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DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

REPLACEMENT ROOF COVERING AND STRUCTURAL REMEDIAL WORKS TO THE ORANGERY AT GRITTLETON HOUSE

Site Address: The Street, Grittleton, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN14 6AP

Proposals: Listed Building Consent for replacement roof covering and structural remedial works

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose and Scope

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared to support a Listed Building Consent application for replacement roof covering and structural remedial works to the orangery at Grittleton House. The statement should be read in conjunction with:

- Structural Report by David Partridge Ltd (Ref: 25-195, dated 5 December 2025)
- Architectural drawings as listed below

1.2 Drawing Schedule

Existing Drawings:

- 4977-01A: Existing plan and elevations
- 4977-02A: Existing elevations and section
- 4977-03: Site location plan
- 4977-04A: Photographic survey
- 4977-05: Site layout

Proposed Drawings:

- 4977-60A: Proposed plan and elevations
- 4977-61A: Proposed elevations and section
- 4977-62: Proposed site layout

Engineering Drawings:

- 25-195-01: Plan details
- 25-195-02: Section details

1.3 Site Context and Designation

Grittleton House is a Grade II Listed Building located at the southern edge of Grittleton hamlet, within the Grittleton Conservation Area. The property is a substantial Victorian country house dating from the mid-19th century, designed by architects James Thompson and Henry Clutton between 1832-1856.

The orangery is an ancillary structure attached to the south elevation of the main house. It forms part of the curtilage and setting of the Grade II Listed Building and contributes to the historic character of the estate, which is characterised by parkland and formal gardens inherited from the 19th-century country house layout.



The Orangery at Grittleton House

1.4 Current Condition

The orangery roof is currently covered with corrugated fibreglass sheeting which has become brittle and significantly deteriorated through prolonged weathering, is heavily lichen-covered, and is no longer weathertight, meaning it has reached the end of its serviceable life and now presents both weatherproofing and safety risks.

A structural assessment by David Partridge Ltd (Chartered Engineer) also identified evidence of outward lateral movement caused by unrestrained roof thrust, including a visible outward lean at the heads of the masonry columns, cracking to the masonry arches on the southern elevation, and an estimated eaves spread of approximately 25–35mm to the southern side.

The report concludes that the roof trusses lack effective lateral restraint at their feet, so without intervention the movement is likely to progress, leading to further masonry deterioration and potential failure, loss of historic fabric, increased safety risk to users, and ultimately the need for more extensive (and more intrusive) remedial works.

1.5 Remedial works

The works are required to deliver a conservation-led repair that addresses the identified deterioration while safeguarding the orangery's historic character and fabric. The approach is intentionally based on minimal intervention, limiting the scope to what is necessary to remedy roof failure and structural deficiency.

The proposals are designed to be reversible, with new structural components such as introduced as measures that can be removed in the future without permanent harm to historic components.

At the same time, the works are required to maintain the established form and appearance of the orangery, keeping the existing hipped roof profile, geometry, and visual character so that the building continues to read as a coherent part of the listed house and its setting.

The selected replacement materials are modern but appropriate: lightweight and durable to reduce load demands and improve long-term performance, while remaining sympathetic in appearance to a historic estate context.

In practical terms, the works are necessary because the existing corrugated fibreglass roof covering has reached the end of its serviceable life and must be replaced to restore weatherproofing and protect the structure. Structural stabilisation is also required to arrest the identified lateral movement and prevent progressive deterioration of the historic masonry. Together, these interventions will secure the orangery's long-term viability and continued use as part of the estate, supporting its preservation for future generations.

2. Appearance

2.1 Existing Appearance

External Character

The orangery currently presents as a Victorian glasshouse structure with:

- Hipped roof profile
- Corrugated fibreglass roof covering (opaque, weathered, lichen-covered, visually tired and deteriorated)
- Masonry columns and arched features visible on south, east, and west elevations
- Integration with the main house's south elevation

The current deteriorated condition of the roof covering detracts from the visual quality of the listed building's setting.

Internal Character

- Decorative steel A-frame trusses visible from interior
- Open volume beneath roof structure
- Steel purlins partially obscured by internal fabric lining

2.2 Proposed Appearance

External Changes

The only visible external change will be the roof covering material:

From: Corrugated fibreglass (opaque, weathered, lichen-covered, brittle)

To: Metal standing seam roof system (clean, durable, recessive finish)

Roof Profile: Retained exactly – hipped form with the same eaves and ridge geometry

Visual Impact:

The external appearance will be significantly improved compared to the current deteriorated state. The metal standing seam finish will be specified with:

- Colour selected to be recessive and appropriate to historic setting
- Non-reflective or low-reflectivity finish
- Sympathetic to the Victorian country house character

Internal Changes

New structural elements will be visible internally:

- New steel purlins (70x70x8 RSA)
- Steel tie beams positioned immediately above southern wall arches
- These elements are functional, secondary components that do not obscure or compete with the primary historic decorative A-frames

2.3 Materials

Sympathetic Material Selection

- Standing seam metal roof: modern material with precedent in historic glasshouse/conservatory conservation
- Recessive finish: colour and reflectivity specified to be appropriate to historic setting
- Visual improvement: clean, well-maintained appearance compared to current deteriorated fibreglass

Material Selection Criteria

All proposed materials have been selected to meet the following criteria:

Durability: Long service life to minimise future intervention

Lightweight: Minimal additional load on historic structure

Weatherproofing: Superior performance to ensure building longevity

Reversibility: Bolted fixings allow future removal without permanent alteration to historic fabric

Conservation appropriateness: Precedent for standing seam metal roofs on historic glasshouse/conservatory structures

3. Amount

The proposed works comprise:

3.1 Roof Covering Replacement

- **Remove:** Existing corrugated fibreglass sheeting (brittle, deteriorated, non-weathertight)
- **Install:** New metal standing seam roof system
- Lightweight construction
- Standing seam metal finish over breathable membrane
- External-grade plywood substrate
- Fixed to new steel purlins via clips and non-penetrating fasteners where feasible

3.2 Purlin Replacement and Upgrade

- **Remove:** Existing steel purlins (original sections, undersized for current requirements)
- **Install:** New 70x70x8 RSA (Rolled Steel Angle) steel purlins
- Sized to accommodate new roof loads and provide lateral stiffening
- Bolted to existing steel A-frame trusses
- Painted to protect against corrosion and blend with existing steelwork
- Reuse existing connection points where technically feasible

3.3 Structural Tie Beams (Lateral Restraint System)

- **Install:** Horizontal steel tie bars at each of the ten A-frame truss locations
- 12mm diameter steel bar (as specified by structural engineer)
- Positioned immediately above the arched feature on the southern wall
- Connects the foot of each A-frame truss across the full width of the orangery (east-west direction)
- Bolted shoe connections at each truss foot, designed for permanent rigid restraint
- Purpose: Arrest outward horizontal thrust and prevent continued lateral spread and masonry cracking

3.4 Retention of Historic Elements

No change to:

- Ten decorative steel A-frame trusses (retained and unaltered)
 - Masonry columns and walls (stabilised, not demolished or replaced)
 - Historic arched features in southern wall
 - Building footprint, height, or massing
 - Relationship to main house or parkland setting
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4. Layout

4.1 Existing Layout

The orangery occupies an integral position attached to the south elevation of Grittleton House. Its rectangular plan form, orientated approximately east-west, measures internally approximately 31 metres in length with a width of 6.8 metres.

The structure comprises:

- Northern elevation: abutment to main house masonry wall
- Southern elevation: masonry columns supporting roof structure
- Eastern and western gable ends: masonry columns in cast-iron shoes
- Internal space: open volume beneath hipped roof

4.2 Proposed Layout

No changes to layout are proposed. All works are confined to the roof structure and covering:

- Building footprint remains unchanged
- Internal volume and spatial configuration remain unchanged
- Relationship to main house remains unchanged
- Position within the curtilage and parkland setting remains unchanged
- Access arrangements remain unchanged

The tie beams will be positioned internally, immediately above the arched feature on the southern wall, determined by structural engineering requirements to optimise load distribution while minimising visual impact on usable internal height.

5. Scale

5.1 Existing Scale

The orangery is a substantial ancillary structure, subservient to but integral with the main Grade II Listed house. Its scale reflects Victorian horticultural traditions for country house estates.

Key dimensions:

- Length: approximately 31 metres (east-west)
- Width: approximately 6.8 metres (north-south)
- A-frame truss spacing: 2.8 metres centres

5.2 Proposed Scale

No changes to scale are proposed. The external envelope, roof profile, ridge height, and eaves level will remain identical:

- The new metal standing seam roof build-up has similar depth to the existing fibreglass system
 - The hipped roof profile and pitch are retained exactly
 - Overall building height remains unchanged
 - Visual mass and proportions remain unchanged
 - Relationship to the main house remains appropriately subservient
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6. Landscaping

6.1 Existing Landscaping

The orangery is set within the formal parkland and garden landscape associated with the historic Grittleton House estate. The setting includes mature trees, lawn areas, and garden features that contribute to the Grade II Listed Building's significance.

6.2 Proposed Landscaping

No landscaping changes are proposed. The works are confined to the orangery roof structure and will not affect:

- Garden layout or planting
- Trees or mature vegetation

- Pathways or access routes
- Views within the parkland setting
- Relationship between building and landscape

Temporary construction access and scaffolding will be carefully managed to minimise ground disturbance and protect existing landscape features (see Section 7, Access).

7. Access

7.1 Inclusive Access Considerations

Access Arrangements

Access to the orangery is currently provided as part of the Grittleton House estate (used for events and hospitality), via existing ground-level entrances from the main house and externally from the garden.

The proposed works are confined to the roof and will not change access arrangements: there are no alterations to entrances, doorways, thresholds, internal floor levels, circulation routes, external paths, parking, or vehicular access, and the accessibility of the orangery will remain the same for users and visitors.

As the proposals are repair and maintenance work with no extension or change of use, they do not trigger additional inclusive access requirements beyond the existing arrangements, which will remain appropriate for the current use.

7.2 Access during works

Site access strategy

During construction, scaffolding will be erected around the orangery for safe roof access, with protective measures to avoid damage to landscaping and historic masonry. Construction traffic will use the existing estate access from The Street, deliveries will be managed to minimise disruption, materials will be stored within a secure compound away from key heritage features, and works will be undertaken during normal daytime hours unless otherwise agreed.

14. Conclusion

This Design and Access Statement demonstrates that the proposed replacement roof covering and structural remedial works to the orangery at Grittleton House are:

- **Conservation-led:** Driven by material failure and structural necessity, addressing end-of-life roof covering and progressive masonry deterioration
- **Appropriate in design:** Minimal intervention approach preserves historic fabric (A-frames, masonry) while introducing reversible secondary structural elements (purlins, tie bars)
- **Sympathetic in appearance:** Retains existing hipped roof form and profile; improves visual quality through replacement of deteriorated fibreglass with recessive standing seam metal finish

- **Compliant with heritage policy:** Preserves the Grade II Listed Building and its setting, sustains and enhances heritage significance, reduces risk to the asset, and secures viable use
- **Proportionate in scale and impact:** Works confined to roof structure; no changes to footprint, height, massing, layout, or access arrangements
- **Deliverable and sustainable:** Technical solution specified by qualified structural engineer; materials selected for durability and long-term performance; ongoing private stewardship commitment

The proposed works will ensure the long-term conservation and viability of the orangery as an integral part of the Grade II Listed Grittleton House estate. No harm to heritage significance has been identified; the works deliver positive heritage outcomes through structural stabilisation, risk reduction, and visual improvement.