

## ~ WESTHOUSE FARM ~

HENFIELD ROAD, ALBOURNE, HASSOCKS, WEST SUSSEX, BN6 9DE

*External and internal alterations and general repair and conservation works to main house. Construction of rear single-storey extension.  
Removal and replacement of outbuilding with carport.*

## DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT INCORPORATING HERITAGE STATEMENT



Prepared by Roberto Prieto-Labrador MA, PCIfA ~ Reviewed by Ben Kirk MSc, IHBC

November 2025



ABOUT MANORWOOD

Manorwood is a small team of historic building professionals with varied skills across different areas of the historic environment.

This report has been prepared by Senior Historic Building Consultant and Researcher Roberto Prieto-Labrador and reviewed by Director Ben Kirk

Roberto holds a MA in English Building History, awarded with Distinction by the University of York. His field of expertise is domestic vernacular architecture, specialised in material culture and domestic life during the late medieval and early modern periods.

Roberto is a Practitioner member of the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists (PCIfA), as well as an Affiliate member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC). He is also a member of The Domestic Buildings Research Group (DBRG) and the Wealden Buildings Study Group (WBSG).

As a Senior Historic Building Consultant and Researcher at Manorwood, Roberto is responsible for in depth research into building records, mapping, and physical evidence to help inform proposals and for preparing Heritage Statements and Statements of Significance to support applications for alteration or redevelopment of historic buildings and areas, as well as surveying and recording historic buildings.

Ben holds an MSc in Timber Building Conservation, completed at the Weald and Downland Museum, and validated by Bournemouth University, and is a full member of the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) and a recognised Historic Environment Service provider under the well-established HESPR scheme.

Ben is a member of various groups including the Vernacular Architecture Group (VAG), the Domestic Buildings Research Group (DBRG), and the Wealden Buildings Study Group (WBSG).

Ben has been actively working in the historic environment industry for 15 years on numerous heritage asset projects which include surveying of historic buildings (both domestic and agricultural), preparation of schedules of works and detailing of repairs. Ben oversees numerous applications for Planning permission and Listed Building Consent and has built solid working relationships with Conservation Officers at a number of Authorities across the South East.

As a company Director at Manorwood, Ben has overseen works to historic buildings carried out by a skilled network of sub-contractors including the timber restoration at Charleston Farm barns in Firle and the re-erection of historic buildings at the Weald and Downland Living Museum near Chichester, both which received awards from the Sussex Heritage Trust.

As a company Manorwood have provided various historic environment services to a number of Country Estates across the South East including the Lydhurst Estate, the Borde Hill Estate, the West Dean Estate and a number of projects on the Wiston Estate where Manorwood continue to provide consultancy advice on redevelopment and reuse of various areas.

Most recently Manorwood completed the sensitive restoration and conversion of the magnificent 15<sup>th</sup> century barn for Nyetimber Vineyards in West Sussex.



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## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Roberto Prieto-Labrador MA, PCIfA on behalf of Manorwood to accompany an application relating to a proposal at Westhouse Farm, Albourne.
- 1.2 Westhouse Farm is a historic farmstead comprising a group of former agricultural buildings located at the end of a driveway on the west side of Henfield Road, approximately half a mile to the north-west of Albourne, West Sussex.
- 1.3 The group includes a Grade II Listed farmhouse of 17<sup>th</sup> century origin, a Grade II Listed 17<sup>th</sup> century barn, a late 18<sup>th</sup> century stable building, and a group of 20<sup>th</sup> century agricultural and storage structures.
- 1.4 The farmhouse has suffered significant decay due to a prolonged lack of maintenance. It is now in need of repair, along with upgrading works to ensure its long-term preservation and usability as a modern residential dwelling.
- 1.5 The property is in the process of being acquired by the applicants, who are keen to make the investment necessary to carry out essential repair works to the historic buildings on site, whilst also providing them with viable new uses to ensure their continued longevity.
- 1.6 This report has been prepared to support a revised application for the alterations proposed to the farmhouse (including the construction of a single-storey extension), as well as the replacement of the existing outbuilding with a new carport.
- 1.7 This version supersedes the earlier Heritage Statement dated April 2025 and has been comprehensively revised following pre-application discussions (DM/25/1043) and detailed feedback received from Mid Sussex District Council's Conservation Officer in July 2025. It incorporates updated measured drawings (November 2025), a full interpretative analysis of the farmhouse and its evolution, and a revised scheme that responds directly to the conservation advice received.
- 1.8 The purpose of this document is to:
- Describe the historical and architectural significance of the building and its setting.
  - Assess the impact of the proposed works on that significance.
  - Demonstrate that the proposals preserve and enhance the character, appearance and setting of the heritage asset.
  - Explain how the scheme has evolved in direct response to conservation advice and policy.
- 1.9 The revised design reduces the size of the new rear extension, as well as the size of the new en-suite in bedroom and rationalises the alterations to the first floor layout. The new carport has been reduced in scale and re-positioned on the location of the outbuilding to be replaced. The approach has been guided by Historic England's publications Making Changes to Heritage Assets (HEAG023), The Setting of Heritage Assets (GPA 3), Conservation Principles (2008), and the Energy Efficiency and Historic Buildings (HEAG014).



*Location of Westhouse Farm.*

- 1.10 This Heritage Statement should therefore be read alongside the updated drawings (refs. 2412WE\_001 - 203), which together form a coordinated response to the Conservation Officer's comments.
- 1.11 Historic maps has been consulted to better understand the development of the site and the Conservation Area. The maps are included in Section 4 of this report.
- 1.12 This Heritage Statement also includes a Significance Assessment, which identifies the relative heritage value of the identified heritage assets (i.e., the historic buildings on site). It also includes an Impact Assessment, which evaluates the potential effect of the proposed scheme on the significance of the heritage asset, including the contribution made by its setting. This approach to impact assessment is required to comply with the provisions of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024), and the requirements of the Local Planning Authority.
- 1.13 The relevant Historic Environment Record (HER) has also been consulted in the preparation of this report, in accordance with paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024).

## 2 HERITAGE ASSETS AND DESIGNATIONS

- 2.1 Westhouse Farm comprises two statutory Listed Buildings designated in May 1983. The listing reads:

### **WEST HOUSE FARMHOUSE**

**Location** Albourne, West Sussex, BN6 9DE

**District** Mid Sussex (District Authority)

**Date Listed** 11<sup>th</sup> Mat 1983

**List Entry No** 1025825

**Grade** II

**Description** Late C18 or early C19. Two storeys. Three windows. Red bricks. Tiled roof. Glazing bars intact. Doorway with projecting cornice and panel over this and door of 6 fielded panels.

### **BARN TO THE SOUTH OF WEST HOUSE FARMHOUSE**

**Location** Albourne, West Sussex, BN6 9DE

**District** Mid Sussex (District Authority)

**Date Listed** 11<sup>th</sup> Mat 1983

**List Entry No** 1354799

**Grade** II

**Description** C18 Faced with weather-boarding. Hipped tiled roof.

### **CONSERVATION AREAS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL NOTIFICATION AREA (ANA)**

- 2.2 Westhouse Farm is not located within the boundaries of any Conservation Area and/or Archaeological Notification Area (ANA).



*Grade II Listed West House Farmhouse*



*Grade II Listed barn to the south of West House Farmhouse*



*Heritage Assets at Westhouse Farm.*

## **CURTILAGE LISTED**

- 2.3 According to the advice note *Listed Buildings and Curtilage* published by Historic England in 2018, the law provides that buildings and other structures that pre-date July 1948 and are within the curtilage of a listed building are to be treated as part of the listed building. Historic England's advice note gives hypothetical examples to assist in the assessment as to whether a building within the curtilage of a statutory listed building should be deemed to be part of the listing.
- 2.4 The historic stables building to the northwest of the listed barn and southwest of the listed farmhouse is not a statutory listed building in its own right. It is clear, however, that the stables building was constructed before 1948 and associated in use and ownership to the Grade II Listed barn and farmhouse and their setting. The stables building, therefore, forms part of the listing and is considered to be "curtilage listed".

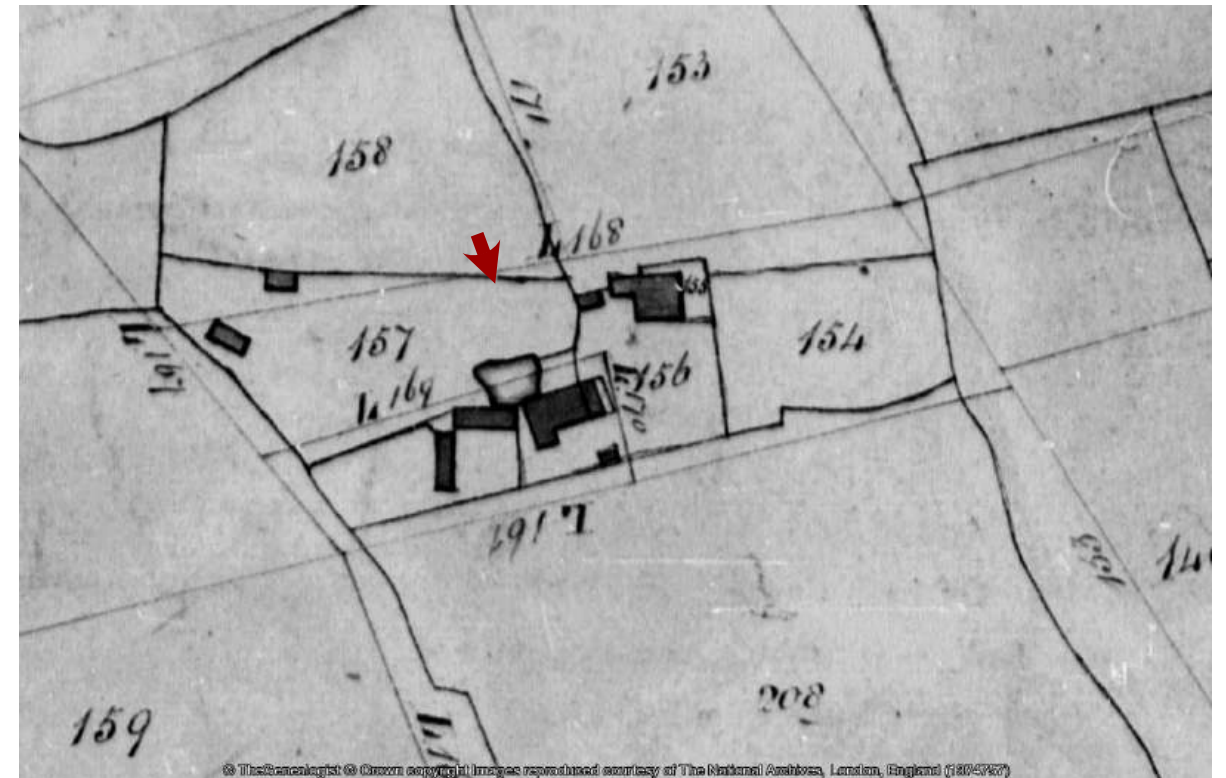
### 3 PROPOSALS

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- 3.1 The proposal comprises the construction of a single storey extension to the rear of the farmhouse, internal alterations to the ground and first floor layout, and the replacement of a modern outbuilding with a new carport.
- 3.2 The scheme has been revised following the Conservation Officer's pre-application advice received in July 2025. The rear extension has been reduced in both width and depth to preserve the external expression of the rear chimney stack, and the extent of internal subdivision at first floor has been rationalised. The proposed carport has been re-positioned within the historic curtilage and reduced in scale to reflect the footprint of the modern outbuilding it replaces.
- 3.3 The works also include the replacement of non-original uPVC windows with sympathetic double-glazed slim-profile timber casements, conservation-led repair of historic timber windows, re-pointing in lime mortar, reinstatement of traditional lime plaster finishes internally, and repair works to chimneys and roofs using appropriate materials.
- 3.4 The revised proposals have been developed through a heritage-led approach, respecting the historic form and fabric of the building, and ensuring that any new additions are discreet, legible, and reversible. The replacement carport has been designed to preserve key views within the farmstead and to maintain the historic relationship between the farmhouse and its associated buildings.
- 3.5 Further details of the proposed works are contained within the accompanying plans and drawings, which should be read in conjunction with this report.
- 3.6 The works and their potential impact on the heritage significance of the building and its setting are discussed further in Section 6 of this report.

## 4 HISTORIC CONTEXT

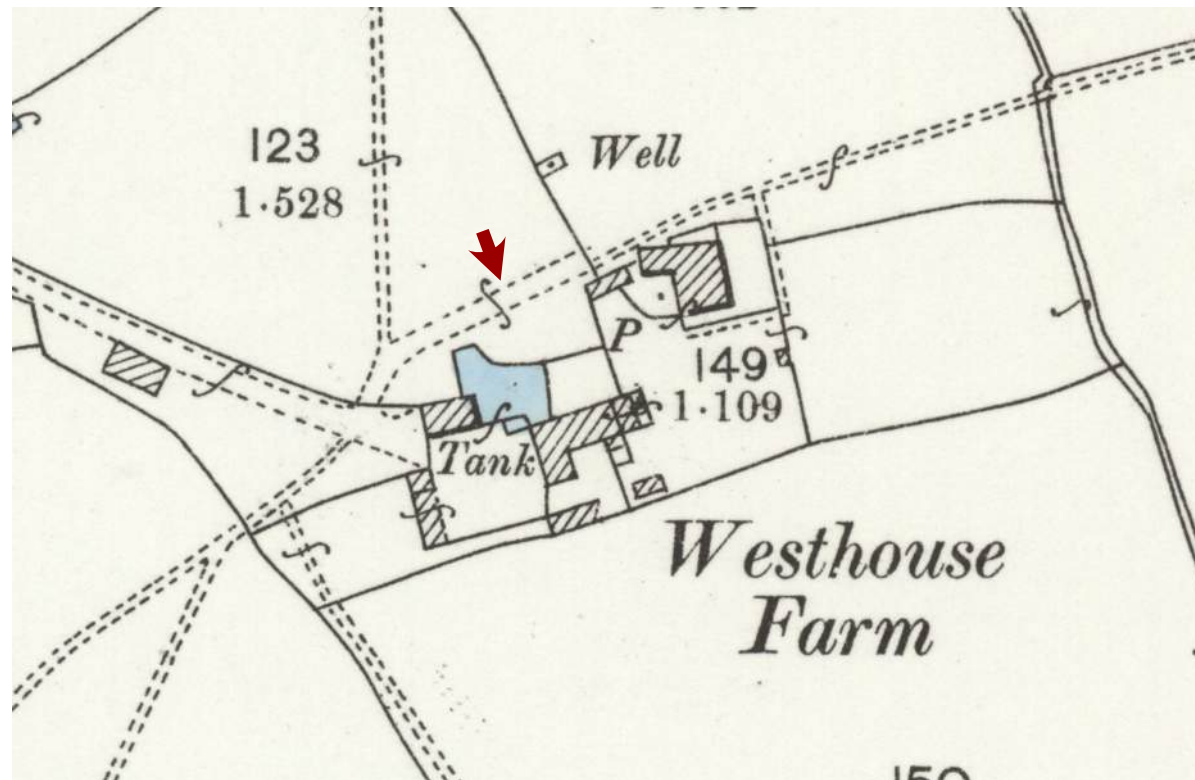
- 4.1 The earliest reference identified in connection with Westhouse Farm during the preparation of this report appears in the land tax assessment for the parish of Albourne, dated 1781. The document records a Mrs Michael as the owner of the property, which was tenanted at the time by a John Emery.
- 5.2 No earlier documentary evidence relating to the farmstead has been identified during the preparation of this report. However, physical evidence observed on site suggests that the complex has existed since at least the 17<sup>th</sup> century.
- 5.3 In its present form, the site comprises a medium-sized farmstead, with the agricultural buildings arranged around two open farmyards. Immediately to the north-east of the yards stands the farmhouse which, at first glance—and as noted in Historic England’s listing description—appears to date from the late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, a survey of the farmhouse undertaken by Manorwood has established that the building originally dates from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century or early 18<sup>th</sup> century. This assessment is supported by the presence of a clasped purlin roof structure with raking struts and off-centre bridging beams decorated with run-out chamfer stops on the ground floor of the building. The original form of the house remains legible despite later alterations: it was a single-pile building with side chimneys and possibly featured a lean-to across the rear elevation.
- 5.4 The farmhouse was significantly altered and extended during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, achieving its current double-piled gentrified form. The single-storey rear extension also dates from this period. An inspection of the loft above this structure revealed that the roof timbers are heavily sooted, suggesting some form of service-related activity once took place here—possibly a brewhouse or washhouse.
- 5.5 To the south-west of the farmhouse stands the historic barn, which appears to be contemporary with the original phase of the farmhouse (mid- to late 17<sup>th</sup> century). Tar marks visible on the rafters indicate that the barn was originally thatched. Early maps of the farm depict two additional structures flanking the barn—possibly cattle shelters—which enclosed the easternmost of the two farmyards. These ancillary buildings no longer survive.
- 5.6 The western farmyard lay adjacent to the barn. The existing historic stable building forms the northern boundary of this yard. It is constructed of flint with brick quoins and dressings and features attractive timber trusses with raking struts. Evidence of former mangers is visible along the interior walls. The building appears to have survived in a relatively intact condition, although there is clear evidence that the original fenestration has been altered, particularly in relation to the width of the doorways.
- 5.7 An open-fronted structure once stood along the western side of the yard, possibly serving as a cowshed or cart shed. This building was replaced in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century by the existing stable building, which is constructed of breeze blocks.
- 5.8 The remainder of the existing agricultural and storage buildings on site date from the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These were constructed following the demolition of the historic outbuildings seen on early maps, which were lost after 1956.



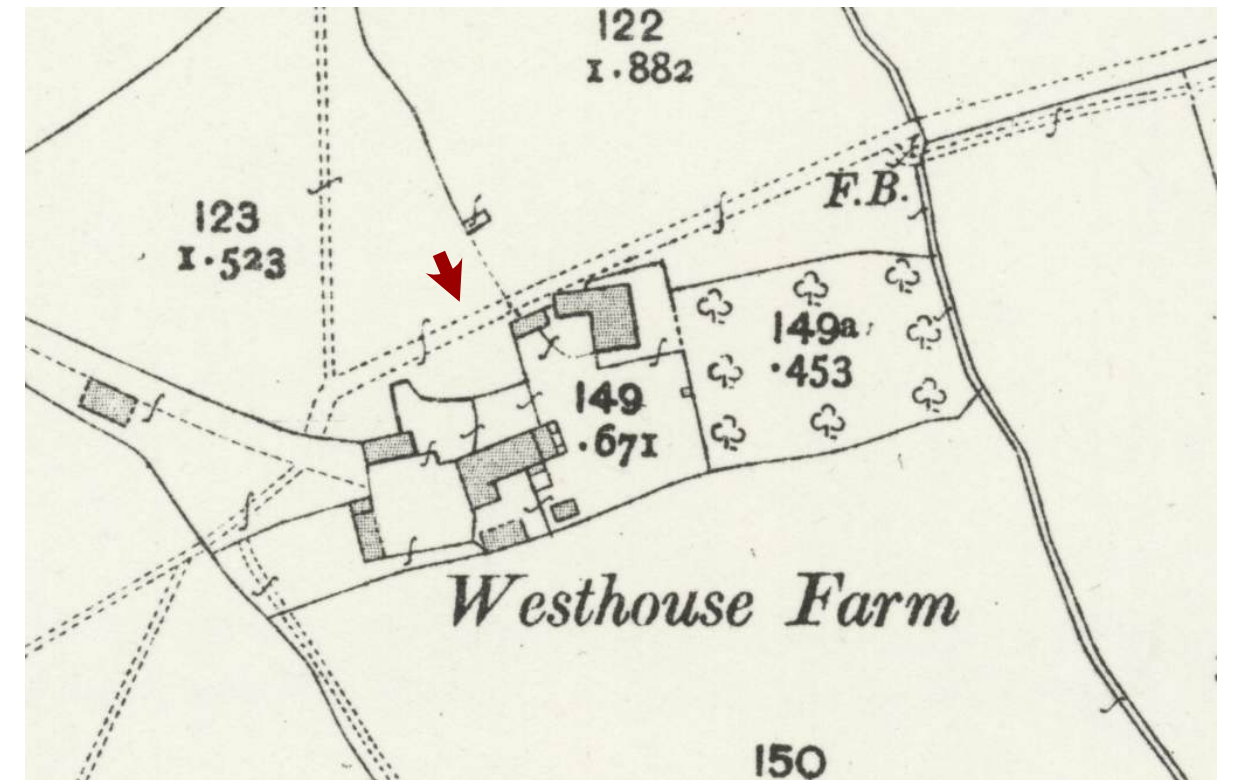
Detail of Tithe Map showing Westhouse Farm, 1838 (TheGenealogist).



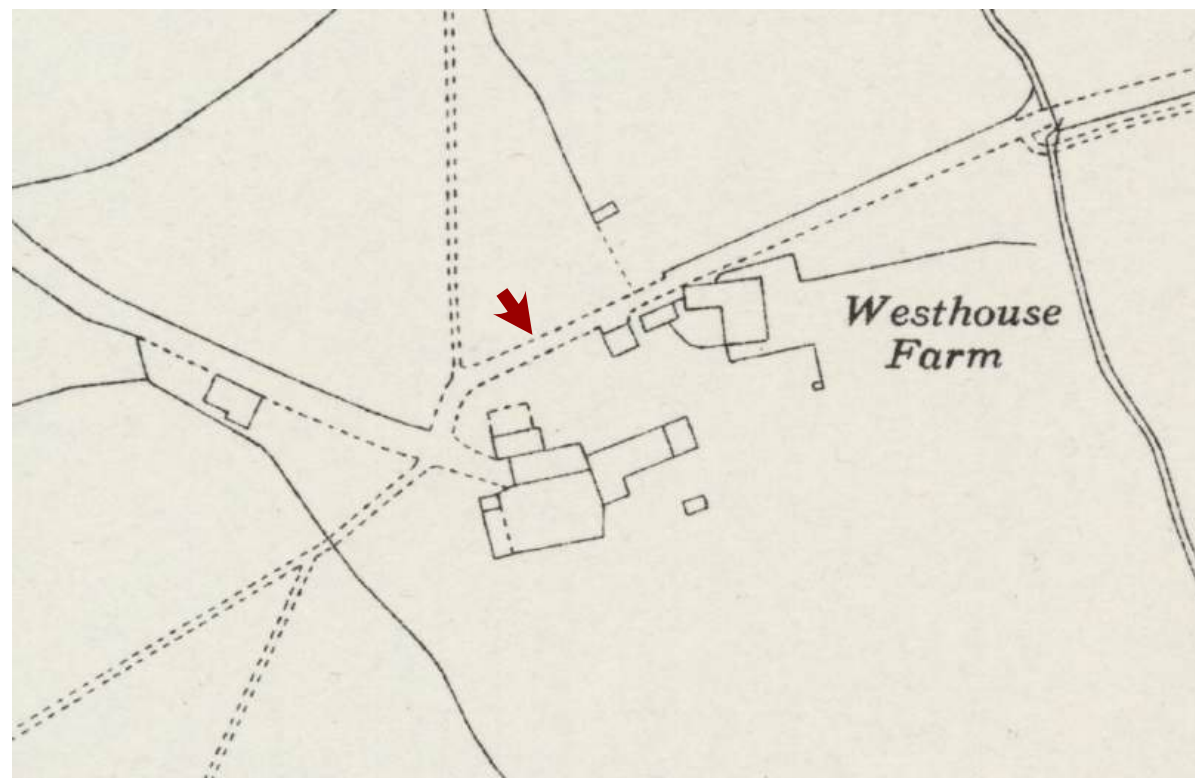
Detail of Ordnance Survey showing Westhouse Farm, 1874 (National Library of Scotland).



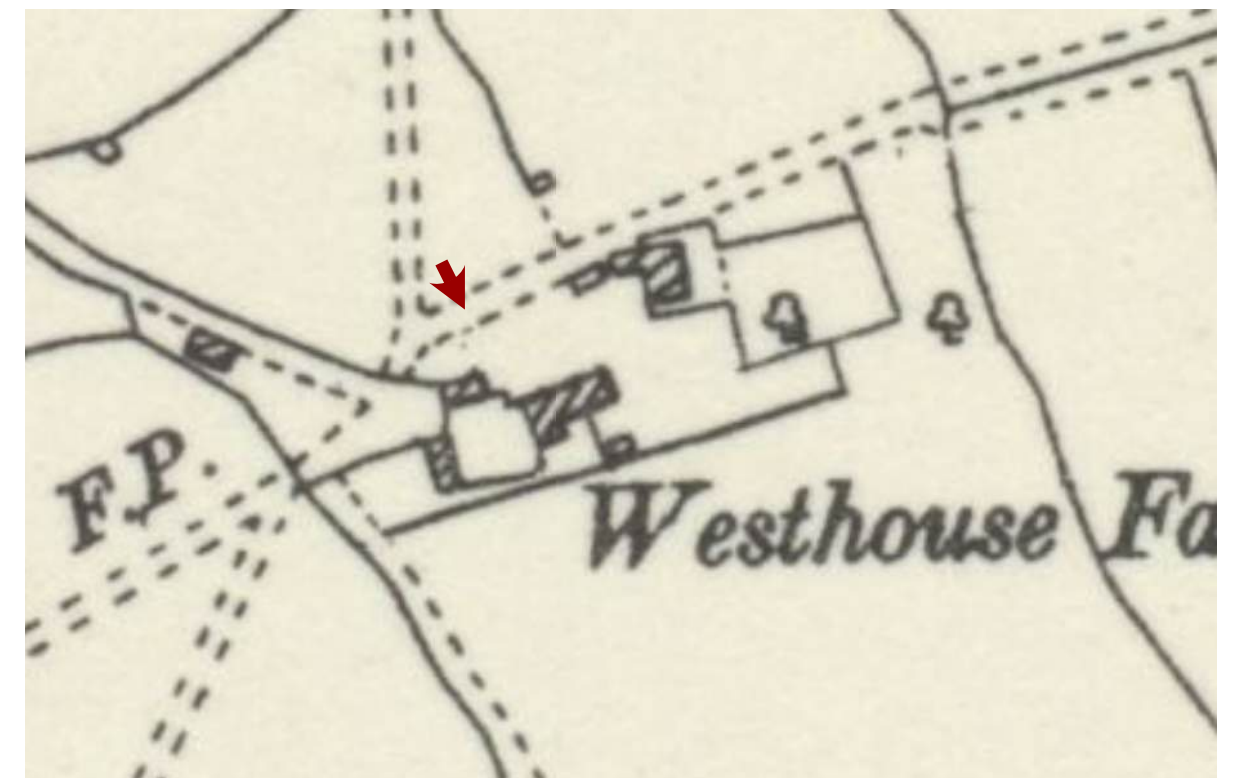
Detail of Ordnance Survey showing Westhouse Farm, 1896 (National Library of Scotland).



Detail of Ordnance Survey showing Westhouse Farm, 1939 (National Library of Scotland).



Detail of Ordnance Survey showing Westhouse Farm, 1938 (National Library of Scotland).



Detail of Ordnance Survey showing Westhouse Farm, 1947 (National Library of Scotland).



*Detail of Ordnance Survey showing Westhouse Farm, 1956 (National Library of Scotland).*



*Satellite view of Westhouse Farm, 2022 (© Google Earth).*

## 5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATIVE SURVEY

- 5.1 An archaeological interpretative survey was undertaken to assess the evidential value, constructional development, and phasing of the Farmhouse situated to the eastern edge of Westhouse Farm. The survey aimed to elucidate the building's chronological development, identify surviving historic fabric, and interpret its evolution within the broader context of post-medieval agricultural practice in the Low Weald.
- 5.2 The survey was carried out through direct visual inspection of accessible elements, photographic recording, and analytical observation of the carpentry, joinery, and fabric in accordance with *Historic England's Understanding Historic Buildings* (2016). No intrusive investigation was undertaken.

### FARMHOUSE

#### Description

- 5.3 The farmhouse is a two-storey dwelling, now presenting externally as a polite Georgian house but retaining a substantially earlier core. The principal elevation faces east and is organised as a balanced 3-bay front with a central doorway and flanking sash windows, set beneath a steeply pitched clay-tiled roof. Substantial brick chimney stacks rise from both gable ends. To the rear, a pair of two-storey brick wings project westwards from the main range, squaring the footprint of the building, whilst a later single-storey hipped extension is attached to the north-west, forming a low ancillary range with its own clay-tiled roof.
- 5.4 The east elevation is of red brick laid in an essentially Flemish bond, with rubbed brick flat arches above the window openings and brick dressings forming simple jambs. The five evenly spaced sash windows, four of which with a sixteen-pane arrangement and one with twelve panes, are set within boxed frames and largely date to the late 18th or early 19th century, although some elements have been repaired or renewed. The central entrance doorway is framed by a simple classical surround and overlight, giving the façade an ordered and modestly genteel character. Extensive climber growth obscures most of the brickwork in this elevation preventing a deeper interpretation of the brickwork.
- 5.5 The side and rear elevations reveal more of the building's structural complexity. The brickwork here is slightly less regular in bonding and colour than that of the principal front, and it is laid on English bond indicating rationalisation of material display. Overall, the side and rear elevations are constructed in brick of a comparable character and date to the front elevation, though with a more functional treatment. Window openings to these elevations are fewer and simpler, some with flat brick arches, others with segmental heads, consistent with their subsidiary status as service and secondary spaces.
- 5.6 The single-storey extension attached to the north-west corner is a low, hipped-roof structure built in brick on a shallow plinth with a dentil detail in the uppermost brick course. Its roof is covered with handmade clay tiles, and internally the roof structure is heavily smoke-blackened. The rafters themselves are relatively small, irregularly spaced and largely hand-sawn, with pegged collars to clasped purlins. The even deposition of soot across the whole underside of the roof, rather than in a concentrated plume, is a key characteristic of this range and provides important evidence for its original function. The extension is lit by wide, narrow windows with multiple small panes to the south and by larger openings to the north; access is via a planked door in the west wall leading from the rear yard.



*East (front) elevation of the farmhouse.*



*West elevation of the farmhouse*



*South elevation of the farmhouse.*



*North elevation of the farmhouse.*

- 5.7 Internally, the main range retains a number elements of its earlier timber construction. At first-floor level, in the stair hall within the rear wings exposed oak studs, mid-rails, and diagonal tension braces survive, all displaying adze and hand-sawn conversion marks and irregular scantlings indicative of late 17th or very early 18th-century carpentry. The first-floor ceilings include substantial chamfered bridging beams and closely-spaced common joists. Nonetheless, these elements display a number of empty mortices which suggest they are reclaimed, possibly from the original core of the house, when it was refronted. Within the main range, plaster finishes and linings conceal most of the ceiling timbers, which only display bridging beams with run-out chamfer stops, although the dimensions of the rooms, the positions of the chimney breasts and the bridging beams with respect of the present layout support the interpretation of a two-cell plan with end chimneys from the outset.
- 5.8 The ground-floor finishes are mixed. In circulation spaces and service zones there are areas of brick paving laid in stretcher courses, likely of 18th or early 19th-century date and characteristic of domestic service floors within farmhouses. In the principal rooms, timber floorboards survive beneath modern coverings, some appearing to be wide, possibly 18th-century boards, others later replacements. Internal doors are largely of four-panel type with relatively simple mouldings, most consistent with late 18th to 19th-century joinery; a small number of plank doors survive to service spaces, attesting to earlier, more utilitarian fittings. Skirtings, dados and picture rails reflect 19th and 20th-century decorative schemes, adding to the cumulative evidence of layered occupation.
- 5.9 The roof structure over the main south range comprises early, hand-converted common rafters of oak or similar hardwood, pegged at the ridge and resting on substantial wall plates. The rafters are uneven in section and show axe and adze marks, and the spacing is slightly irregular, all of which is characteristic of pre-industrial framing. The form displays a series of common rafters with collars and clasped purlins rather than a sophisticated truss system; nevertheless, the relationship between rafters, wall plates and chimneys indicates that this roof belongs to the first structural phase of the building. By contrast, the roof structures over the two-storey rear wings are of lighter, more regular, machine-sawn timber, with nailed joints and softwood struts, indicating replacement or re-roofing in the Victorian period, even though the walls they cover belong to the earlier late 18th-century expansion of the house.

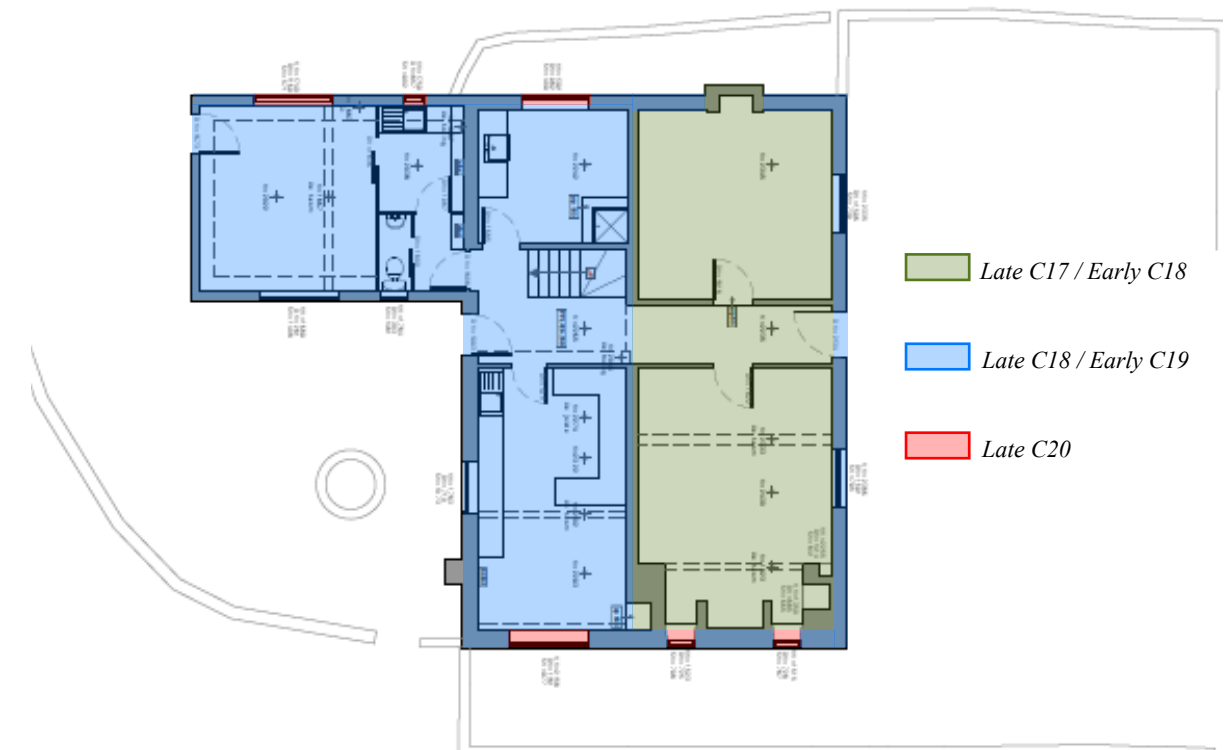
## Phasing and Development

### Phase 1 – Late 17<sup>th</sup> century to Early 18<sup>th</sup> century

- 5.10 The earliest phase of the building is represented by a two-storey, end-chimney timber-framed house aligned north-south, occupying the footprint of the present main range. Diagnostic evidence for this phase includes the roof structure over the main range with exposed internal studwork and braces at first-floor level, the substantial hand-hewn ceiling joists and bridging beams, and the early common rafters over the main range. The presence of end chimneys, rather than a central stack, indicates that the house was conceived from the outset as a more modern, post-medieval dwelling rather than a converted hall house. It is likely to have comprised two principal ground-floor rooms, both heated by the end stacks, with corresponding chambers above and a stair either squeezed between the rooms or placed within one of them. This configuration accords with the emerging late 17<sup>th</sup> century tradition of compact, two-room houses occupied by the wealthier strata of the rural middling sort in the Low Weald.

### Phase 2 – Late 18<sup>th</sup> century to Early 19<sup>th</sup> century

- 5.11 During the later 18<sup>th</sup> or very early 19<sup>th</sup> century the farmhouse underwent a significant episode of gentrification and expansion. In this phase the external framing was entirely replaced with brick to create the polite Georgian façade seen today. At the same time the two-storey brick wings were added to the rear, projecting northwards to establish a double pile plan. The brickwork of the wings, their bonding and the form of their openings correspond closely with that of the front elevation, and there is no observable structural joint or differential settlement to suggest a later addition. The combined evidence strongly supports the interpretation that the refronting and the construction of the rear wings formed a single coherent campaign of improvement.
- 5.12 Functionally, this phase involved not only a change in external appearance but also a re-ordering of the internal plan. The refacing allowed the creation of a central entrance hallway aligned with the principal façade, giving access to flanking reception rooms which now read as a pair of parlours or a parlour and dining room. The new rear wings provided additional accommodation, likely kitchen and service rooms at ground-floor level with chambers or servants' rooms above, thereby moving the principal cooking and domestic work further away from the polite front rooms. The construction of these wings also reflects broader trends in the later 18<sup>th</sup> century, when prosperous farming families increasingly adopted gentrified spatial arrangements and embraced the hierarchy between front and back regions of the house.
- 5.13 The single-storey hipped extension to the northwest appears to follow closely upon the gentrifying phase, and may be broadly contemporary with, or slightly later than, the addition of the rear wings. Its brickwork and roof covering are compatible with a late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century date. The key diagnostic feature is the extensive smoke-blackening of the roof structure. The soot is evenly distributed over the interior face of the roof rather than focused around a chimney flue, strongly suggesting that the space once accommodated an open copper or unflued hearth used for boiling rather than domestic heating.



*Construction phases of Westhouse Farmhouse.*



*Original late C17/early C18 inglenook and detail of run-out chamfer stop decorating the lintel.*



*Detail of bridging beam displaying run-out chamfer stop and awkward location of later inserted sash in relationship with earlier bridging beam.*



*Roof structure over main range.*

- 5.14 In the context of a gentrified farmhouse of this date, such a space is most convincingly interpreted as a brewhouse and washhouse range, providing facilities for brewing, laundry and possibly other scalding or boiling processes. The low eaves, robust brick floor and relatively utilitarian windows, particularly the long narrow windows use for ventilation, reinforce this reading. The provision of a dedicated brewhouse or washhouse separate from the main kitchen is a familiar feature of more substantial late 18th and early 19<sup>th</sup> century farmhouses, and the survival of the smoke-blackened roof is therefore of considerable evidential interest.

#### Phase 3 – Late 19<sup>th</sup> century

- 5.15 During the 19th century the roofs over the two-storey rear wings were renewed, perhaps in response to decay or to permit re-tiling. The replacement sections of the structure employs machine-sawn timbers, nailed junctions and softwood components, clearly differentiating it from the earlier roof of the main range. This work may have coincided with other internal improvements, such as the introduction or upgrading of four-panel doors, refinements to staircase joinery, and localised adjustments to room subdivisions to meet contemporary expectations of comfort and privacy.

#### Phase 4 – 20<sup>th</sup> century

- 5.16 The most recent phase of the building's development has been characterised by comparatively modest repair and adaptation. This includes the insertion of electrical wiring and plumbing, the laying of bituminous felt beneath roof tiles, piecemeal replacement of decayed floorboards, and the introduction of modern finishes and fittings. Although these interventions have in places obscured earlier surfaces, they have generally respected the principal structural elements and have not substantially compromised the legibility of the earlier phases.

#### **Interpretation and Function**

- 5.17 The farmhouse originated as a relatively compact, end-chimney, timber-framed dwelling of the later 17th or very early 18th century, representing the aspirations of a rural family situated towards the upper end of the local social spectrum. Its plan, with two heated ground-floor rooms and corresponding chambers above, belongs firmly to the post-medieval tradition of framed houses that had abandoned the open hall but had not yet adopted the full Georgian language of brick classicism.
- 5.18 The late 18th- to early 19th-century gentrification, in which the front elevation was encased in brick and the rear wings were added, marks a decisive shift both in architectural expression and in domestic arrangement. Externally, the house was recast as a polite Georgian farmhouse, signalling prosperity and alignment with contemporary taste. Internally, the creation of a central hall, the enhancement of the front rooms and the provision of additional service accommodation in the rear wings reflect evolving notions of privacy, comfort and work segregation.

- 5.19 The addition of the single-storey brewhouse or washhouse extension forms an integral part of this process of improvement. It demonstrates the increasing specialisation of domestic service spaces and the desire to remove hot, dirty, or noisy activities from the principal rooms of the house. The survival of its sooted roof structure offers tangible evidence for historic brewing and laundry practices and links the building to wider patterns of domestic economy in the period.
- 5.20 Later 19th-century re-roofing and minor internal adjustments illustrate the ongoing maintenance and incremental modernisation of the property without fundamentally altering the spatial hierarchy established in the Georgian period. Twentieth-century repairs and services have ensured continued occupation but, owing to their relatively light-touch nature, have left the key architectural and archaeological evidence largely intact.

#### Significance

- 5.21 The farmhouse possesses considerable evidential significance as a well-preserved example of a late 17th- or early 18th-century timber-framed dwelling that was substantially gentrified and expanded in the late 18th or early 19th century. The survival of its early internal frame, of the pre-industrial roof over the main range, and of the smoke-blackened roof within the brewhouse or washhouse extension together provide a rich body of material evidence for the study of domestic architecture and household practice in the Low Weald across more than three centuries.
- 5.22 Historically, the building encapsulates the trajectory of a middling rural household whose rising prosperity found architectural expression first in the construction of a framed end-chimney house and later in the adoption of Georgian brick classicism and specialised service accommodation. Its phased development charts broader social and economic shifts, including the refinement of domestic space, the growth of service functions and the increasing separation of work and display within the home.
- 5.23 Architecturally, the contrast between the timber-framed core, the polite brick front, the more functional rear wings and the low, heavily sooted brewhouse range creates a legible palimpsest of constructional episodes. The building's external presence as a symmetrical Georgian farmhouse, set against the survival of earlier fabric within, enhances its interest and demonstrates the interplay between appearance and structure in vernacular gentrification.
- 5.24 In terms of group value, the farmhouse contributes strongly to the character of the wider farmstead and its landscape setting. Taken together, the house and its ancillary ranges offer a valuable case study in the adaptation of rural domestic architecture to changing agricultural and social conditions in the Low Weald and represent a significant asset for understanding the historic development of the local area.



*Detail of roof structure over main range. Note the presence of carpenter marks.*



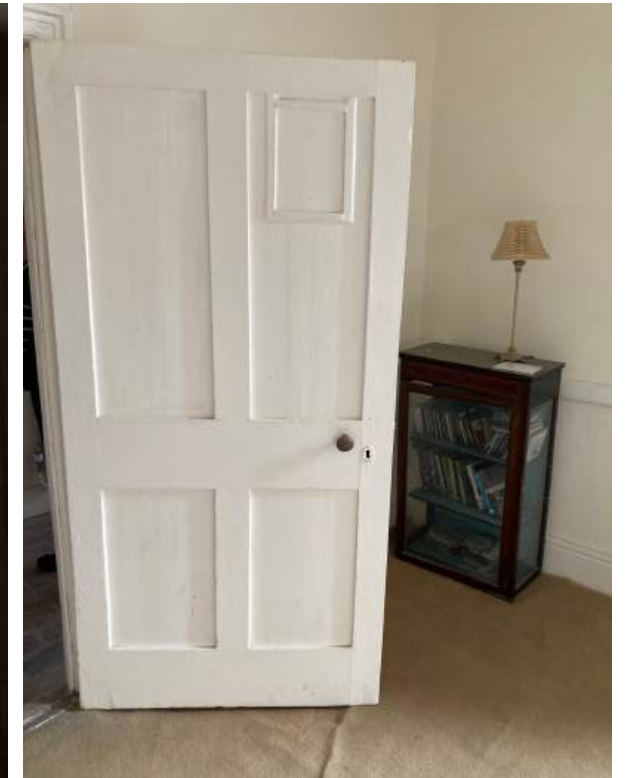
*Timber-framed partition and exposed joists and bridging beam within rear wings.*



*Roof structure over rear wings.*



*Example of surviving Georgian sash and panelled door.*



*Former brewhouse/washhouse. Note the ventilation windows.*



*Sooted roof structure over former brewhouse/washhouse.*

- 6.1 The following section is an assessment of the significance of Westhouse Farm according to the The planning policy requires an applicant to provide an assessment of the significance of any heritage assets affected by a development proposal.
- 6.2 Significance (for heritage policy), as defined in the NPPF (Annex 2: Glossary), is used to describe the heritage interest of an asset to this and future generations. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence but also from its setting.
- 6.3 The setting of a heritage asset is the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed, can extend beyond the asset's curtilage, 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 (NPPF, Annex 2: Glossary).
- 6.4 The NPPF introduced the concept of interests to assess the significance of heritage assets, and the PPG (Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 18a-006-20190723) provides interpretation. These interests are also set out in Historic England guidance (*Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets*, Historic England Advice Note 12, 2019), which echoes the definitions set out in national policy and guidance on the historic environment:
- **Archaeological interest:** there will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.
  - **Architectural and artistic interest:** these are interests in the design and general aesthetics of a place. They can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from the way the heritage asset has evolved. More specifically, architectural interest is an interest in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship, and decoration of buildings and structures of all types. Artistic interest is an interest in other human creative skills, like sculpture.
  - **Historic interest:** an interest in past lives and events (including pre-historic). Heritage assets can illustrate or be associated with them. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.
- 6.5 The above criteria reflect NPPF terminology and previous Historic England guidance (*Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance*, English Heritage, 2008), which proposed values to assess heritage significance (Evidential, Historical, Aesthetic, Communal).
- 6.6 This assessment of significance has been used to inform the proposals in order to minimise impact on the special interest of the listed building, and, where possible, to take opportunities to enhance its special interest.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTEREST

- 6.7 A heritage asset will hold archaeological interest if it contains, or has the potential to contain, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation.
- 6.8 Westhouse Farm possesses moderate to high archaeological interest, arising from both the physical survival of its standing historic buildings and the potential for below-ground remains associated with at least 17<sup>th</sup> century agricultural occupation. Although the earliest documentary reference identified is the 1781 land tax assessment (naming Mrs Michael as owner and John Emery as tenant), the fabric of the farmhouse and barn demonstrates a significantly earlier origin.
- 6.9 The farmhouse retains extensive evidence of its original late 17<sup>th</sup> or early 18<sup>th</sup> century construction. Early features include a clasped-purlin roof with raking struts, hand-converted common rafters, off-centre chamfered bridging beams with run-out stops, exposed timber studs and tension braces at first-floor level, and reclaimed structural members with empty mortices. These offer a highly valuable archaeological record of post-medieval domestic carpentry in the Low Weald.
- 6.10 The barn, which appears broadly contemporary with the earliest phase of the farmhouse, contains tar-marked rafters confirming an original thatched covering and retains early structural fabric consistent with 17<sup>th</sup> century agricultural construction. Such material provides evidence for building technologies, roofing practices, and the organisation of mixed farming during the early post-medieval period.
- 6.11 The flint-and-brick stable block also contributes meaningfully to archaeological interest through its largely intact roof trusses, surviving mangers and evidence of altered door openings. These features provide insight into historic husbandry practices and the functional operation of a medium-sized Wealden farmstead.
- 6.12 Early maps show now-lost outbuildings flanking the eastern farmyard, likely cattle or cart sheds. Their demolition after the mid-20th century suggests buried foundations or surfaces may survive.
- 6.13 Later 20th-century structures possess negligible archaeological interest.
- 6.14 Overall, Westhouse Farm represents an archaeologically rich multi-phased farmstead, retaining rare and legible evidence for rural domestic and agricultural life from the 17th century onward.

## ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST

- 6.15 Architectural interest arises from design, craftsmanship, materials, and construction, whether the result of conscious design or vernacular evolution.
- 6.16 Westhouse Farm possesses high architectural interest as a coherent and well-preserved traditional farmstead demonstrating sustained development from the 17th century onwards. The farmhouse is architecturally significant for the survival of its late 17th or early 18th century timber-framed core, including substantial hand-converted common rafters, chamfer-stopped bridging beams and a clasped-purlin roof structure characteristic of post-medieval domestic construction in the Low Weald. Despite later concealment, the internal fabric preserves a clear and legible sequence of structural evolution.
- 6.17 Equally important is the late 18th or early 19th century phase of gentrification, in which the building was refronted in brick and recast in a polite Georgian idiom. The symmetrical three-bay façade, Flemish-bond brickwork, rubbed brick arches, classical door surround and sash windows demonstrate a conscious shift from vernacular timber construction to the architectural language of rural gentility. The addition of the two-storey rear wings, executed in brick of broadly consistent character and date, established the present double-pile plan and reflects contemporary expectations regarding hierarchy, comfort and separation of service accommodation. The single-storey brewhouse or washhouse extension to the north-west similarly contributes to the architectural interest of the farmstead, its smoke-blackened roof timbers offering rare physical evidence for specialised domestic service functions.
- 6.18 The associated agricultural buildings enhance the architectural significance of the site. The barn retains early structural fabric and tar-marked rafters indicative of its original thatched roof, thereby illustrating traditional constructional methods and the materials of mixed husbandry. The flint-built stable block, with brick dressings and timber trusses, survives largely intact and demonstrates local craftsmanship and the functional requirements of 18th- or early 19th-century animal husbandry. As a group, these buildings form a visually coherent ensemble, unified by their massing, constructional logic and traditional material palette. Later 20th-century buildings lack architectural interest and dilute the coherence of the historic group, but do not substantively diminish the architectural value of the core structures.

## ARTISTIC INTEREST

- 6.19 Artistic interest concerns human creative skill and aesthetic quality, whether expressed through design, composition, or craftsmanship.
- 6.20 Westhouse Farm possesses modest but notable artistic interest, arising from the visual qualities, material palette and compositional relationships of its historic buildings and their rural setting. Although not designed as a formal architectural composition, the farmstead exhibits a layered aesthetic charm that results from the juxtaposition of its polite Georgian farmhouse and its more utilitarian vernacular outbuildings.

- 6.21 The farmhouse, with its late 18th- to early 19th-century brick refacing, symmetrical three-bay frontage, classical doorway and evenly spaced sash windows, introduces a consciously refined architectural language into what was originally a modest timber-framed dwelling. The proportions, regularity and material discipline of this polite façade produce a quiet elegance. Its carefully ordered appearance, emphasised by the use of Flemish-bond brickwork and rubbed brick arches, contributes significantly to the aesthetic qualities of the site.
- 6.22 This polite character creates an attractive and visually meaningful contrast with the vernacular appearance of the adjacent agricultural buildings. Whereas the farmhouse expresses aspirational domestic refinement through symmetry, brickwork and classical restraint, the barn and stable block are characterised by functional massing, weathered materials and the straightforward expression of structure. The barn's timber framing, boarded elevations and tar-marked rafters, together with the stable's flint and brick construction and exposed trusses, embody a more workmanlike, utilitarian aesthetic typical of traditional Low Weald farmsteads. This contrast between formality and vernacular simplicity enriches the farmstead's overall visual character, illustrating the historical hierarchy between domestic and agricultural spheres while producing a composition of notable rural charm.
- 6.23 The interplay of materials—soft red brick, hand-made clay roof tiles, weatherboarded agricultural elevations, flint and brick dressings—generates a cohesive palette that unifies the contrasting elements of the group. The patina of age, including weathering of timber and softening of brick surfaces, enhances the textural and tonal richness of the ensemble, reinforcing its picturesque qualities.
- 6.24 The spatial arrangement of buildings grouped around two interconnected yards also contributes to the farmstead's aesthetic value. The informal geometry of the yards, framed by the polite front of the farmhouse and the more modest agricultural ranges, creates a series of visually engaging views that reveal the historical working relationships between the structures while sustaining a sense of openness characteristic of traditional farmsteads in the Low Weald.
- 6.25 Although the late 20th century additions lack artistic interest and slightly detract from the coherence of the group, they do not overwhelm or diminish the aesthetic presence of the historic buildings, which remain the dominant visual and experiential components of the site.

## HISTORIC INTEREST

- 6.26 Historic interest relates to how a heritage asset illustrates or is associated with past lives, events, or developments in society, economy, or culture.
- 6.27 Westhouse Farm possesses considerable historic interest as a tangible record of agricultural life in the Low Weald from the 17th century to the present. The phased development of the farmhouse—from a late 17<sup>th</sup> century timber-framed dwelling to a polite Georgian farmhouse with specialised service accommodation—reflects rising prosperity and changing expectations of comfort among the rural middling sort.
- 6.28 The survival of early farm buildings, including the barn and stable, illustrates the evolution of mixed farming practices and the gradual expansion and rationalisation of agricultural operations during the post-medieval and Victorian periods.
- 6.29 The 1781 land tax reference anchors the site within known patterns of 18th-century landownership and tenancy, demonstrating the continuity of agricultural occupation.
- 6.30 The later loss of ancillary outbuildings and the replacement of some structures in the 20th century correspond with broader shifts in agricultural labour, mechanisation and farm consolidation.
- 6.31 Taken together, the farmstead offers a rich and layered narrative of rural social and economic change over more than three centuries.

## SETTING OF THE HERITAGE ASSET

- 6.32 Annex 2 of the NPPF (2024) 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.”*
- 6.33 The setting of Westhouse Farm remains predominantly rural and coherent, retaining key characteristics that allow its historic development to be readily understood. The farmhouse sits slightly apart from, yet visually connected to, the barn and stable, all arranged around two open yards that continue to read as the operational heart of the working farmstead.
- 6.34 The relationship between the farmhouse and its associated agricultural buildings remains strong. The spatial hierarchy—farmhouse to the east, barn to the south-west, stable defining the northern edge of the western yard—is intact and continues to contribute positively to the appreciation of the asset’s significance.
- 6.35 Views across the surrounding fields and hedged enclosures retain the farmstead’s agricultural character. Although pockets of modern domestication exist, these have not eroded the historic form or rural tranquillity of the wider setting.

- 6.36 Late 20<sup>th</sup> century structures within the curtilage have a neutral to slightly negative impact on setting. However, they do not overwhelm or prevent understanding of the historic grouping, which still forms the dominant visual and experiential component of the site.
- 6.37 The setting therefore continues to make a positive and integral contribution to the significance of Westhouse Farm as a historic farmstead.

- 7.1 This section appraises the impact of the proposed works on the historic building and its setting.

#### REPAIR WORKS

- 7.2 The scheme incorporates a programme of essential conservation repairs to address long-term material failure and inappropriate past interventions. These works are fundamental to the preservation of the Grade II listed farmhouse and are in line with best practice as set out in Historic England's *Maintenance and Repair of Traditional Farm Buildings* (HEAG157), *Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency* (HEAG321), and the *Conservation Principles* (2008), which collectively advocate for early maintenance, compatible materials, and the retention of authenticity.

#### External Walls

- 7.3 Areas of external brickwork have been pointed with modern cement-based mortar. This material is incompatible with traditional solid wall construction and has caused accelerated weathering and deterioration by trapping moisture within the brickwork and inhibiting evaporation. Cement mortars are known to cause freeze-thaw damage and salt crystallisation in heritage walls, with widespread spalling already evident.
- 7.4 The proposals include the careful removal of all cementitious pointing and its replacement with a lime-based mortar of appropriate strength and permeability. As stated in Historic England's *HEAG157* (p. 6), it is essential that repairs to traditional farm buildings use materials which match the existing fabric in breathability, appearance, and texture, and which allow moisture to evaporate freely from the wall surface. This approach ensures that the wall performs as originally intended and avoids further decay.
- 7.5 Repointing will be undertaken by hand, using traditional techniques and joint profiles, to avoid damaging the underlying masonry. Where individual bricks are found to be damaged beyond repair, they will be replaced using handmade bricks carefully matched in size, colour, texture, and surface finish, in accordance with HEAG157 recommendations (p. 10). All interventions will be clearly recorded and minimal in extent.
- 7.6 These works will not only halt progressive decay but will enhance the performance, character, and authenticity of the farmhouse. They respond directly to Historic England's *Conservation Principles* (p. 8), which emphasise the importance of retaining the physical fabric that contributes to a place's evidential and aesthetic value. As such, the proposed repairs will have a positive impact on significance.

#### Roof

- 7.7 The roof covering comprises machine-made clay tiles of early to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century date, fixed using battens and underlay rather than traditional pegs. whilst not original, the tiles have weathered over time and contribute to the building's established appearance. However, inspection has confirmed that many are heavily deteriorated, exhibiting widespread spalling and breakage due to frost damage. This is a common form of decay in porous clay tiles and reflects the poor kilning consistency of mid-century production.

- 7.8 The proposed works include the careful stripping of the roof covering and its replacement with new handmade clay tiles. Where sound examples of the existing tile survive, these will be salvaged for re-use on less exposed roof slopes. The new tiles will be handmade in accordance with traditional methods, using varied clays and firing techniques to produce a visually rich and textured finish. This approach ensures that the new covering will blend sympathetically with the building's historic character, avoiding the uniform appearance of modern sand-faced tiles.
- 7.9 The proposals follow the advice of Historic England's *HEAG321: Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency* (p. 27), which supports the repair or replacement of roof coverings using natural materials that match the original in form and appearance. HEAG321 also stresses the need to retain or improve thermal performance whilst ensuring that breathability and roof ventilation are preserved. In this case, the introduction of breathable membranes and appropriate ventilation detailing at ridge and eaves will ensure that the new roof performs as intended without creating interstitial condensation.
- 7.10 In aesthetic terms, the proposed tiles will retain the traditional character of the roofscape and reinforce the architectural coherence of the building. In performance terms, they will ensure improved durability and water-shedding capacity whilst remaining compatible with traditional joinery, chimneys, and eaves details.
- 7.11 These works are considered to result in no harm to the special interest of the building and will have a positive effect on its long-term preservation and resilience.

#### Chimneys

- 7.12 The chimney stacks are key elements in the building's silhouette and retain a traditional form and materiality that contribute to its character. However, they are presently in poor condition, with failed flaunching, open joints, and evidence of past cement repairs that are beginning to delaminate. These defects are a known cause of water ingress into the roof structure and upper walls.
- 7.13 The proposals involve the careful raking out and repointing of the chimney stacks using lime mortar, as well as the renewal of flaunching around the base of the chimney pots. New lead flashings will be installed to traditional detail at the abutments, with appropriate weathering detail to prevent future ingress.
- 7.14 These works are in full accordance with the advice given in HEAG157 (p. 11), which identifies chimney stacks as a frequent point of failure in traditional buildings and recommends prompt repair using breathable, compatible materials. The works are also supported by *HEAG321* (p. 31), which recognises the importance of weathering features in reducing thermal inefficiency and avoiding damp-related deterioration.
- 7.15 The works will improve the visual presentation and functional integrity of the chimney stacks without loss of historic fabric, and will be carried out in a conservative and respectful manner. The impact is assessed as neutral to positive.

### Internal Walls and Ceilings

- 7.16 Internally, the removal of modern gypsum and cement-based finishes will allow a more accurate assessment of the underlying structure, including lath and plaster ceilings and historic wall finishes. These non-traditional finishes are known to inhibit evaporation and to contribute to condensation-related damage in traditional walls, as set out in *HEAG321* (p. 24) and *HEAG157* (p. 14).
- 7.17 Where historic lath and plaster survives, it will be retained and repaired using traditional haired lime plaster applied in three coats over retained timber laths. New lathwork will be introduced only where required, using riven hardwood laths fixed with nails.
- 7.18 The retention of traditional plasterwork is an important part of preserving internal character, especially in buildings that express hierarchical spatial planning through finish quality. As per *HEAN 2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets* (p. 10), changes that respect the original hierarchy of spaces and conserve historic material should be considered compatible with the significance of the asset.
- 7.19 The removal of impermeable modern materials and reinstatement of breathable lime finishes will improve both environmental performance and historic authenticity. These works are essential to the preservation of the building's character and are assessed as having a positive impact.

### External and Internal Alterations

- 7.20 In addition to fabric repair, the proposal includes a number of external and internal alterations designed to enhance the building's usability and enable its continued function as a modern residence. These interventions are modest in nature and respond positively to pre-application feedback, particularly from the Conservation Officer, by reducing the degree of change to significant fabric, improving the legibility of the plan form, and enhancing subservience in new work. The scheme has also been developed with regard to the best practice principles outlined in *Historic England Advice Note 2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets* (HEAN 2), which states that alterations to listed buildings should seek to sustain and reveal their significance, avoid cumulative loss, and adopt a proportionate and well-informed approach.
- 7.21 This approach has been underpinned by an archaeological interpretative survey, undertaken in accordance with Historic England's *Understanding Historic Buildings* (2016). The survey provides a phased and evidential analysis of the farmhouse and has directly informed the design development. Understanding the evolution of the building—from its late 17<sup>th</sup> century timber-framed origins to its polite Georgian gentrification and later service adaptations—has allowed for a highly targeted and justified approach to internal and external change. The proposed works respond not only to the building's present needs but to the significance embedded in its form, fabric, and phased development.

### Replacement of Modern Windows

- 7.22 The building currently features a mix of historic timber casements and later uPVC storm-proof windows. The latter are of inappropriate material, proportion, and detailing, and detract from the traditional character of the farmhouse. Historic England's *Traditional Windows: Their Care, Repair and Upgrading* (HEAG073) and *Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency* (HEAG321) both emphasise that poorly detailed modern replacements may have a disproportionate impact on character, and that reinstating traditionally detailed timber windows should be a priority where harm has occurred.
- 7.23 In this case, the uPVC units lack traditional fenestration patterns, are fitted as top-hung storm casements with deep profiles, and introduce a modern aesthetic that is visually disruptive and materially incompatible with the host building. These windows appear to date from the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and have no historic or architectural merit.
- 7.24 It is proposed to replace all non-historic windows with new painted timber casements incorporating slimline double glazing, traditional sections, and glazing bars of historically appropriate pattern. These will match the detailing of surviving historic joinery and improve the uniformity and legibility of the façade. In accordance with HEAG321, where windows are not historic and of poor quality, replacement with double-glazed units of traditional form and detailing is considered to have a neutral or positive impact on significance. Crucially, the proposed replacements are based on surviving examples within the building itself. This careful study has informed the proportions, profiles and opening methods of the new units.
- 7.25 The scheme retains and repairs all original timber casements. These works are consistent with the Conservation Officer's advice to retain and refurbish historic joinery wherever possible, and to adopt a conservation-led approach to thermal upgrades. The use of slim-profile double glazing within new joinery avoids retrofitting into historic windows, thereby preserving the original fabric. This aligns with the guidance in HEAG321 (pp. 24-25), which recommends the retention of historic windows and only advocates replacement where units are non-historic and harm the building's character.
- 7.26 Overall, the window proposals involve no loss of historic fabric, reinstate lost traditional detail, and enhance the architectural coherence of the elevations. They are fully supported by the analysis of existing fabric and by best practice guidance. The impact is assessed as neutral to positive.

### Alteration of Existing Window to Create New Doorway

- 7.27 The proposal includes the conversion of a non-original window on the north elevation into a doorway to provide access to the rear of the building. The existing opening appears to be a later alteration and contains a uPVC storm casement of non-traditional form. Its proportions and sill level suggest it was formerly a taller sash or stable-type opening, now reduced in size.

- 7.28 Historic England guidance acknowledges that the insertion of new openings may be acceptable where they do not result in the loss of significant fabric and where the architectural hierarchy of the building is maintained (HEAN 2, p. 12). In this instance, the proposed new door will be of traditional vertical-boarded design, with a glazed upper panel and painted timber frame. It will be visually recessive and clearly secondary in function to the principal entrance on the front elevation.
- 7.29 This intervention has been informed by the survey findings that identify the north elevation as one of the less formal service ranges of the house, likely associated with the ancillary use of the rear wings and later brewhouse extension. The proposed door provides logical access from the garden to the newly located kitchen, and reuses a compromised opening rather than introducing new disruption.
- 7.30 As such, the intervention responds positively to the advice of both the Conservation Officer and Historic England. Any minor loss of historic material is considered negligible and fully justified by improved functionality.

#### INTERNAL RECONFIGURATION

- 7.31 A series of internal changes are also proposed to improve circulation, rationalise room functions, and ensure the building meets present-day expectations for privacy and sanitary provision. These changes have been substantially reduced and simplified in response to the Conservation Officer's comments and have been carefully informed by the archaeological analysis of plan form and constructional phasing.

#### Relocation of Kitchen

- 7.32 The kitchen will be relocated to the existing single-storey rear extension, currently used as a utility and workshop space. The fabric and smoke-blackened roof structure of this range suggest it functioned historically as a brewhouse or washhouse (Phase 2 or 3), and as such it was never part of the principal domestic accommodation. Its conversion to a kitchen retains its role as a service space and does not compromise the spatial hierarchy established in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.
- 7.33 Two lightweight modern partitions will be removed to facilitate this change. These are confirmed to be later insertions and not part of the original structure. Their removal will reinstate the open character of the brewhouse/washhouse interior, improve legibility of its original volume, and allow the survival of its historic structure, including the smoke-blackened roof, to be appreciated. This change is considered beneficial and aligns with HEAN 2 (p. 10), which supports the enhancement of legibility where it does not entail loss of significant fabric.



*Examples of UPVC windows to be replaced.*



*Existing window to be converted into a doorway.*



*Bathroom to be subdivided (left) and example of internal door to be replicated (right).*



*Location of proposed extension.*

- 7.34 In functional and evidential terms, the reinstatement of a single open room reflects the historical use of this extension as a brewhouse or washhouse, where openness was integral to its function and to the operation of heat- and steam-generating activities. The archaeological survey noted the even pattern of soot across the underside of the roof, suggesting that the space was not subdivided and that it contained an open copper or hearth. The removal of partitions and the use of the space as a kitchen respect and reinforce this original spatial character, thereby sustaining the evidential and illustrative value of the extension as a rare surviving example of an ancillary domestic structure.

#### **Formation of Ground-Floor WC**

- 7.35 The former kitchen space will be repurposed as a study and small WC. The WC will be formed through the insertion of two lightweight stud partitions and a new doorway from the adjacent lobby. The Conservation Officer previously noted the need to avoid excessive subdivision, and the revised scheme now ensures the original room proportions remain readily legible. The new door will be carefully detailed to match existing joinery and will avoid loss of principal fabric. The proposed room was previously a circulation and utility space and already contained plumbing, minimising further intervention.
- 7.36 Whilst there will be a limited loss of brickwork to form the new opening, the quantity of fabric affected is minor and the intervention is reversible. The impact on significance is judged to be negligible and justified by the functional improvement it brings.

#### **Revised First-Floor Layout**

- 7.37 The scheme proposes only one new en-suite within Bedroom 2, formed by a single lightweight partition. The size of the en-suite has been reduced in response to pre-application feedback to better preserve the proportions of the room and its contribution to the original plan form. The archaeological analysis confirms this bedroom lies within the earlier core of the house and retains historic features such as the joists and bridging beams. The revised partitioning avoids interrupting historic features and ensures their contribution remains legible.
- 7.38 The other en-suite and bathroom previously proposed within the existing bathroom have now been rationalised. The revised layout avoids the insertion of any new doorways or blocking of existing ones. Instead, the proposal partitions the existing family bathroom into two smaller rooms accessed directly from Bedrooms 1 and the landing. This approach avoids any further disturbance of fabric and ensures that the hierarchy and spatial logic of the floor plan (established in the Georgian phase of reordering) are retained.
- 7.39 In line with HEAN 2 and Historic England's *Conservation Principles*, changes to plan form are acceptable where they are minimal, reversible, and justified by the continuing use of the building. The current internal alterations represent a clear improvement over the previous iteration of the scheme, directly address the Conservation Officer's concerns, and are informed by an understanding of significance derived from detailed on-site survey.

## REAR EXTENSION AND REPLACEMENT CARPORT

- 7.40 The proposals also include the construction of a modest single-storey rear extension and the replacement of a modern outbuilding with a new two-bay timber-framed carport. Both elements have been substantially revised from the pre-application scheme in direct response to the comments of the Conservation Officer. The revised proposals reflect a clearer understanding of the listed building's significance and of the contribution made by its setting and architectural form.

### Rear Extension

- 7.41 The proposed extension will be located to the rear of the farmhouse, adjoining the north end of the west elevation. In contrast to the earlier proposal, which extended further to the west and risked visually encapsulating the prominent brick chimney stack, the revised scheme has been significantly reduced in scale and reconfigured to ensure the stack remains clearly legible in long views and in three-dimensional form. The reduction in footprint and massing ensures that the extension reads as a subservient addition, consistent with the principles set out in *Making Changes to Heritage Assets* (HEAN 2), which stresses the importance of subordination in new work (p. 11).
- 7.42 In its revised form, the extension adopts a deliberately contemporary architectural expression, clearly differentiated from the historic fabric of the farmhouse in line with good conservation practice. The flat-roofed structure will feature Crittall-style fenestration across its west elevation, providing high levels of transparency whilst maintaining a recessive appearance. The use of slim-profile metal framing ensures that visual bulk is minimised, and reflections on the glazing will soften its impact in daylight conditions. The vertical timber cladding introduces a naturalistic material that contrasts in tone and texture with the adjacent brickwork, providing a legible but respectful distinction between old and new. This approach follows Historic England guidance in *Adapting Traditional Buildings* (HEAG321), which encourages the use of sympathetic contemporary materials and visual differentiation where appropriate (pp. 6–7).
- 7.43 Access to the new extension will be provided via the existing rear doorway of the main house and a new opening in the southern wall of the existing single-storey extension. There is clear evidence in this wall of former openings and alterations, meaning the loss of historic fabric from opening the new doorway will be very limited. Nonetheless, the potential impact of this intervention is considered to be minimal and outweighed by the substantial benefit of providing an appropriately scaled kitchen and dining space in line with contemporary expectations for a dwelling of this size. In order to mitigate the impact further, nibs and a downstand will be retained around the new opening, preserving the legibility of the original wall and maintaining a clear understanding of the building's historic form. This approach accords with guidance in *Conservation Principles* (2008), which emphasises the importance of sustaining the legibility of a heritage asset's development over time (p. 42).



*View of the farmhouse from the driveway. Note the new extension will be fully screened.*



*View of the farmhouse from the driveway. Note the new extension will be fully screened.*



Location of new opening. Note the evidence of previous alterations.



Modern outbuilding to be replaced with new carport.

- 7.44 The archaeological building survey confirms that the single-storey extension originated as a brewhouse or washhouse, identifiable by its low form, robust structure and extensive smoke-blackening to the roof timbers. The proposed adaptation of this space for kitchen use represents a compatible reuse that preserves the volume and character of the range. By locating the new kitchen within this ancillary structure, the proposal removes intrusive pressure from the principal rooms of the main house and reinstates the original openness of the brewhouse, which was a key characteristic of its historic function. This design-led approach is in line with recommendations in *Understanding Historic Buildings* (Historic England 2016), which emphasise spatial character and the importance of evidential value in shaping appropriate interventions.
- 7.45 The Conservation Officer's previous concerns regarding harm to plan form and chimney articulation have been fully addressed. The extension now respects the articulation of the gable end and its associated stack, which remains entirely visible and freestanding. This revision preserves the architectural legibility of the building's Georgian phase, during which the brick stacks formed key vertical accents at either end of the main range.
- 7.46 In line with *Conservation Principles* (2008), the extension causes no substantial loss of historic fabric, preserves the legibility of the building's historical plan form and development, and meets modern needs without eroding heritage values.

#### Replacement Carport

- 7.47 The proposal includes the demolition of an existing modern outbuilding of no historic merit and its replacement with a traditionally constructed, two-bay open-fronted timber carport. The revised carport has been reduced in size and relocated from its previously proposed position to the northwest of the farmhouse. This change directly addresses the Conservation Officer's concern that the earlier location would intrude upon the setting of the listed building and disrupt key views.
- 7.48 The new carport is proposed in the same location as the outbuilding it replaces, to the west of the farmhouse, tucked into the existing service yard. This siting ensures it remains clearly subordinate in the landscape, avoids competing with the farmhouse in prominence or scale, and preserves the open rural character of the surrounding setting. This aligns with Historic England guidance in *GPA3* (HEAG180, pp. 9–11), which highlights the importance of minimising visual intrusion and maintaining the spatial relationship between heritage assets and their context.
- 7.49 The carport will adopt a restrained vernacular design, using oak posts and a pitched clay tile roof to harmonise with the materials of the wider farmstead. The open-fronted form ensures that its mass remains visually permeable, avoiding bulk or enclosure. Its siting adjacent to existing hedging and agricultural structures further reduces its prominence in public and private views.
- 7.50 As advised by *HEAN 2*, new ancillary structures within the curtilage of a listed building should avoid harm to its setting, adopt a subservient form and character, and be based on an understanding of the asset's historic function and organisation. The current proposal achieves these aims, replacing a less sympathetic structure with one more appropriate in material, scale, and layout.

## 8 CONCLUSION

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- 8.1 The proposed works are informed by a detailed understanding of the Grade II listed farmhouse and its immediate setting, supported by an archaeological interpretative survey and guided by Historic England's conservation principles.
- 8.2 External alterations and repairs follow established best practice and will enhance the historic character of the building whilst ensuring its continued viable use.
- 8.3 The revised extension to the farmhouse has been significantly reduced in scale and designed to be subservient, responding to Conservation Officer comments. Its location avoids encapsulating the chimney stack, whilst the new opening into the brewhouse/ washhouse is limited in impact, retaining nibs and a downstand to preserve legibility. Relocating the kitchen to this space reinstates its historic openness and original service-related function.
- 8.4 The replacement of a detrimental and visually intrusive 20<sup>th</sup> century outbuilding with a modest timber-framed two-bay carport designed as a traditional agricultural building in the same location represents an enhancement to the setting of the listed building.
- 8.5 Internal alterations, including the rationalisation of en-suite layouts and new openings, will better preserve the building's historic plan form.
- 8.6 The proposals are compliant with respect to the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 insofar as the special interest of the historic assets will be preserved and enhanced.
- 8.7 The proposals are, therefore, considered to be compliant with respect to the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Area) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Mid Sussex Local Plan.

## APPENDIX: LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

The primary legislation relating to Listed Buildings and their settings is set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990:

*Section 16(2) states “In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority or 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 which it possesses.”*

*Section 66(1) reads: “In considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority 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 which it possesses.”*

In relation to development within Conservation Areas, Section 72(1) reads: *“Special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.”*

Policy relating to the historic environment is set out at national level within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Policy relating to the historic environment is set out at local level within the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031.

### NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF)

Chapter 16 (Paragraphs 202 to 221) of the NPPF updated and adopted in December 2024 constitute the Government’s national guidance and policy regarding development relating to the historic environment.

The NPPF is a material consideration and states that applications are to be determined in accordance with the local framework unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The NPPF seeks to conserve and enhance the historic environment with much emphasis on “significance”, defined in Annex 2 as:

*“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site’s Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.”*

Setting is defined in Annex 2 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.”*

Annex 2 defines Conservation (for heritage policy) as:

*“The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.”*

This definition is important as it distinguishes conservation from preservation and puts an emphasis on proactively managing change rather than reactively resisting it.

### LOCAL POLICY – MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL

The site lies within the boundary of the Mid Sussex District Council Authority. Mid Sussex District Council adopted the Mid Sussex District Plan 2014 – 2031 as a Development Plan Document at its meeting on 28th March 2018. It replaces the Mid Sussex Local Plan 2004.

Policy PD34 of the Mid Sussex District Plan relate to listed buildings and heritage assets, and Conservation Areas. They are, therefore, considered relevant to this proposal:

#### POLICY DP34 – Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets

Strategic Objectives: 2) To promote well located and designed development that reflects the District’s distinctive towns and villages, retains their separate identity and character and prevents coalescence; 4) To protect valued characteristics of the built environment for their historical and visual qualities; and 11) To support and enhance the attractiveness of Mid Sussex as a visitor destination.

Evidence Base: West Sussex Historic Environment Record; Register of Listed Buildings.

Listed Buildings

Development will be required to protect listed buildings and their settings. This will be achieved by ensuring that:

- A thorough understanding of the significance of the listed building and its setting has been demonstrated. This will be proportionate to the importance of the building and potential impact of the proposal;
- Alterations or extensions to a listed building respect its historic form, scale, setting, significance and fabric. Proposals for the conversion or change of use of a listed building retain its significance and character whilst ensuring that the building remains in a viable use;
- Traditional building materials and construction techniques are normally used. The installation of uPVC windows and doors will not be acceptable;
- Satellite antennae, solar panels or other renewable energy installations are not sited in a prominent location, and where possible within the curtilage rather than on the building itself;
- Special regard is given to protecting the setting of a listed building;

# APPENDIX: LEGISLATION AND POLICY CONTEXT

Where the historic fabric of a building may be affected by alterations or other proposals, the applicant is expected to fund the recording or exploratory opening up of historic fabric.

## Other Heritage Assets

Development that retains buildings which are not listed but are of architectural or historic merit, or which make a significant and positive contribution to the street scene will be permitted in preference to their demolition and redevelopment.

The Council will seek to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the character and quality of life of the District. Significance can be defined as the special interest of a heritage asset, which may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic.

Proposals affecting such heritage assets will be considered in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and current Government guidance.



SURVEY & DOCUMENTS BY:

MANORWOOD

SUITE 114  
26 THE HORNET  
CHICHESTER  
WEST SUSSEX  
PO19 7BB

T: +44 (0) 1243 201102  
M: +44 (0) 7725 023213

E: [ENQUIRIES@MANORWOOD.CO.UK](mailto:ENQUIRIES@MANORWOOD.CO.UK)