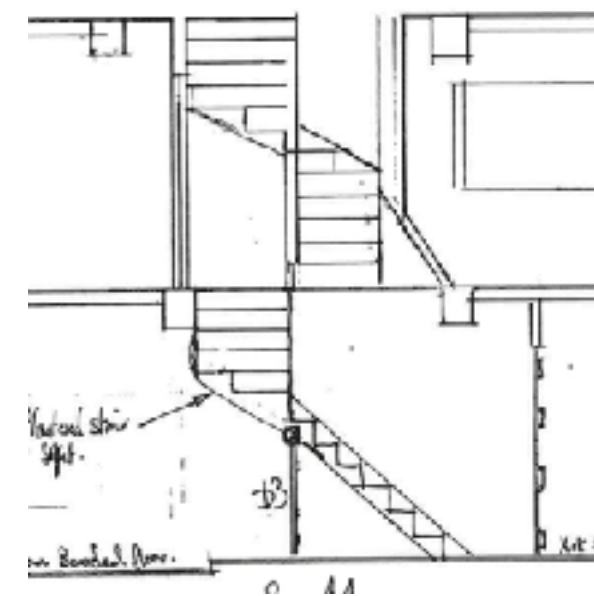


Rooflight on the southerly roofline prior (removed 1987)

- The attic space has been insulated with Urea-formaldehyde foam insulation (UFFI). This will date to the 1987 roof-works, when it was commonly used to insulate heritage properties as its negative impacts had not been understood.
- Such harmful impacts include moisture retention and the degradation of original fabric through encouraging mould and decay, plus exacerbation of freeze-thaw deterioration to masonry. Furthermore the formaldehyde in urea may react with certain materials causing long-term deterioration. There are also (non-heritage) concerns with its performance, safety and environmental impact.
- Planning records show that the existing attic stair was put in in the 1993 replacing loft hatch and ladder access, though at that point there was also reference to "remains of previous attic stairs". Its current head height is somewhat constrained by the pitch of the west roof.



1993 Stair Plan, Existing (Source: wiltshire.gov.uk)



1993 Stair Plan, Proposed (Source: wiltshire.gov.uk)

- There is a soil pipe in the attic (though no longer attached) suggesting former use as a WC or bathroom.
- The roof structure comprises some original timbers, with later insertions and structural reinforcement.



Urea foam insulation



Access to attic



Soil pipe in north gable

2.4. Planning History

The following records are recorded on the LPA website:

Date	Description	Decision	Application no.
18/10/2021	New doorway on first floor and blocking up existing doorway. New doorway to garden. Demolition and rebuilding of garden wall in materials to match and new garden decking. This will be carried out as part of these works and have already been assessed by the Council, hence not re-considered in this Report.	Approve with conditions	PL/2021/09866
29/07/2009	Repair to Front Wall of House	Approve with conditions	N/09/01346/LBC
17/12/2002	External alterations to rear elevation and erection of decking	Approve with conditions	N/02/02411/LBC
18/01/1995	Installation of Bathroom in 1st floor bedroom and erection of stud partition to form corridor in main bedroom.	Approve	N/95/00104/LBC
18/01/1995	Internal works to replace existing stairs	Approve	N/95/00105/LBC
18/11/1994	Attached outside light to dwelling	Approve	N/94/02236/LBC
09/03/1993	Replace open tread staircase and internal alternations replace staircase / alterations	Approve	N/93/00402/LBC
14/12/1994	Affix street nameplate	Approve	N/94/02393/LBC
23/11/1987	Alterations to Skylights	Approve	N/87/02835/LBC

Section 3: Planning Context

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- Statutory duties exist under section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (“the Act”) requiring that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.
 - Sections 16(2) and 66(1) of the Act require that the local planning authority, in considering whether to grant planning permission for development that affects the setting of a listed building have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building’s setting.
 - National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published 2012, revised Dec 2023, sets out procedures for determining planning application.
 - National planning policy relating to the historic environment is provided within section 16. It advises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.
 - It advises:
 - *para 200*: In determining applications Local Planning Authorities (LPA) should require an applicant to describe in a proportionate manner the significance of any heritage assets affected.
 - *para 201*: LPAs should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be included in the proposal (including development affecting the setting).
 - *para 203*: In determinations, LPA considerations should include the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; and the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
 - *para 205*: great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (the more important the asset, the greater the weight).
 - *para 206*: any harm to, or loss of, significance should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to, or loss of, grade II listed buildings should be exceptional.

- *para 207 and 208*: harm to, or loss of significance require evidence that such harm or loss is outweighed by public benefits, including optimum viable use.
- *para 212*: LPAs should treat favourably proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset or which better reveal its significance.
- Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted 2015) echoes the requirements of the NPPF requiring that development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment.
- It states that development will be required to be sensitive to all heritage assets including the individual and distinctive character and appearance of Wiltshire's historic villages.
- It makes clear that designation of a conservation area or listed building, does not preclude the possibility of new development and the council is committed to working pragmatically with owners to find positive solutions

which will allow adaptation of such buildings to reflect modern living aspirations.

- Such alterations will only be acceptable where they are consistent with the conservation of a heritage asset's significance. Consequently, it is expected that development will be of the highest standard in order to maintain and enhance the quality of the area or building, and be sensitive to its character and appearance; specifically the council will seek to ensure that the form, scale, design and materials of new buildings are complementary to the historic context.
- Wiltshire Core Strategy Policy 57 - Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Making expands on this requirement. It requires 'a high standard of design in all new developments' and for development to 'respond positively to the existing townscape and 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'

- **National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)**'s chapter on the Historic Environment provides further guidance on enhancing and conserving the historic environment:
- 'Significance' in terms of heritage-related planning policy is defined as the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.
- Also relevant are **Historic England's Planning Advice and Good Practice Notes**, namely:
 - *Advice Note 1 (2019): Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management*
 - *Advice Note 2 (2015): Managing Significance in Decision-taking in the Historic Environment*
 - *Advice Note 3 (2017): The Setting of Heritage Assets*

Section 4: Assessment of Significance

- According to national and local policy, Netherby Cottage, by virtue of being Grade II listed, is deemed to be of special interest warranting every effort to preserve them.
- All parts of the buildings are equally listed but not all parts are of equal significance.
- The building and its setting is also deemed to be important in terms of its contribution to the Conservation Area.

4.1. Significance - methodology

The criteria described within Historic England's Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance have been applied, whereby significance is assessed looking at four defined heritage values.

These are:

- **Evidential value:** the potential for new knowledge in the fabric of the asset.

- **Historical value:** this is derived from the ways in which the asset or its features support a narrative of past people, events and aspects of life.
- **Aesthetic value:** the sensory and intellectual stimulation that the asset evokes. This can be the result of a conscious design or a fortuitous outcome of the way in which a place has evolved over time.
- **Communal value:** derives from the meaning of a place for those who relate to it or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory; these can often be commemorative or symbolic.
- This following section addresses the significance of the listed asset in a manner proportionate to the proposals.

4.2. Aesthetic value

- **Netherby Cottage has moderate aesthetic value and makes a positive aesthetic contribution to the Conservation Area**
- The front elevation is highly legible in its historic form with morphological change evident, through blocked up doorways indicated by lintels and jamb stones.
- There is a decorative triangular stone and mortar feature to the right hand cottage at first floor level which is particularly distinctive and unusual.
- The cottage displays attractive architectural features which are intrinsically associated with vernacular village cottages of the 18th century.
- Features such as its rubble stone walls (right side), stone tiled roof, coped gables and cyma-moulded mullioned windows, timber lintels and a continuous hood mould contribute towards its visual appeal.
- The left side is ashlar fronted, denoting a shift in architectural character with a return to rubble on the north wall.
- The East gable has an attic 2 light window (one side infilled) with dripstone. The fact that it is infilled, and its poor state of repair, detracts from its aesthetic value.

- The attic (formerly inhabited) is now in an unkempt state with some unsympathetic and harmful modern interventions such as urea insulation which is of detriment to its aesthetic value.



Slightly different character between the LH side...

... and the RH side

4.3. Historic interest

- **Netherby Cottage has moderate historic interest, and has a positive contribution to make to the Conservation Area in terms of historic value.**
- The vernacular form of the principal cottage is typical of buildings of this type in Wiltshire and reflects the use of local materials and craftsmanship which was the norm prior to the Industrial Revolution. This is of historic interest.
- The morphology of the building, some of which is evident by way of infilled old doors, is informative about the way people used to live, and the fact that it was once three very small dwellings and is now one, reveals much about former living conditions compared to now.
- Netherby Cottage forms part of the historic core at the bottom of Hazelbury Hill, and much of the built form as the hills ascends is 20th century development, hence it is of historic interest in regard to the old form and fringes of the village.
- The changes within the attic space is of historic interest, with the two light window (now partly infilled) revealing a former way of using the house.



Former attic window, now partially blocked

4.4. Communal interest

- **Communal interest of Netherby Cottage is low.**
- As a longstanding private property, Netherby Cottage has limited communal interest other than as an appealing building on the streetscape within the Conservation Area. As a Conservation Area near Bath, Box attracts walkers and tourists as well as the active local community, so it will be appreciated in general, if not specific, terms.

4.5. Evidential interest

- **Evidential interest of Netherby Cottage is low**
- There is no reason to suppose there is notable evidential interest at Netherby Cottage, although no doubt the fabric will contain further clues as to its former layout (and potentially uses) which we know has evolved.

4.6. The significance of Setting and the Conservation Area

- The Conservation Area of Box does not benefit from a Character Appraisal but it has been designated as such for its special architectural or historic interest which is worthy of preservation or enhancement.
- The setting of Netherby Cottage is of importance.
- It has a prominent place on the streetscape, being at a junction point of four roads.
- Its relationship with the neighbouring buildings, which are of a similar period, is strong, and collectively and individually they make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area.

- Historic maps show how Hazelbury Hill has evolved, with significant 20th century development. The setting of this part of the Hill connects this later development with the past village form and earlier origins.

Section 5: Proposals

- Reinstatement of 1no. window.
- Removal of Urea-foam insulation from underside of roof tiles.
- Removal of non-original structure unfit for purpose and replacement with modern structural elements where necessary.
- Internal reworks to second floor, including re-insulating and refinishing, reflooring and refurbishment of existing second floor space to facilitate a bedroom and ensuite.

Section 6: Impact Assessment

- The purpose of this section of the Report is to assess the impacts of the proposals upon the heritage significance as set out in the previous Statement.
- The assessment is executed in line with the NPPF which advises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.
- Impacts are considered to be either:

Positive meaning that the proposed change will enhance the heritage values and the ability to appreciate them.

On Balance Positive meaning that some loss may be sustained but the action is necessary to preserve heritage value.

Neutral meaning the proposed change preserves the heritage value or has no affect either way

Adverse if the proposed change fails to sustain heritage value or impairs appreciation for them

- Where relevant it also considers the justification of impact and any relevant mitigatory steps.

6. Impact Assessment

Proposal:	Heritage value of fabric affected	Impact of works on significance	Justification and / or mitigation
The removal of Urea-foam insulation from underside of roof tiles	None - urea foam is a harmful late 20th century material which has shown itself to catastrophic to historic roofing fabric	On balance Positive - removal of urea foam will undoubtedly reveal the need for a significant loss of original roof structure which will have deteriorated beyond repair due to the effects of the years its application. However, acting now will preserve what is left to conserve.	This is necessary for the long term health of the roof space. Given mortgage lenders will not lend against buildings with urea foam, it is also necessary to ensure an onward market and stewardship of the house.
Re-roofing of the existing stone slated volume together with warm roof insulation and plasterboard lining.	Medium / high - the stone slates are of historic value, (although some may be non-original due to previous roof works)	Neutral - all tiles that can be re-used will be retained and reapplied, and where necessary through loss or degradation, these will be supplemented with reclaimed natural stone tiles . Stone tile vent to be applied for bathroom ventilation, which is relatively discreet and necessary to protect the internal structure.	Serviceable roof tiles will be re-used.
The reinstatement of 1no. partially infilled window – under the gable at attic level on the north elevation	High - this is a valuable historic feature which is visible from the public realm.	Positive - reinstatement will enhance historic character and visual appeal; repair will help preserve this deteriorated historic feature.	n/a
Replacement of existing velum rooflight with new conservation rooflight	None - this dates from 1980s and is of no historic interest.	Positive - the conservation rooflight will have an improved profile and appearance on the roofscape	n/a
Internal works including re-insulating and refinishing, reflooring and refurbishment of existing second floor space, to facilitate a bedroom and ensuite.	Low - proposed changes are reversible and will not impact greatly on existing historic fabric. New floor to be created above existing. Studwork to be built off existing. New SVP to follow the assumed historic run.	Positive - in that the principle of the restoration of this space is positive for its conservation.	n/a

6. Impact Assessment

Proposal:	Heritage value of fabric affected	Impact of works on significance	Justification and / or mitigation
The removal of non-original roof structure and replacement with modern structural elements where necessary. Purlin above stair to be removed.	Mixed - much of the roof structure has been altered - the structure is a palimpsest, reflecting different phases and interventions.	Neutral - the principal, original structure will be retained. Impact will be on non-original structure. Removal of purlin above stair is necessitated to make this a workable space.	The space is currently compromised due to accreted structural change. This space was initially sleeping quarters, later with sanitation introduced, subsequent changes (addition and removal of roof lights), and latterly used only for storage. Returning it to usable space will ensure its overall conservation. Removal of the purlin above the stair is necessitated by reasonable access as stipulated by Building Regulation.

Section 7: Conclusion

- Netherby Cottage is considered to have aesthetic and historic significance as a fine example of a vernacular village house of the period.
- It impacts positively on the streetscape and enhances the Conservation Area.
- The proposed scheme considered in this Report is for alterations to the Attic space and the scheme is deemed to have an overall positive impact on the character and appearance of the listed building as assessed in the Impact Report.
- The proposed scheme is sympathetic to the overall significance of the designated heritage asset and will remove unsympathetic and harmful alterations. It will also restore and reinstate historic features.
- The proposed alterations considered in this Report are considered to comply with all relevant planning policy relating to the protection and conservation of the historic environment.
- As such there is no reason, subject to design details, why the scheme would not be considered favourably by the Local Authority.

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07796 143132
www.kinman-conservation.co.uk