

The Old Rectory Letcombe Bassett



Historic Buildings Assessment and Heritage Impact Statement

oxfordarchaeology

southsouthsouth
June 2014

Client: Mr Nicholas Ashe

Issue No: 2
OA Job No: 5923
NGR: SU 37458 84983

Client Name: Mr Nicholas Ashe
Document Title: The Old Rectory, Letcombe Bassett
Document Type: Historic Building Assessment and Heritage Impact Statement
Issue Number: 2

Grid Reference: SU 37458 84983

OA Job Number: 5923
Site Code: n/a
Invoice Code: LEBORBA

Prepared by: Angela Warner
Position: Buildings Archaeologist

Checked by: Jon Gill
Position: Project Manager (Historic Buildings)

Approved by: Julian Munby
Position: Head of Historic Buildings
Date: 18 June 2014

Document File Location: \\Server21-db\buildings\Projects Ongoing\Letcombe Bassett, Old Rectory\Report\Old Rectory, Letcombe Bassett Report.odt

Illustrated by: Julia Collins

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Oxford Archaeology

Janus House

Osney Mead

Oxford OX2 0ES

t: (0044) 01865 263800

e: oasouth@oxfordarch.co.uk

f: (0044) 01865 793496

w: www.thehumanjourney.net

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Table of Contents

Summary.....	1
1 Introduction.....	2
1.1 Project background.....	2
1.2 Aims and objectives.....	2
1.3 The site.....	2
1.4 Methodology.....	2
2 Historical Background.....	2
2.1 Letcombe Bassett.....	2
2.2 The Old Rectory.....	3
2.3 Archive and map evidence.....	3
2.4 Outbuildings.....	6
3 Outline Description and Historical Development.....	7
3.1 Introduction.....	7
4 Significance of The Old Rectory.....	15
4.1 Significance and Heritage Values: definition of terms.....	15
4.2 Assessment of Significance.....	15
4.3 Summary statement of significance.....	16
5 Proposed Works and Impact of Development.....	16
5.1 Proposed Works.....	16
5.2 Assessment of impact of proposals.....	16
6 Planning framework: NPPF.....	21
6.1 National Planning Policy Framework.....	21
7 Conclusion.....	22
Appendix A. Bibliography and Archive Sources.....	23
Appendix B. Listed Building Description.....	24

List of Figures

Figure 1	Location plan
Figure 2	Extract from a Possible Draft Enclosure Map for Letcombe Bassett (1744)
Figure 3	Extract from the 25 inch Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map (1912)
Figure 4	Sketch plan of proposed sanitary improvements (1912)
Figure 5	Extract from plan of the cellar, reproduced from the survey drawings by Digital Terrain Surveys LLP
Figure 6	Extract from plan of the ground floor, reproduced from the survey drawings by Digital Terrain Surveys LLP
Figure 7	Extract from plan of the first floor, reproduced from the survey drawings by Digital Terrain Surveys LLP
Figure 8	Extract from plan of the second floor, reproduced from the survey drawings by Digital Terrain Surveys LLP

List of Plates

Plate 1	Front elevation of The Old Rectory
Plate 2	Rear extension
Plate 3	Potting shed
Plate 4	Cruck barn
Plate 5	Coach house and stable
Plate 6	Open fronted shed, small coach house and harness room
Plate 7	Front elevation of the southernmost wing
Plate 8	Front elevation of the northernmost wing
Plate 9	Rear elevation, general shot
Plate 10	WC to the north-west elevation
Plate 11	North-west elevation
Plate 12	Central block in the front elevation
Plate 13	South-west elevation of the older building
Plate 14	South-west elevation of the later building
Plate 15	Rear elevation of the older building
Plate 16	Roof of the conservatory
Plate 17	Cellar
Plate 18	Arched, panelled ceiling of the porch
Plate 19	Reception Hall
Plate 20	Reception hall doors to the later building
Plate 21	Hallway, looking towards the reception hall

Plate 22	Rear door
Plate 23	Rear door, exterior
Plate 24	Rear door and cupboard [NB: restricted angle for photograph]
Plate 25	Utility room
Plate 26	Conservatory showing efflorescence to the stable wall and ferns growing from walls
Plate 27	Kitchen
Plate 28	Sitting room
Plate 29	Sitting room sash windows
Plate 30	Sitting room fireplace
Plate 31	Sitting room cornice
Plate 32	Drawing room
Plate 33	Wall between drawing room and sitting room
Plate 34	Library: servants' staircase and lobby to reception hall
Plate 35	Library beams
Plate 36	Lobby between library and WC
Plate 37	Main staircase
Plate 38	Bedroom 1
Plate 39	Bedroom 2
Plate 40	Bathroom 2, looking from bedroom 2
Plate 41	Bathroom 2 easternmost corner
Plate 42	Central hallway
Plate 43	Bedroom 3 fireplace
Plate 44	Bedroom 3: door to bathroom 2
Plate 45	Stairs to the extension landing
Plate 46	Bedroom 4
Plate 47	Bedroom 5
Plate 48	Bedroom 6
Plate 49	Light between bedroom 6 and extension landing
Plate 50	Second floor landing and cupboards
Plate 51	Bedroom 7
Plate 52	Study
Plate 53	An example of a carpenter's mark in the study

The Old Rectory, Letcombe Bassett

Historic Building Assessment and Heritage Impact Statement

Summary

The Old Rectory is a Grade II listed building and of considerable built-heritage significance. The residence of the incumbent since construction, by the time of listing in 1951 it had passed into private hands.

The original timber-framed building was constructed in the seventeenth century, potentially extending an earlier building of similar construction. In the late-eighteenth century, a single storied brick extension was constructed to the rear of the house and the older building remodelled. In turn, this extension underwent alteration a century later when the upper rooms were added. Throughout the twentieth century, minor improvements were undertaken, with a conservatory, fitted kitchen and utility room occurring in the closing years of the century or the beginning of the twenty-first century.

The proposed works include the addition of two dormer windows to the later Victorian roofline of the Georgian extension with associated internal remodelling, removal of the modern porch with potential rebuilding of an earlier style porch and the widening of the rear doorway. The conversion of several rooms to alternative use will include the construction of a doorway between the Drawing Room and Sitting Room, to be converted to use as a kitchen, and the alteration of a sash window will create a door between the new kitchen and the garden.

The electrical, plumbing and heating systems will all be renewed.

The majority of the proposed alterations will affect secondary elements of lesser significance and overall it is considered that those works will have a minor direct impact on historic fabric. This detrimental impact will be mitigated with the benefit to the structure through halting water ingress, renewal of unsafe services and enabling inspection of the roof structure.

The works will enable the house to be occupied following a long period of vacancy during which the property has experienced water damage to the walls and ceilings in the upper floors and flooding through leakage of the water supply pipes.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 In May 2014, Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Lockinge Estate Building Services on behalf of Mr Nicholas Ashe to carry out an historic building assessment for The Old Rectory, Letcombe Bassett, Oxfordshire.
- 1.1.2 The assessment has centred on proposed building plans discussed on site with Mr Ashe. Floor plans used during the assessment were based on those published in the sale particulars.
- 1.1.3 Additional archive research was carried out at Berkshire Record Office, where the parish records were deposited prior to the 1974 reorganisation of the counties.

1.2 Aims and objectives

- 1.2.1 The principal aims of the current report are to document the history, development and significance of the buildings and through this to assess the impact of the proposals on that significance.

1.3 The site

- 1.3.1 The Old Rectory is situated on Gramp's Hill, to the south of the village of Letcombe Bassett. The house is Grade II listed and lies within the Letcombe Bassett Conservation Area. Within the grounds of the house are several outbuildings, most notably a fourteenth-century Grade II* listed cruck barn, formerly the tithe barn, and an unlisted coach house.

1.4 Methodology

- 1.4.1 The assessment has been based on on-site investigation and outline documentary research. It has not been the intention to undertake a comprehensive architectural study of the entire house, although sufficient information has been gathered to allow an informed assessment. The work has concentrated on the areas to be impacted, although consideration has also been given to the wider context of the building to allow a fuller understanding of how the house has developed.

2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Letcombe Bassett

- 2.1.1 The village of Letcombe Bassett is situated in the Berkshire Downs, approximately two and a half miles south-west of the town of Wantage in The Vale of the White Horse, now in Oxfordshire, but in Berkshire until 1974 (Fig 1).
- 2.1.2 Letcombe Bassett lies upon the grey and white chalky deposits of seven Chalk Formations with nearby clay, sand and gravel alluvial deposits.
- 2.1.3 Letcombe Bassett is widely acknowledged to be the inspiration for Cresscombe in Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*, stemming from the village's fame for growing watercress.

2.2 The Old Rectory

- 2.2.1 The hall and cross-wings to the front of the property date to around the seventeenth century and consists of a timber frame with roughcast over to the majority of the front (south-western) elevation. The front gables of the wings are tile clad. The central block has a stone tiled roof, whilst the roofs of the wings are tiled. The majority of the windows date to the late-eighteenth century, contemporary with the brick-built extension (Pl. 1).
- 2.2.2 To the rear of the building, at the north-eastern corner, is a one and a half storey brick-built late-eighteenth-century extension with a late-nineteenth-century dormer and windows of the same date to each side. The slate roof is contemporary with the nineteenth-century alterations (Pl. 2).
- 2.2.3 The Advowson of Letcombe Bassett is detailed from the thirteenth century in the Victoria County History (VCH) volume for Berkshire; the era contemporary with the building in this study details the advowson passing to Corpus Christi College, Oxford in 1407, although a third was sold to James Yate and John Smith in 1561. This portion then followed the descent of the manor of Mautravers in Childrey until 1634 and shortly afterwards passed also to Corpus Christi College.
- 2.2.4 Jonathan Swift stayed here with the Reverend Geree between June and August 1714 and wrote *Some Free Thoughts upon the Present State of Affairs* (rather than *Gulliver's Travels*, as stated in the Strutt and Parker Estate Agent's particulars). Alexander Pope also visited Swift during this time.

2.3 Archive and map evidence

- 2.3.1 An early probable reference to the property is the Hearth Tax Return of 1663 which states that the Rector, Timothy Stevens, has five 'fires, hearths and stoves' in his property.
- 2.3.2 The earliest map available in the Berkshire Record Office which shows the property is an unlabelled map which has been catalogued as probably being a draft for the enclosure and dated c1774 (Fig 2). This map, although an obvious draft, can be considered to be reliable; it still displays the triangulation marks in setting out the fields and the unaltered buildings compare well with the later Ordnance Survey maps.
- 2.3.3 This 1774 map, as well as demonstrating the changes in outbuildings, shows a 'U' shaped plan of a hall with cross wings, as noted in the listing details, and demonstrates the layout prior to the construction of the brick extension to the rear.
- 2.3.4 The Tithe Map of 1851 does not show the building.
- 2.3.5 By the time of the 25" First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1879, and through to the Third Edition of 1912 (Fig 3), the house is largely in its current form; the brick extension is clear and the potting shed (then a dairy) is present. There is still a longer extension to the north-western corner than there is currently. A building bridging the gap between the house and the stable is also shown, which also features in the sketch plan and is described in the specification ahead of sanitary improvements in 1912.
- 2.3.6 The Ordnance Survey maps illustrate the unchanging footprint of the building and so do not reflect any changes in the roofline to the brick block, nor would they necessarily show the porch.
- 2.3.7 In April 1912, a specification for works to improve the sanitary arrangements, funded by the Queen Anne's Bounty (a fund which began in 1704 to aid poorer clergy), was prepared by the Architect and Diocesan Surveyor, Spencer Slingsby Stallwood FSA, who described the then arrangements: 'The present sanitary arrangements at the south east corner of the Rectory House consist of an upstairs WC and an outside privy. The only

present cesspool is the vault beneath the servant's privy and the soil from the indoor closet runs into it. The indoor closet itself is of the old pan construction, now quite obsolete. These arrangements are just as bad as they can possibly be. There is at present no bath and no pantry sink'. In accompanying documents, Martin Skinner, Architect at the Queen Anne's Bounty Office, states that the sanitary arrangements are '...very crude... the cesspool which deals with the first floor WC and the servants' privy is under the latter. The WC is of ancient pattern.'

- 2.3.8 Despite the concerns about the lack of a bath and sink, Skinner states 'The present proposals do not include a hot water service. The architect thinks that the rainwater storage will suffice for ordinary needs including the bath but does not think it advisable to encourage extravagant use of water in the installation of a hot water system.' He then goes on to state that the rainwater storage could be supplemented by the well in dry weather, but that the labour in connecting the well would be 'heavy'.
- 2.3.9 All of the alterations were located around the south-east corner of the building. The aforementioned well is between the Dairy and Scullery at the opposite end of the property.
- 2.3.10 The contract was awarded to WA Wheeler and Co. Builders of Wantage and cost £84 in all. The specification summary required:
- A new system of soil drainage from the WCs, bathwaste and carried to a cesspool about 80ft from the house.
 - New first floor and servants' WCs.
 - New pantry sink.
 - Fit a bath in the small room next to the first floor WC.
 - To fit a new 150 gallon cold water cistern to be supplied from the existing force pump in connection with the rainwater tank.
- 2.3.11 Interestingly, the tender specification details some particular fittings: [N.B. A pan closet was a system whereby when a handle was pulled, the pan tilted to drop the waste to the container and trap below. Appearing around the 1790s and known to be unhygienic by the 1870s].
- Take down and remove the present pan closet and seat ... Take down present privy seat, clean the cesspool at the back of the present privy, take out the brick steining, excavate and remove the sodden soil behind the steining.... Dig trenches for new drainage... the drains are to be all laid with Doulton's 'tested' glazed stoneware socketed pipes with cement joints...
 - Provide Broad and Co. white enamelled fireclay trough with inlet piece and iron gratings complete (as shown on page 8 of the supplementary catalogue 1911) outside the pantry sink arranged also to receive the bathwaste...
 - At the west gable of the farm stable near the outdoor closet carry up 4" galvanised pipe above the roof with wire bonnet on the top...
 - For the outdoor closet provide and properly fix upon concrete a white ware pedestal closet of approved pattern... to this closet put deal stained and varnished hinge seat... paisley pattern 3 gallon galvanised iron waste preventing cistern with ball cock, brackets etc. ... [N.B. 'paisley pattern' refers to the type of cistern, not '*pattered*' in the modern sense].

- Inside the pantry make such alterations to the existing fittings as may be necessary and provide and properly fix and support a white glazed pantry sink of best Belfast pattern 30" x 18" x 10" with overflow...

- Provide Shanks and Co. N1686 "Ailsa" bath white porcelain enamelled inside and painted white outside with nickel plated taps, overflow and waste...

- In the closet adjoining the bathroom put Twyford's "Axis" pattern white glazed in and out basin with patent after flush chamber and paperbox in Vitrina Ware lead trap and sleeve all the best quality also patented mahogany hinged seat and hinged flap. Provide and fix on cast iron brackets a 3 gallon approved syphon cistern with noiseless fittings, strong heavy brass rod pull with brass bonds for fixing...

- In some convenient place above the bathroom and closet, put a 150 gallon 1/8 plate galvanised iron cistern. Well and properly support on strut bearers resting upon brick walls.

2.3.12 Accompanying the specification is a sketch plan of the ground and first floors (Fig 4). Although the usage of the rooms can presumably be relied upon, the exact layout of partitions, windows etc. must be treated with caution, demonstrated by the location of the windows in the upper storey of the brick extension; although the windows are shown to be all placed along the north-east elevation, there is no material evidence to show that the windows at either end were relocated to the side elevations at some point since 1912. It also shows one large window in the external wall of each of the Sitting and Drawing Rooms, rather than the two sash windows which are known to be original. The configuration of the first floor also demonstrates its approximate nature by the incorrect alignment of the Central Passageway with the staircase and surrounding rooms. Further omissions are detailed within the room descriptions.

2.3.13 In 1914, when Reverend W S Tupholme was incumbent, an inventory of 'certain fixtures annexed to the Benefice' was produced which details the fixtures down to the level of the number of fixed shelves in a cupboard. In summary, the inventory of the house includes:

- Attic south west: Old fashioned grate; 2 rails and 9 pins.

- Attic landing: Deal panelled cupboard front with folding doors. 6' wide with division and shelf.

- Bedroom west: Old fashioned grate; rail and 5 pins; 4 shelves in cupboard.

- Bedroom south west: Grate as set; Deal hanging cupboard, front 4'6" wide with 6 panelled door and 4 shelves; extra baize covered door with spring. [N.B. an 'extra baize door' is a sound-proofed door and often signified the separation of the servants' quarters]

- Bedroom north west: College grate.

- Landing: Large stained deal store cupboard 7'6" wide with 4 panelled doors, shelves and divisions.

- Upper bedroom 1: College grate.

- Upper bedroom 3: College grate.

- China Closet and Butler's Pantry: Deal return dresser with 4 drawers, 4 cupboards and return end; long return shelving as fixed to wall; the return plate and glass cupboards with one pair of doors, three single doors, flat framing and shelves; shelf over door.

- Library: Canopy grate with tiled cheeks; 1 pair finger plates.

- Drawing room: Canopy grate with tile cheeks; picture rail all round room.

- Dining room: College grate with splay cheeks; 2 pairs of new glazed double casements [sic] to sash windows; picture rail all round room.
- Entrance hall: Cupboard front with pair of panelled doors, shelf and pins; green baize door and spring.
- Kitchen: Flavelli range with 2 ovens, iron covings and bright plate rack; 100 gallon galvanised tank in room over kitchen; dresser with 4 drawers, pot board and shelves; dresser in window recess with 3 drawers; 2 shelves; rail and pins in cupboard.
- Pantry: Dresser with 2 drawers; framed dresser board and leg supports; 2 plates shelves.
- Larder: Return dresser boards; 2 long shelves and brackets.
- Scullery: 2 board draining shelves; plate rack.
- Bells: Electric bell installation comprising 1 indicator, gong and 2 cell battery with pushes in 3 reception room and 3 bedroom.

2.4 Outbuildings

- 2.4.1 Attached to the north-west corner of the house, not accessible internally, is a single storey, single pitched potting shed, formerly the dairy until at least the time of the 1914 inventory (Pl. 3). Not accessible at the time of this survey, the 1914 inventory lists the contents as: Long framed return dresser board on leg support.
- 2.4.2 To the south-east of the house stands a Grade II* listed thatched and weather-boarded former tithe barn, with the earliest cruck-framed bays dating to the fourteenth century, with seventeenth-century additions (Pl. 4).
- 2.4.3 To the east of the house, is an early to mid-eighteenth-century coach house and stable with hayloft over (Pl. 5). Following planning permission being granted in 2005, the floor has been replaced with a concrete floor over damp proof membrane and the timbers appear to have been cleaned and replaced in part.
- 2.4.4 To the north of the house is a thatched open fronted cart shed and a further, smaller, coach house and harness room (Pl. 6). The 1914 inventory lists: Rail and harness pegs; 3 saddle rests; grate. The grate is still in situ, although some alteration has been carried out to the chimney breast and to the doorway to the garden.
- 2.4.5 A laundry is mentioned in the Insurance Schedules of 1877 and 1887, but no longer listed in the aforementioned documents of 1912 and 1914. The logical location for the laundry would be near to the scullery and well at the north-west of the building, which may account for the building north-west of the scullery which is apparently no longer present at the time of the sanitary works. Although said building appears on the 1912 Ordnance Survey map, it is doubtful that any such minor alteration would appear so promptly. The insurance schedules describe the laundry and wash houses as being detached, although being located to the end of a covered area linked to an abutting building may not have been regarded as being attached to the main house.
- 2.4.6 In several documents dating to the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, buildings forming a farmstead approximately a mile to a mile and a half from the Rectory are detailed, but are no longer associated with this property.

3 OUTLINE DESCRIPTION AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The house, which is a Grade II listed building, is aligned approximately north-west to south-east, with the front of the house facing south-west.
- 3.1.2 The listing details give the name of the building as 'The Old Rectory and Parsonage Flat', although there is no evidence within the internal layout that a portion of the building providing all of the necessary facilities was formerly a separate dwelling. If a separate set of rooms had been created at some point after the 1912 sanitary renovations and before the time of listing in 1951, and since reversed, a one bedroomed, two-storey group of rooms, rather than a fully private 'flat' may have been possible. To the ground floor, the door between the Reception Hall and the Library is lockable; the library was a kitchen in 1912 and so could have provided kitchen and sitting room facilities, with an external door via the then scullery, which is now a WC. The servants' staircase in the eastern corner of this ground floor room leads to a short landing between what are now Bedroom 3 and Bathroom 3. The doorway between Bedroom 3 and Bathroom 2 is sealed and the door between this landing and the main central corridor is also lockable. Bathroom 3 dates to around this time and so by effectively locking-off this former original wing of the house, an acceptable set of rooms could be created, although by modern standards not a separate dwelling, and not a 'flat'. A window is currently between the landing and the central corridor, over the bulkhead of the servants' stairs, although this is fairly modern.
- 3.1.3 A sign attached to the potting shed reads 'Parsonage Flat', although there is no internal access to the house and so presumably this sign is reused for decorative purposes. Anecdotal evidence from a villager who stated that he has lived in the village for eighty years suggests that this was not a parsonage, but the servants' quarters and so it could be considered that 'Parsonage' is an affectation or play on the building having been a rectory, and that a member of staff, such as a housekeeper or gardener had private quarters within the house.
- 3.1.4 **Exterior:** *General phasing:* The hall and cross-wings to the front of the property, the south-west elevation, date to the seventeenth century and consists of stone and timber frame with roughcast over the majority of the front elevation; the front elevation of the southern wing is of painted brick (Pl. 7). The front gables of the wings are tile clad. The central portion has a stone tiled roof, whilst the wings are roofed in tile. The windows date to the late-eighteenth century, contemporary with the brick-built extension.
- 3.1.5 The two wings are of different dates; the current form gives the appearance of the northernmost wing being the earlier, as speculated in the listing details, however, several phases of alteration and lack of access into the roof space of the northernmost wing prevents further discussion at this stage. The northernmost wing is notable in that it is not square; the north-west wall and the ridge of the roof are skewed slightly to the south (Pl. 8).
- 3.1.6 To the rear of the building, at the north-eastern corner, is a two-storey brick-built late-eighteenth-century extension with a late-nineteenth-century dormer and second-storey windows to each side. The slate roof is likely to be contemporary with the nineteenth-century alterations (Pl. 9).
- 3.1.7 *Elevations:* Attached to the western end of the north-west elevation is a small single-storey brick-built WC and lobby with an open shelter (Pl. 10); to the opposite end of the same elevation is attached a potting shed, previously a dairy until at least 1914.

- 3.1.8 The north-west elevation clearly shows the join between the earlier timber-framed building and the later brick building; it also shows the one-and-a-half storey, rather than two-storey nature of both phases. It also demonstrates that a chimney breast has been removed to the later building, however, several patch repairs to the brickwork largely obscures this (Pl. 11). A blocked fireplace in Bedroom 4 and the lack of cornice detail south-west of the window indicate that the stack was located to mirror the stack at the opposite end of the brick extension. It is not noted when this work was carried out, although the 1951 listing refers to the extension having 'end stacks' in the plural and there is still blackening to the rear of the fireplace in the Drawing Room.
- 3.1.9 The chimney stack in the earlier building serves the fireplace in Bedroom 3 and the stack visible at the join of the buildings serves the fireplace in the current Library.
- 3.1.10 The window extending through the eaves in the brick extension is late-nineteenth-century. The window in the first floor of the older wing is early to mid-twentieth-century and was probably installed when the former 'Box Room' was converted to a bathroom for the aforementioned 'Parsonage Flat'. The ground floor window to the current library is an original window with a replacement frame and casement contemporary with the inserted window above.
- 3.1.11 Scarring from a single-storey pitch-roofed building abutting the join of the two phases of building is also apparent; it is located over the well, as shown on the 1912 sketch, and so was presumably associated with this.
- 3.1.12 The front elevation to the south-west is the older part of the building. Dating to the seventeenth century in the main, the current windows are contemporary with the late eighteenth-century extension, demonstrating that the whole building was modernised as part of the works.
- 3.1.13 The side wings' roofs are tiled and the central two-gabled block is stone tiled (Pl. 12).
- 3.1.14 The majority of the elevation is covered in roughcast, obscuring any indications of other phases of work, however, the face of the southernmost wing consists of painted brick with visible relieving arches above the ground floor windows. Although the original timber frame survives to the gable, visible in Bedroom 7, the majority of the wall appears to have been rebuilt during the late-eighteenth-century alterations. Substantial structural movement, currently visible in Bedroom 2 in the central portion of the elevation, may indicate necessity of this. The window frame in Bedroom 7, the attic room, dates to the early-twentieth-century phase of alteration.
- 3.1.15 The listing details speculate that the northernmost wing is older than the adjoining hall and wing. Inspection of the roof timbers (not accessible at the time of visiting) may clarify the dating of the building. Certain differences are apparent: the internal floor levels to both storeys are lower than the adjoining central portion and the upper storey does not have an exposed beam as does its counterpart in Bedroom 1. The beam in the current Kitchen is chamfered, but the visible beam in the current Library is chamfered and stopped, and the configuration of the ceiling beams is different, indicating that an earlier building was extended forwards to match the adjoining building being built. Again, inspection of the roof space may clarify the phasing and alteration.
- 3.1.16 The listing details describe the porch as being late-twentieth-century. Panelling to the interior of the porch suggests an earlier phase contemporary with the late-eighteenth-century alterations, however, no porch appears on the OS maps or the improvements sketch of 1912 and so it may be considered that the panelling is not original.

- 3.1.17 The south-west elevation of the older building is painted render; one through-eaves hipped dormer and one gabled dormer which abuts the brick chimney stack, are present, both blind. The upper portion of the stack includes several vitrified headers which emphasises the beginnings and ends of three phases of repair or alteration (Pl. 13).
- 3.1.18 The ground floor windows to the kitchen are recent and probably contemporary with the fitted kitchen and the conservatory. The lower window to the staircase is nineteenth-century, reglazed fairly recently; the upper window is modern, although, as the only source of light to the late-eighteenth-century staircase, logically both may be replacements of earlier frames.
- 3.1.19 The south-west elevation of the brick extension is level with the edge of the central block; a nineteenth-century sash window and a brick stack are visible over the modern conservatory (Pl. 14).
- 3.1.20 The north-eastern rear elevation is dominated by the late-eighteenth-century brick-built block; in Flemish bond with brick arches over recessed sash windows. The windows, unusually for the period, are not symmetrical, rather they are set in proportion to the Sitting and Drawing Room internal elevations.
- 3.1.21 In the late-nineteenth century, the roof was raised, adding the cornice, dormer and two side windows in order to utilise the roof space.
- 3.1.22 Set back from the brick building and the conservatory is the rear elevation of the southernmost wing (Pl. 15). The ground floor, obscured by the conservatory and lean-to porch, contains two small early to mid-twentieth-century casement windows to the Utility Room. The first and second floors contain central late-eighteenth-century sash windows with one small late-nineteenth-century window to the first floor bathroom, which formerly had a separate WC.
- 3.1.23 Extending from the rear of the house to the stable is a conservatory consisting of brick walls and a modern timber and plastic roof (Pl. 16). The walls, which abut the house and the stable to each end, are of reclaimed brick, likely to be repaired and/or rebuilt in the 1990s or early 2000s from the single-storey structure which formerly contained the outside WC and rainwater tank shown in the 1912 sanitary improvements plan. A short matching porch adjoins this and shelters the rear door to the house.
- 3.1.24 A *Cellar* to the south-eastern end of the building is reached via a door under the main staircase (Pl. 17). This was not accessed due to recent flooding, but contains the modern boiler served by a brick flue dating to the second quarter of the twentieth century. Brick-built storage is to the south-west wall (Fig 5).
- 3.1.25 The **ground floor** is accessed via the central porch and front door to the front elevation, and via the door between the Library and WC and the door next to the Utility Room (Fig 6).
- 3.1.26 As previously discussed, the panelling to the *porch* interior is stylistically contemporary with the late-eighteenth-century phase of alterations, although the porch does not appear on any of the maps and plans consulted. The arched ceiling over may represent a semi-circular pediment which has been extended outwards and downwards to create a storm-porch (Pl. 18). The pitched roof is later-twentieth-century, the external double doors are early to mid-twentieth-century and the door to the Reception Hall is late-eighteenth-century, panelled to match the porch.
- 3.1.27 *The Reception Hall* displays the ceiling beams crossing the room, albeit plastered and a plaster cornice added. The floor is of flagstone (Pl. 19).

- 3.1.28 With the exception of the front door and window, which are set in the centre of the front external elevation, the room is symmetrical, with false blocked doorways to the rear wall (with the partition to the Drawing and Sitting rooms beyond) and to the northern corner of the room (with the servants' staircase beyond) (Pl. 20); the recessed skirting board within the features matches that of the walls, whereas the true blocked door to the current Study (the former Cloakroom) has a plain skirting. The doors, window, skirting and architrave date to the late-eighteenth-century alterations.
- 3.1.29 *The Hallway* leads from the Reception Hall to the staircase and surrounding rooms and to the rear door. An archway marks the line of the wall to the southernmost wing (Pl. 21).
- 3.1.30 The cupboard is that described as being in the 'Entrance Hallway' in the 1914 inventory.
- 3.1.31 The rear door is a nineteenth-century replacement, and has a three-paned light above and leads to a modern porch of the same construction as the adjoining conservatory (Pl. 22, Pl. 23). A cupboard bridges the gap between the flue from the boiler in the cellar below and the back door (Pl. 24).
- 3.1.32 *The Utility Room* was a Pantry at the time of the 1912 sanitary alterations and the inventory two years later. None of the original features survive; the units and sanitary ware are contemporary with the current Kitchen.
- 3.1.33 Extensive damage to the lath and plaster ceiling was caused by a recent water leak (Pl. 25).
- 3.1.34 Obscured intersecting beams are present.
- 3.1.35 *The Conservatory*, as discussed in the exterior description, was rebuilt in the late 1990s or early 2000s, the tiled floor matching that of the Kitchen and Utility rooms (Pl. 26).
- 3.1.36 *The Kitchen* was formerly the Study or Library, until at least its last mention in the documentary evidence in 1914. The current fittings, units and floor tiles were installed within the last decade or two (Pl. 27).
- 3.1.37 The two windows in the south-east wall are also recent, and the horizontal members of the timber frame which were cut through in order to install them have been left exposed in the returns. The sash windows in the front elevation date to the late-eighteenth-century alterations.
- 3.1.38 The ceiling beam is chamfered, but not stopped, and is flanked by a cornice which extends around the room and also indicates that the room has since been replastered.
- 3.1.39 The range obscures the location of the former fireplace, which, assuming that the 'Library' in the 1914 inventory refers to is this room, was a 'canopy grate with tile cheeks' which may survive behind the current range.
- 3.1.40 *The Study* is the former Cloakroom, and the now-blocked door to the Reception Hall would have allowed access without venturing from the public rooms. The recess created by blocking the door has since been utilised as a shelf and cupboard unit in the Study.
- 3.1.41 The window seat contains a floral-patterned moulding.
- 3.1.42 *The Sitting Room* is much as-built, although the picture rail mentioned in the 1914 inventory has since gone (Pl. 28). The sash windows retain their original wooden shutters, although they were reglazed shortly before the aforementioned inventory (Pl. 29).
- 3.1.43 The grate is missing; the 1914 inventory lists a college grate with splay cheeks; the sale particulars show a modern fire, now removed (Pl. 30). The mantle is original, decorated

- with a typical classical scene and swags. The foliage-patterned cornice with reeding above is obscured with layers of paint, but intact (Pl. 31).
- 3.1.44 *The Drawing Room*, as the Sitting Room, is unaltered, again with the exception of the picture rail. The cornice is plainer, with reverse ogee in place of the foliate design in the Sitting Room (Pl. 32, Pl. 33).
- 3.1.45 The fire surround has been stripped of paint, but is original, and of an Adams style; the patterned grate is original.
- 3.1.46 *The Library* was formerly the kitchen and presumably remained so until after the building was listed, due to the 'Parsonage Flat' requiring such a facility. The mid-twentieth-century parquet flooring obscures the original floor, although quarry tile and brick floor coverings are still visible in the lobby between the Reception Hall and the Library and at the bottom of the Servants' Stairs respectively (Pl. 34).
- 3.1.47 The beam parallel to the façade is boxed in with softwood, to match that of the column which has been added for structural support. The adjoining beam is supported with a long piece of wood, but has been left exposed, showing that it is chamfered and stopped at the wall above the fireplace and where the beams meet (Pl. 35). This fashion was popular for several centuries, but the configuration and decoration of the timbers differs to that of the front room in the other wing (the current Kitchen), implying that it is part of an earlier building, extended to match the new wing at the opposite end.
- 3.1.48 The doors within this room are seventeenth-century, which may imply that this room was relegated to the status of a service room at the late-eighteenth-century alterations whilst the rest of the rooms were fitted with fashionable doors, however, the 1912 sketch plan suggests that the staircase was not enclosed until later, and the inner lobby to the Scullery (now WC) was also added later and so the doors may be reclaimed from elsewhere.
- 3.1.49 The partition to the lobby between the Library and the Reception Hall is of two phases; the later phase is fairly recent and the earlier phase is contemporary to the enclosing of the servants' stairs, potentially at some point since 1912.
- 3.1.50 The fireplace may be a replacement as the 1914 inventory states that a range is used in the kitchen. It is possible that the fireplace was moved from the current kitchen when the room functions were swapped.
- 3.1.51 The window frame to the side elevation dates to the early to mid-twentieth-century, but within the original window opening and retaining the shutters. The window in the front elevation does not appear in the estate agents' plans or the 1912 sanitary improvement plan, however, it is late-eighteenth-century and there are no indications that it has been temporarily blocked recently, although the 1912 plan shows that it would have been within the larder until the room was altered to the current use. The location of the partition can be seen in the wall to the north of the window (Pl. 36).
- 3.1.52 *The Rear Entrance and WC* is the former Scullery; the doorway and inner lobby from the current Library, then the Kitchen, has been reconfigured.
- 3.1.53 The brick walls, including the small obscured light may well have been rebuilt in the mid-twentieth-century phase of alterations.
- 3.1.54 The **first floor** is accessed via the main staircase and via the servants' stairs in the current Library (Fig 7).
- 3.1.55 The dog-legged main staircase is contemporary with the late-eighteenth-century alterations. It is fairly simple, with decorated stair ends, plain square balusters and turned

- posts to each landing. The pendant to the underside of the newel post is a simple ball design; no finial is present: the handrail runs uninterrupted over the newels (Pl. 37).
- 3.1.56 The timber frame of the partition is visible between the landing and Bedroom 1. The original wide floorboards survive.
- 3.1.57 A blocked doorway is next to the doorway to the Bathroom, as seen in the 1912 sanitary improvement sketch plan which shows the Bathroom and WC were separate.
- 3.1.58 *Bathroom 1* was originally installed as detailed in the 1912 sanitary improvements documents: the earlier separate WC was later incorporated by demolishing the partition.
- 3.1.59 The original indoor WC may have been installed within a few decades of the late-eighteenth-century alterations, as the type of pan described as 'ancient' and 'obsolete' in the sanitary improvement specification of 1912 had been in use in fashionable houses from the late-eighteenth century.
- 3.1.60 An obscured timber ceiling beam runs from near to the door to above the main window.
- 3.1.61 A portion of the flooring is visible via the area of damage in the Utility Room ceiling below and is at least partially of chipboard.
- 3.1.62 The room was not fully accessible at the time of the survey due to a recent water leak. The current sanitary ware appears to be mid-twentieth-century with later additions.
- 3.1.63 The windows have been described in the elevation description.
- 3.1.64 *Bedroom 1* has an obscured beam over, running parallel to the façade approximately in the centre of the room.
- 3.1.65 A plain grate and mantle are in the south-east external wall, with two fitted cupboards to the left and a fitted set of shelves to an alcove in the front wall (Pl. 38).
- 3.1.66 A narrow alteration of the skirting board in the partition wall to Bedroom 2 is visible in front of the beam; the 1912 sketch plan shows a doorway between Bedrooms 1 and 2.
- 3.1.67 *Bedroom 2*: The beam and storey post to the front wall, supporting the valley of the two stone covered roofs are visible, although boxed-in. The floor is buckled and replacement floorboards are visible to the northernmost end of the room.
- 3.1.68 A twentieth-century brick fireplace and hearth with fitted cupboards flanking it are to the southernmost wall (Pl. 39).
- 3.1.69 As discussed in Bedroom 1, a doorway is shown between the two bedrooms in the sketch of 1912 and the fireplace is not shown. In the 1914 inventory, the cupboards and fireplace are described as they are currently. Although the narrow alteration to the skirting board in Bedroom 1 does not fully align with the cupboard which is in this position in Bedroom 2, it is possible that the alteration was made between 1912 and 1914, however, inaccuracies have been proven in the 1912 sketch plan.
- 3.1.70 Above the picture rail to the rear wall is a sloping soffit, potentially indicating the original rear of the building, with the Hallway beyond re-roofed in the later phase. Again, inspection of the internal roof structure may clarify this phasing.
- 3.1.71 *Bathroom 2* is accessed via Bedroom 2 and the central passageway. A sealed door leads to Bedroom 3 (Pl. 40).
- 3.1.72 An obscured timber beam runs parallel to that in the adjacent bedroom, and slopes to the rear and northernmost walls reflect the structure of the stone-tiled roof (Pl. 41).

- 3.1.73 The room was probably created by partitioning the northernmost end of the Bedroom and adding doors to Bedroom 3 and to the Central Hallway, creating a Dressing Room for Bedroom 3.
- 3.1.74 The bathroom was converted from the Dressing Room in approximately the 1960s; although the door is of the same style as the others, the architrave suggests that it is a mid to late-twentieth-century addition.
- 3.1.75 *The Central Hallway* runs the length of the rear of the central block of the older building, although inspection of the roof structure would clarify the later phasing hinted at by the slope in the adjacent wall of the adjoining Bedroom 2 and Bathroom 2.
- 3.1.76 The floor slopes down towards the older building, and the changes of floor level in each of the major phases of alteration are clear.
- 3.1.77 Cupboards run along the rear wall and appear in the 1914 inventory (Pl. 42).
- 3.1.78 At the northernmost end of the corridor, the bulkhead over the servants' staircase is visible, with a modern light over. A fairly modern skylight is above.
- 3.1.79 The servants' stairs, with a safety gate, lead down to the Library.
- 3.1.80 *Bedroom 3* is in the potential oldest part of the building and the likely bedroom of the 'Parsonage Flat'.
- 3.1.81 A Victorian gothic fireplace with contemporary surround is in the northernmost external wall, with a sloping soffit above (Pl. 43).
- 3.1.82 A sealed door leads to Bathroom 2 which would originally have been the adjoining dressing room. The step up to this door emphasises the probable earlier phase of this part of the building (Pl. 44).
- 3.1.83 A built-in cupboard is in the southernmost corner.
- 3.1.84 *Bathroom 3* was the Box Room in 1912, but was evidently converted to a bathroom in the early to mid-twentieth century, as detailed in the 'Parsonage Flat' discussion.
- 3.1.85 The 1914 inventory states that a 100 gallon galvanised cistern is located in a room above the kitchen; a hot water cylinder is currently in this location, partitioned off from the bathroom.
- 3.1.86 *The Extension Landing* is accessed via steps up from the central hallway of the older building (Pl. 45). Roof timbers are exposed to either end of the space, and a skylight is to the southernmost wall.
- 3.1.87 Three bedrooms lead from this landing; all date to the late-nineteenth century, as discussed in the external description.
- 3.1.88 Although the 1912 sanitary improvement sketch shows the area to be laid out differently, it can be seen that the area was not drawn with any accuracy as it was not part of the improvement plan: the alignment of the Central Passageway with the surrounding rooms, the staircase and bathroom in particular, shows the intention to simply indicate usage, therefore the existing partitions are as built in the late-nineteenth-century, with the addition of the obscured glass light to Bedroom 6 added later. This is supported further by the presence in the sketch of only two steps up to the landing, compared with the four in existence; the c1m rise in floor level has not been altered as demonstrated by the surviving fireplace complete with hearth in Bedroom 4. There is no material evidence that a scheme of three dormer windows, rather than one dormer and two side windows, existed.

- 3.1.89 *Bedroom 4* contains an access hatch to the roof space, but which was not accessible during the inspection (Pl. 46).
- 3.1.90 A blocked fireplace with a plain surround and hearth contemporary to the room's construction is in the northernmost wall. The 1914 inventory lists a college grate in this room.
- 3.1.91 A horned sash window is to the right of the fireplace.
- 3.1.92 *Bedroom 5* contains the dormer window visible from the garden. A roof leak has exposed the lath and plaster ceiling above (Pl. 47).
- 3.1.93 *Bedroom 6* has a later wash basin next to the window, the fitting of which may have obscured any trace of the fireplace which is indicated in the 1912 sanitary improvement sketch; the 1914 inventory lists a college grate in this room (Pl. 48).
- 3.1.94 The late-nineteenth-century horned sash window overlooks the conservatory and rear door. A mid-twentieth-century light with obscured glass is to the left of the door to the landing. (Pl. 49)
- 3.1.95 The **second floor** is accessed only via the main staircase. A modern window is to the half-landing (Fig 8).
- 3.1.96 The timber frame is visible to purlin level to all sides. The built-in cupboards on the landing are detailed in the 1914 inventory (Pl. 50).
- 3.1.97 The doors and door furniture to each room are identical to the late-nineteenth-century doors in the other areas.
- 3.1.98 *Bedroom 7* is at the front of the building. The pegged timber frame is exposed up to the purlin, the ceiling is affixed to the underside of the collars which slopes considerably towards the south-east wall (Pl. 51).
- 3.1.99 A fairly large brick fireplace and hearth is to the south-eastern wall, flanked by modern built-in cupboards. The 1914 inventory details an 'old-fashioned grate' in this room, which is now missing.
- 3.1.100 The window in the tiled gable to the front is, as discussed, an early twentieth-century replacement, cut into the timber frame.
- 3.1.101 *The Study*: The timber frame is as per Bedroom 7 (Pl. 52), however, carpenters' marks are visible to several of the joints in the gable (Pl. 53).
- 3.1.102 A possible empty mortice is to the left of the window, although no corresponding sockets or features are now visible.
- 3.1.103 A boxed-in beam running the length of the room has been added at a later date, presumably to improve structural stability.
- 3.1.104 An access hatch to the roof space is in the centre of the ceiling, but was not accessible at the time of survey.
- 3.1.105 The sash window dates to the late-eighteenth-century alterations.
- 3.1.106 Modern fitted cupboards are to the south-eastern wall, the 1912 specification required a 150 gallon cold water cistern to be fitted in this room.

4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE OLD RECTORY

4.1 Significance and Heritage Values: definition of terms

- 4.1.1 This assessment of the heritage significance of The Old Rectory is in alignment with English Heritage's document Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance (2008) and analyses the site in terms of key area of value defined by English Heritage. These are:
- 4.1.2 **Evidential value** - this derives from the potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity. This includes physical remains as the primary source of evidence and the people and cultures that made them. Significantly, where there is a lack of written records the importance of the material record increases.
- 4.1.3 **Historical value** - this originates from the ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. This may include illustrative value, such as its connection to an important development such as technology, or associative value such as the connection to an important event or person.
- 4.1.4 **Aesthetic value** - this is derived from the ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place. These may be related to the design of a place for example through defensive reasons, or the informal development over time such as the relationship of structures to their setting.
- 4.1.5 **Communal value** - this derives from the meaning of a place for the people who relate to it, this includes commemorative, symbolic, social and spiritual value. For example, some places may be important for reminding us of uncomfortable events in national history.

4.2 Assessment of Significance

- 4.2.1 The Old Rectory is of substantial **evidential value**. The phases of the building include numerous features from which information about the development and alteration of this building can be gleaned. There is phasing evidence, both internal and external, and in the absence of substantial documentary evidence, the building fabric becomes even more important. There is potential for survival of features of the original timber-framed building obscured by the roughcast to the front and the brick-built building to the rear which will further aid our understanding of the house.
- 4.2.2 The building as a whole has some **historical illustrative value** by helping to demonstrate construction techniques, building types and architectural forms throughout most of the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries with a particular emphasis on the late-eighteenth century.
- 4.2.3 The house has some **historical associative value** as the building reflects the usage by the local clergy and has anecdotal evidence of visits by two important early-eighteenth-century writers in Swift and Pope.
- 4.2.4 The building has considerable **aesthetic value** through the evolution of its development, rather than its architectural design, and the way that it has grown over time reflects the usage and history of the building. The aesthetic value of the late-eighteenth-century interior is largely intact.
- 4.2.5 The Old Rectory is of considerable **communal value**, being the residence of the most prominent community leader for several centuries.

4.3 Summary statement of significance

- 4.3.1 The Old Rectory is a Grade II listed building and it is therefore by definition of national architectural and historical significance. This significance is based on a number of factors including the age and architecture of the building as well as its historical associations.
- 4.3.2 The building as a whole holds considerable Evidential, Aesthetic and Communal value: the foremost significance of the building is its occupation by the incumbent.

5 PROPOSED WORKS AND IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Proposed Works

- 5.1.1 A series of alterations are proposed for the building in a number of areas. In summary:
- The removal of the entrance porch and reinstatement of a porch in keeping with the possible arched pediment evident from the arched panelling inside the existing porch
 - The widening of the rear doorway by removing the flue from the boiler (located in the cellar) along with the cupboard adjacent to the rear door and the door and frame
 - The demolition of the modern conservatory and replacement with a glass lean-to porch to the rear door of the main house
 - Removal of the chimney to the north-west of the building
 - The removal of a sash window in the current Sitting Room and replacement with a patio door in a similar style
 - The removal of the kitchen units in the current Kitchen
 - The conversion of the current Kitchen into a Study and reinstatement of the fireplace behind the current range, if surviving
 - The conversion of the current Sitting Room into a kitchen
 - The installation of a door between the current Sitting Room and the current Drawing Room
 - Removal of partitions to two lobbies in the current Library
 - Renewal of the electrical, heating and plumbing systems
 - Replacement of existing bathroom suites
 - Removal of two of the doors to Bathroom 2
 - Removal of several partition walls in the first floor of the extension
 - Installation of two dormer windows flanking the existing in the east elevation of the extension
 - Removal of existing built-in cupboards and dressers
 - Removal of the ceiling in Bedroom 7, the attic bedroom
 - Install additional loft hatches, locations of which are yet unspecified

5.2 Assessment of impact of proposals

- 5.2.1 The impact of these proposals on the historic building are summarised in the table below:

<i>Proposal</i>	<i>Notes on impact</i>
The removal of the entrance porch and installation of a porch in keeping with the possible arched pediment evident from the panelling inside the existing porch	<p>The existing entrance porch is twentieth-century, although potentially utilising reclaimed, or stylistically earlier panelling and doors.</p> <p>Demolition of the existing porch should take into account the potential for discovering an earlier feature, whether that is a porch which was not included on previous maps, or a pediment above the door.</p>

<i>Proposal</i>	<i>Notes on impact</i>
	The proposed work will have no detrimental impact on the heritage value of the house.
The widening of the rear doorway by removing the flue from the boiler (located in the cellar) along with the adjacent cupboard, door and frame	<p>The flue dates to the second quarter of the twentieth century and extends from the cellar, where it serves the modern boiler, and extends through the house via the hallway adjacent to the rear door in question, through Bathroom 1, appearing to supersede the former fireplace, and is joined to the earlier chimney which is visible next to the window of Bedroom 6.</p> <p>Although the removal of the flue itself will not result in the loss of historic material, care should be taken to avoid damage to historic materials to which it is bonded, including the fireplace, flue and chimney stack which still serves the current Sitting Room and potential remains of the fireplace in Bathroom 1 which may exist behind the flue.</p> <p>The removal of the door and frame, cupboard and short return adjacent to the door will result in the loss of a late nineteenth-century door and slightly later glazed light and a mid-twentieth-century cupboard and fittings. The likelihood of removing material from the seventeenth-century phase of the rear wall of the house is obscured by the later brickwork. Care should be taken to avoid removing part of the seventeenth-century timber frame, if exposed.</p> <p>The proposed work will have minor detrimental impact on the heritage value of the house.</p>
The demolition of the modern conservatory and replacement with a glass porch attached to the main house	<p>The existing conservatory was added in the late-twentieth century and, although designed in keeping with the appearance of the surrounding buildings, and on the approximate footprint of an earlier outbuilding, is having a detrimental effect of causing damp and efflorescence to the end wall of the coach house.</p> <p>The removal of the existing conservatory will have a positive impact on the heritage value of the house.</p> <p>The installation of a sympathetically designed new glass lean-to conservatory and porch will have minor detrimental impact on the heritage value of the house.</p>
The removal of the brick chimney stack to the north-west of the property. Victorian gothic cast iron fireplace in Bedroom 4 to be blocked, but grate and surround to be retained	<p>The brick stack to the north-west of the house serves only the fireplace in Bedroom 4. Contemporary with the Victorian Gothic cast iron fireplace, it has undergone several phases of repair and complete replacement of the dozen or so upper courses of brickwork.</p> <p>The stack does provide visual interest to the elevation and an indication of the history of the useage of the rooms within this wing. It's main interest lies within the installation of this fireplace and stack within what was the lower-status rooms and, soon after, specifically the servants' quarters of the house.</p>

<i>Proposal</i>	<i>Notes on impact</i>
	The proposed work will have moderate detrimental impact on the heritage value of the house.
The removal of a sash window in the current Sitting Room and replacement with a patio door in a similar style	<p>The sashes in the Sitting Room were reglazed prior to the inventory of 1914.</p> <p>The replacement of the sash window could be mitigated by the replication of the ovolo mouldings in any replacement door. The shutters, panel and cornice above should be retained as should the surrounding architrave.</p> <p>In addition, Mr Ashe has suggested that the sashes could be retained, fixed to each other and hinged to one side, whilst the panel below could be replaced with a hinged panel and affixed to the lower sash. This solution would reduce the visual impact to both the interior and exterior. The loss of the sash box to create a jamb may result, although retention of the shutters should be prioritised and care taken to ensure the cornice is retained.</p> <p>The proposed work will have moderate detrimental impact on the heritage value of the house.</p>
The conversion of the current Sitting Room into a kitchen and insertion of a door between the current Sitting Room and the current Drawing Room	<p>The Sitting Room is currently almost as-built, with the exception of the picture rail and the grate, removed at some point since 1914.</p> <p>The original features, namely the fireplace and all woodwork and door and window furniture should be retained. Kitchen units should not obscure the fireplace.</p> <p>The insertion of a doorway between the two rooms would cause the removal of some of the late-nineteenth-century material. Care should be taken to retain the original skirting board to either side of the opening and not to damage the cornice above.</p> <p>The proposed work will have moderate detrimental impact on the heritage value of the house.</p>
The removal of the kitchen units in the current Kitchen and conversion of the current Kitchen into a Study and reinstatement of fireplace behind the range, if surviving	<p>The kitchen fittings and floor tiles were fitted within the last decade.</p> <p>The room was a study at the time of the 1912 sanitary improvements.</p> <p>With appropriate making-good, the proposed work will have no detrimental impact on the heritage value of the house.</p>
Removal of partitions to the two lobbies in the current Library	<p>Although the partitions do not appear on the 1912 sanitary improvements sketch plan, the approximate nature of the plan has already been established in known features being excluded.</p> <p>The lobby to the Reception Hall is of two phases; the later phase is recent, the initial phase of the partition may be mid-twentieth-</p>

<i>Proposal</i>	<i>Notes on impact</i>
	<p>century, but care should be taken to avoid damage to any earlier material which may survive.</p> <p>Similarly, the inner wall to the lobby appears to be post-1912 with an earlier door, however, the original lobby, formerly to the Scullery, now to the WC, dates to the late-eighteenth- or late-nineteenth-century phases of alteration and also indicates the location of the former pantry wall.</p> <p>The proposed work to the later partitions will have no detrimental impact on the heritage value of the house.</p> <p>The proposed work to the earlier lobby-to-scully partition will have minor detrimental impact on the heritage value of the house.</p>
Renewal of the electrical, heating and plumbing systems	<p>Installation of a safe electrical system is necessary to the safety of the property; an effective heating system and improved plumbing system is required to combat the leakage and subsequent damp issues the property has experienced.</p> <p>With appropriate making-good, the proposed work will have no detrimental impact on the heritage value of the house.</p>
Replacement of existing bathroom suites	<p>The bathroom suites and the downstairs WCs are twentieth-century.</p> <p>Care should be taken to avoid disturbance to the fabric of the walls, floors and ceilings.</p> <p>The proposed work will have no detrimental impact on the heritage value of the house.</p>
Removal of doors between Bathroom 2 and the Central Hallway and between Bathroom 2 and Bedroom 3	<p>The doorways from Bathroom 2 to Bedroom 3 and to the Central Hallway date to the late-nineteenth-century phase of alterations.</p> <p>Although the doors are themselves not uncommon, the doorways do provide information to the potential use of the room as a 'Jack and Jill' bathroom with additional access from the hallway, in particular, the door between the bathroom and Bedroom 3 which provides both an indication of the change of levels between the wing and central block and also indicates the partitioning of the former 'Parsonage Flat'.</p> <p>Care should be taken when removing the doorframes to avoid damage to the surrounding wall which will contain seventeenth- and eighteenth-century, and potentially earlier, material.</p> <p>The proposed work will have minor detrimental impact on the heritage value of the house.</p>
Removal of several partition walls in the first floor of the extension	<p>The partition walls proposed for removal are nineteenth-century with minor twentieth-century alterations.</p> <p>The proposed work will have minor detrimental impact on the</p>

<i>Proposal</i>	<i>Notes on impact</i>
	heritage value of the house.
Installation of two dormer windows flanking the existing in the east elevation of the extension	<p>The existing dormer window is a late-nineteenth-century addition and does not follow the near-symmetry of the north-east elevation of the Georgian extension. The two side windows in the upper half-storey are of the same date.</p> <p>Installation of dormer windows flanking the existing will have minor detrimental impact on the heritage value of the house.</p> <p>Removal of the Victorian sash windows to either end of the block will have moderate detrimental impact on the heritage value of the house.</p>
Removal of existing built-in cupboards and dressers	<p>The fitted cupboards in several locations have some significance to the aesthetics and original function of the building and are noted in the 1914 inventory in great detail.</p> <p>The proposed work will have minor detrimental impact on the heritage value of the house.</p>
Removal of the ceiling in Bedroom 7, the attic bedroom, to create extra headroom	<p>The plaster in the attic rooms is obscured by paper and gloss paint, no areas of damage enabled inspection of the plaster to suggest a date, however, the staircase shows that the current configuration of the attic rooms dates to at least the late-eighteenth century.</p> <p>The ceiling is likely to be attached to the underside of the collars, indicated by the purlins visible between the sloping soffit and ceiling, therefore actual headroom may not be gained by removal of the ceiling, although a visual impression of extra height would be. Removal or relocation of the collars would alter the original nature of the roof and may require additional structural support which would have a negative impact on the structure.</p> <p>A mitigating factor of removing the ceiling would be the improved visibility, and therefore ease of inspection, of the roof structure, enabling leaks or structural issues to be observed before further damage occurred.</p> <p>The proposed work will have moderate detrimental impact on the heritage value of the house.</p>
Install additional loft hatches, locations of which are yet unspecified	<p>With regard to any additional, or alteration of existing loft hatches to the existing second storey in the southernmost wing, please see the notes regarding the removal of the ceiling to Bedroom 7, above.</p> <p>The first floor ceilings within the brick-built block date to the late-nineteenth-century phase of alterations, the lath and plaster construction of which is visible in the area of ceiling collapse in Bedroom 5. Again, a mitigating factor of any loss of Victorian material by creating improved access would be the ability to inspect the roof space for issues arising which may prevent further loss such as the vegetation growth, water ingress and ultimate failure as seen</p>

<i>Proposal</i>	<i>Notes on impact</i>
	<p>in Bedroom 5 and which is imminent in Bedroom 4.</p> <p>The first floor ceilings within the central block and northernmost wing are obscured with paper and paint, and areas of damage remain behind paper and so the material could not be examined to indicate age. As with the other areas of the building, improved roof space access to enable inspection to each of the three roof structures in this area would mitigate loss of historic material.</p> <p>The proposed work will have minor detrimental impact on the heritage value of the house.</p>

6 PLANNING FRAMEWORK: *NPPF*

6.1 National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), was published in 2012 to provide planning guidance for sustainable development. It replaces the previous PPS5, PPG15 and PPG16.
- 6.1.2 The document emphasises the value of the historic environment and its contribution to our cultural, social and economic life. National policies are set out to which local planning authorities are expected to adhere in their plan making and development management functions. These range from collecting information and protecting heritage assets in local plans to detailed policies and principles to be followed when determining applications for development involving or affecting such heritage assets.
- 6.1.3 The NPPF states that *'Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay of other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance.'*
- 6.1.4 **Policy 12 (128)** states that *'Local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting'.*
- 6.1.5 **Policy 12 (131)** states that *'In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*
- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
 - the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.'
- 6.1.1 **Policy 12 (134)** states that *'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 securing its optimum viable use.'*

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1.1 The Old Rectory is a Grade II listed heritage asset and is therefore by definition of national built-heritage significance. The residence of the incumbent until the mid-twentieth century, the original timber-framed building was constructed in the seventeenth century, potentially incorporating an earlier building of similar construction as the northernmost wing.
- 7.1.2 It was in this building that Jonathan Swift stayed in the summer of 1714, visiting the then incumbent Reverend Gere, and writing *Some Free Thoughts upon the Present State of Affairs*.
- 7.1.3 In the late-eighteenth century, a single storied brick extension was constructed to the rear of the house and the older building remodelled. In turn, this extension underwent alteration a century later when the upper rooms were added. Throughout the twentieth century, minor improvements were undertaken, mostly to the sanitary services and service rooms.
- 7.1.4 The proposed works include the addition of two dormer windows to the later Victorian roofline of the Georgian extension with associated internal remodelling, removal of the modern porch with potential rebuilding of an earlier style porch and the widening of the rear doorway. The conversion of several rooms to alternative use will include construction of a doorway between the Drawing Room and Sitting Room, the conversion of the said Sitting Room to a Kitchen and the alteration of a sash window to create a door between the new kitchen and the garden. The bathroom suites and electrical, plumbing and heating systems will all be renewed.
- 7.1.5 The majority of the proposed alterations will affect secondary elements of lesser significance and overall it is considered that those works will have a minor direct impact on historic fabric. This detrimental impact will be mitigated with the benefit to the structure through halting water ingress, renewal of unsafe services and enabling inspection of the roof structure.

Angela Warner

June 2014

APPENDIX A. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND ARCHIVE SOURCES

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[document ref.: T/A 17/15]

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APPENDIX B. LISTED BUILDING DESCRIPTION

This building is listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as amended for its special architectural or historic interest.

Name: THE OLD RECTORY AND PARSONAGE FLAT

List entry Number: 1198563

Location

PARSONAGE FLAT
THE OLD RECTORY

Grade: II

Date first listed: 25-Oct-1951

Details

LETCOMBE BASSETT SU38SE 10/125 The Old Rectory and Parsonage 25/10/51 Flat. GV II

House. C17, remodelled late C18. Roughcast with tile clad gables to front, over timber frame; tile roof; brick stacks. Hall with cross-wings. 2 storeys; 6- window range. Fenestration 1:3:2 to gabled wing, recessed and double-gabled centre, and gabled wing. Late C20 porch to central C20 door, late C18 sashes: gabled roof; end stacks. Interior: late C18 dog-leg with landing stairs; panelled doors; stone floor to hall; timber framed partition to first floor right; 3-bay C17 collar truss roof with butt purlins to right wing; left wing slightly lower and probably earlier, but not inspected. Late C18 block to rear left: Flemish bond brick, slate roof; 2-unit plan with access to house; 4-bay garden front gauged flat brick arches over sashes, each recessed in a semi- circular gauged brick arch. Late C19 brick cornice, central dormer and hipped roof; end stacks. Interior: late C18 fireplaces in two rooms. Jonathan Swift (1667-1745) stayed here in 1714, where he wrote "Verses on Himself" and "Some Free Thoughts on the Present State of Affairs." (Frederick T. Barrett, *Letcombe Bassett Then and Now*, 1950 (reprinted 1980), pp. 16-18).

Listing NGR: SU3745084987

Selected Sources

1. Book Reference - *Author:* Barrett, F T - *Title:* Letcombe Bassett Then and Now - *Date:* 1980 - *Page References:* 16-18



Figure 2 : Extract from a Possible Draft Enclosure Map for Letcombe Bassett (1744)

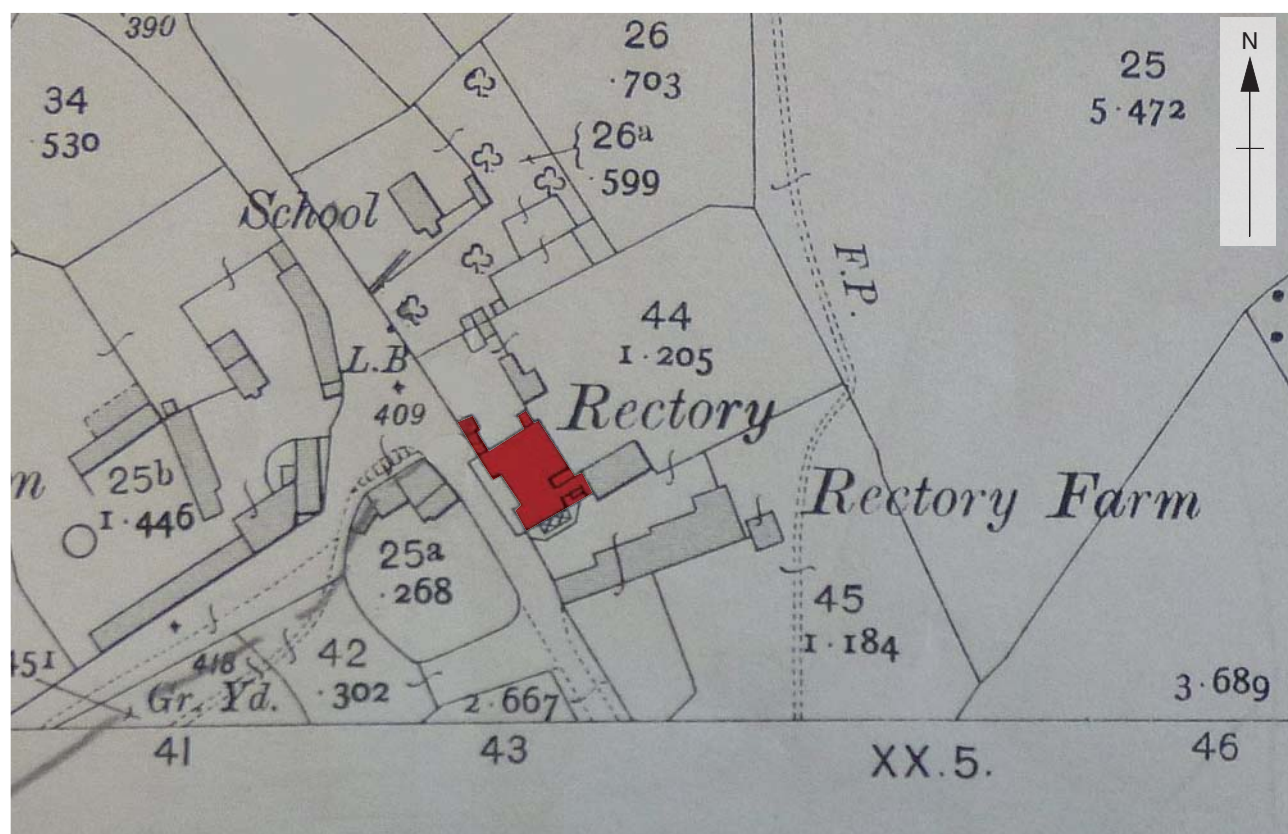


Figure 3: Extract from the 25 inch Third Edition Ordnance Survey Map (1912)

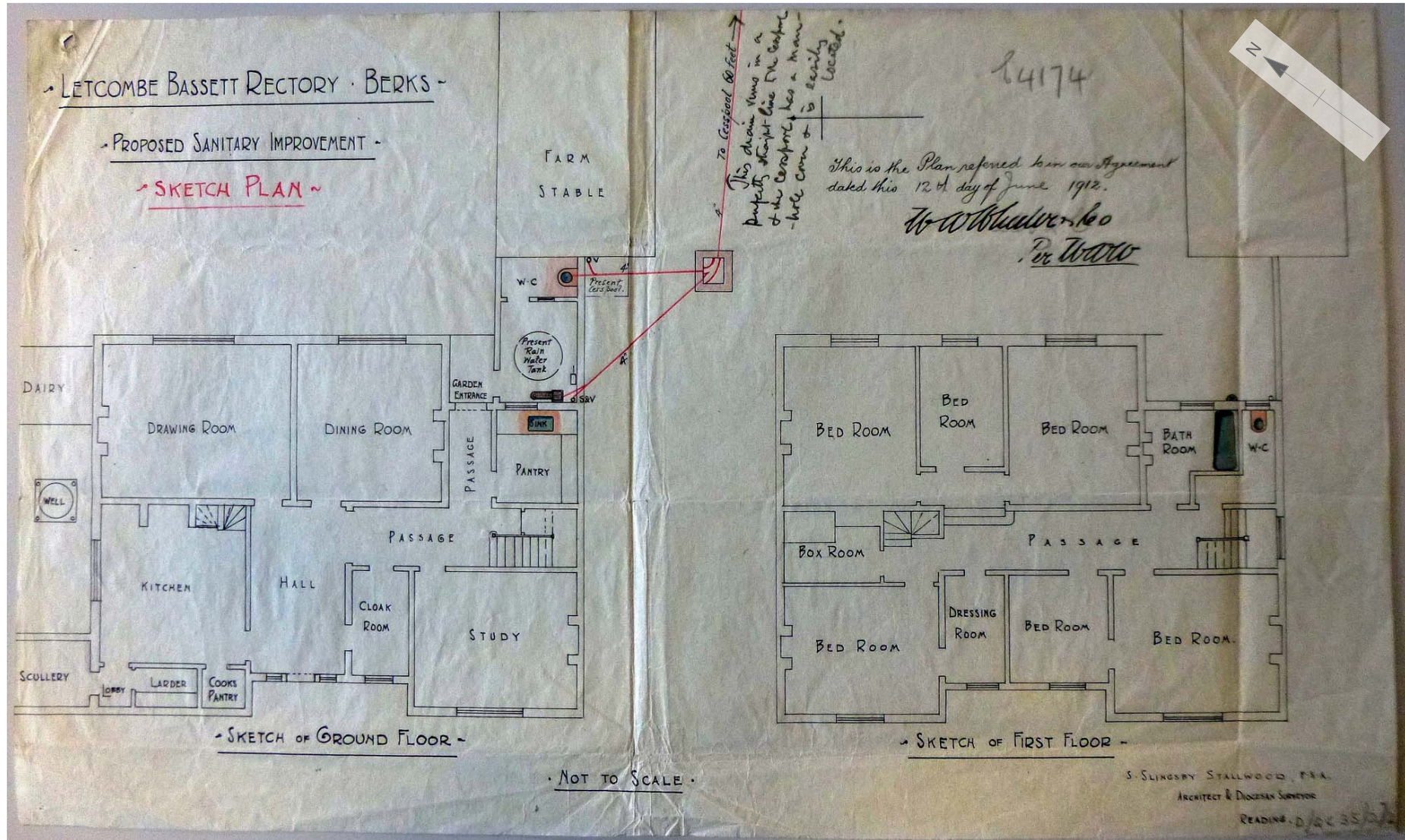


Figure 4: Sketch plan of proposed sanitary improvements (1912)



Figure 5: Extract from plan of the cellar, reproduced from the survey drawings by Digital Terrain Surveys LLP



Figure 6: Extract from plan of the ground floor, reproduced from the survey drawings by Digital Terrain Surveys LLP

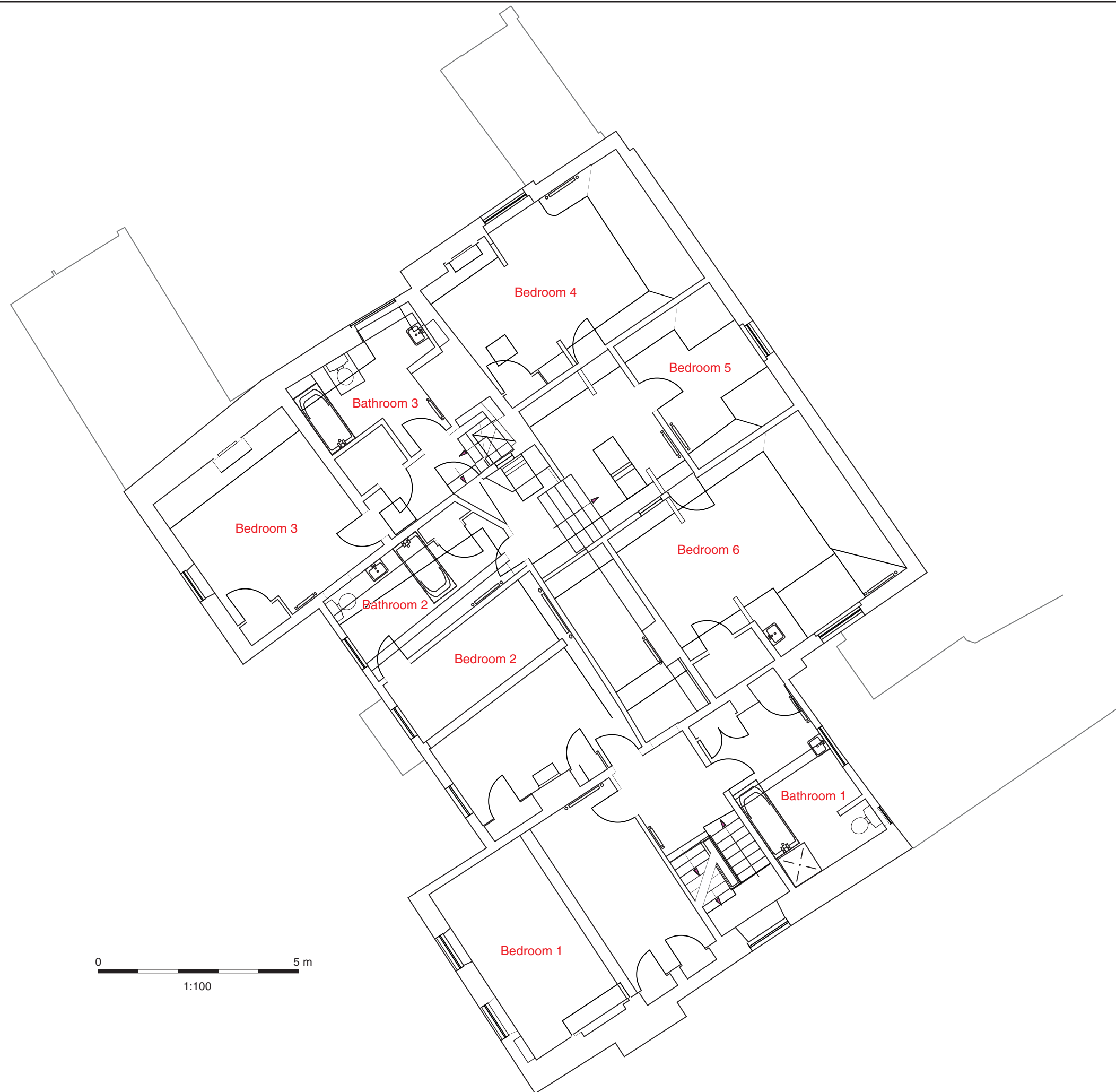


Figure 7: Extract from plan of the first floor, reproduced from the survey drawings by Digital Terrain Surveys LLP



Figure 8: Extract from plan of the second floor, reproduced from the survey drawings by Digital Terrain Surveys LLP



Plate 1 Front elevation of The Old Rectory



Plate 2 Rear extension



Plate 3 Potting shed



Plate 4 Cruck barn



Plate 5 Coach house and stable



Plate 6 Open fronted shed, small coach house and harness room



Plate 7 Front elevation of the southernmost wing



Plate 8 Front elevation of the northernmost wing



Plate 9 Rear elevation, general shot



Plate 10 WC to the north-west elevation



Plate 11 North-west elevation



Plate 12 Central block in the front elevation



Plate 13 South-west elevation of the older building



Plate 14 South-west elevation of the later building



Plate 15 Rear elevation of the older building



Plate 16 Roof of the conservatory



Plate 17 Cellar



Plate 18 Arched, paneled ceiling of the porch



Plate 19 Reception Hall



Plate 20 Reception hall doors to the later building



Plate 21 Hallway, looking towards the reception hall



Plate 22 Rear door



Plate 23 Rear door, exterior



Plate 24 Rear door and cupboard [NB: restricted angle for photograph]



Plate 25 Utility room



Plate 26 Conservatory showing efflorescence to the stable wall and ferns growing from walls



Plate 27 Kitchen



Plate 28 Sitting room



Plate 29 Sitting room sash windows



Plate 30 Sitting room fireplace

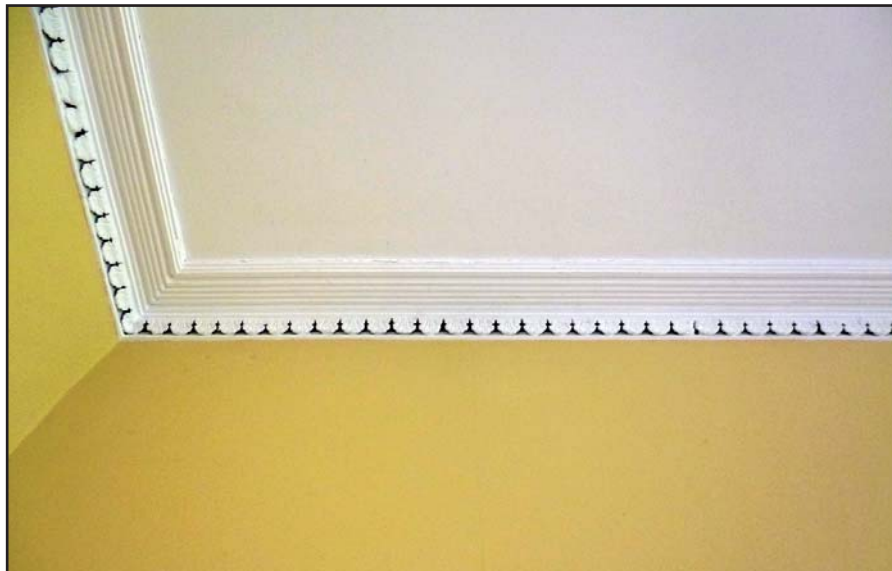


Plate 31 Sitting room cornice



Plate 32 Drawing room



Plate 33 Wall between drawing room and sitting room



Plate 34 Library: servants' staircase and lobby to reception hall



Plate 35 Library beams



Plate 36 Lobby between library and WC



Plate 37 Main staircase



Plate 38 Bedroom 1



Plate 39 Bedroom 2



Plate 40 Bathroom 2, looking from bedroom 2



Plate 41 Bathroom 2 easternmost corner



Plate 42 Central hallway



Plate 43 Bedroom 3 fireplace



Plate 44 Bedroom 3: door to bathroom 2



Plate 45 Stairs to the extension
landing



Plate 47 Bedroom 5



Plate 46 Bedroom 4



Plate 48 Bedroom 6



Plate 49 Light between bedroom 6 and extension landing



Plate 50 Second floor landing and cupboards



Plate 51 Bedroom 7



Plate 52 Study



Plate 53 An example of a carpenter's mark in the study



**Head Office/Registered Office/
OA South**

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496
e: info@oxfordarchaeology.com
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

OA North

Mill 3
Moor Lane
Lancaster LA1 1QD

t: +44 (0) 1524 541 000
f: +44 (0) 1524 848 606
e: [oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com)
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

OA East

15 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridgeshire
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850500
e: [oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com)
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>



Director: Gill Hey, BA PhD FSA MIFA
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