

# Wickham Cottage Biddestone

## Heritage Statement

Revision A

September 2026





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Contents

|    |                                |    |                   |
|----|--------------------------------|----|-------------------|
| 01 | Introduction and Methodology   | 05 | Impact Assessment |
| 02 | Identifying the Heritage Asset | 06 | Conclusion        |
| 03 | Statement of Significance      | 07 | Appendices        |
| 04 | The Proposals                  |    |                   |



01

# **Introduction and Methodology**



# Introduction

This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Designscape Architects in support of a Planning and Listed Building application for Wickham Cottage, Biddestone.

The purpose of this document is to identify the architectural and historic significance of the building and its fabric, and to set out the design principles underlying the proposals, so that the impact of the alterations on the significance of the heritage asset can be properly understood and assessed.

It aims to provide an understanding of the development of both the Heritage Asset that is Wickham Cottage and its setting. This process has informed the design approach of the proposals, the intention being to minimise harm and, where possible, to deliver a net heritage benefit through the long-term, sustainable reuse of the building.

Wickham Cottage is listed Grade II (National Heritage List for England entry number 1022839, first listed 20 December 1960). Buildings of this nature are considered nationally important and of special architectural and historic interest. A copy of the listing entry is appended.

The property lies within the Biddestone Conservation Area (CA/N/20).

The planning history of this property includes:

2004.06.09 – Replace existing staircase within cottage – Approved – N/04/01778/LBC

2007.08.08 – Add Two Dormers on Rear Elevation – Approved – N/07/01624/FUL + N/07/01623/LBC

This application addresses a rear extension to the main dwelling, the creation of an outbuilding at the end of the garden, an enlargement of the two dormer windows on the rear, internal arrangement alterations and solar panel installations on the rear of the new extension roof.



## Summary of the proposals

The required changes are itemised as:

**Item 001:** Single story extension to the South (Rear) of property. This also includes removal of existing modern window and door along with portion of more recent masonry at the rear facade.

**Item 002:** The formation of a permanent outbuilding and changes to access at the rear of the garden.

**Item 003:** Removal of modern partition wall on the first floor to merge two bedrooms together.

**Item 004:** Replacement of existing dormer windows with larger dormers.

**Item 005:** New partition wall within the existing kitchen creating separation between the new lobby and utility spaces.

### Consequential improvements:

- Removal of poor quality existing modern lintel, door and window and reconstituted stonework on rear facade.
- Improve privacy for dwelling and neighbours.

The overall ambition of this proposal is to enable the ongoing beneficial use of the heritage asset by undertaking work to make more suitable spaces for 21<sup>st</sup> century family living whilst maintaining and accepting responsibility for the long term welfare of the Heritage Asset.

These works are assessed in this report against their anticipated heritage impacts and are presented as amounting to **less than substantial harm** for the conservation officer's assessment.



# PROTECT YOUR ANCIENT BUILDINGS

TECTION OF ANCIENT BUILDINGS  
FIFTY YEARS TO SAVE THEM  
DS YOUR HELP.  
HAM STREET, ADELPHI, W.C.2

## Methodology

The methodology used in preparing this Heritage Statement follows the guidance and general principles for assessing the significance of a Heritage Asset set out in the ICOMOS Education and Training Guidelines. These guidelines comprise fourteen points which underpin the international standards for conservation good practice (including the accreditation schemes run by the RIBA, RIAS, RIAI and ICE) and which are reflected in BS 7913:2013 Guide to the conservation of historic buildings. These principles are supported by conservation best-practice publications including The Repair of

Ancient Buildings (SPAB, 1929), The Athens Charter (1933) and The Venice Charter (1964).

The terminology used in this report accords primarily with the Historic England publications Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (2008) and The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3, 2nd edition, 2017). These documents establish the key terms and principles for understanding and evaluating heritage assets in terms of their Evidential, Historical, Aesthetic and Communal values, and the

contribution of Setting. Reference has also been made to Historic England's Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (GPA2) and Making Changes to Heritage Assets (Historic England Advice Note 2, 2016).



# Approach

ICOMOS: 14 Principles for the Education and Training of Conservationists

Good conservation practice should:

1. **Read a monument**, ensemble or site and identify its emotional, cultural and use significance.
2. **Understand the history** and technology of monuments, ensembles or sites in order to define their identity, plan for their conservation, and interpret the results of this research.
3. **Understand the setting** of a monument, ensemble or site, their contents and surroundings, in relation to other buildings, gardens or landscapes.
4. **Find and absorb all available sources of information** relevant to the monument, ensemble or site being studied.
5. **Understand and analyse** the behaviour of monuments, ensembles and sites as complex systems.
6. **Diagnose intrinsic and extrinsic causes of decay** as a basis for appropriate action.
7. **Inspect and make reports** intelligible to non-specialist readers of monuments, ensembles or sites, illustrated by graphic means such as sketches and photographs.
8. **Know, understand and apply UNESCO conventions** and recommendations, and ICOMOS and other recognised Charters, regulations and guidelines.
9. **Make balanced judgements** based on shared ethical principles, and accept responsibility for the long-term welfare of cultural heritage.
10. **Recognise when advice must be sought** and define the areas of need of study by different specialists, e.g. wall paintings, sculpture and objects of artistic and historical value, and/or studies of materials and systems.
11. **Give expert advice on maintenance** strategies, management policies and the policy framework for environmental protection and preservation of monuments and their contents, and sites.
12. **Document works executed** and make same accessible.

**13. Work in multi-disciplinary groups** using sound methods.

**14. Work with inhabitants, administrators and planners** to resolve conflicts and to develop conservation strategies appropriate to local needs, abilities and resource.



## Framework

The proposals are also assessed within the statutory and policy framework that applies to the determination of this application, namely:

- **The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990**, in particular Section 16(2), which requires the decision-maker to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building, its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
- **The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, August 2026)**, Section 20, in particular Policy HE5, paragraphs 1–5 (Assessing effects on heritage assets)
- The 2026 NPPF takes and explicitly positive approach to the reuse of Heritage Assets and identifies “important public benefits” including securing the long term use of a vacant or underused Listed Building as carrying particular weight in the planning balance (Policy HE6)

- **Wiltshire Local Plan**, comprising of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015) and made neighbourhood plans for which there is not currently one for Biddestone. Biddestone is categorised as a Small Village within the Chippenham Community Area. Core Policy 48 supports the sensitive reuse of built assets within small villages to help meet local needs.

An assessment of the proposals in terms of the balance of potential harms and benefits to the heritage asset, in accordance with the above framework, is set out in Sections 5 and 6 of this report.



02

# Identifying the Heritage Asset



## The Building and Setting

Wickham Cottage sits on the South side of The Green in the centre of Biddestone, opposite the war memorial and by the junction to Harts Lane. It forms part of a longer terrace of eight buildings. Whilst the historic listing currently views it as its own entry it was previously listed as “part of 3 cottages east of the Malt House”

The dwelling was built in the early 1700s and was constructed with rubble stone with a stone tiled roof ( on the front / North only). The rubble stone wall is similar to the neighbouring properties both East and West, whilst only the property to the East still has the stone tiled roof. The properties to the West have slate tiled roofs.

Historic maps shows that not only did the old Malthouse to the West used to extend further at the rear but that there used to be a rear extension at the back of the property and an outbuilding at the western boundary of the

garden.

The neighbouring property to the East also has a flying freehold ( the “infill” under ther flying freehold is believed to date from the 1980s) that over – sails the existing kitchen of Wickham Cottage, creating a very low ceiling in the kitchen. The upstairs rear window of the neighbouring property therefore looks directly into the Garden of Wickham Cottage’s. The proposed extension would reduce the negative impact of the “Bradstone” extension at the back of the Old Forge.

The heritage listing describes North facade only – See Appendix B.

The listing significance of Wickham Cottage is therefore concentrated in its principal elevation and its contribution to the street scape and the historic village community.



1840s Tithe Map



1844 - 1888 OS Map



1898 - 1939 OS Map

Front Facade

Modern door as secondary entrance into kitchen. Probably this door originally gave onto an open passageway to the rear, but was infilled c 1980

"3-light and 2-light window under continuous hood mould"

"[At first floor there is a] 3-window range of recessed hollow chamfer mullion windows "

"Small paned windows mostly renewed"

"door in moulded flush doorcase with hood on brackets and renewed casement with timber lintel"

Rubble stone construction

Stone tiled roof



## Rear Facade

Historic maps show that there was once (from 1840s till at least 1939) a rear extension / lean to here.

Wall showing historic extent of malthouse

Historic window and door openings with timber lintol over door. Moulded stone mullioned windows with stone hood mouldings

Dormer windows installed in 2007

Modern window and door in section of wall that was probably once an open passageway

Neighbours bathroom window in flying freehold overlooking garden



## Ground Floor Details

Historic fire place against kitchen wall  
of living room



Historic timber elements framing  
opening in living room

Historic timber lintels above  
replacement timber front door.



## Ground Floor

### Details

Modern timber door and window at rear of kitchen. Showing low ceilings.



## First Floor

Reconfiguration of bedrooms - removal of modern partition at first floor level.

## Second Floor

Exposed roof structure in second floor ceiling.

New dormer window below purlin level





## Current condition and use

The current condition of the building is one that has been cared for and modernised over time with a multitude of internal and external alterations. These have kept the building suitable for the living standards of the time. The house is currently only occupied periodically as a holiday house.

continue to be a sought after and loved family home for many years to come.

To properly enable full time occupation by a family, where more ground floor / living and utility space is required and the kitchen is becoming a greater focal point the dwelling is starting to struggle to keep up.

The lack of space and being unsuitable for 21<sup>st</sup> century family living is not, of itself, a justification for harmful change. However, sustainable, viable and careful alterations prevent the dwelling from becoming underused and ensures that the dwelling will



03

# **Statement of Significance**



## Evidential Value

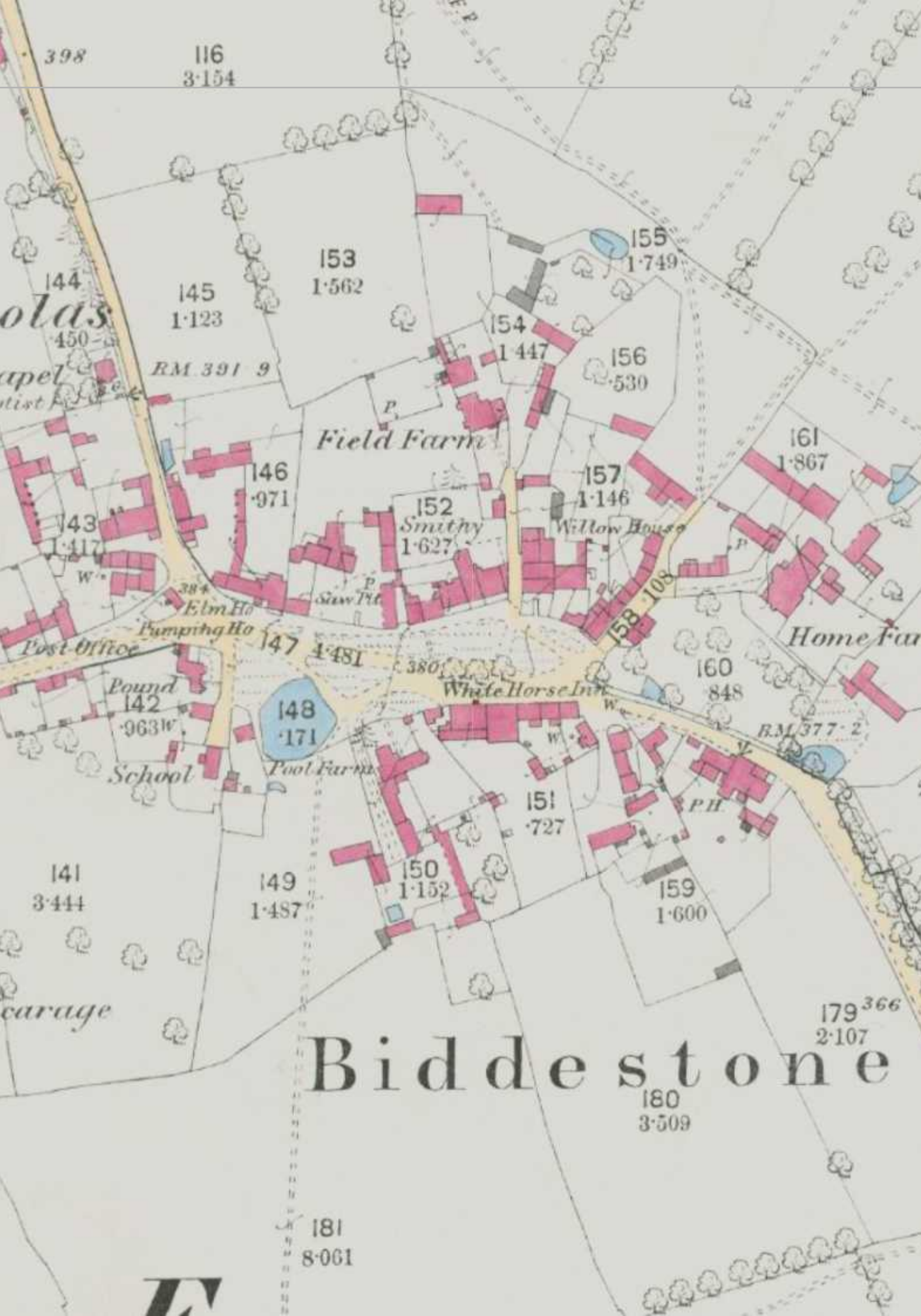
*"The potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity."*

the segregation of internal space and the original staircase location.

The dwelling has moderate evidential value, as part of the terrace and village built around the same time at the beginning of the 1700s. On the rear elevation there is recorded evidence of a rear extension / lean-to however this has disappeared at some point since 1939 and there is no longer any visual evidence as to its exact location or where it joined onto the main dwelling.

Much of the existing structural timber especially the roof frame and lintels have been retained, restored and exposed. The original fireplace is set within the main living space.

The simplicity of the building layout reflects the simplicity of historic living, however there is limited evidence as to



## Historical Value

*"The ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present."*

The building's historical value comes from being part of the development of the Wiltshire village of Biddestone which has been a settlement since at least 1086.

The cottage may have been part of accommodation for the neighbouring malthouse.

Unfortunately there are no known clear historic images of the dwelling.



## Aesthetic Value

*"The ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place."*

The facade and massing of the cottage has aesthetic value on its own merit due to its historic features such as stone roof tiles, rubble walls and stone detailed hood moulds and mullions to doors and windows.

As part of the larger terrace including the village pub it provides greater aesthetic value due to positively contributing to the village aesthetics as situated opposite the village green and war memorial.



## 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 communal value of Wickham Cottage is principally as a contributor to a collectively valued historic ensemble of the traditional English village.

Allowing the building to adapt and continue act as a domestic dwelling that supports 21<sup>st</sup> century family living, without impacting the other values, maintains its communal value within the village.





## Summary of significance

The significance of Wickham Cottage lies principally in its contribution, as a domestic dwelling, to the architectural narrative of the typical historic English village and in its surviving original fabric, of which the timber structure, stone roof tiles and stone window surrounds and fireplace are significant interior features.

The proposals concentrate entirely on continuing the building's use as a fully occupied domestic dwelling that suits the requirements of modern living, whilst ensuring historic elements are retained and conserved.



04

# The Proposals



# Proposals

The primary proposal is a rear extension and outbuilding however there are also some secondary proposals regarding alterations to the listed building.

## Conservation objectives

- Any alterations to the existing fabric are limited to C20th elements – at worst these could be “less than substantial harm” but are intended as improvements.
- Area where rear extension connects to existing dwelling is limited to a small portion of the rear facade. With the only opening in the wall, limited to the non historic portion of wall.
- The solar panels on the East side of the proposed extension will contribute to the future sustainability of the dwelling.
- The outbuilding and change of access formally separates the gardens of the two properties and give them their own entrance.

Refer to all drawings included within the planning application.





05

# Impact Assessment



# Impact Assessment

The proposed alterations have been assessed individually, against the heritage values identified in Section 3 and the policy framework set out in Section 1. The categories of impact used are consistent with the NPPF: "No Harm / Heritage Gain", "Less than substantial harm" and "Substantial harm". None of the proposals is assessed as causing substantial harm.

**Item 001:** Single story extension to the South (Rear) of property. This also includes removal of existing modern window and door along with portion of more recent masonry at the rear facade. Drawings: Extension is referred to on majority of drawings, wall, window and door removal shown on 524.P.110.

Heritage Assessment:

- All of the masonry at ground floor, door and window are 20<sup>th</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> century. No historic fabric is lost.
- Historic masonry above level existing ceiling in R005 to remain intact, so the historic fabric is preserved.
- Section of wall in poor condition (cement pointing) will be repointed with lime mortar - preserving the

structure.

- The section of existing rear wall facing into the new extension will remain as is and no new internal finishes applied, to retain historic fabric.
- Section of non historic reconstituted block facade wall on west of The Old Forge (neighbour to the East) to be finished / covered internally
- Level of impact: **Less than substantial harm** (loss of non historic fabric), at the lower end of that category, mitigated by the retention and legibility of the historic aspect of the rear facade.

**Item 002:** Formation of permanent outbuilding and changes to access at the rear of the garden. Drawings: 524.S.010, 524.P.010, 524.P.10, 524.P.311-314

Heritage Assessment:

- The proposed outbuilding is contained behind an existing (curtilage listed) garden wall. The wall will need to be raised by about 1m to envelope the outbuilding, such that the outbuilding does not

appear as a standalone building. A new doorway in that wall replaces a low timber gate.

- Proposed outbuilding is subservient to existing adjoining structures within the ground of the listed neighbouring property "The Malthouse". With no permanent alterations to the garage required.
- This will replace a much less substantial and somewhat incongruous timber shed, currently pushed into a corner of the garden
- Level of impact: **Less than substantial harm** (Wall, that does not provide any significant value, only partially altered) - at the lower end of that category.

**Item 003:** Removal of modern partition wall on the first floor to merge two bedrooms together. Drawings: 524.S.111, 524.P.111

Heritage Assessment:

- The partition is modern, no historic fabric is lost.
- **Benefit:** Removal of the partition will partially re-establish historic



#### Item 004: Replacement of existing dormer windows with larger dormers.

##### Heritage Assessment:

- The dormers are a modern 20<sup>th</sup> century addition. Enlarging them does not impact the historic fabric.
- **Harm:** the enlargement would result in the removal of some parts of the original rafters and roof structure - noting that the house has been re-roofed already and the rafters may well not be very old.
- The tiles on the roof are not original as per the stone tiles on the front half of the roof, and the primary purlin will remain in place.
- **Benefit:** There is potential for exposing an extra section of the historic lower purlin, currently covered.
- Level of impact: **Less than substantial harm.** The harm arises from the removal of a small part of the existing roof structure, this is

balanced by the avoidance of damage to larger structural element of the purlin, and the potential re-exposure of the lower purlin.

#### Item 005: New partition wall within the existing kitchen

##### Heritage Assessment:

- Removal of a section of modern infill / partition. The space will be returned its historic plan form and use as a passageway.
- Internal wall, ceiling and floor linings around the new proposed wall are all modern.
- Level of impact: **Less than substantial harm.** The harm arises from the separation of the space, altering the historic form, this is balanced by the partition being fully reversible and could be removed in the future to reinstate the historic form.



## Summary

Taken as a whole the proposals are assessed as resulting in **less than substantial harm** to the significance of the listed building, at the lower end of that scale. The historic front facade and the historic part of the rear facade are unaltered and historic elements such as large elements of timber structure and fireplace are also left untouched.

In heritage terms, direct physical intervention into the historic fabric is largely avoided.

This is considered to be an acceptable approach that preserves the historic elements of the dwelling. The new elements and minor alterations are considered to extend and enhance the life of the building as a family house in the village context.

## Consequential Heritage Gains

The extension can help provide much needed privacy for both the neighbours and Wickham cottage.



The addition of solar panels and a well insulated extension in which a significant portion of occupied time will be spent helps reduce operational carbon in heating a historic building.



The existing house is very constrained by the limited kitchen size. The proposal includes returning this to a passageway - reinstating its original use and form. Also a benefit in terms of limiting noise transfer to the flying freehold above.





06

# Conclusion



## Conclusion

### The existing building

Wickham Cottage sits on the South side of The Green in the centre of Biddestone, opposite the war memorial and by the junction to Harts Lane. It forms part of a longer terrace of eight buildings. Whilst the historic listing currently views it as its own entry it was previously listed as “part of 3 cottages east of the Malt House”

The dwelling was built in the early 1700s and was constructed with rubble stone with a stone tiled roof. The rubble stone wall is similar to the neighbouring properties both East and West, whilst only the property to the East has the stone tiled roof. The properties to the West have slate tiled roofs.

The significance of Wickham Cottage lies principally in its contribution, as a domestic dwelling, to the architectural narrative of the typical historic English village and in its surviving original fabric, of which the timber structure, stone roof tiles and stone window surrounds are significant features.

### The proposals

The proposals are limited to internal alterations that will result in the greatest positive impact on the use of the building whilst limiting any harm to that which is less than substantial. The proposal therefore focuses on the extension and outbuilding which have very limited to no impact on the existing dwelling and its historic significance .

The principal elements with heritage significance are the historic elements of the exterior facades and front roof, all which are retained in situ in their entirety.

The proposal has no negative impact the heritage values of this listed dwelling.



# The planning balance

## The effect on the significance of the asset and the planning balance

The required changes as proposed in the application would result in less than substantial harm to the Grade II listed building, at the lower end of that spectrum. No significant historic fabric is lost;. In accordance with NPPF great weight has nonetheless been given to the conservation of the parts of the building with Historic Significance - facades, and the design has been developed specifically to avoid any loss of, and to minimise any intervention to the significant fabric.

The proposal invests in the historic fabric and ensures continued use of the building as a successful family

home and will justify investment in its repair and maintenance, including much needed work to the deteriorating windows on the frontage. This affords long-term benefit to the heritage asset.

The proposals follow the conservation principles set out at the beginning of this report: significant fabric is retained, key facades are unaltered, new construction is functional and noticeably different / has clear legibility to contribute positively to the Historic Narrative.

## Summary

The proposed alterations represent a modern and carefully considered scheme to enable the continued use of a Grade II listed dwelling.

The historic elements are to be retained in situ, the primary front facade and historic elements on the rear facade to be untouched and any

harm to the the asset is less than substantial, and is clearly outweighed by the substantial benefits of safeguarding the future success of the dwelling.

The proposals are therefore considered to accord with Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings

and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, with Section 16 of the NPPF (December 2024), and with the Wiltshire Core Strategy

Wickham Cottage, Rear Facade

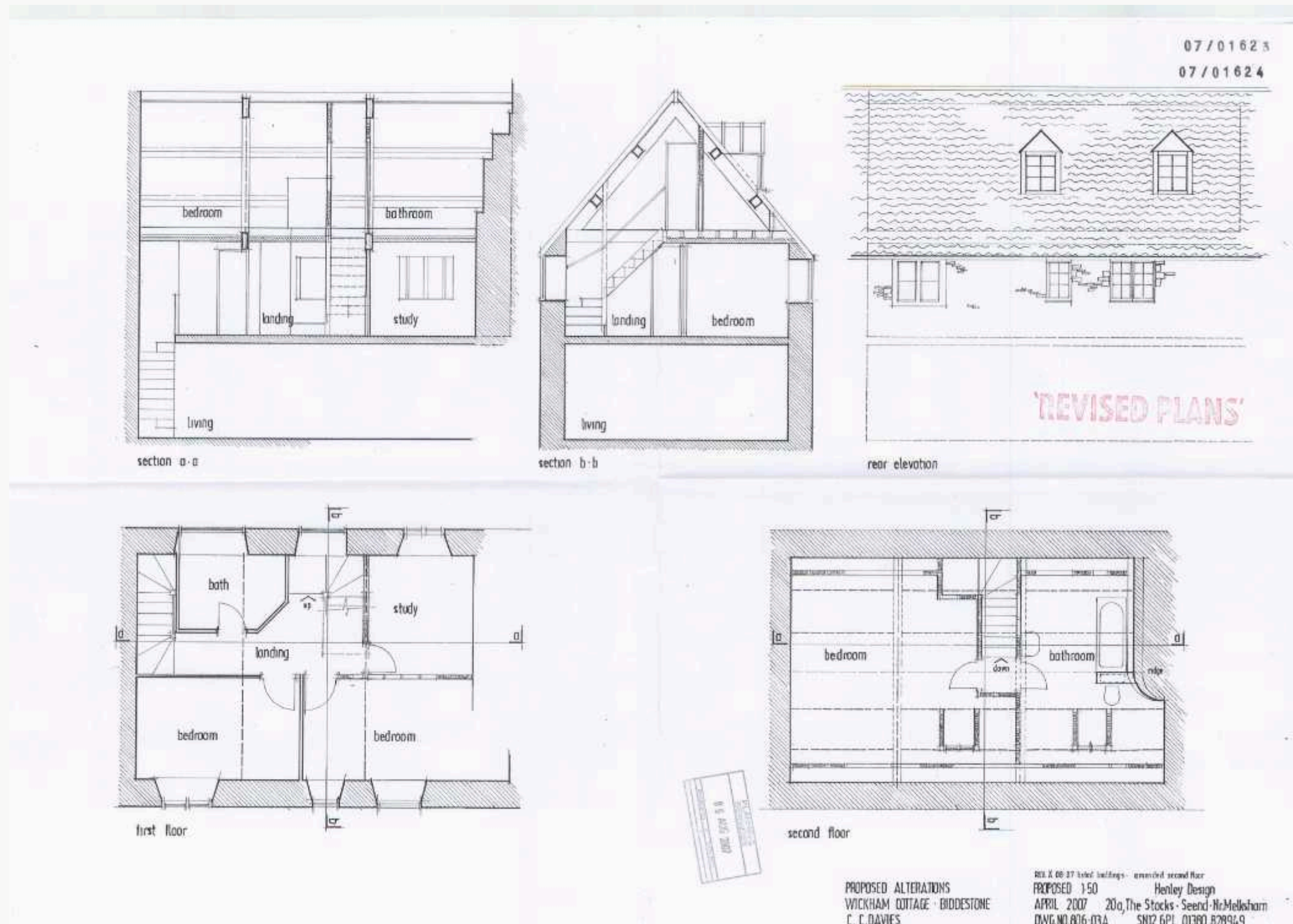




07

# Appendices

# Appendix A



**N/07/01624/FUL**

**N/07/01623/LBC**

The proposed plans already approved and built in 2007.

# Appendix B

Historic  
England  
List Entry  
1022839

WICKHAM COTTAGE,,BIDDESTONE THE GREEN, ST 8673, (south side), 9/54 Wickham Cottage, (formerly listed as part of 3 cottages east of the Malt House), 20.12.60

GV II

House, early C18, rubble stone with stone tiled roof and east end stack. 2 storey, 3-window range of recessed hollow chamfer mullion windows. Two 2-light and one 3-light upper windows, centre and 3-light windows renewed. To ground floor 3-light and 2-light window under continuous hoodmould, door in moulded flush doorcase with hood on brackets and renewed casement with timber lintel. Small paned windows mostly renewed. Old photographs show two 2-light upper windows, with blank panel between.

List Entry: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1022839?section=official-list-entry>

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