

MATHEWSON WATERS ARCHITECTS

Proposed pair of garden pergolas at Butlers Quarters, Longleaze Lane, Melksham, Wiltshire, SN12 6QJ

Design & Access and Heritage statement.

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View of the rear, (east) elevation of Butlers Quarters, looking south-west.

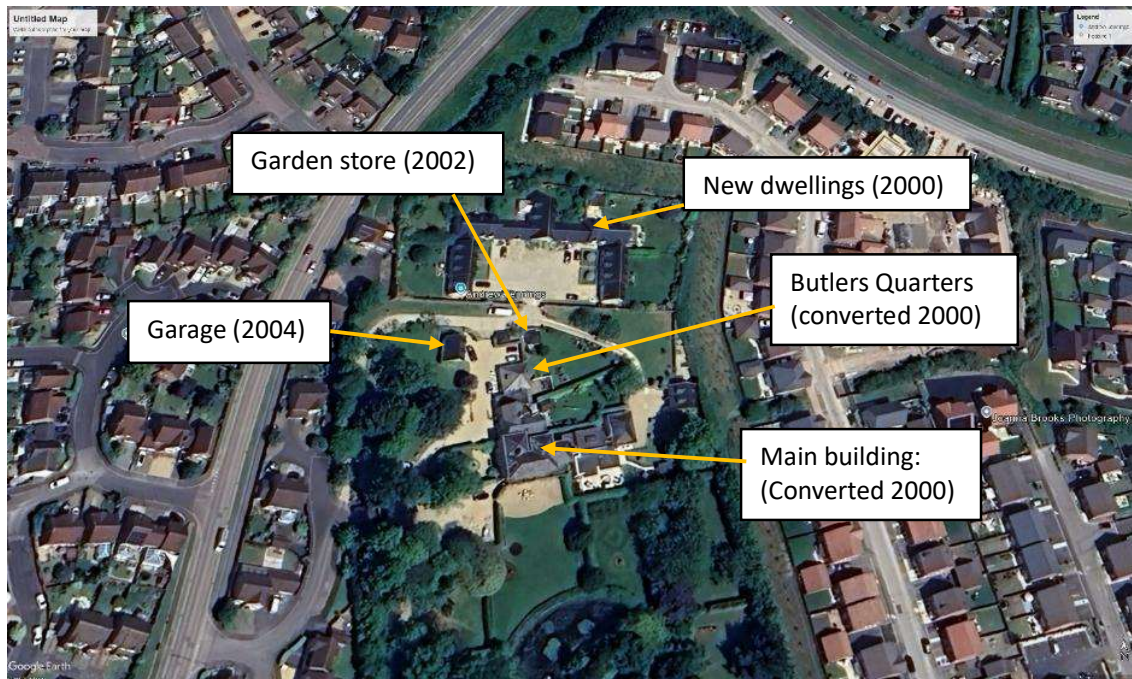
Introduction:

The subject of this application submission is Butlers Quarters, which forms part of Bowerhill Lodge Farmhouse is listed Grade-II as being of architectural and historical significance.

The applicants, Mr & Mrs Rose have instructed Mathewson Waters Architects to prepare and submit this application seeking Householder planning permission for two traditional pergola structures in different parts of the garden in order to improve their enjoyment of their outdoor space.

The application property:

Butlers Quarters is a part of the historical property known as Bowerhill Lodge Farmhouse, which is listed grade II as being of architectural and historical interest. Butlers Quarters is, in effect a 'wing' of the main building and includes a single-storey range that is a relatively modern building. This property, (Butlers Quarters) was created as part of a significant planning approval in 2000, which enabled the conversion of the main building into four self-contained dwellings and the construction to the north of the main building of five new-build dwellings.



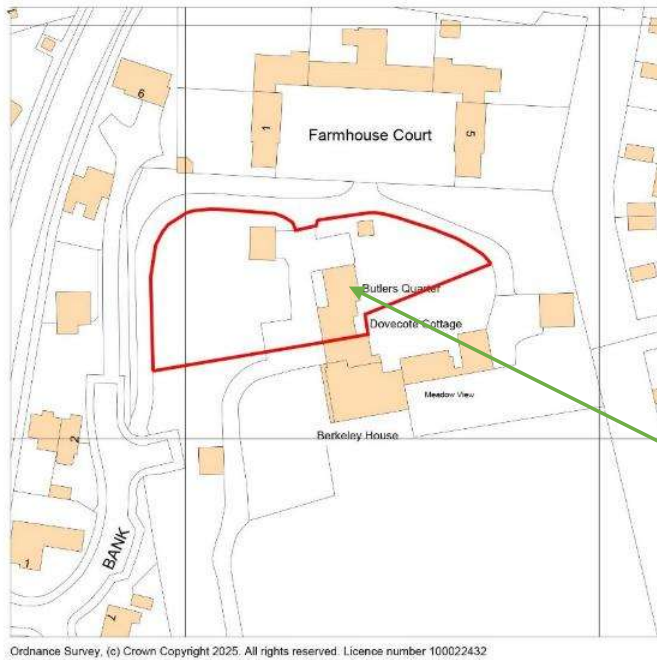
Aerial view of Butlers Quarters and its context

(Google Earth)

Other separate applications in 2002, 2004 and 2013 were approved and allowed the construction of a detached garden store, a detached double garage with study space over and the erection of close-boarded fencing and metal railings respectively. These applications have repeatedly established that the principle of new domestic structures within the curtilage of Butlers Quarters is acceptable.

It is also very relevant to highlight other examples of development within the curtilage of the properties created through the original conversion of Bowerhill Lodge Farmhouse.

Dovecote Cottage and the main house Berkeley House have both had planning consent granted for double garages built at the front of those properties. Also that Dovecote Cottage has had a rear extension added in recent years and Paddock View has had substantial works undertaken which includes an outdoor kitchen, hot tub area and patios.



Current OS plan extract

Two OS plans which enable a clear comparison to be made between the current context of Butlers Quarters, (left) and as the site of Bowerhill Lodge Farmhouse was between 1873-1888.

In the historical plan, the north 'wing' of the main house was significantly different to how the footprint of the wing appears now, which indicates that Butlers Quarters occupies a structure that is non-historical.



1873-1888 OS plan extract

Butlers Quarters is located within the curtilage and setting of two Grade-II listed structures, Bowerhill Lodge Farmhouse and the Gate Piers to that building.

The statutory listing description for the two buildings/structures are as follows:

Heritage Category: **Listed Building**

Grade: **II**

List Entry Number: **1021767**

Date first listed: **13-Feb-1985**

List Entry Name: **BOWERHILL LODGE FARMHOUSE**

Statutory Address: **BOWERHILL LODGE FARMHOUSE, LONG LEAZE LANE**

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

District: **Wiltshire (Unitary Authority)**

Parish: **Melksham**

National Grid Reference: **ST 91445 63311**

Details

ST 96 SW MELKSHAM WITHOUT LONG LEAZE LANE, MELKSHAM (north side)

4/193 Bowerhill Lodge Farmhouse

GV II

Farmhouse. Circa late c18 rear wing, early c19 front range with additions of c1920. Ashlar front range with Welsh slate 2-span hipped roof, rubblestone wing to rear with Welsh slate roof with coped verges and saddlestones, ashlar stacks. L-shaped plan. 2-storey, 4 windows. Entrance in rusticated porch and verandah of c1920, French windows either side have fanlights in semi-circular arched openings. 3 French windows to stone balcony have moulded architraves. One window 2-storey extension to right, of c1920, has same French windows. Deep eaves to roof on wooden brackets. Left return has 4 segmental headed 18-pane sashes, with keystones, plat band to first floor and four 12-pane sashes. Rear rubblestone wing of 2 storeys and attic has central door with segmental head and keystone, 12-pane sashes either side. First floor to left has 12-pane sash and to right on first floor and attic gable is one segmental headed 12-pane sash with wrought iron balcony. Rear is rubblestone with assorted sashes to service wing, stone dovecote on rear wall of C18 range. Interior: entrance hall has semi-circular

arched openings, doorcases are reeded with paterae, marble fireplaces in front rooms.
Rear C18 range is closed. Attached outbuildings to rear of c1920.
Listing NGR: ST9144563311

Heritage Category: **Listed Building**

Grade: **II**

List Entry Number: **1021768**

Date first listed: **13-Feb-1985**

List Entry Name: **GATEPIERS TO LEFT OF BOWERHILL LODGE FARMHOUSE**

Location

Statutory Address: **GATEPIERS TO LEFT OF BOWERHILL LODGE FARMHOUSE,
LONG LEAZE LANE**

The building or site itself may lie within the boundary of more than one authority.

District: **Wiltshire (Unitary Authority)**

Parish: **Melksham**

National Grid Reference: **ST 91429 63305**

Details

ST 96 SW MELKSHAM WITHOUT LONG LEAZE LANE, MELKSHAM (north side) 4/194
Gatepiers attached to left of Bowerhill Lodge Farmhouse

GV II

Gatepiers. Circa late C18. Rusticated ashlar to front, plain to rear. Two pairs of gatepiers have plinth, cornice and large ball finial.

Listing NGR: ST9142963305

The application proposal:

The following structures are proposed within the curtilage of Butlers Quarters:

- a) A traditional pergola structure constructed of Oak posts, beams and braces under a natural slate roof covering. This is illustrated on the submitted plans and would be sited on an area already covered by flagstones and bordered by low brick walls. This would provide a sitting-out space for the applicant so that they can enjoy the main part of their garden even when the weather is raining or strong sun. The footprint dimensions of this pergola would be 5.2m x 4.0m.
- b) A second, smaller pergola constructed using the same materials and details as the first one. This would be sited to act as an extension to the existing garden shed, so that Mr & Mrs Rose can enjoy a different part of their garden. The footprint dimensions of this pergola would be 4.0m x 2.8m.

Photographs:

Photographs of the areas affected by the application proposals are included in the table below:

	<i>View of the west elevation of Butlers Quarters. i.e. the proposed pergolas are not visible from this side.</i>

	<i>View of the double garage that was consented in 2004.</i> <i>With the new houses Visible in the background, which were consented in 2000.</i>
	<i>View looking east of the rear of Butlers Quarters with the location of the larger pergola to the left where the low brick wall currently is.</i>
	<i>View of the existing terrace and low walls where the main pergola is to be sited.</i>

	<i>View of the northernmost part of the garden where the garden store, consented in 2002 can be seen, with the new houses consented in 2000 in the background.</i>
	<i>View of the wooden garden store where the smaller pergola is to be added to create a longer structure.</i>

Statutory Legislation and Guidance:

Historic buildings are protected by law and in planning policy. This report is intended to consider the impact that the application proposal would have on the heritage assets, i.e. The Main Bowerhill Lodge, and the pair of gate piers.

Within this report there is a justification for the proposal according to the relevant legislation, planning policy and guidance.

The Council requires that a heritage statement is undertaken by a professional qualified in historic building conservation. I have more than 34 years experience in projects involving listed buildings and conservation areas. I am a registered architect and a partner in a Chartered firm of architects. I hold a Masters Degree in The Conservation of Historic Buildings.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 is the legislative basis for decision-making on applications that relate to the historic environment. Sections 66 and 72 of the Act impose statutory duties upon local planning authorities which, with regard to listed buildings, require the planning authority to have *‘special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses’*.

In considering applications for planning permission, local authorities are also required to consider the policies on the historic environment set out in the National Planning Policy Framework 2024. At the heart of the Framework is ‘a presumption in favour of sustainable development’ and there are also specific policies relating to the historic environment. The Framework states that heritage assets are ‘an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations’.

The Glossary to the National Planning Policy Framework defines a heritage asset 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. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

The Framework, in paragraph 207, states that:

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.

A later section of this report – the *‘assessment of significance’* – meets this requirement and is of a sufficient level of detail to understand the potential impact of the proposals.

The Framework also, in paragraph 212, requires that:

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

The Framework goes on to state at paragraph 213 that:

Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting) should require clear and convincing justification.

The Framework requires that local planning authorities categorise harm as either 'substantial' or 'less than substantial'. Where a proposed development will lead to 'substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset', the Framework states, in paragraph 214, that:

... local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and*
- b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and*
- c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and*
- d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.*

Where a development proposal will lead to 'less than substantial harm' to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the Framework states, in paragraph 215, that:

...this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Assessment of Significance

The following table sets out what I understand to be the significance of the heritage assets. These have been discussed in terms of Historic England's *Conversation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (2008). A heritage asset can have certain values that are part of its significance; these values are classed as: **Evidential, Historic, Aesthetic and Communal**, which can be briefly explained as follows:

Evidential value: Evidential value derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity:

Historical value: Historical value derives from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. It tends to be *illustrative or associative*:

Aesthetic value: This derives from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place. This can be the result of the conscious *design* of a place, including artistic endeavour. Equally, they can be the seemingly *fortuitous* outcome of the way in which a place has evolved and been used over time:

Communal value: The meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory.

The values of significance of the application building are briefly evidenced in the statutory list description. The main building has a substantial amount of historical fabric and architectural interest thereby giving it obvious **Evidential & Historical** values. However, the lower part of Butlers Quarters is non-historical and of less significance.

The architectural character of the main, 18th century house, being late Georgian is an attractive, ordered example of minor country house architecture with handsome **aesthetic** value. The building has strong **Communal** value derived from its contribution to the social and commercial history of this important Market Town.

Setting assessment:

Annex 2 of the NPPF defines the setting of a heritage asset as:

‘the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.’

The setting assessment is guided by *The Setting of Heritage Assets: Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3* (Historic England 2015b; revised 2017), which advocates a systematic and five-staged approach to the assessment of the effects of development.

- Step 1 to ‘identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected’
- Step 2 requires assessment of ‘the degree to which these settings and views make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s) or allow significance to be appreciated’

- Step 3 to 'assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on the significance or on the ability to appreciate it'
- Step 4: Explore ways to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm.
- Step 5: Make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

Potential harm to the significance and setting:

The proposed pergola structures are minor in nature and are reversible for the most part. The proposed materials, details and form are appropriate for the garden of a heritage asset.

The two pergolas are within the curtilage of the non-historical part of the site and are generally out of view, (and not in the main lines of sight) of the original parts of the main building and the gate piers.

We therefore consider that no harm to the setting and aspects of significance of Bowerhill Lodge or its gate piers would be caused by the implementation of the application proposal.

Justification for the Proposals:

I have considered the impacts on the heritage assets and have concluded that there would be no harm, (or at the lowest end of 'less than substantial harm') to the character and setting of the heritage assets. The proposed modest pergolas are very typical of what might be expected within a traditional garden and would complement views towards and from the application building.

Howard Waters *RIBA*

BA; B.Arch; MSc. (Conservation of Historic Buildings)

5th November 2025