



WHALEBACK

DESIGN, ACCESS, HERITAGE AND PLANNING STATEMENT

Nether Walstead

ADDRESS

Nether Walstead, East Mascalls Lane
Haywards Heath RH16 2QJ

DATE

November 2025

REVISION

1

WHALEBACK LTD

Knockhundred Row
Midhurst
GU29 9DQ

01730 202567

info@whaleback.co.uk

www.whaleback.co.uk

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Context and site description	4
Historical development	15
Design intention	19
Proposals	20
Impact assessment	36
Planning statement	43

Introduction

This Design, Access, Heritage and Planning Statement was initially prepared to support a Pre-Application Enquiry for proposed works at Nether Walstead, a Grade II listed building. Following receipt of Pre-Application Advice, additional historic research and on-site investigations have been undertaken, and the design has been substantially amended to address heritage constraints and the Conservation Officer’s comments.

The resulting scheme is carefully calibrated to the building’s historic fabric, its curtilage-listed structures, and their setting. It aims to conserve and clarify the significance of the heritage assets while introducing proportionate changes that support the building’s continued, long-term use.

The proposals primarily involve the remodelling and improvement of varied twentieth-century additions. In summary, they include:

- removal of the twentieth-century kitchen extension and adjacent single-storey lean-tos, with restoration of the historic catslide;
- construction of a link-detached billiard room in a discreet location on the east side of the house;
- removal of modern kitchen units and associated fittings from the oldest part of the building;
- reopening of a blocked historic doorway;
- alterations to several twentieth-century elements of the house;
- alteration and extension of the twentieth-century western wing;
- creation of two doorways and removal of selected partition walls and bathroom fittings at first floor;
- minor works to the attic; and
- enhancement of the architectural and historic character of the courtyard group.

The proposed works are grounded in a comprehensive assessment of the historical development and significance of the buildings and the site, supported by an archaeological Historic Fabric Assessment. The evidence presented delineates the buildings’ historical evolution, situating them within their broader historical context and examining past alterations. This analysis draws upon historical sources from the West Sussex Records Office, the planning history, direct observation and minor opening-up. This informed understanding has been integral to shaping the design approach.

The proposals are attuned to the architectural and historical significance of the property, with a focus on minimising disruption to the historic fabric while ensuring adaptation for sustainable, long-term use. The design of the proposed new elements is both sensitive and responsive, enhancing the building’s historic character.

This document further articulates the design principles and concepts applied to the scheme’s scale, layout, and appearance, demonstrating how the design respects the property’s special architectural or historical significance, the particular features for which it was listed, and its broader setting.



Aerial view of Nether Walstead and neighbouring cottages.

Context and site description

The site comprises a large private dwelling located at the southern end of a long drive accessed from East Mascalls Lane. It lies within the parish of Lindfield and is administered by Mid Sussex District Council.

The wider setting is rural, with houses dispersed among extensive areas of open, undeveloped land. Three dwellings to the north-east - The Coach House, The Cottage, Hindover Cottage and Keepers Cottage - were historically within the Nether Walstead estate and remain accessed from the same private drive.

The house is set within extensive private gardens containing a variety of mature trees, shrubs and ornamental planting, together with a swimming pool and tennis court. Beyond the garden boundaries the land opens out, with the overall topography remaining level. The seclusion provided by the surrounding trees is an important aspect of the property’s character.

The garden is enclosed by mature tree belts that separate it from the wider landscape. Woodland lies to the north-east, south-west and east, linked by large trees and dense vegetation along hedgerow boundaries.

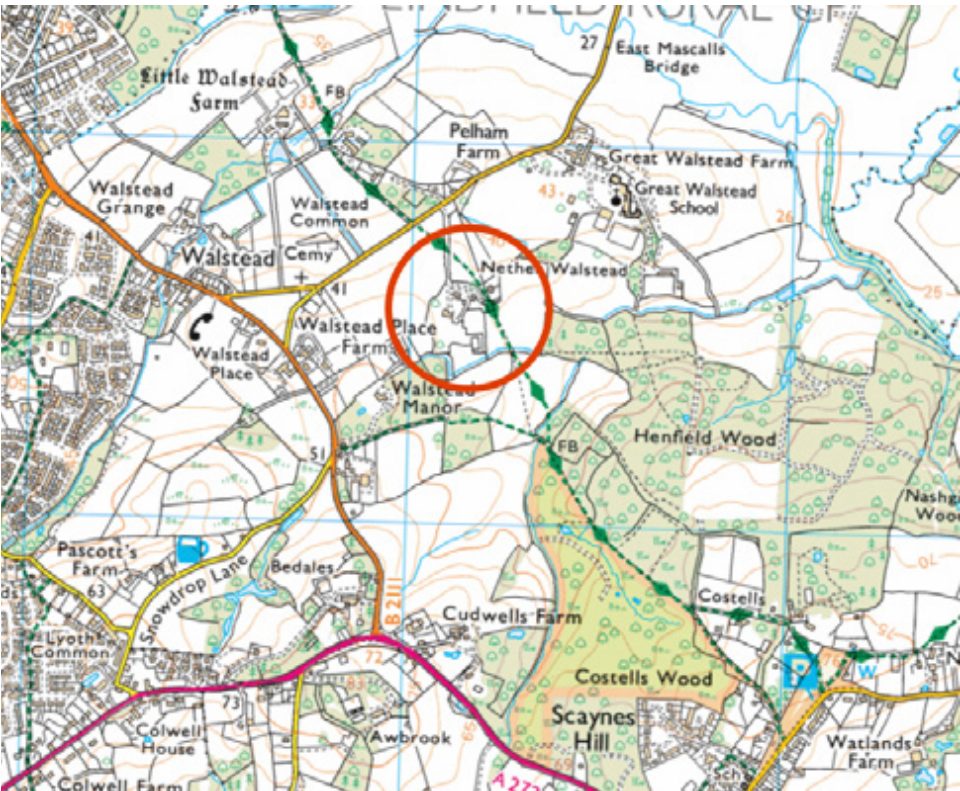
The Cottage, Hindover Cottage and Keepers Cottage are in separate ownership and lie to the north-east. Hindover Cottage and Keepers Cottage are surrounded by trees and woodland and is not intervisible with the site. The front elevation of The Cottage looks across the lawn to the east of the Nether Walstead service-building group, with views towards The Coach House, the small barn to its rear, and the gable end of the garage/studio barn. There is no intervisibility between The Cottage and the principal house.

Nether Walstead is Grade II listed (National Heritage List Entry No. 1180891). The listing describes the building as follows:

The original portion is of two storeys and attic, with two sets of dormers, and is of three bays. It is fronted with weather-boarding and stands on a red brick base. The back elevation is of red brick with a narrow gabled projection of three storeys. The modern additions are to the west and an L-wing to the north. Again these are in weather-boarding on red brick plinths or red brick to the ground floor level. The windows throughout the building are casements.

There is a massive brick chimney breast at the east end, and subsidiary chimneys to the western end of the original portion as well as two additional chimneys in the C19 and C20 sections. All is under a tiled roof.

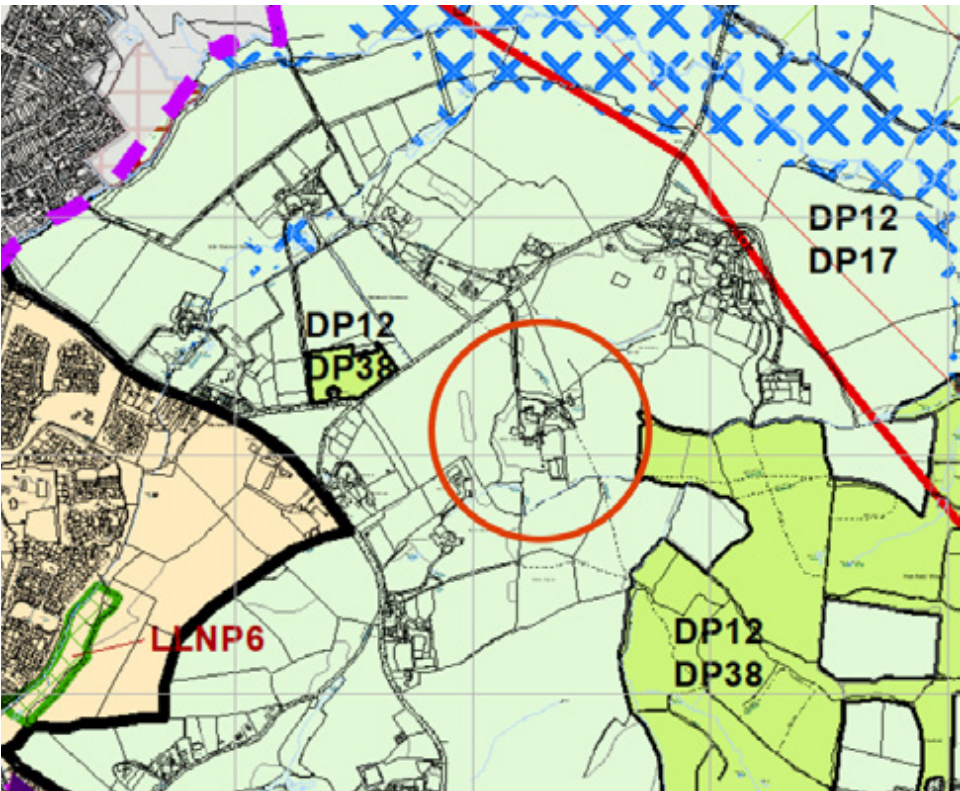
The interior was not inspected.



Ordnance survey map of surrounding area



Map of immediate context



Mid Sussex Policy Map



Magic map of listed buildings and ancient woodlands

Context and site description



Front, north elevation



Rear, south elevation



Side, west elevation



Side, east elevation



Approach from drive



View from site entrance to north

Context and site description



West side of garage to north of courtyard



East side of garage and courtyard



North side of Coach House and Wood Store



South side of Shed



East side of Coach House



Yard interior looking east

Context and site description

EXTERIOR

NORTH ELEVATION

The primary axis of the building is oriented east-west. It is a long, two-storey structure with attic accommodation in the easternmost two bays. This portion of the house is cottage-like in appearance and set between two large chimney stacks. There is a single-storey lean-to structure against the east side.

To the right of the eastern two bays is an unusual two-storey porch, positioned at the junction between the main building range and a projecting northern extension, which also is of two storeys and has a prominent octagonal bay window on its gabled north end.

The eastern section of the building and the northern extension are predominantly clad in white-painted horizontal timber boarding. In contrast, the part behind the two-storey porch section is of brick.

West of the northern extension, the elevation is also brick, defined by a catslide roof with a wide, flat-roofed dormer located against the massive chimneystack on the west side of the northern wing.

The western part of the elevation reflects the early 20th-century Arts and Crafts style, while the eastern parts exhibit a more vernacular rural farmhouse character, albeit with the incongruous addition of the large porch structure. The building's character is further distinguished by the five large chimney stacks that punctuate the roofline.



North Elevation as Existing

Context and site description

EXTERIOR

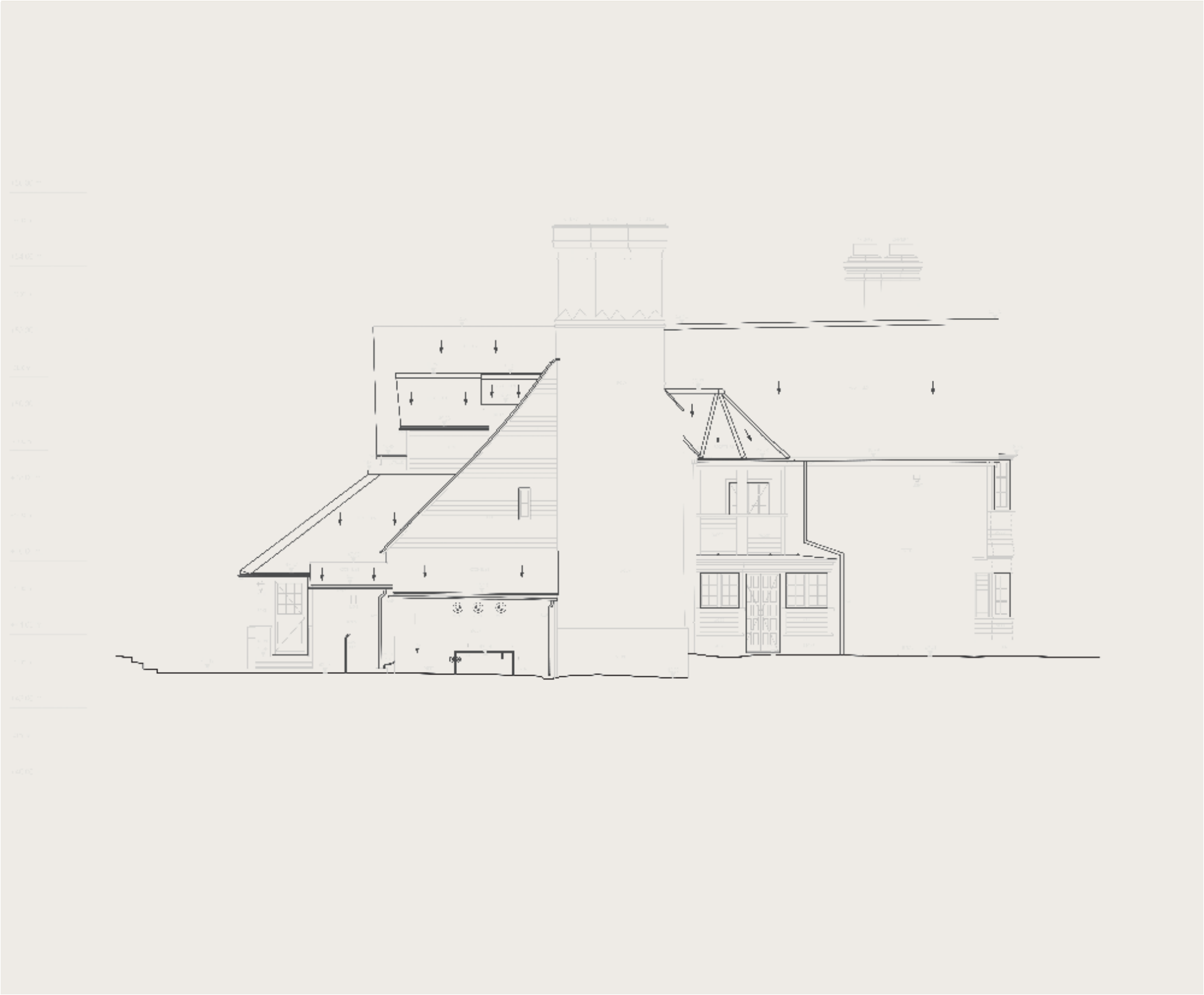
EAST ELEVATION

The east, side elevation is challenging to view in its entirety due to its position relative to the pond and a densely vegetated area of the garden, filled with mature trees and shrubs.

Survey elevations do not accurately reflect how a building is perceived on the ground. If we disregard the portions of the survey drawing that are recessed from the east side, it becomes clear that the side elevation is dominated by a massive chimney stack, corresponding to the northern half of the building’s depth. South of this, the roof descends in a catslide to a single-storey height. A single-storey lean-to is positioned against this gable, and immediately beyond that, to the west, is the hipped single-storey extension that accommodates the relatively recent dining addition.

Although the porch, north wing, dormer, and stair tower are prominent in the survey drawing, they would not be visible in reality.

This side elevation is not composed as a building elevation but is defined by the functional elements of the building as they have developed over time.



East Elevation as Existing

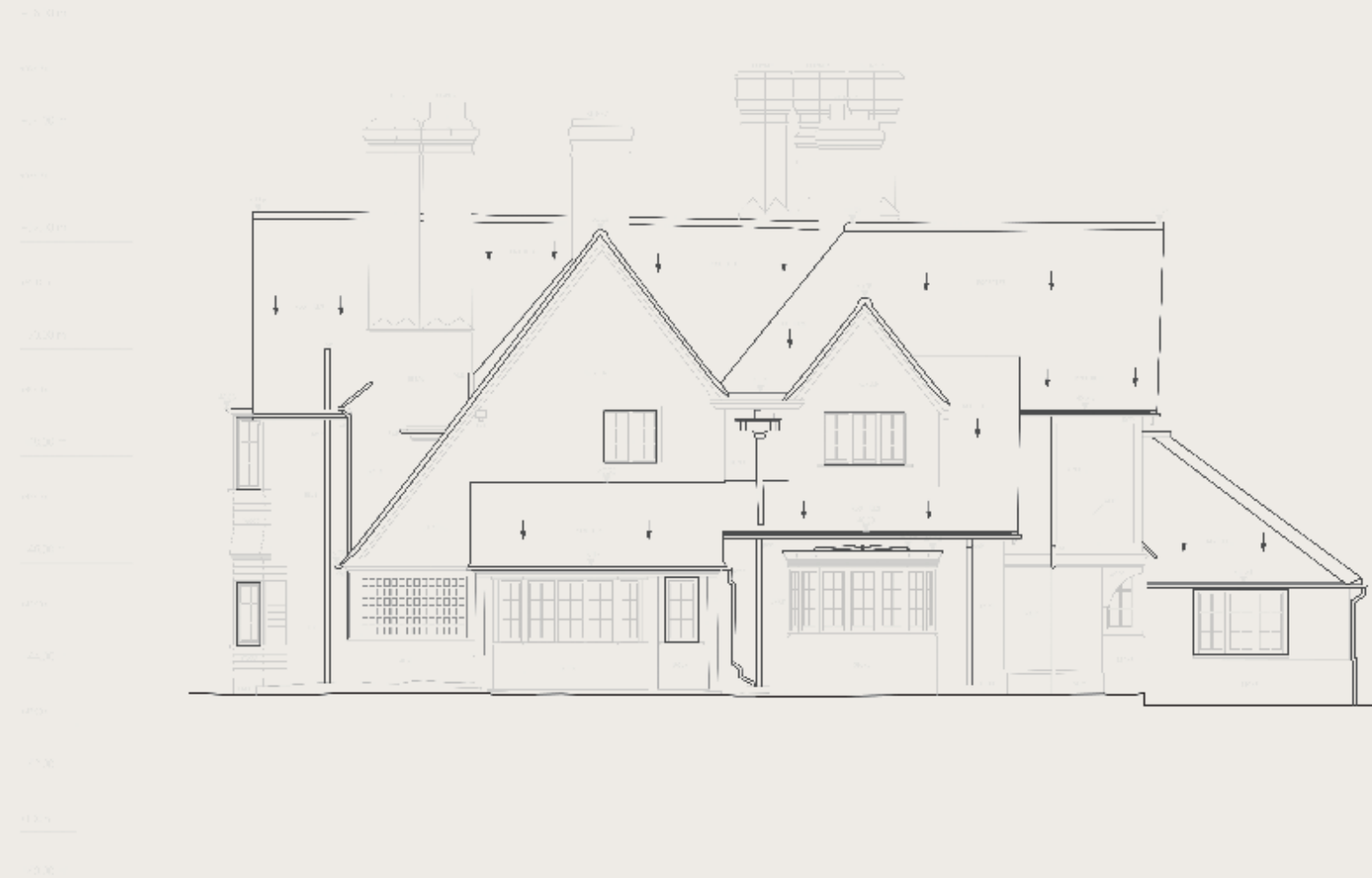
Context and site description

EXTERIOR

WEST ELEVATION

The west side elevation presents a markedly different character from the east, giving the impression of an entirely separate house. It resembles that of an Edwardian or interwar suburban dwelling, influenced by the Arts and Crafts style. The elevation is characterised by a complex interplay of roof slopes, gables, and projecting bay windows, with chimneys providing additional emphasis.

Despite being composed of typical Arts and Crafts elements, the elevation appears cluttered and overly busy, as if too many architectural features have been added without sufficient consideration of their overall appearance. This awkwardness is largely attributable to the bay windows and the projecting open lean-to element. Without these, the elevation would have a more balanced and restful appearance, though it would still convey a twentieth-century suburban character that bears little connection to the older parts of the house.



West Elevation as Existing

Context and site description

EXTERIOR

SOUTH ELEVATION

Like the north elevation, the south elevation is unusually wide and can be divided into three principal sections. The easternmost section, situated between the two chimneys, corresponds to the timber-clad, cottage-like portion of the north side; however, the small visible sections of wall are constructed of brick. The defining feature of this eastern section is the catslide roof, though its impact has been compromised by the addition of the wide hipped roof over the single-storey dining room extension. The interaction between the stair tower, the catslide roof, and the later addition lacks compositional integrity, and the extension can be seen as having a detrimental effect on the character of the historic building.

To the west of the stair tower, the central section has two bays on the left with windows comprising three casements each, followed by narrower bays with windows of two and one casement width, respectively. These openings are topped with shallow brick arches, and the remainder of the elevation is constructed of brick, except for a stone plinth.

Further west is the large extension added in the early twentieth century. More so than the north and west elevations, this addition resembles a typical Edwardian or interwar house that has been attached to the historic building with little regard for stylistic integration. The first floor is half-timbered in design, with cementitious infill panels between the black timbers and deep bargeboards on the gables. The ground floor is of brick construction with a stone plinth.



South Elevation as Existing

Context and site description

INTERNAL LAYOUT

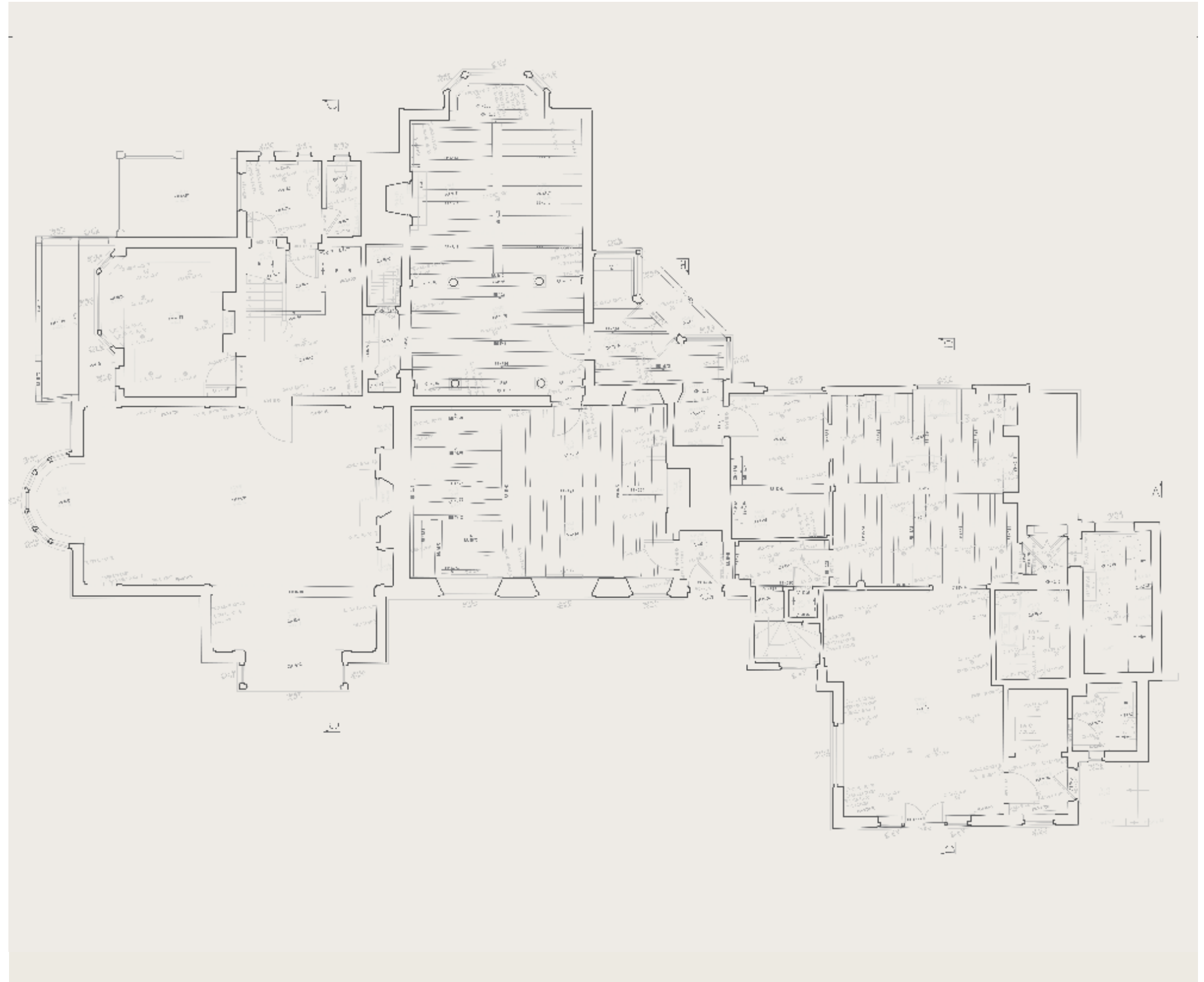
GROUND FLOOR

The house is entered through a double-height porch positioned at the junction between the main east–west range and its northern extension. From here, access is provided into both parts of the building: a large reception room to the west and a smaller hallway to the south, which leads east into the snug and onwards to the kitchen.

The western reception room is a substantial space, its status marked by four Classical columns in its southern half. A bay window occupies the northern end, with a fireplace set to its left. The room connects through a wide opening into the stair hall to the west, and a single doorway in the south-east corner leads through to the sitting room.

The sitting room links east to the kitchen via a corridor running along the south side of the house. This corridor passes the stair tower before entering the southern side of the kitchen, which is separated from the dining room by a timber-framed wall. Four ancillary rooms (utility, boiler room, boot room and WC) lie to the east of the kitchen and dining room. The kitchen can also be reached from the snug, which in turn adjoins the entrance porch.

West of the columned reception room, a doorway on the right leads down to the cellar, followed by the main stair hall. This generous space provides access to a large drawing room to the south, which has a curved bay window on the west elevation and a rectangular bay window on the south. A study lies to the west of the stair hall and has an octagonal bay window. North of the stairs is a cloakroom containing a sealed doorway that once connected to an enclosed back porch, and a staircase descends to the basement.



Ground Floor Plan as Existing

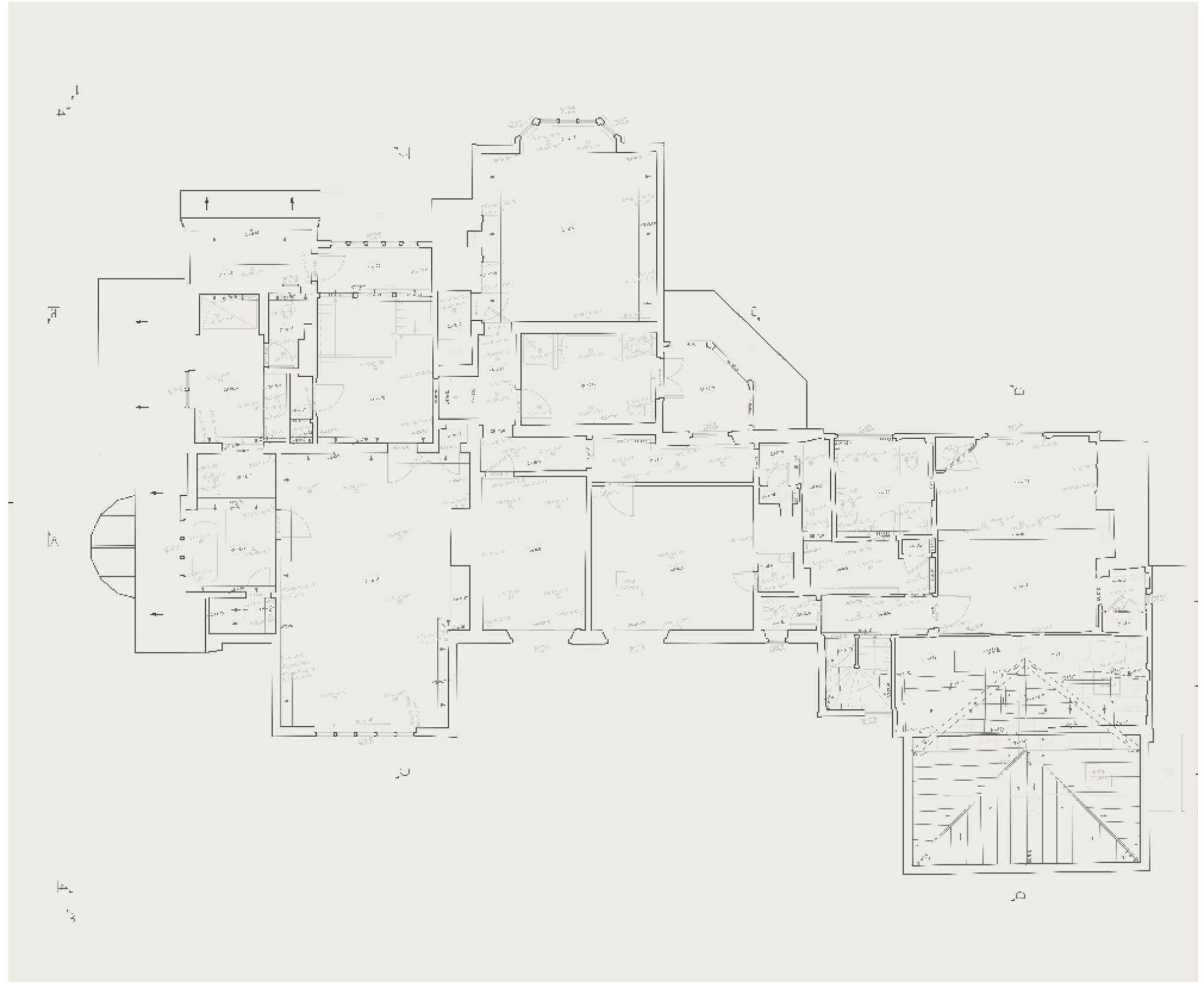
Context and site description

FIRST FLOOR

The first floor is accessible via two staircases: the stair tower attached to the south side of the historic building and the grander stair hall within the western extension. The first-floor plan is complex and somewhat illogical, with neither staircase providing unhindered access. This complexity arises from the building's successive phases of development.

The main staircase in the western extension offers access to the rooms within that later part of the building, the projecting north wing, and the two western bedrooms in the historic part of the house, located above the sitting room. In contrast, the stair tower now primarily serves the easternmost bedroom, with the western bedrooms accessible only via a long and winding corridor.

From the stair tower, there is a small toilet to the west and a bedroom to the east. A family bathroom lies to the north, separated from the landing corridor by a section of timber-framed wall. A corridor continues around the west side of the bathroom, leading to the two bedrooms above the sitting room. Another family bathroom is located to the north, within the southern part of the northern wing, unusually with access via French doors to the enclosed balcony over the front porch. North of this bathroom is a large bedroom, and to its west lies the landing of the main staircase. The principal bedroom is situated to the south of this landing, while west of this and the staircase hall is an unusually long bathroom extending across the depth of the house.

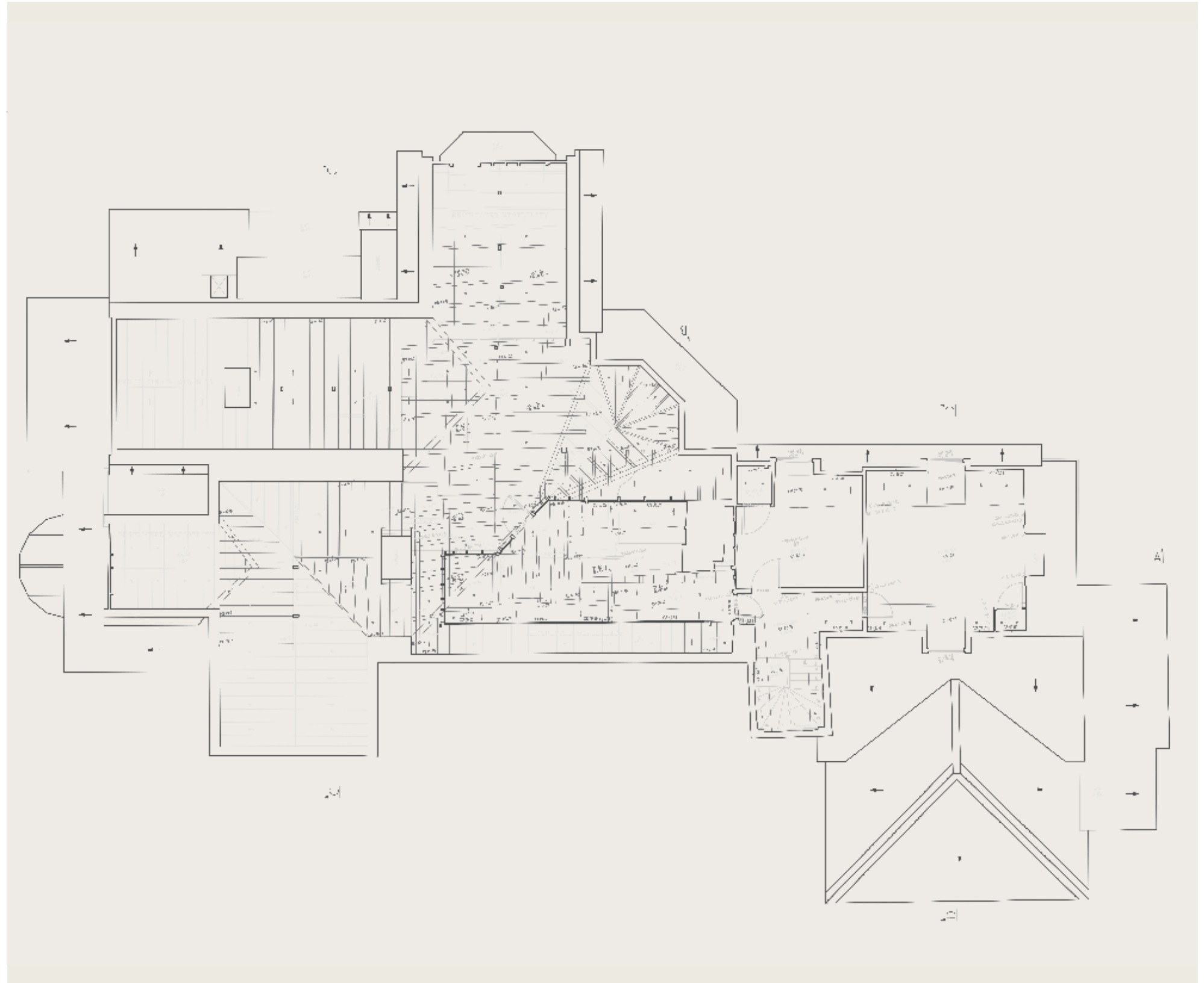


First Floor Plan as Existing

Context and site description

SECOND FLOOR

The second floor is accessible solely via the stair tower. This landing leads to two bedrooms situated above the eastern half of the historic house, with access to the attic to the west. It is noteworthy that the attic is exceptionally large, with only a relatively small portion converted into living accommodation.

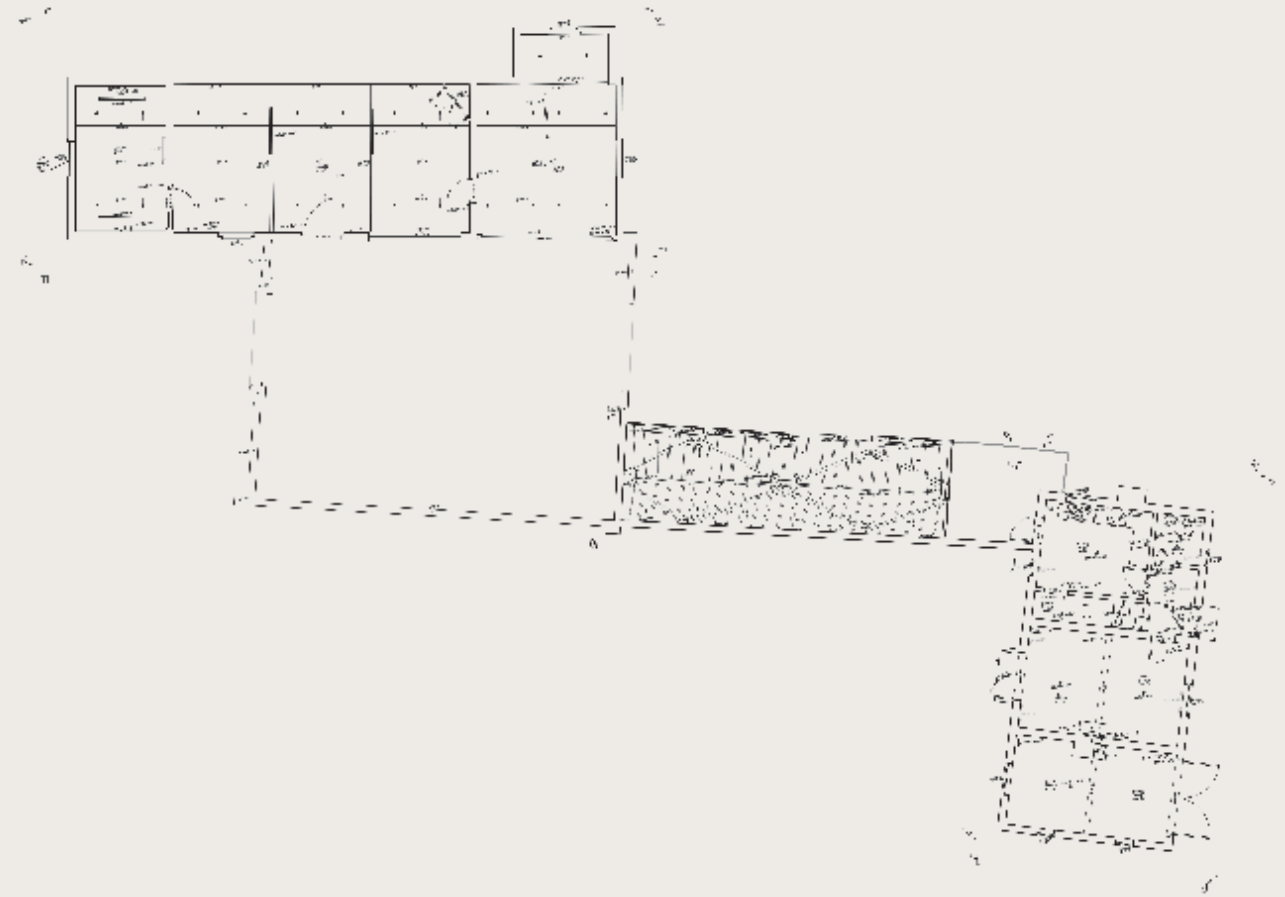


Second Floor Plan as Existing

Context and site description

COURTYARD BUILDINGS

Three ancillary buildings are situated to the northeast of the main house: the Coach House to the east, the Shed in the middle, and the Garage to the west. The Coach House is a two-storey structure, brickwork on the ground floor with UPVC cladding above. The Wood Store, a modest shed of agricultural character, remains open on its northern side. The Garage is larger, with parking bays located at its eastern end and workshop and office space to the west. The Coach House is bordered by a lawn to the west, while a paved yard extends south of the Garage and west of the Wood Store.



Coach House, Shed and Garage Plan as Existing

Historical development

The house at Nether Walstead has been the subject of research by Peter Bushell, whose work has contributed significantly to understanding the origins and ownership of the property. The name “Nether Walstead” may have Anglo-Saxon origins, possibly deriving from “Walca’s Stede,” meaning Walca’s farm or homestead. Another possibility is that the area belonged to Walter de Wolkested, who acquired it sometime during the reign of Edward II (1315-1316).

The first documented mention of Nether Walstead dates back to 1631, when the land was recorded as being owned by Leonard Brett, who passed it to his sons upon his death. The oldest part of the house likely dates from this period, if not slightly earlier. This section consists of two storeys and an attic, forming the eastern part of the house. The Brett family were likely small landowners, and the first known occupant of the house was Richard Heemes, who would have worked the land attached to the property. In 1648, Thomas Dribbin became the new tenant of Nether Walstead. Substantial alterations occurred around 1725, likely related to the initials “H.B.” at the entrance, which stand for Henry Brett. In 1786, the tithes were recorded as being paid by Richard Wyatt, but the house was leased to John Allin, a local farmer. Such leases, or copyholds, typically lasted three generations, and the house remained in the Allin family until 1857. The 1851 census indicates that several people lived in the house: Jane Allin, aged 84; four of her nieces and two nephews - William, aged 54, and his wife Harriet, aged 49; Harriet Jane, aged 29; Elizabeth, aged 23; Maria, aged 21; and Henry, aged 20. Additionally, three unmarried farm workers lived there: Samuel Binch, aged 48; George Tester, aged 30; and Levi Lipwood, aged 13. Following Jane Allin’s death, the house was rented from James King, who held it from the Earl of Chichester.

The opening of the London to Brighton railway in 1841, which included a station serving the towns of Cuckfield and Lindfield, spurred the development of the town of Haywards Heath. As with many such cases, the construction of the railway and station catalysed the area’s growth.

The 1861 census records that George Roser and his wife, agricultural labourers, were living there with their daughter, likely serving as caretakers following Jane Allin’s death. After James King’s death, the house was sold to Thomas Rooke Davis, a wealthy London merchant, in 1862 for £400. Thomas Rooke moved in on 11 June 1863 with his two daughters, Ann Harriet Davis and Caroline Davis. By the 1871 census, William Gander was living there with his family; he is described as a farmer of 190 acres, which was considered an average holding at the time, likely employing several workers.

William Gander died in 1877, and the farm was sold to John Hook of Little Walstead. The 1881 census records that John Hook’s son, William, was living at Nether Walstead with his family. In 1888, Nether Walstead was purchased by Sills Clifford Gibbons, a prosperous dentist from Burgess Hill and the son of a senior clerk in the House of Commons. Following the death of his wife, Clifford Gibbons sold his previous residence, Great Walstead, and purchased Nether Walstead. Although it is not known when Clifford Gibbons sold the house, sales particulars from 1892 describe the property as a “very valuable freehold and sporting estate” to be sold at auction. The estate is described as:

“A commodious and comfortable farmhouse, built of brick and timbered, and roofed with tiles and Sussex stone, containing 2 sitting rooms, kitchen, 2 sculleries,

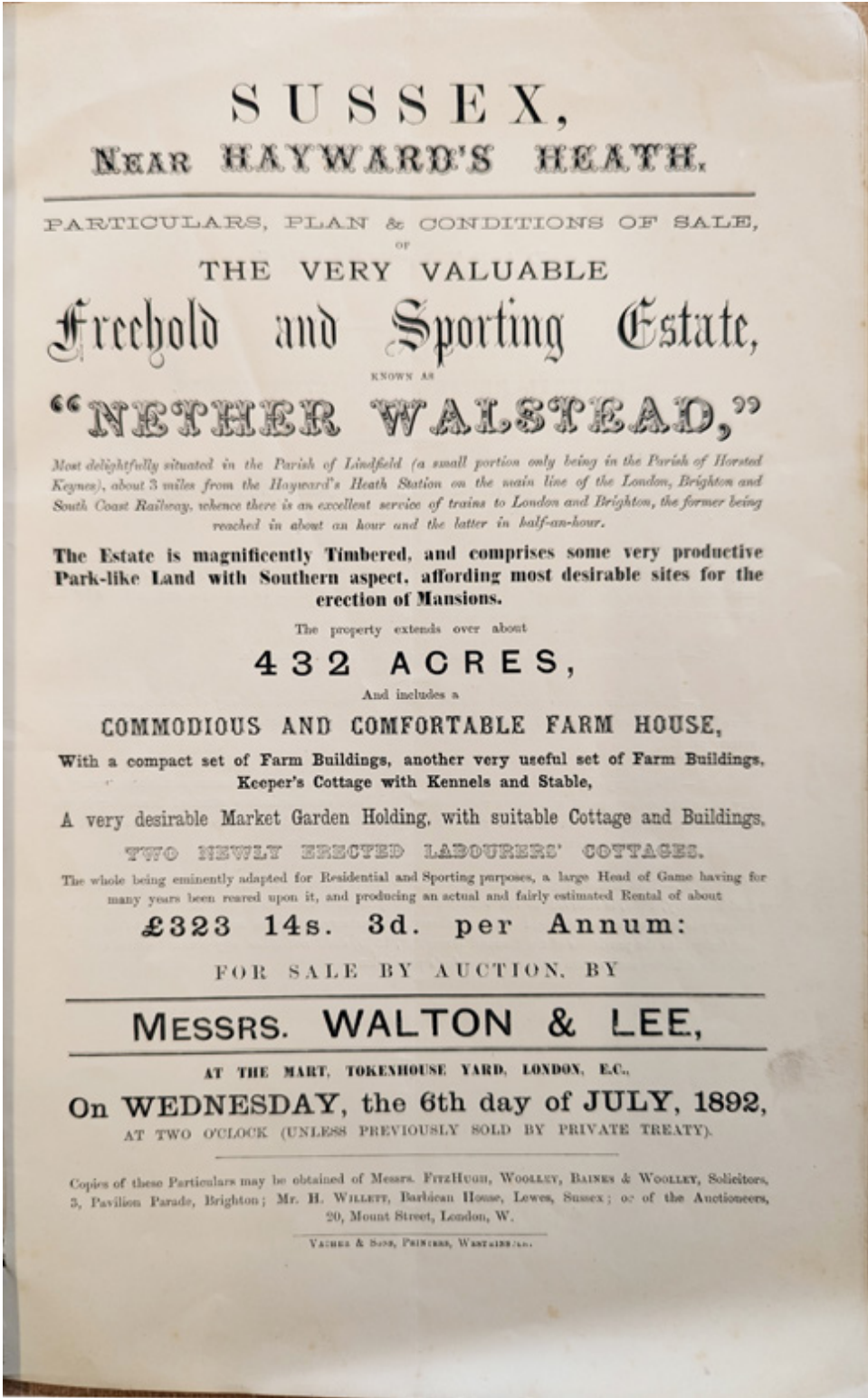
dairy, pantry, and 2 underground cellars, together with 6 bedrooms and 2 attics.”

The farm buildings are noted as compact and situated near the house, including a cart shed, stables, and cattle sheds. There are also two recently built labourers’ cottages, alongside a keeper’s cottage and kennels. Interestingly, the sales particulars list Mr. W. Hook as the occupier of the farm. Whether the house was actually sold in 1892 is unknown.

It is understood that the house was extensively remodelled and extended in the early twentieth century, prior to 1904. Plans of this work have not been found but the building fabric indicates that this involved the addition of a substantial extension to the house’s west end, the addition of the porch and other works to the pre-existing dwelling.

In 1908, Nether Walstead was sold to Sydney Conrad Peters, a partner in the hop factoring firm George & Frederick Ernest Peters, based on Borough High Street, London. In 1914, the house was purchased by Captain Alfred Ernest Speer of the Northumberland Fusiliers. Following Captain Speer’s death in 1925, the house was bought by Miss Mary Hammerton. Upon her death in 1935, the house was sold by her nephews, who described her as a spinster. The house was then bought by Roy Whittington until it was subsequently sold to James Philip van den Bergh. Records indicate that the house was empty in 1963 until it was purchased by Ian and Susan Dipple in 1968.

The exact date when the Dipples sold the house is unknown, but planning records indicate that the property was owned by the Durkins in 2003. The house was sold again in late 2023, when it was acquired by the current owners.



Sale particulars from 1892. Source: West Sussex Record Office.

Historical development

The oldest part of the house, as may be discerned from the measured building survey and exterior examination, comprises the eastern two bays located between the chimneystacks. This section was subsequently extended westward, followed by the addition of a range to the north. This configuration is evident on the 1845 Tithe Map and remained largely unchanged until the house was remodelled and extended in the early twentieth century.

For much of its history, the house likely served both residential and agricultural purposes, possibly containing rooms for brewing, dairying, and laundering, with the kitchen at the heart of the household. As a farmhouse, it would have evolved primarily in response to practical needs, while some elements may have reflected changing aesthetic tastes.

The earliest map showing Nether Walstead is the 1845 Tithe Map, which depicts the house in an L-shaped form, with a modest westward extension beyond the north projection. The southern elevation had a slight projection on the east side corresponding to the catslide roof that remains today. A small outbuilding is shown to the southeast, with the majority of the farm buildings located to the northeast and a few smaller ones to the northwest.

The first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1875 shows a small addition to the western part of the house, situated in the angle between the north projection and the west end of the north elevation. This may have been a new addition or an element missed in the earlier map. While no other changes to the house are visible, there are minor alterations to the farm buildings to the northeast.

The second edition Ordnance Survey map of 1897 reveals the addition of a rectilinear structure between the north wing and the east end of the north elevation. The eastern end of the house also the addition of a small structure to the east of the catslide roof.

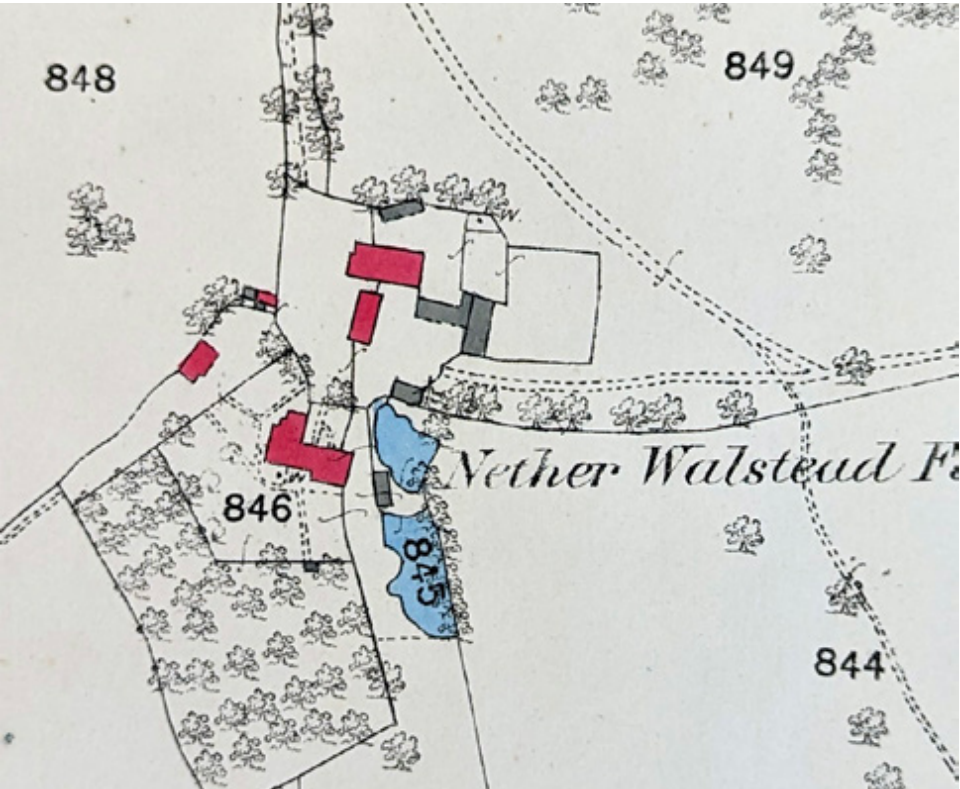
By the time of the third edition Ordnance Survey map in 1910, the western portion of the house had undergone substantial alteration and extension. A diagonal structure replaced the previous rectilinear one, corresponding to the current front porch. Additionally, the small element east of the catslide had been extended southward, along with the construction of a new detached building south of the catslide. A long, rectangular building with a glasshouse on its south side had also been erected to the east of the house.

The Ordnance Survey map of 1946 (not reproduced) shows the addition of two small extensions on the western elevation, with no other significant changes noted in later maps.

More recent planning history indicates that the house was altered in 1987, with works to the kitchen and additional modifications to the farm courtyard, necessitating the demolition of two small buildings in that area. Earlier internal changes included the replacement of the central heating system in 1982 and various internal works, including alterations to the dining room fireplace. In 2002, several windows were replaced, including the south and north dormers. In 2003, garden outbuildings and a garden wall were demolished, and a single-storey dining room extension was added at the eastern end of the southern elevation, extending into the catslide. The balcony doors and window were also replaced at this time.



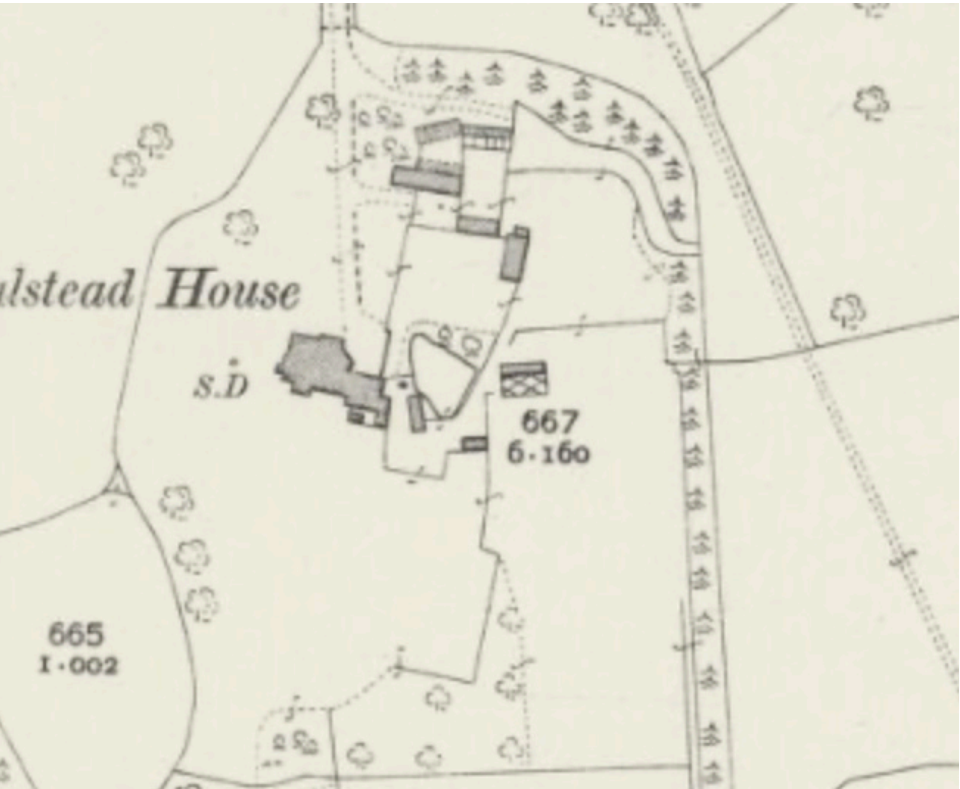
Tithe Map of 1845.



First edition Ordnance Survey map of 1875.



Second edition Ordnance Survey map of 1897.



Third edition Ordnance Survey map of 1910.

Historical development

DEVELOPMENT PHASES

1845

Overlaying the Tithe Map of 1845 with the current OS map suggests that the building elements coloured brown on the map opposite may have been in existence at this time.

Whilst this is considered to be correct for the main east-west range of the house and the catslide, there are questions over the date at which its northern wing was built. The listing description considers the northern wing to be modern, built with the extension to the west, but the map and fabric analysis suggest that it was, in some form, present prior to 1845. Without intrusive archaeological investigation, it is ambiguous and difficult to interpret and it seems likely that a pre-existing structure of one or two storeys was remodelled in the early twentieth century.

Within the courtyard north of the main house, the 1845 map shows buildings in approximately the same positions as the three present structures (garage, shed and Coach House). The map, however, suggests that the southern pair of buildings (corresponding to the shed and Coach House) were formerly larger, with the open shed fully abutting the Coach House and meeting the southeast corner of the garage. The fabric and stylistic evidence indicate that the garage was likely rebuilt as a stable block in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century, and that the Coach House was reconstructed in the mid to late twentieth century.

1875

Differences between the map of 1845 and that of 1875 consist only of:

- the addition of a small structure on the west side of the north wing;
- the rebuilding of a small structure (e.g. shed) to the north of the house; and
- the building of a small structure to the north of the farm courtyard

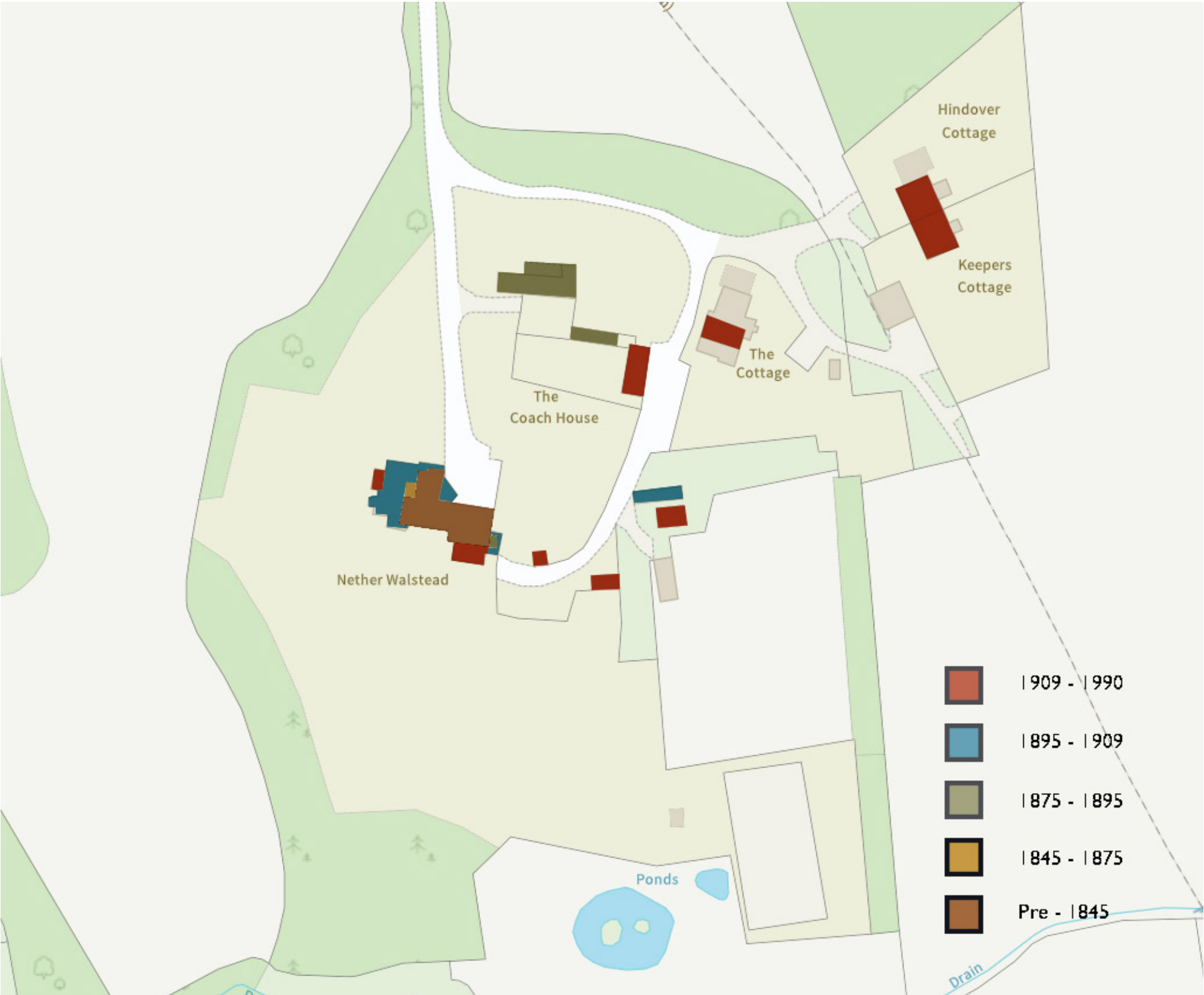
1895

Differences between the map of 1875 and that of 1895 consist of:

- the addition of a square structure to the east of the northern wing, in the location of the current porch;
- creation of a small element to the east side of the catslide;
- likely rebuilding of the courtyard buildings; and
- new agricultural buildings to the north of the courtyard

1909

By 1909 the house had been substantially extended to the west and the new porch constructed between north and east building ranges. A modest addition had been made to the east side of the catslide and a garden structure associated with a glasshouse built in the garden to the east.



Current OS map annotated with assumed building phases

Historical development

DEVELOPMENT PHASES

The accompanying plan has been shaded to distinguish the parts of the building believed to pre-date 1845 (in brown) from those associated with the early twentieth-century phase (in blue). The minor additions visible on the 1875 and 1895 maps appear to have been demolished and replaced during the major renovations of the early twentieth century.

The pre-1845 fabric was constructed in multiple phases, with the eastern half of the east-west range likely built first, in the sixteenth or seventeenth century. In 1725, as indicated by the datestone, a westward extension of similar proportions to the original house was added. It is plausible that the north wing was constructed simultaneously, as suggested by the continuity of the roof structure. If built concurrently, the north wing appears to have been of lower status, being timber-framed in contrast to the masonry construction of the southern range. The absence of windows on its east elevation further suggests that it may have served an ancillary, functional purpose, such as a kitchen, scullery and/or dairy. This wing was extensively modified during the Edwardian phase.

The areas of the building shaded in brown are considered to have greater historical significance than those shaded in blue. The early twentieth-century works are of relatively generic Edwardian design and they have greater capacity for sensitive change.

The existing dining room extension also obscures the catslide roof and diminishes the value of this historic feature as well as the adjacent stair tower.

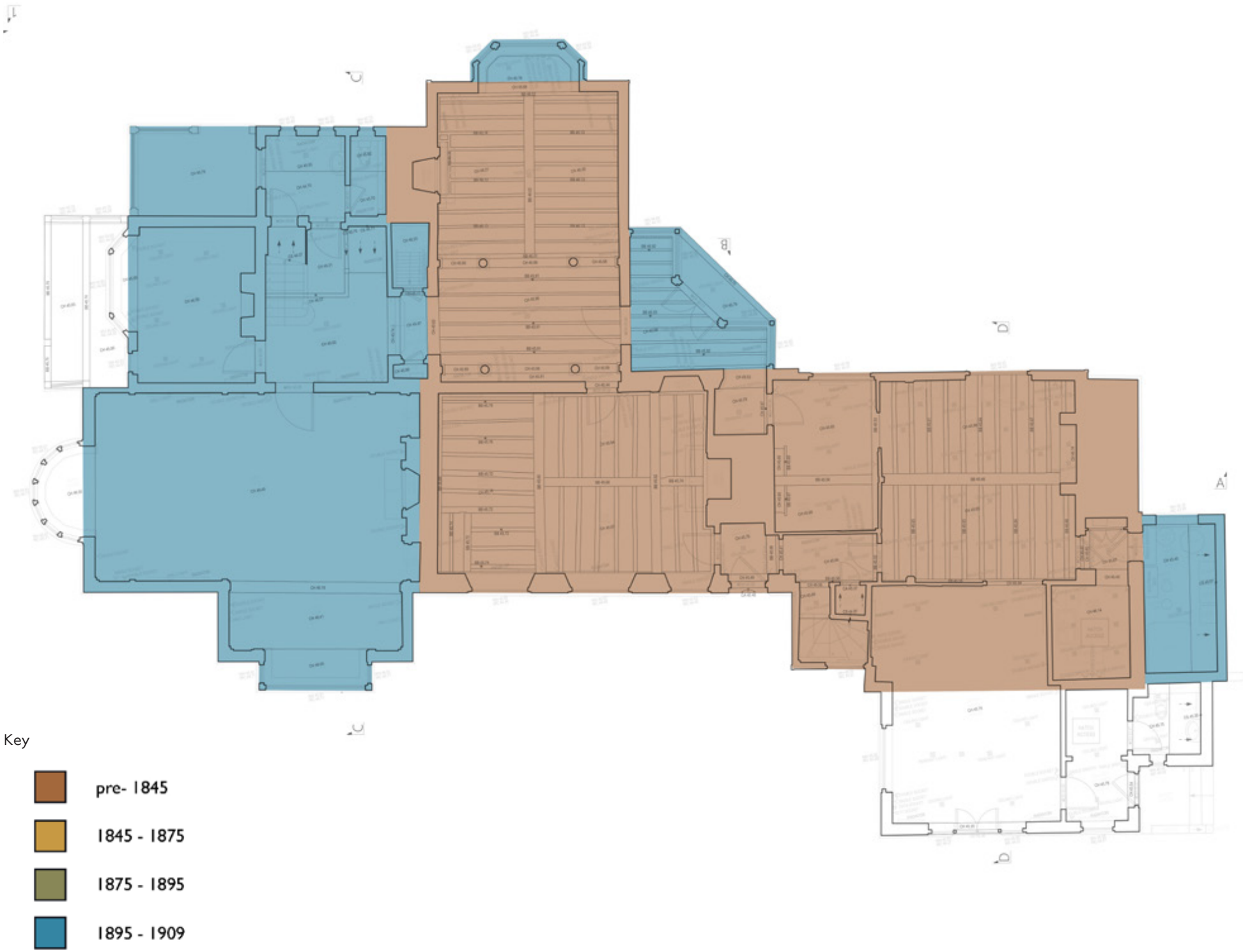
Although the pre-1845 sections were constructed in two or more phases, they are all considered to be of high significance. The design philosophy has been to avoid impacts on this historic fabric and, where possible, to undertake works that better reveal its significance.

Statement of Significance

Nether Walstead is a multi-phase historic farmhouse, its origins traceable to at least the 17th century and possibly earlier. The earliest fabric, forming the eastern two bays between the chimney stacks, survives as a well-preserved example of a small rural holding that later evolved into a more substantial farmstead. Subsequent phases, including the dated 1725 westward extension and the probable contemporaneous north wing, illustrate the incremental growth typical of vernacular farmhouses adapting to changing agricultural needs. These elements retain high evidential, architectural, and historic value.

The house's later history reflects successive waves of occupation by local farming families, followed by wealthier nineteenth-century owners drawn to the area after the arrival of the railway. Its early twentieth-century remodelling introduced an Edwardian extension of modest architectural quality, representing the shift from working farmhouse to country residence. While this phase contributes to an understanding of the building's evolution, it is of lesser significance than the pre-1845 fabric and has greater capacity for sensitive adaptation.

Collectively, Nether Walstead embodies the layered social and architectural history of a rural Sussex farmhouse transformed over time. Its significance lies in its early fabric, its legible development, and its contribution to the historic landscape.



Ground floor plan with pre-1845 and early C20 phases shaded

Design intention

The applicants have developed their brief with architect Graham Morrison of Allies and Morrison, working in partnership with George & James Architects. The design approach seeks to improve the functionality of the house while respecting its historic character, architectural integrity, and spatial logic. The proposed works follow a detailed assessment of the building, its evolution, and opportunities for sensitive improvement.

1. Entrance Relocation

The current two-storey porch is unsympathetic in form and scale and the entrance position is too far to the east, meaning a circuitous route to the principal circulation space of the main stair hall. The proposal is to re-open the principal entrance within the western addition, creating a direct relationship with the hall and stair and fulfilling the intended role of the 20th-century extension. This will improve the plan, reduce visual competition with the historic core, and create an entrance more appropriate to its scale.

The entrance will be retained in the current location to preserve the legibility of the historic farmhouse. The upper storey of the porch will be removed to form a modest, more proportionate entrance that better reveals the historic elevation.

2. Restoration of Catslide

It is proposed to remove the dining room addition to the south of the kitchen, built in the later 20th century, as well as the adjacent lean-to elements on the east side, enabling the restoration of the sweeping slope of the historic catslide. This represents a significant heritage gain.

3. Billiard Room

The applicants wish to accommodate a billiard/pool room. Although the existing dining room extension could have been adapted, it is considered preferable for the building’s historic integrity to remove this later structure, reinstate the catslide roof, and locate the billiard room within a detached pavilion in a less sensitive and less prominent position.

4. Western Extension

An extension is proposed at the western, early 20th century end of the house to create a more coherent and accessible layout. This will allow the kitchen to be relocated, improving connections with family living spaces. The established character of the western extension will be respected and has guide the form of its additions.

By removing kitchen functions from the oldest part of the house, its historic plan form and significance can be more clearly appreciated.

5. Internal layout

Minor internal adjustments are proposed to refine the organisation of rooms while maintaining the historic fabric and established structural layout.

6. Attic

The house contains a very large loft with existing attic accommodation. A further portion of this space is proposed to be converted to provide a home office, without altering the external form or affecting significant historic fabric.

7. Modifications to Courtyard Buildings

It is proposed to convert the existing garage/ store to a garage/ gym/ studio. This provides an opportunity to remove modern garage doors and improve the overall appearance of the building with fenestration that is suited to its traditional service character. A car barn of similar character is proposed south of the garden to the Coach House, complementing the character of the service building group.

Design Statement

Nether Walstead is a listed building and the primary objective is to conserve and enhance its historic value through a sensitive programme of repairs and alterations, rectifying work previously undertaken that was harmful to its historic character and appearance. Closely linked to this are proposals for modifications and extensions that will adapt the building to the needs of its current owners. The proposals have been informed by historic research and archaeological investigation.

Those parts of the building that are oldest have the highest level of significance, and the greatest attention has been paid to conserving historic fabric and restoring its character and appearance. The house underwent a major phase of alteration and remodelling in the early 20th century. While this fabric is not of the same level of significance as the 17th- and 18th-century parts of the farmhouse, it has more modest heritage value in describing the process of aggrandisement to a country house of some status during the Edwardian period. We have therefore sought to retain the character and appearance of this work, whilst recognising that it has greater scope for sensitive change.

Work undertaken in the late 20th century is not considered to be of heritage value and has, instead, caused harm to the building’s legibility and character. Most notable is the dining room addition to the rear catslide. This large, hipped-roofed and unsympathetic extension has overwhelmed the simplicity of the original roof. Its purpose was to increase family space at the kitchen end of the house, but, as with many such large additions, the result left the centre of the plan with reduced daylight and, in this case, made the tower stairs feel more remote.

The early 20th-century western extension also had some negative impacts on the reading and functionality of the historic dwelling. It was almost as though a semi-detached house was added to the west. The position of the new stair hall and its associated entrance (now a cloakroom) shows an intention to move the main entrance to this part of the house. However, the existing front door was also retained and emphasised with a large new porch. This lack of resolution caused the plan to become confused and extended.

Internally, the early 20th-century works exhibit a muscular Edwardian classicism; externally, the character is mock-Tudor. This did not relate to the historic structure but followed a standard building pattern familiar in early 20th-century suburbs. Its modest heritage significance is recognised, although its appearance has already been affected by the addition of heavy bay windows, cement-rendered infill panels and overblown bargeboards. Some elements of value remain, but there is much to improve.

The project for Nether Walstead seeks to address the consequences of these

past interventions, helping to activate the western part of the plan as originally intended, with access into the stair hall. Careful alterations and additions will provide a unified composition that respects the historic building. A new entrance canopy is proposed to give emphasis to the correct part of the western addition, corresponding to its entrance hall, thereby clarifying the plan. Moving the principal entrance to the western side will improve understanding of the plan once inside. This new connection to the main hall and stair will create a more coherent first impression and provide clearer access to the principal rooms.

With the circulation resolved, the ground floor of a revised western extension will connect a new kitchen/dining space to the stair hall, with a pantry and laundry linked to a new back door and porch. Upstairs, this extension will supplement the main bedroom suite and link the children’s bedrooms to a single landing. The external composition of the extension will repeat and extend the existing roof forms but, being less visually assertive, will contribute positively to the overall composition.

At the eastern end, the oversized hipped extension will be removed and the form of the original roof restored. The existing kitchen units will be removed and the historic space will become a second living room and the small winding stair in the tower will lead to the guest room and a new second-floor studio. Both stairs will then appropriately serve the rooms they connect, and the house will become easier to use as a family home.

Separate from the house, three distinct zinc-roofed elements sharing a common architectural language will be placed beyond the main plan. The first is the open porch signalling the front door. The second, at the eastern end, is a billiard room overlooking the pond and discreetly nestled into the landscape. The third is a pavilion adjacent to the existing swimming pool, housing plant and providing changing facilities for guests.

The immediate garden design will focus on the new entrance and settle the project into the landscape. A new formal garden will replace the gravel car park as the setting for the oldest part of the house. At the western end, a new yard created by extending the yew hedge will provide a clothes-drying area, space for bins, and a herb garden. To the south, a series of York stone terraces will acknowledge the chronology of additions to the house.

The outbuildings will be restored and reused. The existing garage and store will be partly converted into a studio and gym overlooking the main gate. A new car barn with bicycle and garden stores will complete the entrance courtyard. Finally, a series of new gates (in separate applications) will clarify the boundary, improve security, and give greater relevance to the long driveway from the main road.

These proposals are based on a critical analysis of the building’s history. They are intended to respect the listed building, clarifying aspects of its plan that were left unresolved following the early 20th-century extension and rectifying later, harmful work. Overall, the proposals seek to make this an enjoyable and more easily managed family home, ensuring that its historic values are safeguarded for generations to come.

Proposals

SITE PLAN

The proposals maintain the established pattern of buildings across the site while introducing a series of carefully considered improvements that reinforce the historic hierarchy and enhance the setting of the listed farmhouse. The existing garage and storage building will remain in its current form and position, with the only alteration being the removal of a modern lean-to on its north elevation, allowing the simplicity of the original structure to be better appreciated.

To the south side of the Coach House garden, a new car barn is proposed. Its siting relates naturally to the existing cluster of ancillary buildings and respects the traditional hierarchy between the principal house and its service structures. The design is modest and deferential, intended to read as a continuation of the established group.

On the east side of the site, the remains of the glasshouse and outbuilding are to be rebuilt on their existing footprints. This returns a historic function to this part of the grounds and preserves the long-standing use and character of the eastern garden enclosure. The smaller outbuildings immediately to the south of this area will be retained.

A swimming-pool pavilion is proposed to the north of the existing pool. This small, low-key building provides plant and changing accommodation and has been positioned to sit comfortably within the landscape, separate from the main house and visually recessive.

Adaptations to the main house are described in detail in the following sections, but, in summary, they focus on improving legibility, restoring historic forms, and resolving areas of past harm while retaining the building’s architectural integrity.

Across the wider grounds, landscape interventions are modest and sympathetic. They are designed to reinforce the character of the historic building, improve the relationship between the house and its immediate setting, and settle the proposed buildings into the garden without altering the essential organisation of the site.

Overall, the proposals preserve the existing layout of the site while introducing sensitive, well-judged improvements that sustain its historic character and enhance its long-term use.



Proposals

NORTH ELEVATION

The proposed changes to the north elevation are designed to conserve and better reveal historic fabric while introducing new elements that are deliberately modest, discreet and clearly subservient to the character of the house. A key benefit is the removal of the poorly conceived first-floor section of the existing porch. Its removal will expose the brickwork behind and restore a more appropriate appearance consistent with this part of the building’s 18th-century character.

The proposed billiard room, situated to the east (left) is linked by a small glazed flat-roofed element and reads as a modest, detached pavilion. Its position, set back from the elevation and within a heavily vegetated part of the site, ensures that it has minimal visual impact, as demonstrated in the photomontage which follows. Additional benefits arise from the removal of early 20th-century lean-to structures attached to the left side of the elevation.

Above the retained ground-floor of the entrance porch, a new dormer is proposed to match the existing pair to the east. Aligned with the window openings below, it continues the established compositional rhythm.

Minor changes are proposed to the timber-clad wing that projects north. The oversized early 20th-century bargeboards will be removed, providing a more restrained detail more in keeping with the character of the historic core. The cills of the ground floor windows will be lowered to provide better balance to the upper-

storey windows.

To its west, a new open porch is proposed to express the entrance into the western wing. This location was intended to serve as the primary entrance when the extension was built in the early 20th century, though it was never fully realised and the hall was later used as a cloakroom. The new porch resolves this ambiguity, giving clear legibility to the principal entrance.

A modest extension to the western wing is designed in a manner that reflects the established materials and detailing of this part of the house. It forms a natural and coherent continuation of the architectural language and avoids harm to the historic building. Indeed, it provides a more ordered and sympathetic resolution to an area previously disrupted by later bay additions.

The western wing will be extended continuing the same building form and materials. The extension is restrained in its design, ensuring that the 17th and 18th century parts of the house remain dominant.

Overall, the proposals to the north elevation are considered to offer clear heritage benefits by improving legibility, enhancing the setting of historic fabric, and sustaining the building’s architectural character without harm.



North Elevation as Proposed

Proposals



Existing view of east end of north elevation

Proposals



Proposed view of east end of north elevation - the billiard room is barely visible

Proposals

EAST ELEVATION

The proposals deliver clear heritage benefits to the appearance of the east elevation. The design is more compact and exhibits greater compositional integrity than the current arrangement.

Much of the historic character of this elevation is overlain and confused by later additions: the upper part of the front porch, the lean-tos to the left and the large dining room extension. It is proposed for these to be removed, re-establishing the historic appearance of this side of the building.

The billiard room stands in the foreground, it is a low, lightweight structure that clearly reads as a later addition that does not detract from the appreciation of the historic building. The presence of vegetation and the pond means that this addition will not be viewed from this vantage point. The photomontages show how little it will impact the appearance of the historic building.



East Elevation as Proposed

Proposals

WEST ELEVATION

As with the east elevation, the original west elevation has been altered by later additions such as the bay windows. The proposed extension continues the established built form and Arts & Crafts character but in a more ordered and less visually cluttered manner. The composition of roof forms is retained in a respectful way, and a recessed porch introduces depth and formal articulation. The simplified, more controlled design reduces the visual busy-ness of the existing elevation, enabling the adjacent historic elements to be understood and appreciated in a more coherent relationship.



West Elevation as Proposed

Proposals

SOUTH ELEVATION

The south elevation of the historic farmhouse has been most affected by twentieth-century change. Additions at both the east and west ends have altered the legibility of the original form. To the east, the dining-room extension, with its bulky hipped roof, cuts across the historic catslide, substantially changing the character and appearance of this part of the house. 20th century lean-to structures also occupy the east side. To the west, the early 20th-century wing, discussed earlier, reads as a separate building, like a separate semi-detached house. Its design is not sensitive to the character of the historic farmhouse, and is similar to many mock-Tudor examples of its period.

The proposal removes the dining-room extension and lean-tos from the east end of the south elevation, allowing the simple slope of the historic catslide to be restored. This provides a clear heritage benefit and improves the overall appearance of the elevation. Consideration was given to using the dining-room extension for the billiard table; however, the heritage impact of the extension would have remained, and it was considered preferable for this key part of the historic building to be restored. The billiard room is therefore accommodated in a modest pavilion positioned to the east and linked by a diminutive glazed connection. As may be seen in the photomontages, this part of the site is vegetated, and the pavilion will be set back and largely concealed from view. Its design is restrained and will not detract from the character of the farmhouse or be confused with historic fabric.

The early 20-century west wing is proposed to be modestly extended. The new work follows the established form and proportions of the existing structure. The current half-timbering is visually assertive and sits uneasily against the calmer character of the historic house. It is therefore proposed to remove the half-timbering and cementitious infill panels and to re-render both the existing structure and the new extension in lime render, a natural, historically appropriate finish that will sit more harmoniously alongside the main house. The resulting form is intended to be restrained and well-proportioned, taking its fenestration cues from the existing building while reading as clearly subordinate. This is judged to provide a meaningful heritage improvement.

Other changes include the removal of an intrusive soil vent pipe from the central part of the elevation and the introduction of a small dormer window to the left of the stair tower. The dormer matches the proportions and detailing of the dormer to the right and allows better use of the generous roof space.



South Elevation as Proposed

Proposals



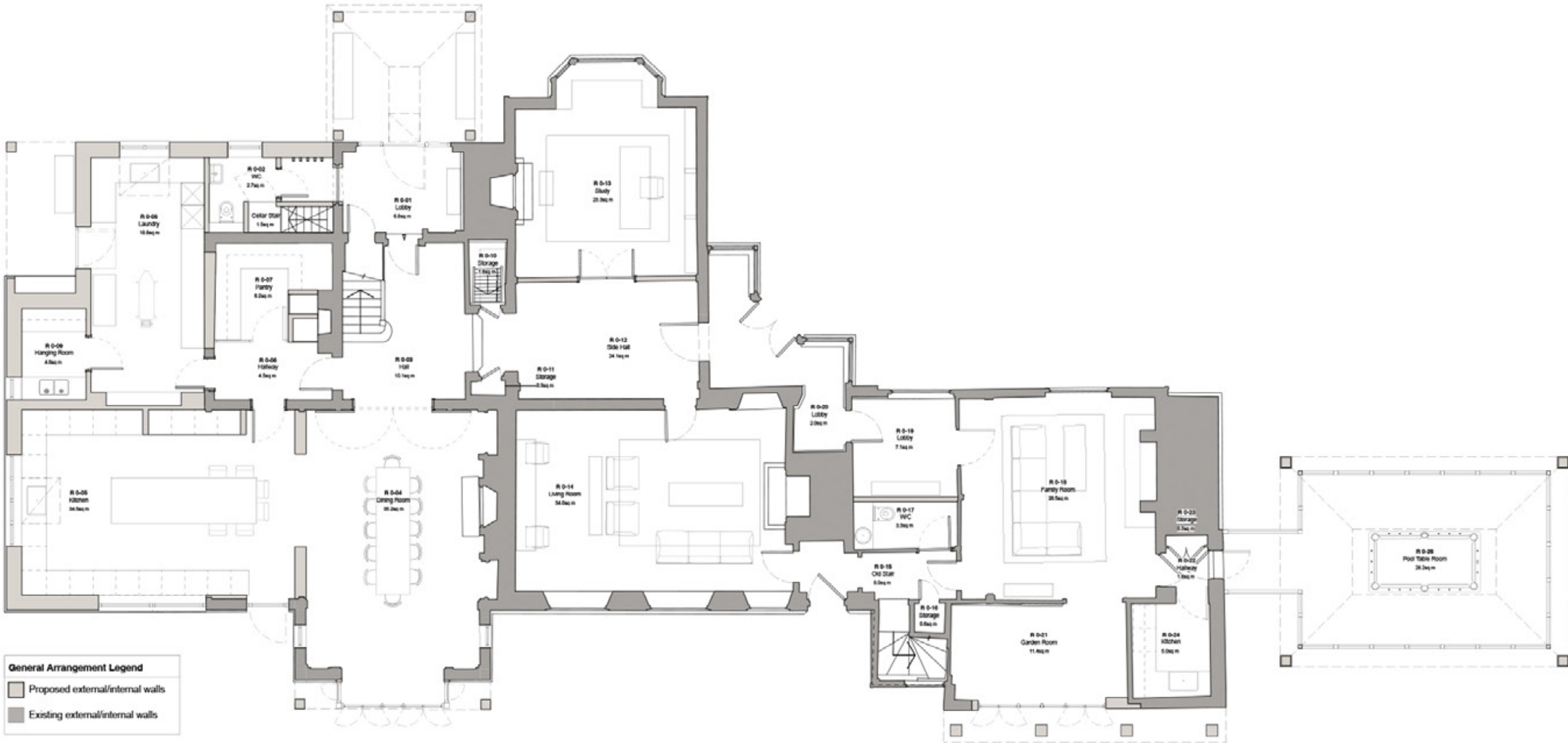
Existing view of east end of south elevation

Proposals



Proposed view of east end of south elevation - the billiard room is set back and recessive

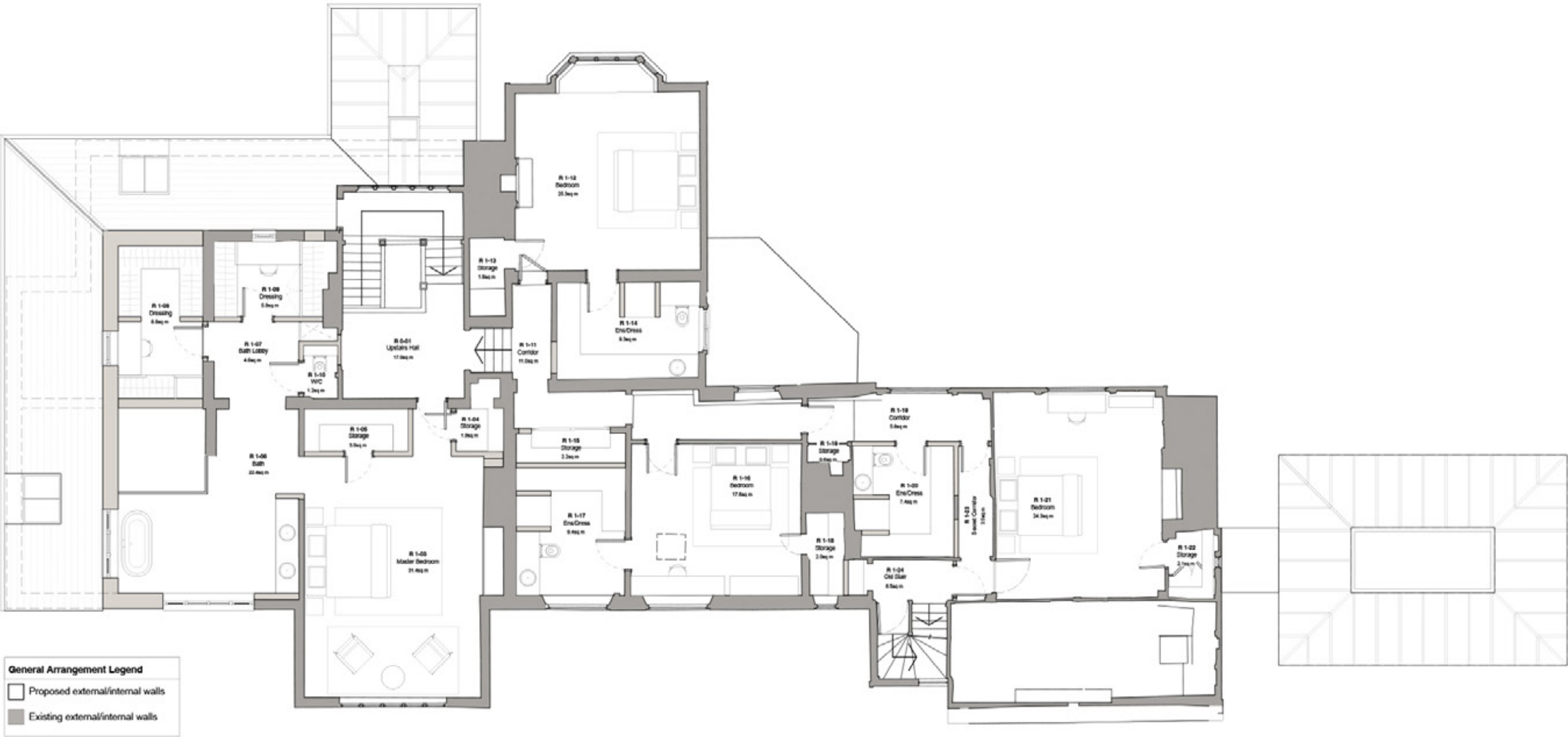
Proposals



2 House-Ground Floor-Proposed
Scale: 1:100

Ground Floor Plan as Proposed

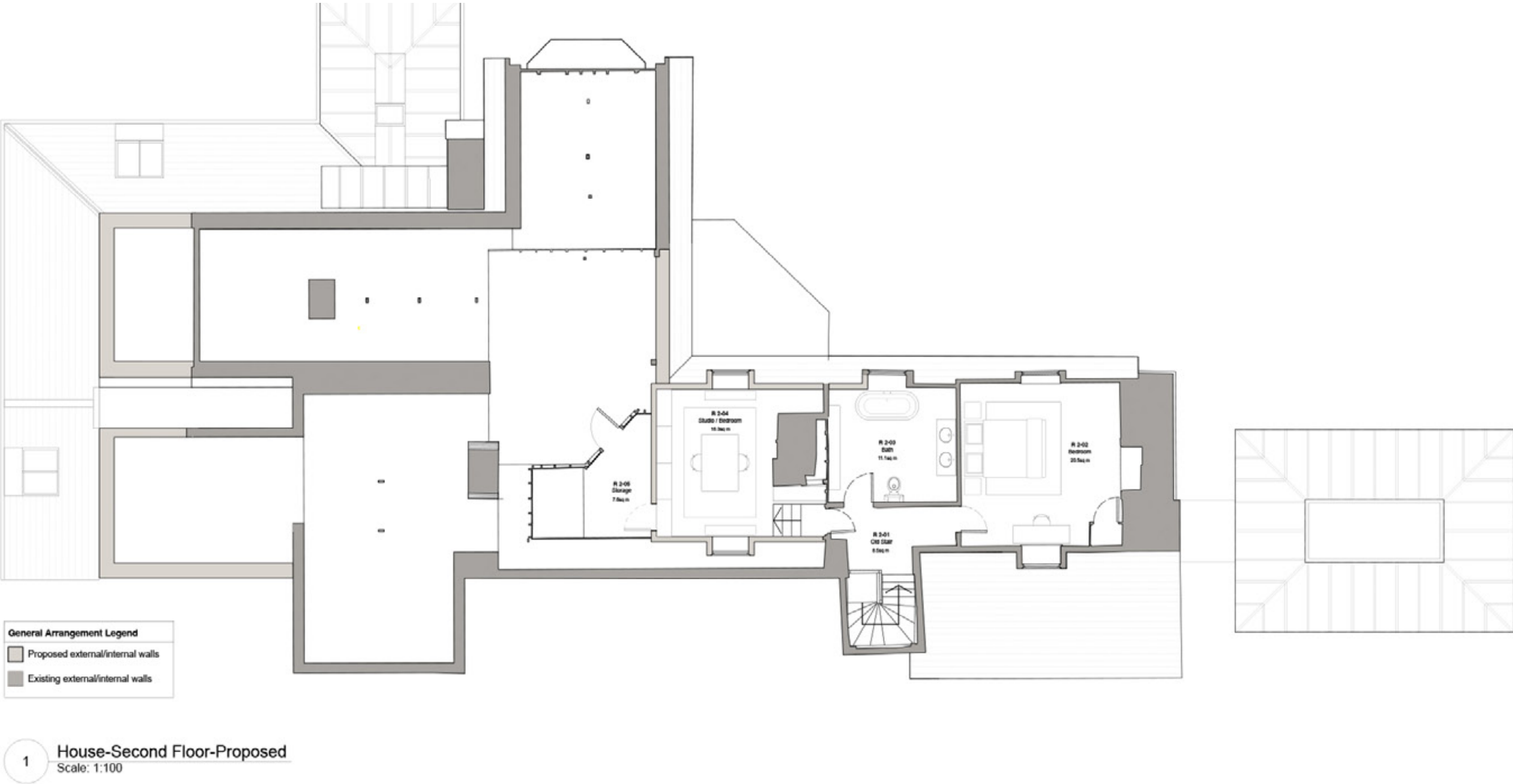
Proposals



3 House-First Floor-Proposed
Scale: 1:100

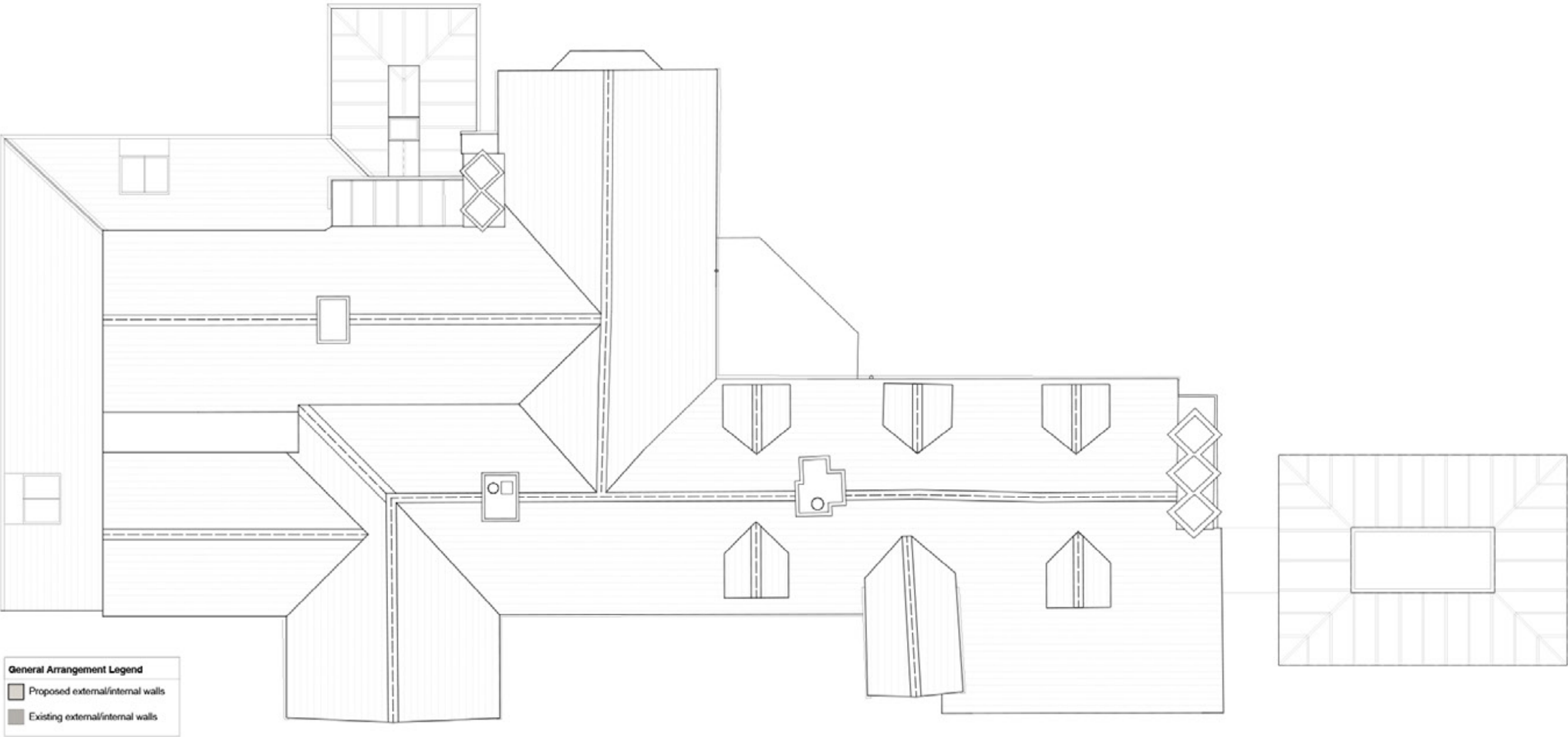
First Floor Plan as Proposed

Proposals



Second Floor Plan as Proposed

Proposals



General Arrangement Legend

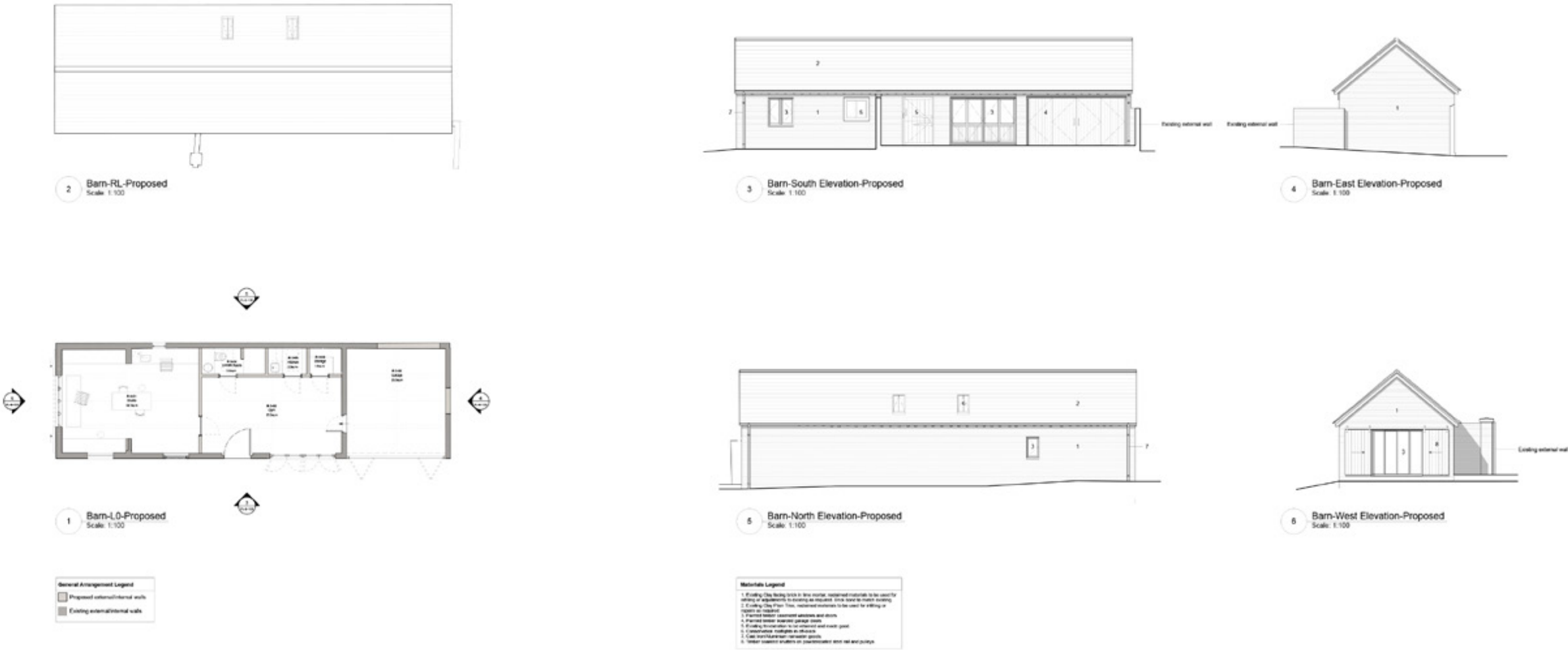
Proposed external/internal walls

Existing external/internal walls

2 House-Roof-Proposed
Scale: 1:100

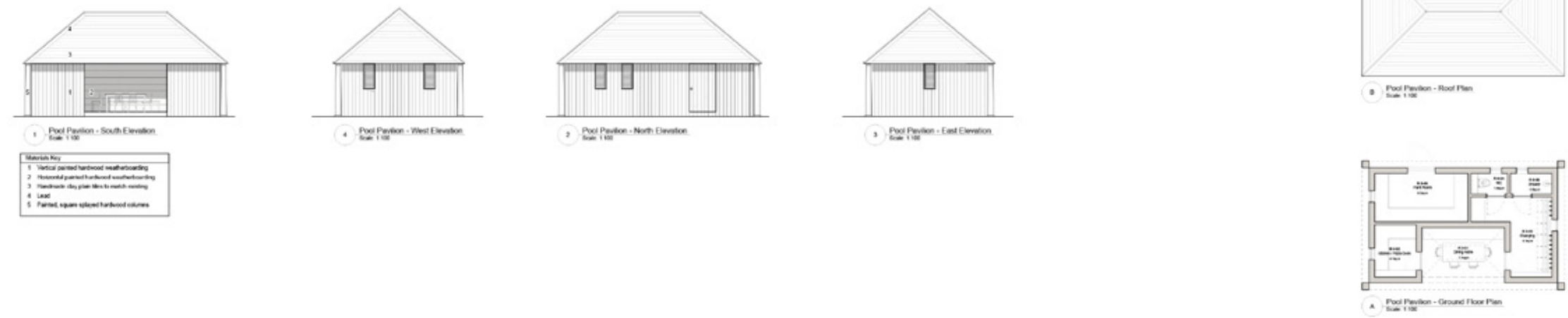
Roof Plan as Proposed

Proposals

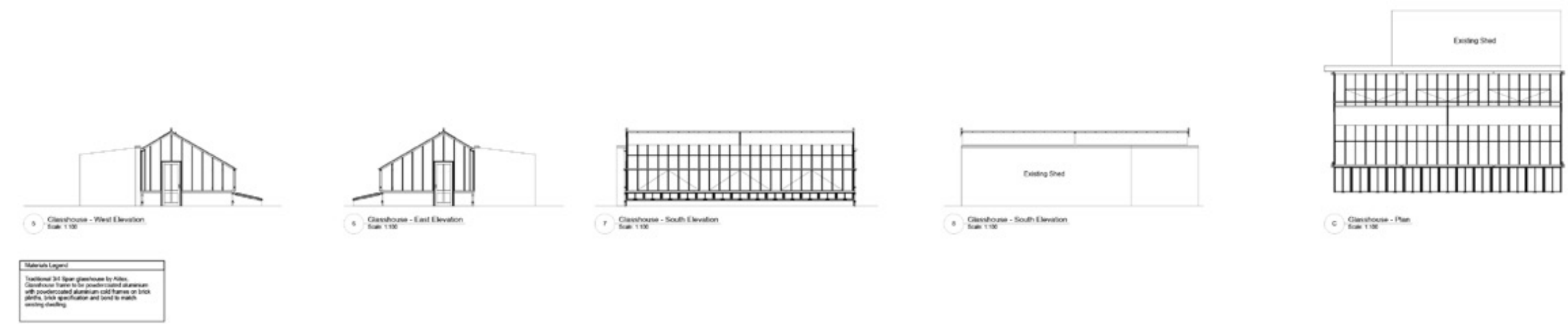


Garage/ Gym/ Studio Plans and Elevations as Proposed

Proposals

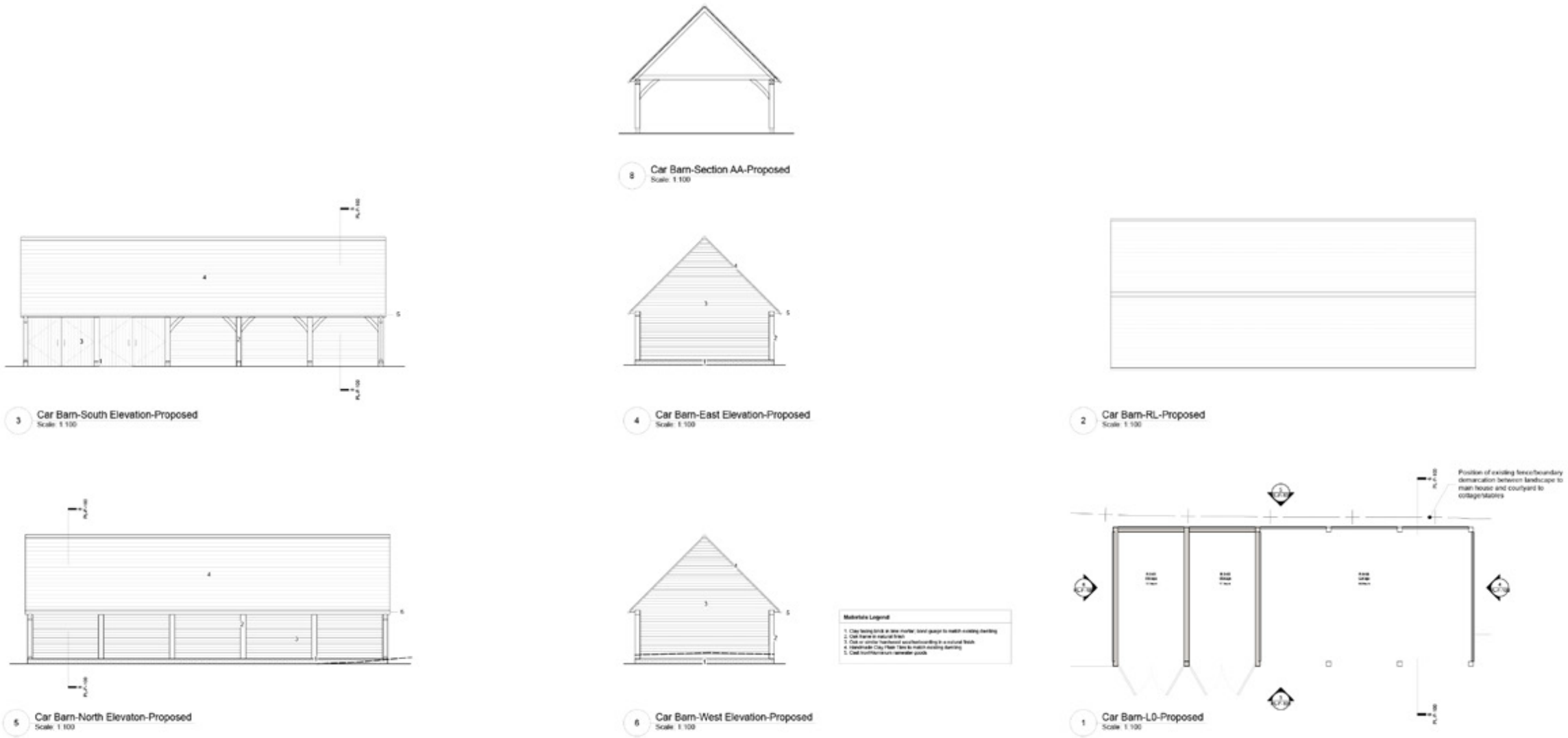


Swimming Pool Pavillion - Proposed Elevations & Floorplans



Swimming Pool Pavillion and Glasshouse/ Outbuilding as Proposed

Proposals



Car Barn as Proposed

Impact assessment

FEATURE	HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE	PROPOSED WORKS	JUSTIFICATION
GROUND FLOOR			
01. Dining Room extension	None, late C20 addition	Demolish and restore catslide roof and south elevation.	Dining room extension is of no heritage significance and harms an appreciation of the historic building.
02. Lean-to additions to east elevation	Low, early and late C20 additions of basic construction	Demolish, restore elevation and construct link to billiard room pavilion.	The lean-to elements are of basic, utilitarian character and do not contribute to the significance of the historic building.
03. Billiard Room	Link connects to historic east elevation	Construct a lightweight glazed link and pavilion	The proposal is less impactful than the lean-tos and the dining room extension. The link makes minimal connection with the historic fabric, enabling the historic elevation to be restored. The pavilion is set away from the historic building and does not adversely affect its appearance or setting.
04. Existing Kitchen and Utility	Floor and fittings are C21	Remove fittings and floor covering	No heritage value, removal of modern elements allows historic character to be restored.
05. Walls in Snug/ corridor, west of existing kitchen	Infill panel is late C20, of low significance	Create doorway in partition wall between snug and corridor by stair tower.	The framing indicates there was previously a doorway in this position, which will be re-opened.
		Divide space with new partition wall to form WC.	New partition wall is additive and could be removed in the future without impact on heritage fabric.
06. Columns in north wing	Room is of high significance C18, while columns are of low significance early C20	Low, installed in early C20 remodelling.	The columns aggrandise the space in a way that is out of keeping with the historic farmhouse character.
07. Partition wall in north wing	Room is of high significance C18	Create partition wall dividing existing room into two.	The change in the ceiling and position of the fireplace indicate that this room was previously divided into two. The proposal therefore restores a previous configuration.
08. Bay window to north wing	Low, early C20	Lower cills	The fenestration in the north wing is contemporary with other early C20 work. Lowering the cills improves their proportion and amount of light.
09. New entrance to west of north wing	Low, early C20	Construct new entrance porch leading to stair hall	It is evident that this part of the house was originally designed as a new entrance hall in the early twentieth century but the function ceased with the creation of a cloakroom/ WC. Since the extension of the house, this is the logical position for a front door, leading to the stair hall and principal rooms.
10. West wing	Low, early C20	Extend and remodel	The existing western extension is of early C20 date and has greater capacity for change than the more historic parts. It will be extended and modified to achieve better integration.

Impact Assessment



01. Dining Room extension



02. Lean-to additions to east elevation



03. Billiard room



04. Existing kitchen



05. Walls in Snug, west of existing kitchen



06. Columns in north wing
07. Partition wall in north wing

Impact Assessment



08. Bay window to north wing



09. Entrance to west of north wing



10. West wing

Impact assessment

FEATURE	HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE	PROPOSED WORKS	JUSTIFICATION
FIRST FLOOR			
11. Cupboard to easternmost bedroom	Low, C21	Remove cupboard	Cupboard is modern and its removal aids the interpretation of the historic room.
12. Bathroom to the west of the above	Low, C21	Removal of bathroom and reconfiguration of partition walls.	Partition walls to the bathroom are modern. Historic fabric will not be impacted.
13. WC to west of stair tower	Medium	Remove WC and partition, form partition wall	The small partition to be removed is considered mid to late-19th century. The new partition wall is removable if required in the future without impact to historic fabric.
14. Balcony over porch and French doors	Low, C20	Remove and restore	Removal of upper part of porch enhances appearance and heritage value of historic building.
15. Bathroom in north wing	Medium	Close doorway to west and create new doorway to north	West wall of bathroom is considered to date from C20 remodelling, with north wall earlier. Relocation of doorway is a minor change to adapt the space to contemporary use.
16. Single bedroom south of north wing	Medium	Remove wall to corridor. Change to bathroom and store, creation of doorway to east bedroom and add partition walls	The walls to be affected are considered mid to late-19th century. Partition wall is removable if required. Changes are modest alterations to adapt the space to contemporary use.
17. West wing	Low	Extend and alter	The existing western extension is of early C20 date and has greater capacity for change than the more historic parts. It will be extended and modified to achieve better integration.
SECOND FLOOR			
18. Attic west of stair tower	High	Convert and install dormers	Modest increase in attic accommodation, converted in manner that minimises impacts on roof structure, matching existing dormers.

Impact Assessment



11. Cupboard in eastern bedroom



12. Bathroom to the west (of easternmost bedroom)



13. WC to west of stair tower



14. Balcony over porch



15. Bathroom in north wing



16. Single bedroom south of north wing

Impact assessment

FEATURE	HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE	PROPOSED WORKS	JUSTIFICATION
GARAGE/ STORE			
19. Garage doors, lintel, rainwater goods	Low, late C21	Remove and reinstate new	Elements are modern and their replacement with better quality elements delivers enhancements.
20. Rear lean-to	Low, late C21	Remove and make good	Element is modern and removal represents an enhancement.
21. Window openings	Medium, late C19	Create new window openings in south and north elevation and widen that in west elevation.	Windows are of appropriate character and appearance. That on the north side re-uses a blocked opening.
22. Internal wall	Medium, late C19	Remove wall, retaining nibs	Wall to be removed to enable proposed use of space. Nibs retained for historic legibility.
23. Partition walls	Medium, late C19	Install new partitions	Install partition walls. Position of partitions respects structural bays and is reversible.



South elevation



West elevation



East elevation and lean-to

Impact assessment

Since the pre-application submission, the design proposal has been substantially altered to take into account the advice of the Conservation Officer and the additional archaeological investigation undertaken by TJC Heritage LTD. The proposals minimise impact to historic fabric, directing changes to parts of the building that are already altered and of more recent date.

North Elevation

The proposals deliver clear heritage benefits by removing intrusive later additions and refining the architectural coherence of the north elevation. The most significant improvement is the removal of the upper storey of the existing porch, which restores the intended form, reveals historic brickwork, and reinstates an appearance appropriate to the 18th-century fabric.

To the east, the billiard room is designed as a modest, detached pavilion, set back and screened by vegetation to ensure minimal visual impact. The removal of early-20th-century lean-tos further simplifies and improves the composition.

A new dormer above the retained ground-floor porch aligns with existing openings, reinforcing the established rhythm. Minor refinements to the projecting timber-clad wing, reduced bargeboards and lowered cills, achieve better proportion and a calmer expression.

To the west, a new open porch clarifies the intended entrance to the early-20th-century wing, while a modest extension continues its established forms and materials without challenging the primacy of the earlier house.

Overall, the works improve legibility, enhance the setting of historic fabric, and sustain the architectural character of the listed building without harm.

East Elevation

The proposals significantly improve the east elevation by removing later additions that currently obscure its historic form. Their removal reinstates a simpler, more coherent composition and better reveals the building’s earlier character. The new billiard room reads as a modest, lightweight pavilion in the foreground. Its low height, restrained design and screening by vegetation by the pond ensure it has minimal visual impact, as illustrated in the photomontages.

West Elevation

Later additions, including bay windows, have disrupted the legibility of the original west elevation. The proposed extension continues the established Arts & Crafts form but in a more ordered and visually restrained way. Roof forms are respected, and a recessed back porch adds clarity and depth. The simplified design reduces the existing clutter, improving coherence and allows the relationship to the historic fabric to be more clearly understood.

South Elevation

The south elevation has been most heavily altered by 20th-century works, particularly the dining-room extension and lean-tos that obscure the historic catslide roof, and the assertive mock-Tudor timbering of the west wing. Removing these elements restores the clarity of the original form and brings immediate heritage benefits, particularly through reinstating the uninterrupted catslide. The billiard room is proposed in a discreet pavilion set within vegetation, linked by a minimal glazed element and visually subordinate to the farmhouse.

The west wing will be modestly extended and its half-timbering removed, with both old and new work finished in lime render to sit more harmoniously with the historic house. Additional refinements, including removing an intrusive SVP and adding a small matching dormer, further enhance legibility and preserve the building’s character.

Ground Floor

The most significant ground floor alterations involve the removal of later, incongruous additions and the restoration of traditional features. The dining room extension, a late 20th-century addition with no heritage significance, will be demolished, allowing for the restoration of the catslide roof and south elevation. This change is crucial as the extension has diminished the appreciation of the historic character of the building. Similarly, the lean-to additions on the east elevation, characterised by their basic and utilitarian construction, will be removed to restore the elevation and allow for the construction of a link-detached billiard room pavilion. These lean-to elements do not contribute meaningfully to the building’s historic value.

Internal modifications, such as creating partition walls, will be executed with sensitivity to the existing fabric. The partition within the north wing restore its historical configuration. The columns appear out of character with the farmhouse’s original design and will be removed.

The upper part of the existing two-storey porch, is considered to detract from the building’s historic value, and will be removed.

In the early twentieth century, a new entrance was created with a lobby located north of the main stair hall and a porch to its west. However, this configuration was never fully adopted; the lobby was later repurposed as a cloakroom, and the external door was sealed shut. Although intended to serve as the primary entrance, this plan was never fully realised, as it lacked the necessary landscape design, such as a forecourt, and was not put into regular use. The proposed new entrance porch aligns with the original vision for this part of the house, restoring the logical entrance sequence and enhancing accessibility. The proposal therefore completes and resolves a design that is already largely in place. The new open porch is legible as a new addition.

The extension and alterations the west wing are modest and in keeping with the existing structure.

First Floor

Alterations at first-floor level largely involve reconfiguring non-historic partitions to improve circulation. The works avoid intervention into high-value historic elements, with only minor changes to areas of lesser significance.

The removal of the French doors and balcony over the porch represent a clear heritage benefit.

Second Floor

On the second floor, the conversion of the attic west of the stair tower with the installation of dormers is planned to be carried out whilst minimising impact on the building’s historic fabric and character. The dormer designs are historically

appropriate, thereby enhancing the attic accommodation while respecting the building’s appearance.

Courtyard Buildings

The proposed conversion of the existing garage/store to a combined garage, gym, and studio represents a clear opportunity to enhance both its appearance and its contribution to the wider group of service buildings. The removal of the modern garage doors, together with the introduction of new joinery of a more appropriate character, will replace visually poor modern elements with those that better reflect the building’s traditional service role. The removal of the modern north lean-to further improves the legibility of the original structure by removing an intrusive, low-significance accretion.

New window openings on the south and north elevations, and the modest widening of an existing opening to the west, will provide functionality while retaining the existing character. Internally, the removal of an internal wall, while retaining nibs, will allow more efficient use of the space while still preserving evidence of the building’s historic plan form. New partition walls are lightweight and reversible and have been positioned within existing structural bays, ensuring that the intervention does not diminish the building’s legibility.

Taken together, the works amount to a modest and sensitive adaptation of the ancillary structure. They improve its appearance, remove modern visual clutter, and sustain its traditional relationship with the listed farmhouse.

Site and Setting

Across the site, the proposals maintain the established hierarchy of buildings while introducing a series of restrained and carefully considered improvements. The pattern of ancillary structures remains legible and coherent, with changes focused on removing modern intrusions, reinstating historic forms, and making efficient use of existing structures.

The introduction of a new car barn to the south of the Coach House garden reinforces the grouping and functional identity of the service buildings. Its siting is informed by historic maps, which show that there was previously a building in this position. It relates to the character of the historic outbuildings, strengthening the overall arrangement rather than competing with it.

To the east of the site, the rebuilding of the ruinous glasshouse and associated outbuilding represents a conservation-led intervention that restores a long-standing functional element of the garden.

The swimming-pool pavilion is modest in form and is positioned to sit quietly within the landscape, north of the existing pool. Its scale ensures it does not intrude on views of the farmhouse or disrupt the hierarchy of built elements.

Landscape interventions are limited and have been designed to strengthen the historic setting rather than impose a new character. Pathways, planting, and garden structures remain aligned with the established grain of the site, helping to integrate new buildings while maintaining the spatial qualities that define the farmhouse and its immediate surroundings.

Planning Statement

PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

A previous scheme was submitted for pre-application advice and feedback received in December 2024.

The main planning considerations were:

- Protection of Countryside
- Design and Character
- Impact on Listed Buildings
- Parking provision
- Impact on neighbouring amenities
- Trees Impact

Protection of Countryside

Given the nature of the proposal in relation to existing established dwellings, the works proposed were deemed in character with the rural area.

Design and Character

It was noted that:

- The proposed relocated front porch was considered acceptable.
- A more modest and subservient single storey front extension in line with DG50 would be preferred.
- The design of the remodelling and extension of the west wing was considered to unbalance the appearance of the dwelling.
- The design of the billiard room extension was considered to unbalance the dwelling and it was thought that it should read as an outbuilding.
- Proposals for the rear elevation were considered acceptable.
- The proposals for the courtyard buildings were generally considered to be acceptable, demonstrating compliance with DP15 of the Mid Sussex District Plan (DPC4 of District Plan Review) as adapted for residential usage.
- The long entrance porch to the gym/studio/garage was considered out of character.
- The position of the carport and plant room was considered too prominent and it was suggested that it be relocated to the east.
- The principle of new entrance gates was accepted.
- Modifications to the driveway would require additional justification.

Impact on Listed Buildings

It was noted that:

- The application should be informed by a historic building survey, which

should be carried out by a qualified and experienced historic building archaeologist.

- The removal of the existing kitchen extension to the rear of the building and restoration of a catslide roof has the potential to enhance this aspect of the special interest of the listed building, subject to detail and to careful preservation of any remaining historic fabric to the elevation below the catslide.
- The removal of 19th/early 20th century lean-to was accepted, with the potential to better reveal the much more significant chimney, subject to findings of historic building survey.
- The construction of a new billiard room to the eastern elevation of the house was considered to overwhelm the historic core, conceal the chimneystack and be visually prominent.
- The remodelling and extension of the west wing was considered contentious, unbalancing the relationship between the early house and its modern additions.
- Some heritage value was attributed to the Edwardian ‘Arts and Crafts’ style additions to the house and its remodelling was considered to prevent an appreciation of this phase of development.
- The existing porch and first floor balcony were considered to detract from the appearance of the façade of the building and its removal and replacement was supported.
- The proposed replacement extension, on the east side of the northern wing, was considered of unacceptable scale and bulk.
- The creation of an entrance into the north side of the Edwardian wing was supported.
- It was noted that works proposed to the interior of the early parts of the house should be justified by a historic building survey. It was noted that alterations to later works to the building (20th century or later) are less likely to be regarded as contentious.
- Works to the garage/ store were supported in principle, noting that care should be taken to preserve its existing character and historic fabric.
- Concerns were raised about the proposed covered walkway to the garage building and the proposed position of the carport and plant room.
- The proposed realignment of the driveway was considered to impact the setting of the house.
- The provision of gates was supported, subject to detail.

Parking Provision

The proposal was deemed to provide sufficient parking, complying with DP21.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenities

Given the relationship with neighbouring properties, the proposals were not

deemed harmful to the neighbouring amenities in line with DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

Impact on Trees

The works are within 15m of trees, and therefore a tree report would have to be provided with any submission.

RESPONSE TO PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE

The scheme has been substantially redesigned to respond to the pre-application advice.

Design and Character

- A front extension, east of the north wing, is no longer proposed.
- The design approach to the west wing has been comprehensively revised.
- The billiard room is no longer engaged with the east elevation but is set away from the historic building, accessed via a lightweight glazed link. It now reads as an outbuilding.
- Compliance of the garage/ gym/ studio building with DP15 of the Mid Sussex District Plan (DPC4 of District Plan Review) is discussed below.
- The long entrance porch to the gym/studio/garage has been removed.
- The carport has been relocated to a less conspicuous position where it reads as part of the courtyard group.
- The route of the driveway is to remain unaltered.

Impact on Listed Buildings

- The design proposal has now been informed by the findings of a Historic Fabric Assessment.
- The design approach to the billiard room has been revised to address the issues raised.
- The design approach to the west wing has been revised. The character and appearance of the existing structure is maintained with only modest alterations. The extension to the west wing responds to this established building character. Edwardian ‘Arts and Crafts’ style remains legible.
- The first floor element of the existing front porch will be removed, allowing the historic fabric behind to be appreciated.
- The front extension, east of the north wing, is no longer proposed.
- Internal works are justified by a Historic Fabric Assessment. Alterations focus mainly building that are 20th century or later.
- Care has been taken to preserve the existing character of the garage/ store. The proposed walkway to it is no longer proposed.
- The position of the carport has been amended in line with the advice.
- The driveway is no longer proposed to be realigned.

Planning Statement

Impact on Trees

A tree survey has informed the design proposal and is submitted in support of this application.

The revised scheme has therefore comprehensively addressed the issues that were raised by officers at pre-application stage.

PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan, unless other material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out the legal requirements for the control of development and alterations which affect buildings, including those which are listed or in conservation areas. Buildings which are listed, or which lie within a conservation area are protected by law. Grade I are buildings of exceptional interest. Grade II* are particularly significant buildings of more than special interest. Grade II are buildings of special interest, which warrant every effort being made to preserve them.

Under Section 66 of the Act, when considering granting planning permission for developments affecting a listed building or its surroundings, local planning authorities or the Secretary of State must prioritise preserving the building, its setting, or any notable architectural or historical features it possesses.

National Planning Policy Framework

A presumption in favour of sustainable development is found at the heart of the NPPF, for both plan-making and decision-taking, defined as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives): economic, social and environment. Key sections relevant to this application are:

- Chapter 2 (Achieving sustainable development)
- Chapter 12 (Achieving well-designed places)
- Chapter 15 (Conserving and enhancing the natural environment)
- Chapter 16 (Conserving and enhancing the historic environment)

Chapter 12, relates to development affecting heritage assets and is most relevant. With regard to proposals affecting heritage assets, the NPPF notes that:

207. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate

to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum, the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

208. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset’s conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

209. Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.

210. In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of: a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

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

213. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting) should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of: a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional; b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

214. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:

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

215. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

216. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

217. Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.

218. Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.

219. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.

220. Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph 214 or less than substantial harm under paragraph 215, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.

Mid Sussex District Plan (2014–2031)

The Development Plan consists of the Mid Sussex District Plan (2014–2031), Lindfield and Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan, Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD, and the NPPF.

Planning Statement

The District Plan 2021 – 2039 was submitted for Examination on 8th July 2024 and is currently undergoing the Inspector’s review, with hearing sessions already underway. As it is not yet adopted, the emerging plan carries limited weight in decision-making. The adopted District Plan (2014–2031) therefore remains the primary basis for determining planning applications at this stage.

The key policies relevant to the determination of this application are:

- Policy DP12: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside (DPC1 of the Mid Sussex District Plan review)
- Policy DP26: Character and Design (DPB1 of the Mid Sussex District Plan review)
- Policy DP34: Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets (Policy DPB2 of the District Plan Review)
- Policy DP21: Transport (DPT4 of the District Plan Review)
- Policy DP37: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows (DPN4 of the District Plan Review)

Mid Sussex Design Guide SPD 2020

The Mid Sussex Design Guide is relevant, particularly with regards to its advice on Household Extensions.

Policy DP34, relating to Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Assets, is the key policy in the assessment of the proposals. The purpose of Policy DP34 is to ensure the protection and preservation of listed buildings and other heritage assets in Mid Sussex, reflecting the district’s unique character, historical significance, and visual qualities.

Key Objectives:

1. Protection of Listed Buildings: Development proposals must demonstrate a thorough understanding of the significance of listed buildings and their settings. This includes respecting the historic form, scale, setting, and fabric of the buildings. Any alterations or extensions should retain the building’s significance and ensure it remains in viable use.

2. Use of Traditional Materials:The policy emphasises the use of traditional building materials and construction techniques, prohibiting modern materials like uPVC windows and doors that could detract from the building’s historic character.

3. Preservation of Building Settings: Special attention is given to protecting the setting of listed buildings, ensuring that new developments do not negatively impact their historical context. This includes careful siting of modern installations like satellite dishes and solar panels.

4. Conservation of Non-Listed Heritage Assets: The policy also covers buildings of architectural or historic merit that are not listed but contribute significantly to the local scene. The council prefers retaining these buildings over demolition and redevelopment, aiming to conserve them in a manner appropriate to their

significance.

Overall, the policy seeks to balance the need for development with the importance of preserving Mid Sussex’s rich heritage, ensuring that historical assets continue to contribute to the district’s character and quality of life.

LINDFIELD & LINDFIELD RURAL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2014–2031

The overall objective of the Lindfield & Lindfield Rural Neighbourhood Plan is to guide development in a way that preserves the unique historical and rural character of the area. It seeks to balance the need for new development with the imperative to protect and enhance the historical environment, ensuring that any changes contribute positively to the area’s heritage and are in harmony with the existing built and natural environment. The plan seeks to influence planning applications related to listed buildings through several approaches:

1. Preservation of Historic Character

The Plan emphasises the importance of maintaining the historic character of Lindfield and Lindfield rural area. It encourages development that is sympathetic to the historic environment and avoids harm to the distinctive character of the area. This includes ensuring that new buildings or alterations to existing buildings respect the scale, materials, and design features typical of the area.

2. Protection of Listed Buildings

The Plan includes specific policies aimed at protecting listed buildings and their settings. Any development proposals that affect listed buildings must demonstrate that they preserve or enhance the building’s historical significance. This includes careful consideration of alterations or extensions, which must respect the historic fabric, scale, and setting of the listed structure.

3. Design and Materials

The Plan advocates for the use of traditional building materials and methods in any development or alteration work, particularly in proximity to historic assets. This ensures that new developments or changes are in keeping with the historic and architectural context of the area.

4. Sensitive Development in Rural Areas

For the rural parts of Lindfield, the Plan seeks to ensure that development is sensitive to the historic and natural landscape. It aims to prevent suburbanisation or inappropriate development that could detract from the rural character and historical landscape.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT

As noted in the pre-application response, the main planning considerations are:

- Protection of Countryside
- Design and Character

- Impact on Listed Buildings
- Parking provision
- Impact on neighbouring amenities
- Trees Impact
- Biodiversity
- New Homes in the Countryside

Protection of The Countryside

Policy DP12 in the District Plan. This states: “The countryside will be protected in recognition of its intrinsic character and beauty. Development will be permitted in the countryside, defined as the area outside of built-up area boundaries on the Policies Map, provided it maintains or where possible enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District, and:

- it is necessary for the purposes of agriculture; or
- it is supported by a specific policy reference either elsewhere in the Plan, a Development Plan Document or relevant Neighbourhood Plan.

This is similar to policy DPC1 of the Mid Sussex District Plan review under examination.

Given the nature of the proposal in relation to existing established dwellings, the works proposed are deemed in character with the rural area.

Design & Character

Policy DP26 requires high-quality, well-designed development that reflects local character, protects landscape features, respects amenity, creates clear and attractive public and private realms, integrates parking, supports walking, and responds to sustainability. The Mid Sussex Design Guide (DG49–DG51) further expects extensions to use simple forms that are subordinate to the host building, avoid closing important gaps, maintain street character, and allow rear extensions, where not publicly visible, to adopt contemporary design where appropriate and consistent with the dwelling’s scale, boundaries, and setting.

The proposals have been amended to address all issues raised by the officer at pre-application stage and are considered to be in full accordance with this policy.

Impact on Listed Buildings

As required by Policy DP34, the proposals have been guided throughout by a thorough understanding of the significance of the listed building and its setting, supported exploratory opening-up works and archaeological investigation and set out in a detailed Heritage Statement and Historic Fabric Assessment. This evidence base has directly informed the design development and ensures a proportionate and robust response to the building’s architectural and historic interest.

Alterations and extensions are carefully located in areas of lower significance and respect the historic form, scale and hierarchy of the farmhouse. The removal of

Planning Statement

intrusive 20th-century additions across several elevations delivers clear heritage benefits, reinstating lost elements of the historic composition, most notably the uninterrupted catslide roof to the south and the coherent form of the north elevation. New work is designed to be visually subordinate and sympathetic in massing, ensuring that the primacy of the historic structure is preserved.

Where historic fabric is affected, interventions are justified, limited in extent, and based on a sound understanding of the building’s evolution. Features of low significance are removed, while high-value elements are retained and revealed. The project team has undertaken appropriate archaeological and exploratory investigations to inform the proposals and ensure that previously concealed historic features are properly understood and, where appropriate, retained.

Traditional building materials and construction techniques are used throughout, with new joinery specified in timber and external finishes chosen to sit comfortably alongside the retained fabric. This approach reflects policy requirements for authenticity and material continuity.

Special regard has been given to the setting of the listed building. The reinstatement of historic ancillary structures, including the outbuilding and attached greenhouse reinforces the established hierarchy of buildings. The siting and modest form of new pavilions, including the billiard room and swimming-pool pavilion, ensure they sit quietly within the site without challenging or competing with the main house. Landscape works have been deliberately restrained, strengthening the historic setting rather than imposing a new character.

Overall, the scheme conserves and enhances the listed building and its setting, delivering tangible heritage benefits, improving architectural coherence, and securing the long-term viable use of the property in a manner fully compliant with the requirements of Policy DP34.

Parking Provision

At pre-application stage, the proposal was deemed to provide sufficient parking, complying with DP21 and this is considered to remain the case.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenities

The pre-application proposals were not previously deemed harmful to the neighbouring amenities in line with DP26 of the Mid Sussex District Plan.

Impact on Trees

The proposals have been informed by a detailed arboricultural assessment and are fully aligned with the requirements of the District’s tree protection policy. Existing trees that contribute to the site’s character and amenity have been retained wherever feasible and incorporated into the design, with their root protection areas carefully respected. In a small number of cases, the removal of lower-value trees is unavoidable; however, these losses are mitigated through the new planting of suitable, predominantly native species.

Where retained trees are close to construction areas, robust mitigation and

protection measures, set out in the accompanying Method Statement, ensure that their root systems, future growth and long-term condition are safeguarded throughout the development process. Overall, the approach protects valued trees, avoids harm to important arboricultural assets, and provides meaningful enhancements consistent with policy objectives.

Biodiversity

The proposals are informed by a comprehensive ecological assessment, covering habitats, protected species and designated sites. The assessment confirms that the development will not result in harm to statutory or non-statutory designated sites, nor to nearby ancient woodland, with all works located beyond the recognised buffer zone. Existing biodiversity has been carefully considered, with sensitivity through construction-phase mitigation.

Where protected species are present, notably roosting bats within the main house, appropriate licensing, mitigation and timing measures will ensure no net loss of biodiversity, including the provision of replacement bat roosting features. Other species, such as nesting birds, reptiles, hedgehog and potentially mobile species such as badger, will be safeguarded through precautionary working methods, sensitive vegetation clearance and pre-commencement checks where required.

The scheme avoids habitat fragmentation and incorporates measures to enhance ecological connectivity, including the retention of tree lines and woodland edges that function as movement corridors. All trees with roosting potential are to be retained and protected. Sensitive lighting design avoids disturbance to nocturnal species and maintains dark corridors.

In accordance with policy, the development delivers meaningful on-site biodiversity enhancements. These include new bat and bird boxes, hedgehog houses, brash piles within adjacent woodland, and habitat improvements such as pollinator-friendly planting and wildflower grassland.

Overall, the proposals avoid harm, incorporate robust mitigation, and deliver measurable biodiversity enhancements, ensuring compliance with the policy requirement to protect, enhance and provide a net gain for biodiversity.

New Homes in the Countryside

At pre-application stage, the officer referred to DP15: New Homes in the Countryside, stating “The potential kitchen and studio could lead to a residential usage and would have to show it complies with the adaption in terms of DP15 of District Plan as outlined above.” The studio proposed, however is a home office (not a studio flat). In accommodating a home office, gym and garage the existing garage/ storage building will remain in incidental use. It is not an annexe and sp DP15 is not considered relevant.

Conclusion

The proposals have been developed through a thorough and proportionate assessment of the site, its heritage significance, landscape setting, and ecological

and arboricultural constraints. The scheme responds positively to the statutory duties set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and is fully aligned with the NPPF’s overarching objective of securing sustainable development, including conserving and enhancing the historic and natural environment.

The design has evolved directly from detailed heritage, ecological, and arboricultural evidence, ensuring that the listed building, its setting, and surrounding landscape are conserved and, in several respects, enhanced. The removal of unsympathetic modern additions, restoration of historic forms, sensitive use of traditional materials, and careful siting of new structures all deliver clear heritage benefits in accordance with Policy DP34. The proposals also achieve high-quality design consistent with Policies DP26 and the Mid Sussex Design Guide, respecting the established character of the rural context and ensuring that extensions remain subordinate, coherent and well integrated.

Landscape, biodiversity and tree matters have been robustly addressed. Retained trees are protected through appropriate mitigation, minor losses are compensated through new planting, and the landscape strategy strengthens on-site green habitat, fully satisfying Policy DP37. Ecological impacts are managed through comprehensive mitigation, sensitive construction practices and meaningful biodiversity enhancements, ensuring that the development avoids harm and secures measurable ecological gains.

The scheme provides sufficient parking and poses no harm to neighbouring amenities, fully meeting the requirements of the Development Plan.

Taken together, the proposals represent a balanced and policy-compliant form of development that protects and enhances the historic environment, reinforces rural character, addresses environmental considerations with care, and secures the long-term sustainable use of the site. In accordance with Section 38(6), and given the absence of any material considerations indicating otherwise, it is concluded that planning permission should be granted.

WHALEBACK

info@whaleback.co.uk

Brighton & Hove: 01273 234354

Midhurst: 01730 202567

Winchester: 01962 587376

www.whaleback.co.uk

