

Moat House

Wokingham Borough Council

HERITAGE STATEMENT | AUGUST 2024

On behalf of Crest Nicholson Operations Ltd and Defence Infrastructure Organisation



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Section 1

Introduction.

1 | Introduction

- 1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by Iceni Projects to provide an understanding of the context and significance of Moat House, Buttenshaw Avenue, Arborfield Green (henceforth 'the Site'), and the potential effects of the proposal on its significance and the nearby assets. Moat House is Grade II listed and stands within some proximity to the Scheduled Ancient Monument of 'Moated Site North of the Moat House'.
- 1.2 The proposed scheme has been informed by pre-application engagement with the Local Authority (Spring of 2024), and this Statement accompanies a Full Planning and Listed Building Consent application for the change of use from Office (Use Class E) to Residential (Use Class C3).
- 1.3 The proposal includes internal alterations to create 4 new apartments, as well as the provision of parking spaces, amenity space, and facilities for bin and cycle storage.
- 1.4 The Site is located within the wider area of proposed redevelopment to the former Arborfield Garrison and adjoining land which is supported by an approved outline application (O/2014/2280) for up to 2,000 homes.
- 1.5 This report will:
 - Set out the relevant legislative and policy framework within which to understand the proposed development at the Site;
 - Provide a proportionate and robust analysis of the Site and surrounding area's historic development;
 - Offer a full description of the site and identify relevant heritage assets;
 - Assess the significance of the Site; and lastly
 - Provide a detailed assessment of the impact of the proposals on the building's significance.
- 1.6 The existing Site and surrounding area have been appraised alongside desk-based research utilising sources that include, and are not limited to, British History Online, Ordnance Survey map regression, and the National Heritage List for England.
- 1.7 The report is produced by Iceni Projects. Specifically, it is authored by Hugo Tomassi BA (Hons), MSt (Cantab), Senior Consultant, and Rebecca Mason BA (Hons) MSc, MA, IHBC; Associate Director, with guidance and review by Laurie Handcock MA (Cantab) MSc IHBC, Director – Built Heritage & Townscape.



Figure 1.1 Moat House Existing Site Location Plan

Section 2

Planning, Legislation, Policy & Guidance.

2 Planning, Legislation, Policy & Guidance

Legislation		National Policy		
2.1	Where any development may have a direct or indirect effect on designated heritage assets, there is a legislative framework to ensure the proposals are considered with due regard for their impact on the historic environment. - Section 7 of the Listed Building and Conservation Area Act (1990) states that “no person shall execute or cause to be executed any works for the demolition of a listed building or for its alteration or extension in any manner which would affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest, unless the works are authorised” - Section 16 of the Act states that in considering whether to grant listed building consent, special regard will be given to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special interest. - Section 66 of the Act states that “in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting.	National Planning Policy Framework (December 2023) (As amended) 2.2 In July 2018, the government published the updated National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”), which was again updated in February 2019, June 2019, July 2021, September 2023, and December 2023. This maintains the focus on sustainable development that was established as the core of the previous, 2012, NPPF. 2.3 This national policy framework encourages intelligent, imaginative and sustainable approaches to managing change. Historic England has defined this approach, which is reflected in the NPPF, as ‘constructive conservation’: defined as ‘a positive and collaborative approach to conservation that focuses on actively managing change...the aim is to recognise and reinforce the historic significance of places, while accommodating the changes necessary to ensure their continued use and enjoyment’ (Constructive Conservation in Practice, Historic England, 2009). 2.4 Section 12, ‘Achieving well-designed places’, reinforces the importance of good design in achieving sustainable development by ensuring the creation of inclusive and high-quality places. This section of the NPPF affirms, in paragraph 135, the need for new design to function well and add to the quality of the surrounding area, optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development, establish a strong sense of place, and respond to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities). Paragraph 139, meanwhile, states that great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs, which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the general standard of design in the area (provided they fit with the overall form and layout of their surroundings). 2.5 The guidance contained within Section 16, ‘Conserving and enhancing the historic environment’, relates to the historic environment, and developments which may have an effect upon it.	2.6 Heritage Assets are defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF as: ‘A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).’ Listed buildings and Conservation Areas are both designated heritage assets. 2.7 ‘Significance’ is defined as ‘The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site’s Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.’ 2.8 The ‘Setting of a heritage asset’ is defined as ‘The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.’ 2.9 Paragraph 200 states that, when determining applications, local planning authorities should require applicants to describe the significance of the heritage assets affected and any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail provided should be proportionate to the significance of the asset and sufficient to understand the impact of the proposal on this significance. According to Paragraph 190, local planning authorities are also obliged to identify and assess the significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal and should take this assessment into account when considering the impact upon the heritage asset.	2.10 Paragraph 203 emphasises that 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. 2.11 Paragraph 205 states that 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. It emphasises that the weight given to an asset’s conservation should be proportionate to its significance, and notes that this great weight should be given irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance. 2.12 Paragraph 206 states that 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. 2.13 Paragraphs 207 and 208 address the balancing of harm against public benefits. If a balancing exercise is necessary (i.e. if there is any harm to the asset), considerable weight should be applied to the statutory duty where it arises. Proposals that would result in substantial harm or total loss of significance should be refused, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss (as per Paragraph 207). Whereas, Paragraph 208 emphasises that where less than substantial harm will arise as a result of a proposed development, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of a proposal, including securing its optimum viable use. 2.14 Paragraph 209 requires a balanced judgment for proposals that affect non-designated heritage assets, having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Planning Practice Guidance (“PPG”) (Department for Communities and Local Government, last updated February 2024)

- 2.15 The guidance on Conserving and enhancing the historic environment in the PPG supports the NPPF. Paragraph 002 states that conservation is an active process of maintenance and managing change that requires a flexible and thoughtful approach.
- 2.16 Paragraph 006 sets out how heritage significance can be understood in the planning context as archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic [defined later in this report].
- 2.17 The PPG emphasises in paragraph 007 the importance of assessing the nature, extent and importance of a heritage asset in understanding the potential impact and acceptability of development proposals.
- 2.18 Paragraph 018 explains that, where potential harm to designated heritage assets is identified, it needs to be categorised as either less than substantial harm or substantial harm (which includes total loss) in order to identify which policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 206-208) apply. It goes on to state that whether a proposal causes substantial harm will be a judgment for the decision-maker, having regard to the circumstances of the case and the policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. In general terms, substantial harm is a high test, so it may not arise in many cases. For example, in determining whether works to a listed building constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest.
- 2.19 The PPG also provides clear guidance in paragraph 020 on the meaning of ‘public benefits’, particularly in relation to historic environment policy, including paragraphs 207 to 208 of the NPPF. The PPG makes clear that public benefits should be measured according to the delivery of the three key drivers of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental outcomes, all of which are reflected in the objectives of the planning system, as per Paragraph 8 of the NPPF. Public benefits include heritage benefits, and do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits, for example, works to a listed private dwelling which secure its future as a designated heritage asset could be a public benefit.

Local Development Plan

Wokingham Borough Council Development Framework

- 2.20 The core documents of Wokingham Borough Council’s Local Development Framework are the Core Strategy (adopted January 2010), the Managing Development Delivery local plan (adopted February 2014), the Joint Minerals and Waste Plan (adopted 2023), and local neighbourhood plans where relevant.
- 2.21 The Core Strategy Local Plan is relevant to this Statement and the appropriate policies are copied below.

Wokingham Core Strategy (adopted January 2010)

CP3 - General Principles for Development

- b. “Planning permission will be granted for proposals that have no detrimental impact upon important... heritage...features”

Managing Development Delivery Development Plan (February 2014)

Policy TB24: Designated heritage Assets (Listed Buildings, Historic Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Conservation Areas).

- 2. The Borough Council will conserve and seek the enhancement of designated heritage assets in the Borough and their settings by:
 - a. Requiring works to or affecting heritage assets or their setting to demonstrate that the proposals would at least conserve and, where possible enhance the important character and special architectural or historic interest of the building, Conservation Area, monument or park and garden including its setting and views.
 - b. Supporting development proposals or other initiatives that will conserve and, where possible, enhance the local character, setting, and management and historic significance of designated heritage assets, with particular support for initiatives that would improve any assets that are recognised as being in poor condition or at risk
- 3. Proposals for building works shall retain or incorporate existing features or details of historic or architectural significance or design quality into the scheme.

Arborfield & Barkham Neighbourhood Plan 2019 - 2036 (April 2020)

Policy IRS4: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Character of the Area

- 1. Development proposals will need to demonstrate how they protect or enhance the historic and natural character of the area, specifically,
- d. The local historic environment, including the setting of Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and other historically significant buildings.

Other Relevant Guidance and SPDs

Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning

- GPA 2 Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (March 2015)
- GPA 3 The Setting of Heritage Assets (December 2017)

Moat House Area Development Brief (ref 181067)

Section 3

Historic Development of the Site and Surroundings.

3 | Historic Development of the Site and Surroundings

Historic Development of the Site and Surroundings

- 3.1 During the 19th century, the Site and immediate surroundings were defined by their agricultural use as part of an open field system.
- 3.2 The first edition Ordnance Survey (OS) Map of the Area (1876) illustrates the farmland with individual fields being defined by hedgerows. Two farms, Longmoor Farm and Biggs Farm, are shown to have been located within some proximity of the Site.
- 3.3 However, by 1900 Longmoor Farm is no longer present and the Biggs Farm is referenced as 'Old Biggs Farm', whilst field boundaries appear to have been dissolved to create larger land holdings.
- 3.4 In 1904 the War Office established the Arborfield Remount Depot which was to function as a location to receive newly-purchased remounts (horses) and prepare them for active service. In its infancy, the land at Arborfield was leased from the Bearwood Estate and comprised 250 acres which had been previously worked by the farms of Bigg's Farm, Old Bigg's Farm, and Ellis Farm.
- 3.5 Bigg's Farm acted as the primary headquarters for the Depot and Ellis Farm provided a designated segregated area for infectious horses. Initially, the depot utilised the existing former farm buildings and only constructed a small wooden stable block at Bigg's Farm.
- 3.6 However, within two years of the Depot's establishment, the army set out to construct a purpose-built Officer's residence within the vicinity. The result was Moat House which was completed in 1906 and shortly after occupied by the Captain Quatermaster, J. Barry. The remaining elements of Old Bigg's Farm were then shortly demolished.
- 3.7 In 1911 - 12, approximately six years after the completion of Moat House, two blocks of loose boxes were built to the east of the Main Yard to provide 'Sick Lines' for animals.
- 3.8 In response to the escalating tensions and likelihood of war, the Remount Service was expanded in the Spring of 1914. The depot's size was increased, former farmland striped, and temporary stabling erected to house a further 600 horses. The new limits of the depot stretched from Langley Common Road to Common Field Lane and encompassed Langley Common Farm.



Figure 3.1 Historic photograph of the Army Remount Depot at Arborfield



Figure 3.2 Historic Photograph of Moat House during the military use of the building

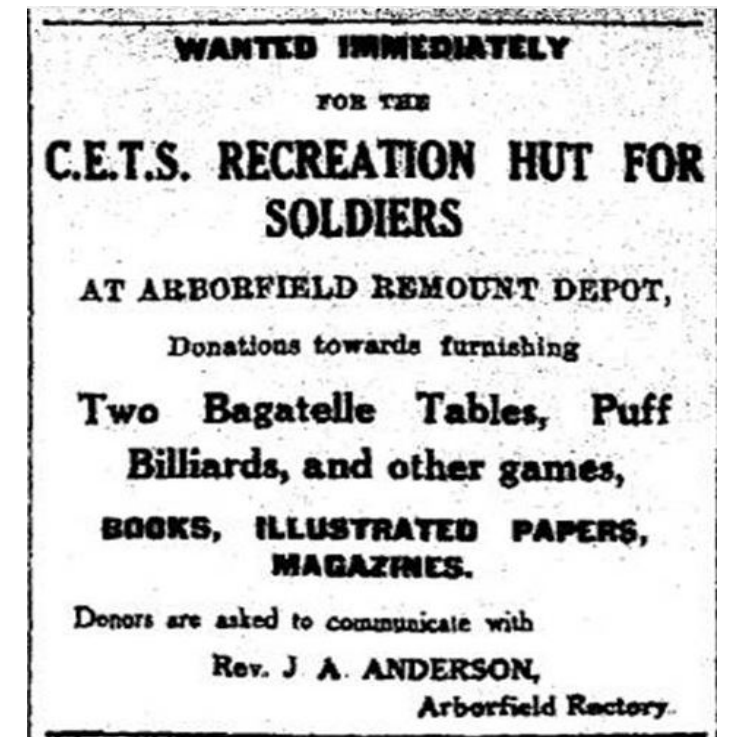


Figure 3.4 Poster for the request of donations towards furnishing the newly built recreation hut at Arborfield Remount Depot.

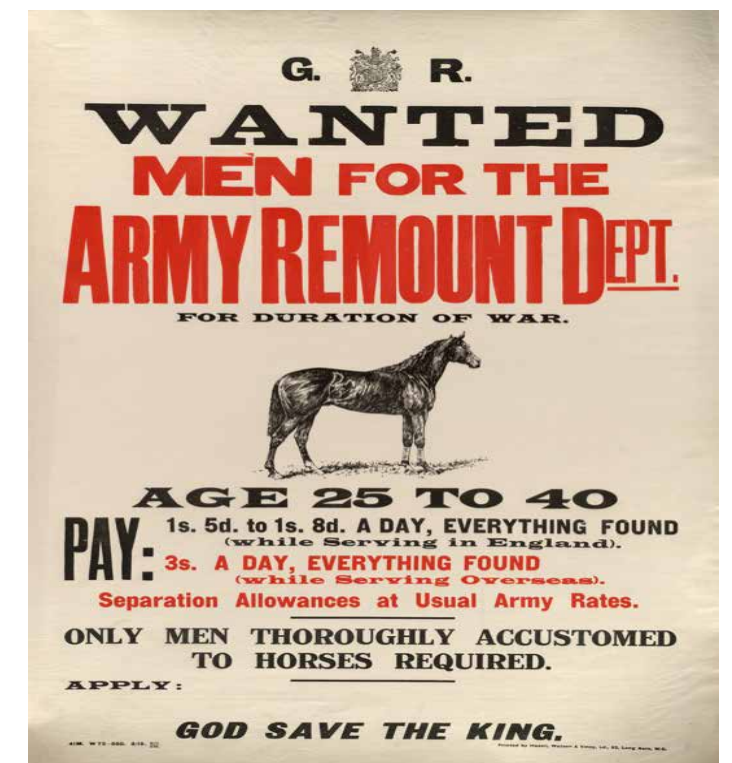


Figure 3.3 Wartime advertisement poster for the recruitment of soldiers to

3 | Historic Development of the Site and Surroundings

- 3.9 Further changes to the character of the Depot occurred as a result of the outbreak of war and saw the inclusion of additional grazing land taken from Arborfield Court, Carters Hill, Sallowfield Court.
- 3.10 Post war, and upon realisation of mechanical warfare, the Depot's purpose adapted to function as a holding and distribution area of draught animals. This resulted in the rebuilding of the former wooden structures in brick and more stable blocks being erected beyond the Main Yard. The Arborfield Remount Depot reached its peak in the early 1930s housing over 150 staff, comprising of over 500 acres, and homing more than 500 animals.
- 3.11 However, by 1937, the realisation of horse units being inadequate to mid 20th century warfare technological advancements saw the depot close, and by 1939 the equestrian centre had be re-purposed as the Army Technical School - later the Arborfield Garrison.
- 3.12 The Garrison was responsible for the large-scale development of the area and the transformation from a semi-rural setting into a dense settlement pattern. The 1968 OS Map (1:2,500) illustrates how the former openness of Moat house was significantly changed during the late 20th century through the establishment of housing on Buttershaw Avenue and Buttershaw Close.
- 3.13 Shortly after the development of the Garrison, Moat House became the museum of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) in 1958. The building continued as a museum until the REME moved the collections in 1985, Moat House then adopted an office functioned which it has remained in until the present day.

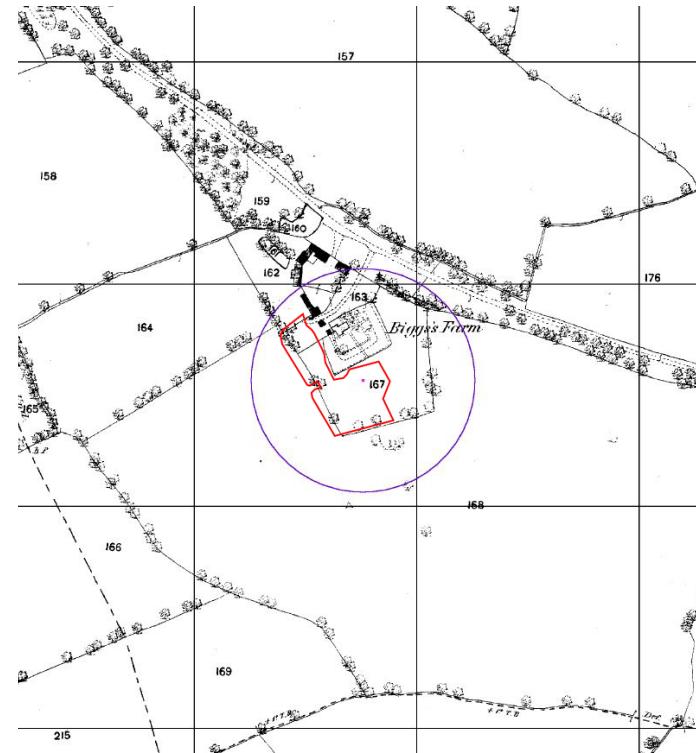


Figure 3.5 1872 OS Map with the Site location outlined (Source:Envirocheck)

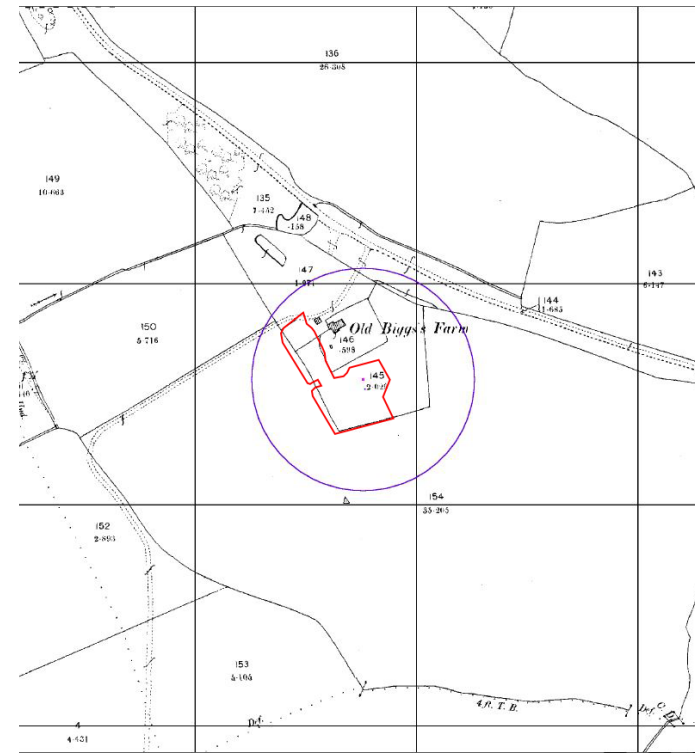


Figure 3.6 1899 OS Map with the Site location outlined (Source:Envirocheck)

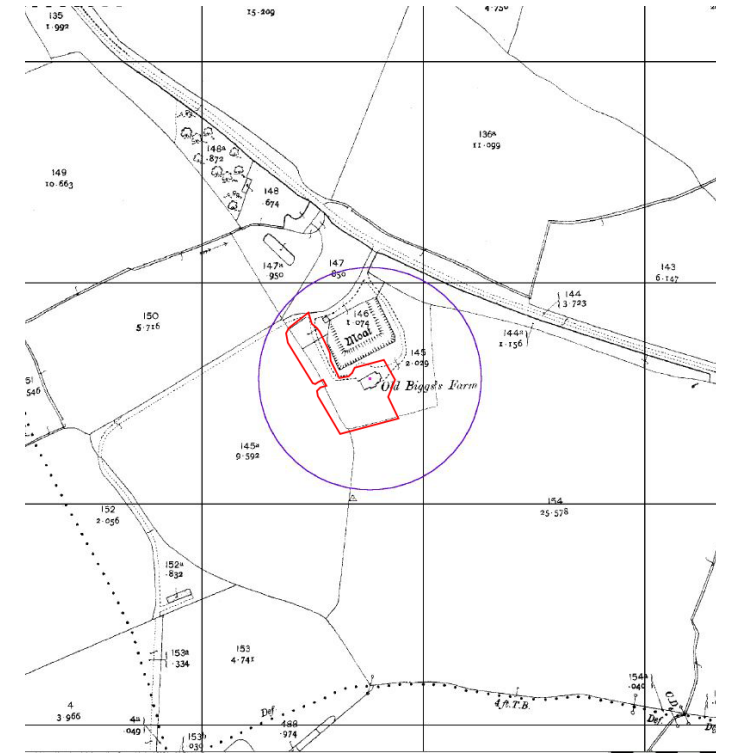


Figure 3.7 1911 OS Map with the Site location outlined (Source:Envirocheck)

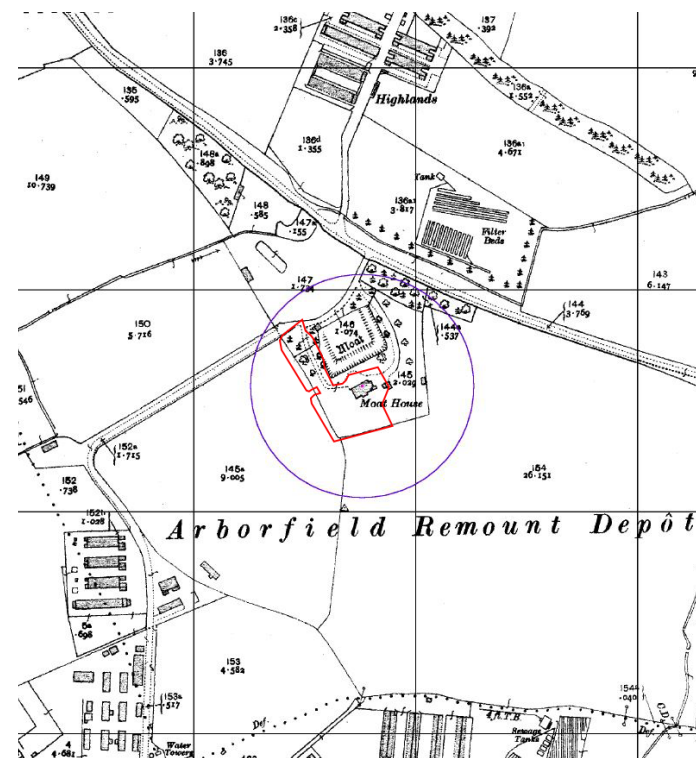


Figure 3.8 1933 OS Map with the Site location outlined (Source:Envirocheck)

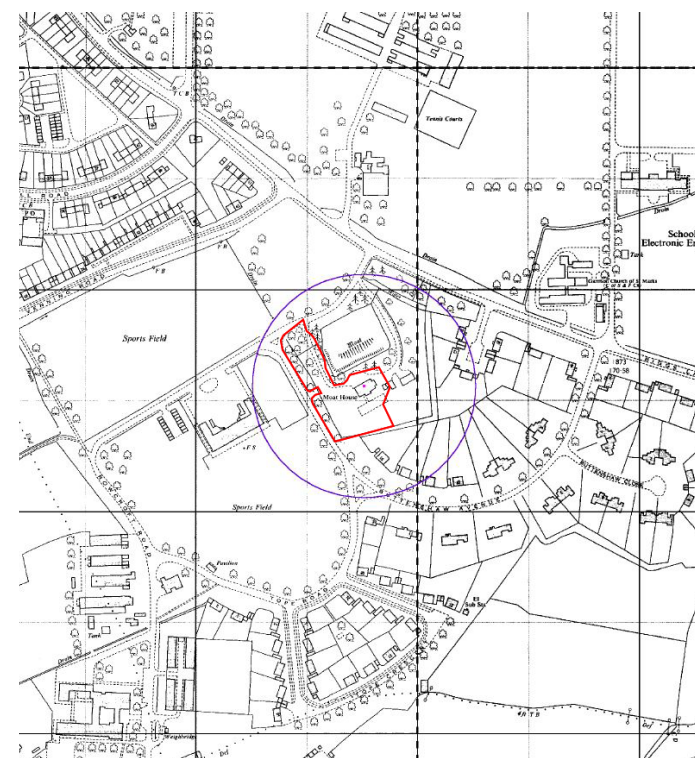


Figure 3.9 1968 OS Map with the Site location outlined (Source:Envirocheck)

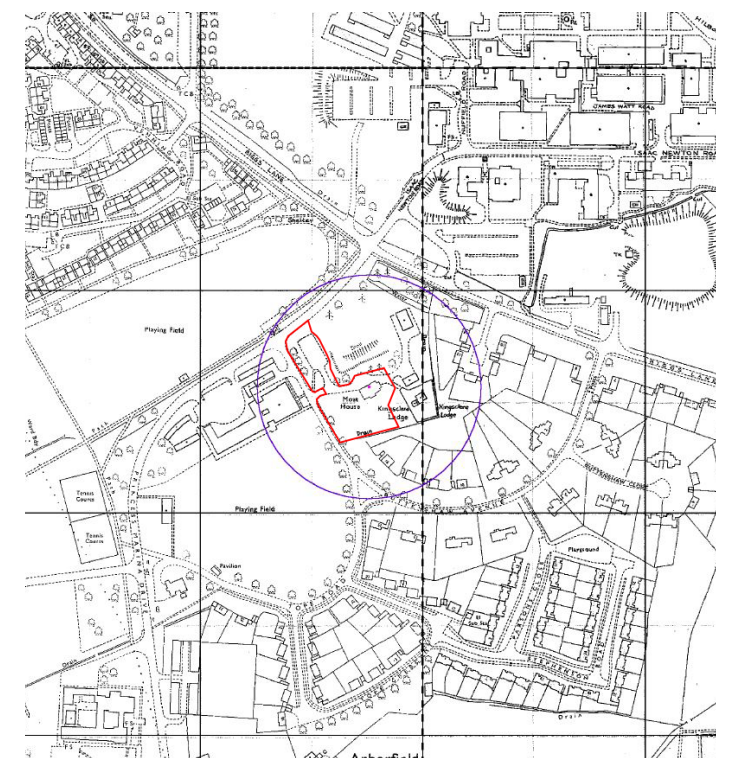


Figure 3.10 1978-87 OS Map with the Site location outlined (Source:Envirocheck)

Section 4

Site Description and Identification of Assets.

4 | Site Description and Identification of Assets and their Significance

Identification of Heritage Assets

4.1 Aside from the Moated Site North of the Moat House, and Moat House, there are no designated heritage assets in over 350 metres from the Site. As such, to ensure proportionality of assessment against the proposals, which are mainly of internal nature and minor external changes, no further assets other than the Site itself and the Moated Site are included within this assessment.

The Site

Description

- 4.2 Moat House is a Grade II listed building of rectangular plan-form and two storeys with attic space.
- 4.3 Principally constructed from red brick in English Bond, the building is accented with rubbed brick dressings and a tiled roof. The main entrance to the building is located on the asymmetrical north-west elevation which is denoted by the shallow, broken pedimented brick doorcase with a rubbed brick four-centre arch.
- 4.4 The south east elevation is symmetrical and provides a loose neo-Jacobean character to the building through the inclusion of a shaped gable and windows which diminish per storey.
- 4.5 Internally, the main entrance provides access to a stair hall with a visually dominant neo-Jacobean oak screen. An open well, closed-string type staircase with turned balusters and a heavily moulded rail provides access to the upper floors.
- 4.6 The doorcases are moulded and surviving doors have six moulded panels. Signs of the building's historic changes in use are reflected through the replacement of fireplaces and elements of the fenestration.

Setting

- 4.7 The asset stands within a heavily altered setting and map regression clearly identifies modern intervention into its primary boundaries. To the south east and south west of the asset are the modern developments of Buttershaw Avenue.
- 4.8 Directly to the north of the asset is the Scheduled Monument of the Moated Site North of the Moat House (List Entry Number: 1009886), which features distinctive medieval earthworks.

4.9 The building stands to the east of Parcel AA, and located within the approved hybrid planning permission 0/2014/2280 which has Reserved Matters approval and has been subsequently constructed to provide up to 2,000 new homes within the surrounding area. The outline proposals include an area of non-development around the asset and scheduled monument which is referred to as the Moat Area

Significance

- 4.10 The significance of Moat House as a Grade II listed asset derives from its architectural and historical interest. The building stands as a example of early 20th century interpretation of the Jacobean style and provides reference to former main house on the estate by Robert Kerr. The brickwork is of good quality with well executed details in the doorcase and detailing.
- 4.11 A degree of historical interest is observed through appreciation of Arborfield's importance as rare example of a remount depot which were fundamental to the mobilisation of the cavalry units during World War I. Additionally, group historic value is found through the nearby scheduled moated site which the building takes its name and forms a historical focus on the asset.
- 4.12 The asset's overall setting is of little interest with the majority of its surroundings holding no informative value on the significance of the Grade II building.

Moated Site North of the Moat House

Description

- 4.13 Dry medieval moat with a single island and visible earthworks on the east, south, and west sides featuring a graded ditch of circa 10 metres. The island rises about 1 metre and banks up to 2 metres.

Setting

4.14 The scheduled area includes the island, ditch and a 2 metre buffer zone. The Moat House is within the immediate setting of the Site can provides a minor contribution to the setting through evidencing the continuation of the land being occupied.

4.15 The Scheduled Monument stands to the east of Parcel AA, and sits within the approved hybrid

planning permission 0/2014/2280 which provides up to 2,000 new homes within the surrounding area.

4.16 The wider setting makes no contribution to the assets significance.

Significance

4.17 This asset extremely high level of significance is derived from its historic and archaeological interest



Figure 4.1 Designated Heritage Asset Map

4 | Site Description and Identification of Assets and their Significance



Figure 4.2 Moat House South Elevation



Figure 4.3 Moat House East Elevation



Figure 4.4 Moat House Shaped Gable



Figure 4.5 Moat House Present Setting to the east of the building

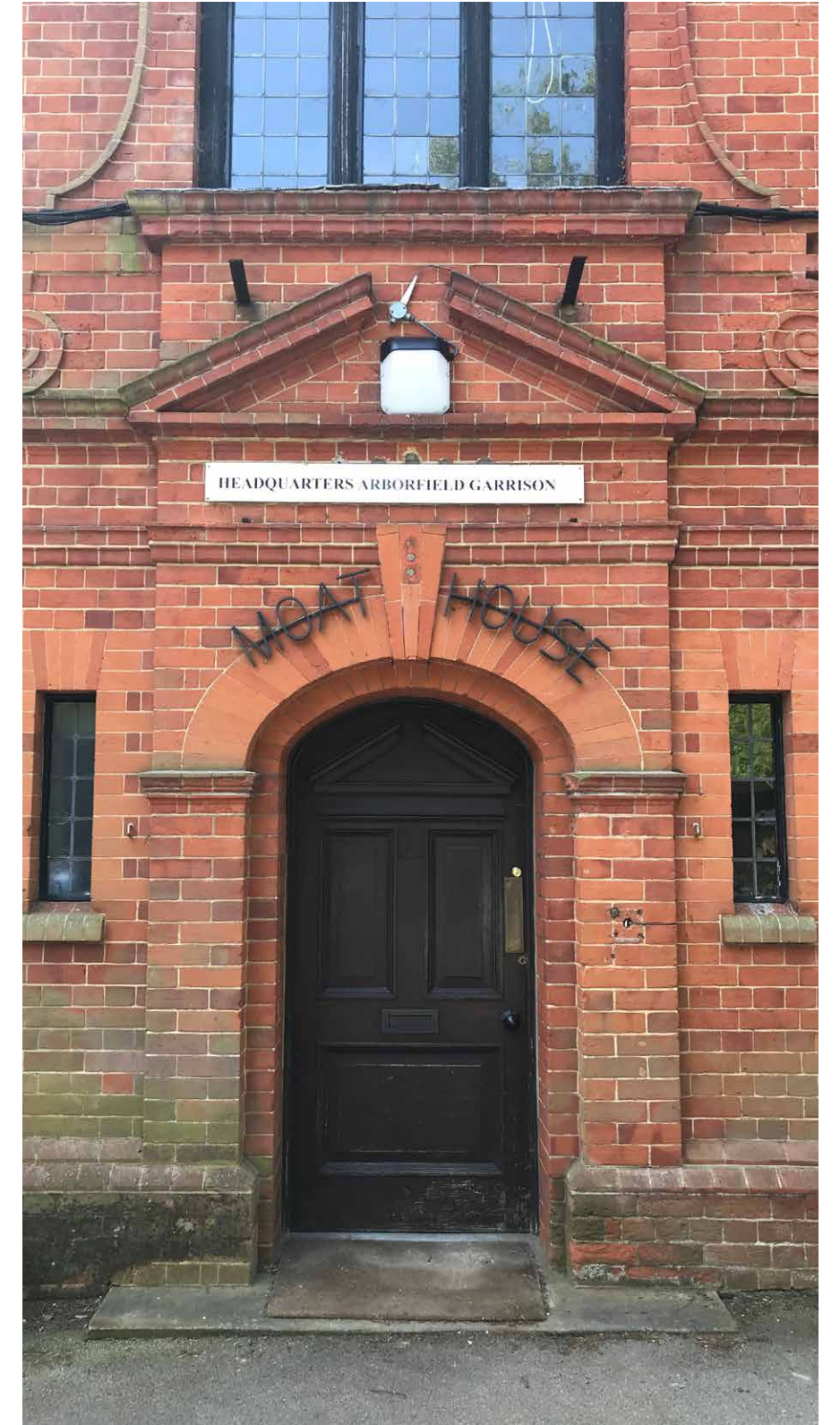


Figure 4.6 Moat House Primary Entrance

4 | Site Description and Identification of Assets and their Significance

Ground Floor Phasing Plan

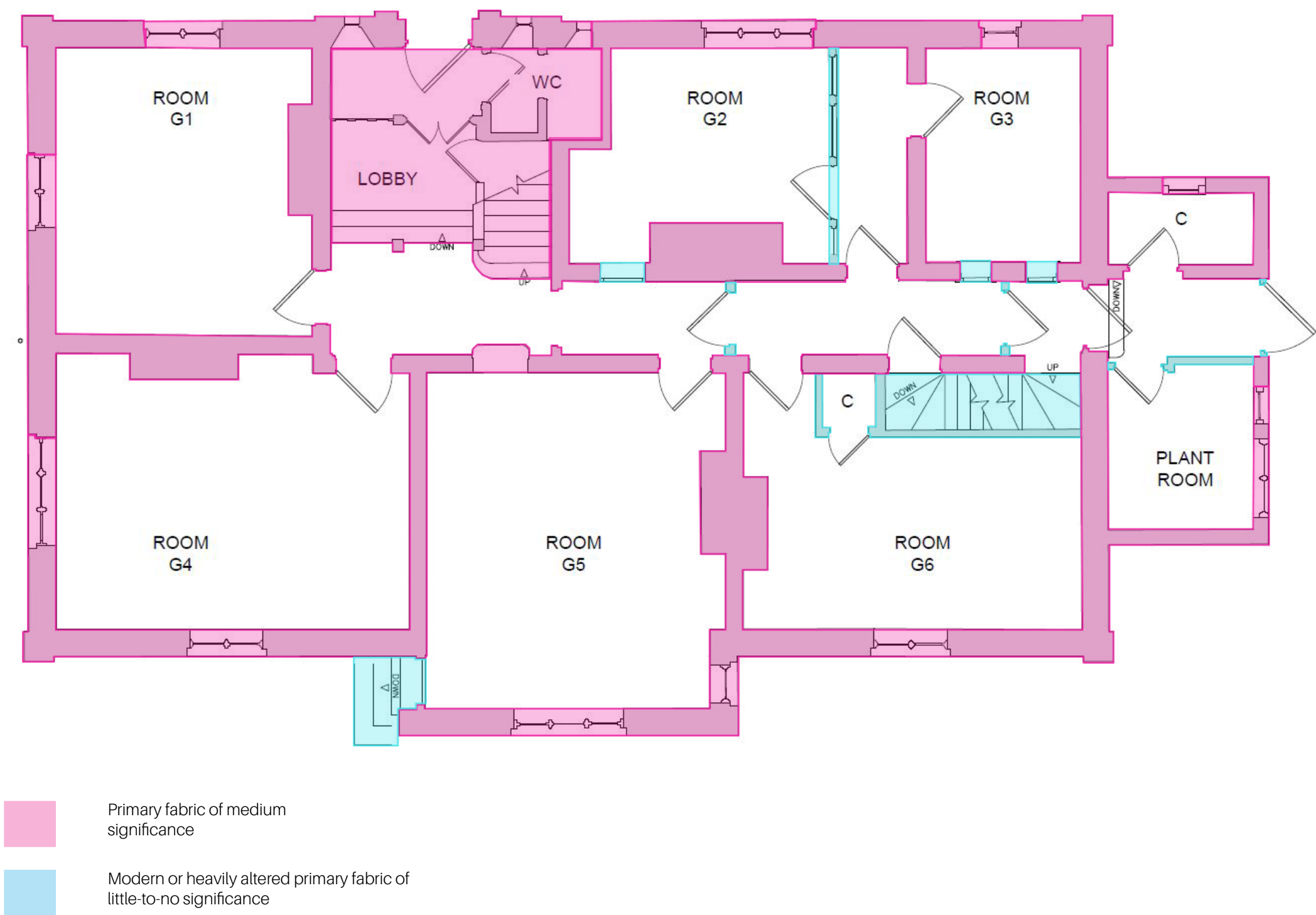


Figure 4.7 Ground Floor Phasing Plan

4 | Site Description and Identification of Assets and their Significance

First Floor Phasing Plan

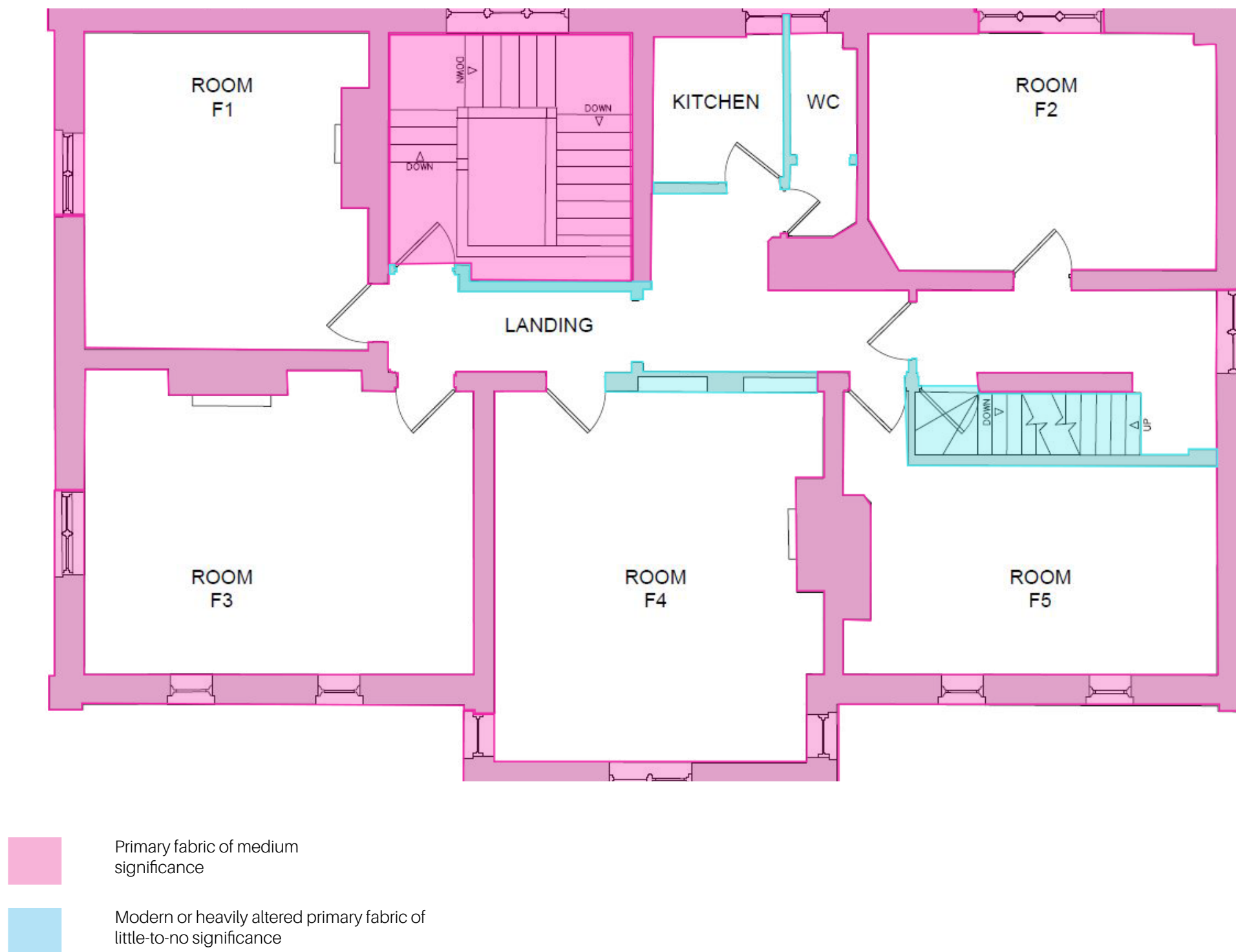


Figure 4.8 First Floor Phasing Plan

4 | Site Description and Identification of Assets and their Significance

Second Floor Phasing Plan

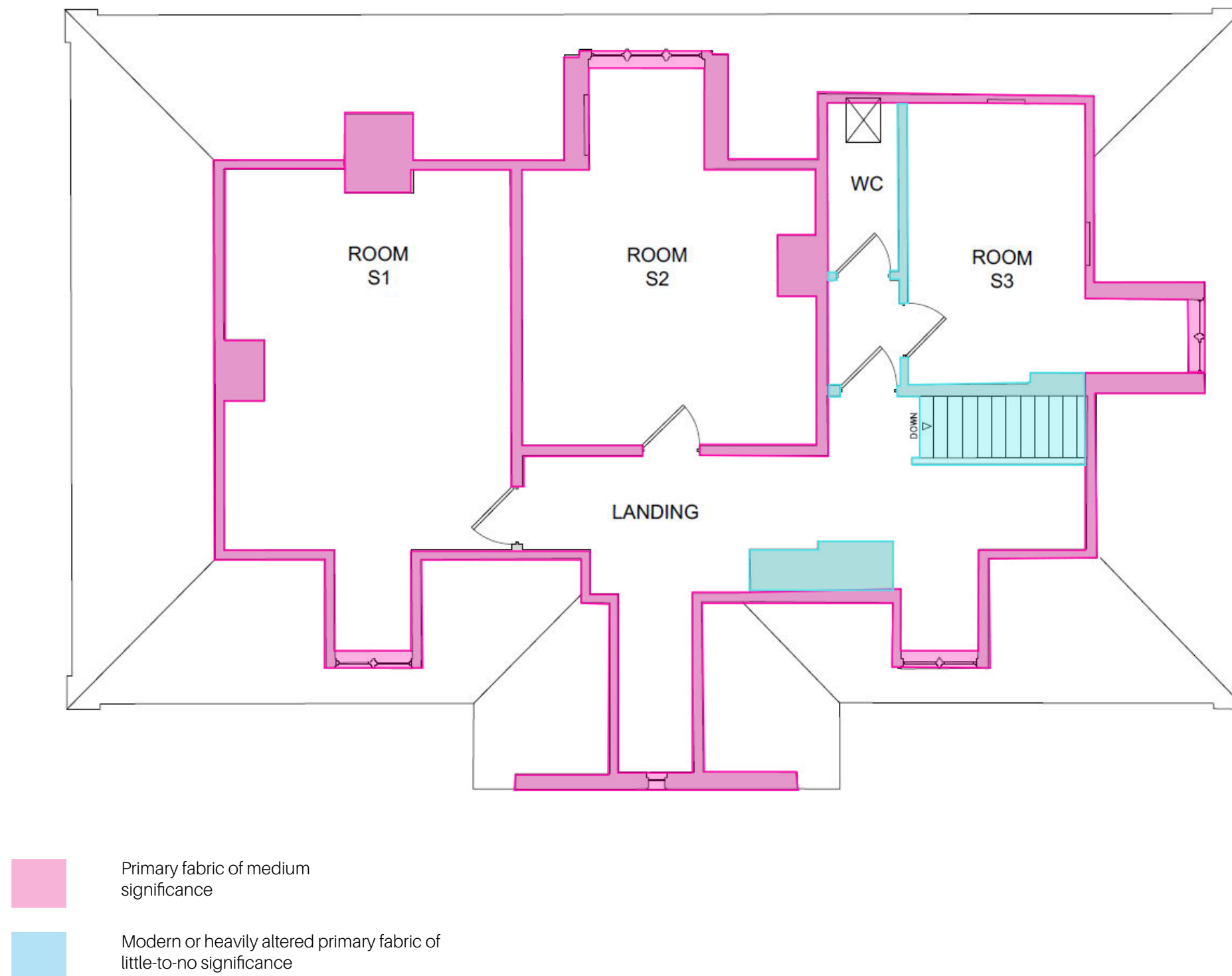


Figure 4.9 Second Floor Phasing Plan

Section 5

Assessment of Impact

5 | Assessment of Impact

Proposals

- 5.1 The proposed scheme aims to sensitively create 4 apartments within Moat House.
- 5.2 The ground floor would comprise of two apartments. Apartment 1 would be a 1 bed, whilst Apartment 2 would feature a duplex with the existing basement to create a two bed apartment.
- 5.3 A further 2 apartments would be contained over the first and second floor on duplexed floor plans with bedrooms at second floor level.
- 5.4 The external alterations are focused on de-cluttering the building of excessive modern cabling and any newly proposed MEP cabling is to be run internally in a non-invasive method, where possible.
- 5.5 Where achievable, existing soil pipes on the external elevations will be removed and replaced by alternative routes within the existing stacks.
- 5.6 In relation to the individual apartments, the following scope of works are proposed

Basement & Ground Floor Apartment 1:

- Reinstatement of lower-ground floor primary opening and associate landscaping to provide emergency access.
- Reorientation of internal layout through the sealing of current doorways and minor punctuation of existing walls.
- Insertion of a centralised partition to allow for the creation of a bathroom and bedroom.
- Removal of modern door and in reinstatement of historic window opening

Ground Floor Apartment 2

- Removal of non-original partitions and rationalisation of non original internal windows with a single opening.
- Removal of non-original cupboard and simplification of the proposed bedroom partition.

Apartment 3

- Reorientation of internal layout through the sealing of current doorways and minor punctuation of existing walls.
- Insertion of a centralised partition and hallway/ staircase arrangement to allow access to the second floor bedrooms.
- Alterations to current landing proportions at second floor level to accommodate proposed staircase and insertion of partitions to create 2 bed, 1 bathroom plan form.

Apartment 4

- Rationalisation of floor plan and removal of non-original partitions.
- Use of existing staircase to provide access to the second floor bedroom and removal of excessive boxing to reinstate elements of the primary proportions
- Removal of second floor level modern partitions and reinstatement of primary floor plan.

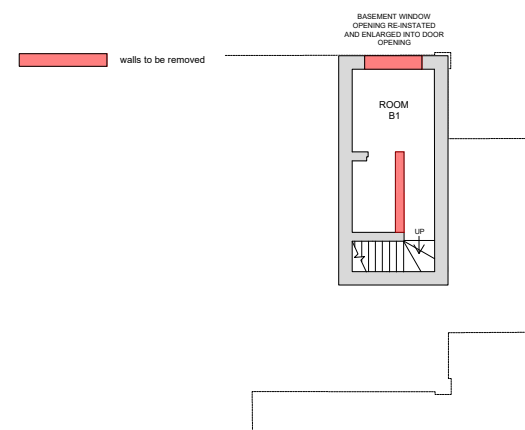


Figure 5.1 Proposed Demolition at Basement Level

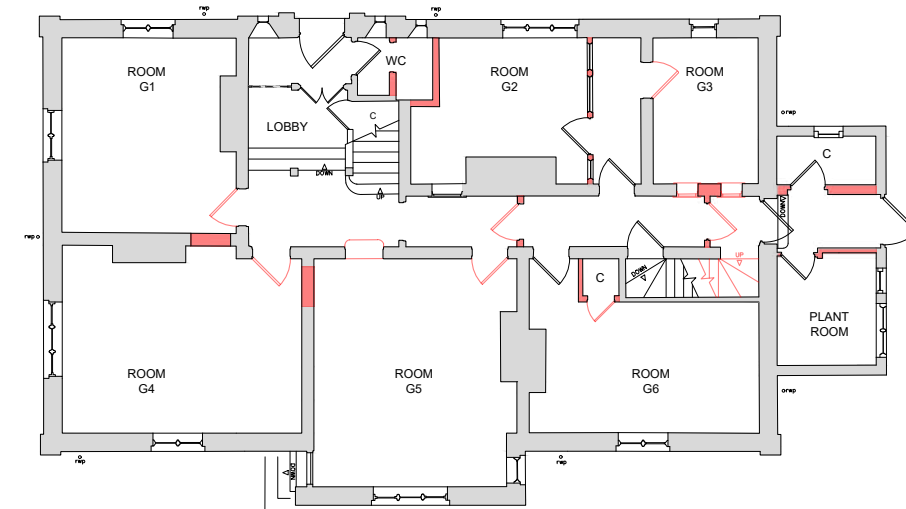


Figure 5.2 Proposed Demolition at Ground Floor Level

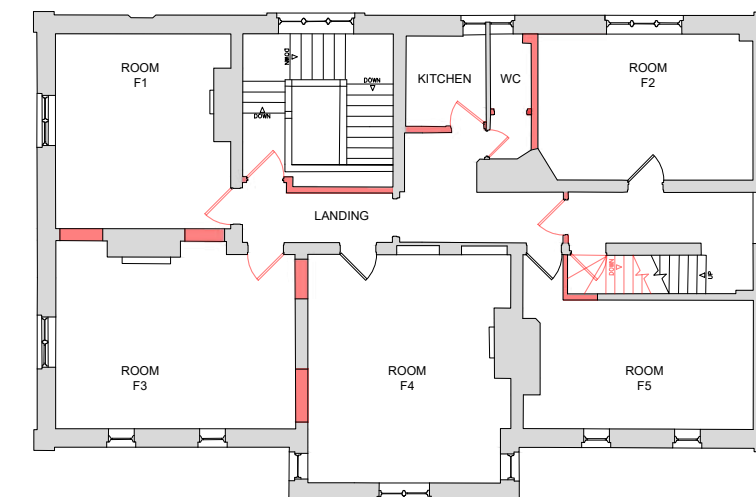


Figure 5.3 Proposed Demolition at First Floor Level

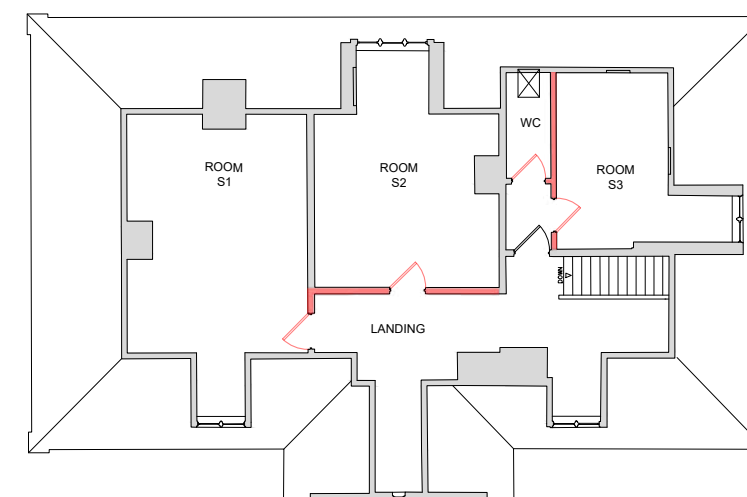


Figure 5.4 Proposed Demolition at Second Floor Level

5 | Assessment of Impact

Assessment of Impact

External Elevations, Bin & Cycle Stores, and landscaping

- 5.7 The proposed scheme aims to remove cluttering downpipes and air-conditioning extraction vents from the principal elevation. At present, these modern additions detract from the appreciation of the building's interest and their removal would be a heritage benefit.
- 5.8 Furthermore, the modern handrail and MEP services found on the side elevations are proposed to be removed. This will present a cleaner, more original, elevation and allow for greater appreciation of the asset's architecture. This is considered to be a heritage benefit.
- 5.9 The proposed landscaping and basement emergency access point have been designed to be sympathetic to the character of the setting and offer a minor enhancement.
- 5.10 To ensure no harm, the bin stores reflect the historic identity of the area through their rural materiality and scale. They are proposed to be proposed away from the main house and screened from the principle approach to the asset to ensure no negative change to setting.

Primary Axial Routes

- 5.11 The proposed ground floor alterations have been sensitively designed to ensure the greatest appreciation of the asset's key internal areas whilst enabling an optimal arrangement for modern living requirements.
- 5.12 The proposed design focuses on making the primary central communal entrance and circulation space accessible for all residents. This aims to allow the maximum appreciation of the fine oak screen and staircase, whilst ensuring the building's special interest is preserved.
- 5.13 Similar to the design intent for the staircase, the scheme aims to protect and enhance appreciation of the ground floor transverse corridor. As shown in Figure 5.2, modern doorways currently divide the corridor and limit full appreciation of the primary arrangement. As such, the proposed scheme aims to remove these modern doorways and reinstate the full readability of the corridor. This is considered to offer a small heritage benefit. Moreover, the proposed door to apartment 2, from the communal entrance, utilises the historic entrance off the stair and enhance understanding on how the primary access was controlled from the communal entrance.

Apartment 1

- 5.14 To create a purposeful 1 bed apartment within Apartment 1, an existing opening from the communal hall requires fixing shut. The design aims to keep the historic door and surround in place to prevent harm to the special interest. The opening will be sealed but remain fully readable as a primary opening from the communal entrance. This ensures that the historic fabric and plan form will remain and presents a fully reversible option whilst helping to enable the building to function optimally as apartment dwellings.
- 5.15 Two small sections of wall are proposed to be removed for necessary access from the kitchen to the bedroom and living room. The proposed openings would result in a small lost of historic fabric which is considered to be of overall little interest. Importantly, the primary plan-form would still remain appreciable through retention of nibs on either side of the proposed openings. The majority of the existing walls would remain in-situ to allow sensitive balance between readability of historic and the creation of a new apartment.
- 5.16 The bathroom and W.C have also been designed to ensure the sensitive reuse of the building and the maximum appreciation of the primary floor plan. The main bathroom is to be located on the rear of the front room and against the back-wall of the existing chimney stack. This ensures a minimally invasive approach whereby the room's primary proportions remain largely unaffected. The proposed bathroom partitions will not obstruct the primary window or encroach on the fireplace's positioning to protect appreciation of the historic form.
- 5.17 Moreover, the proposed location of the bathroom enables the necessary soil-pipe and MEP to be positioned in the void of the stack. This mitigates the need to remove ceiling/floor fabric to create access routes for such facilities and prevents loss of historic fabric.
- 5.18 The proposed partition for the rear room W.C. also follows a minimally invasive design rational. Here, the existing partition is used and mirrored to prevent aggressive change to the internal layout. As such, the alteration to the appreciation of the room would be extremely minor and the overall room's character would remain unchanged. Additionally, the proposed scheme seeks to reinstate a primary window within this area of the floor-plan which was previously adapted as a secondary opening. This offers a small heritage benefit through the reinstatement of a primary opening.

Apartment 2

- 5.19 Two external access points are proposed through the use of existing openings to allow the occupants full appreciation of the historic axial route. Where modern doors currently exist within the corridor, they are proposed to be removed and this will provide a minor heritage benefit.
- 5.20 The creation of the proposed living room results in no lost of historic fabric and the only change within this area will be the removal of a modern cupboard which currently compromises access into the room.
- 5.21 The access to the bedroom will be achieved through the existing entrance point to the room and the present modern partition within this space is to be removed. The partition crudely sub-divides the room and its overt modern, office-like appearance, detracts from the asset's character. As such, its removal will reinstate the room's primary proportions and provide a small heritage benefit.

- 5.22 Equally, the modern openings within the corridor are to be rationalised as part of the proposed bathroom plan. Here, the existing modern openings are to be reduced to a single doorway which is more representative of, and less conflicting with, the building's character.

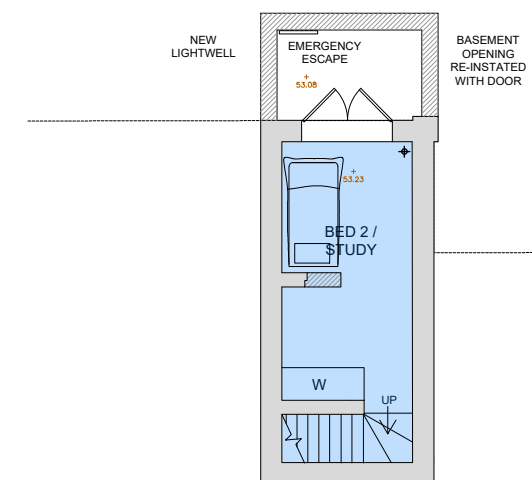


Figure 5.5 Proposed Basement

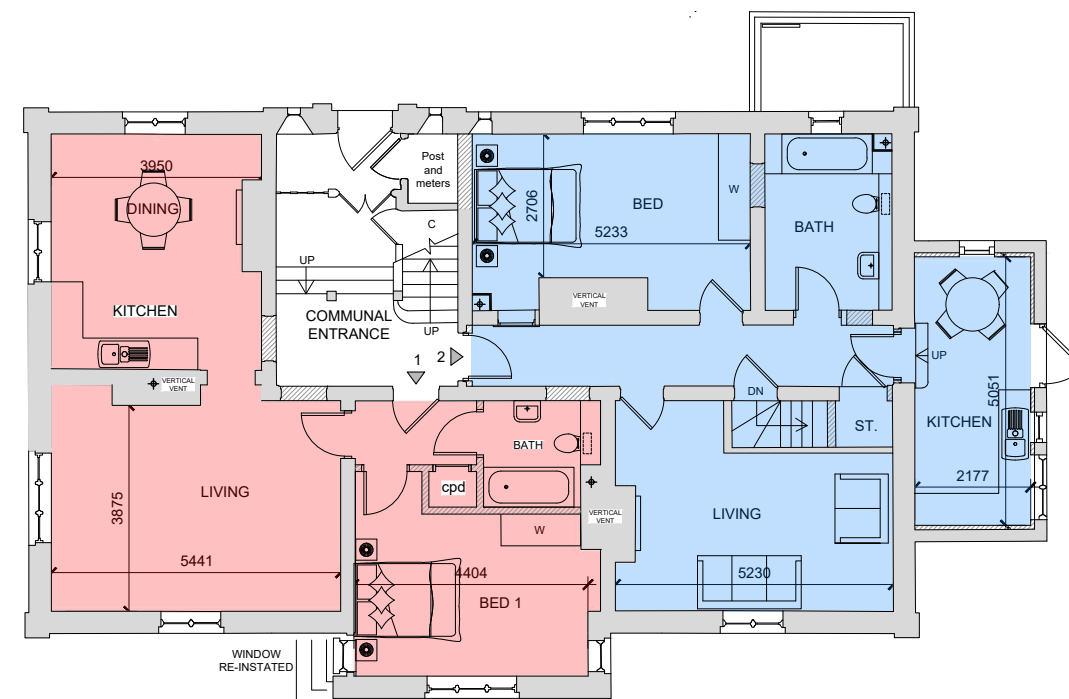


Figure 5.6 Proposed Ground Floor
Heritage Assessment | 16

5 | Assessment of Impact

Assessment of Impact

- 5.23 The kitchen is proposed within the plan's right-hand outshot, on the east side of the building. Two internal walls are proposed for removal to enable the kitchen-diner floorplan.
- 5.24 As shown within Figure 3.11, one of the partitions is known to be modern and its removal is of neutral impact. The removal of the other partition would result in a small loss of historic fabric. Importantly, however, the proposed change exists within an area of the floorplan which has already experience modern intervention and of lower primary importance within the building as a secondary opening. As such, only a very minor level of harm can be attributed to the proposed removal of the partition.
- 5.25 A bricked-up basement opening is proposed to be reinstate and help return this area of the floor plan back to its primary arrangement. This ensures the building can function optimally as a residential apartment whilst offering a heritage benefit through reinstatement of primary arrangements.

First Floor Communal Area

- 5.26 A modern partition and doorway located at the top of landing is proposed to be removed. This would result in a small heritage benefit through the reinstatement of the primary floor plan within a key area of communal access and special interest in the building.

Apartment 3

- 5.27 In regards to access from the communal stair-landing, Apartment 3 follows the established form proposed at ground-floor. The current access will be rationalised and sensitively adapted to fulfil the building's intended viable use. The proposed sealed doorway is considered a primary opening and the proposed retaining of the surround and door way will ensure no harm is created.
- 5.28 The proposed floor plan requires minimal removal of primary walls. Where removal is required, the primary wall will remain visible within the floor plan. The chimney stack would be readable through the proposed retention of nibs and help preserve the present degree of separateness it affords between each space, whilst enabling modern day living requirements.
- 5.29 The proposed duplex arrangement of the apartment requires the insertion of a staircase. The location of the stairs will result in the feasibly minimal disruption of the internal spaces through a design intent for it to abut an existing partition. A small amount of historic fabric will require removal to allow the staircase to

access the second floor and this is considered to result in a minor degree of harm.

- 5.30 At second floor level, a central partition is proposed to create the necessary separation between apartments 3 and 4. This will follow the existing wall line in front of the present staircase and be a subtle change of minimal invasiveness.
- 5.31 The proposed staircase for apartment 3 will rise to the existing landing and run along the length of a partition to create separation with between spaces. This will result in minor change to the existing floor-plan and importantly retain the established circulation narrative of the space.
- 5.32 The existing partition between Room S1 and S2 (as named on the existing plans) will enable the creation of two bedrooms, whilst a further partition is proposed to form a bathroom. The proposed duplex staircase and bathroom partition of Apartment 3 is acknowledged to result in an alteration to the second floor planform. This change is considered to be of the minimal level necessary to fulfil the proposed optimal use of the building. If harm where to be identified within this area of the proposal, it could only be considered as minor and must be understood in the context of the second floor's relatively low hierarchy within the wider narrative of Moat House.

Apartment 4

- 5.33 Existing modern partitions currently truncate the window within the front area (north) of the plan. These modern and detracting alterations are proposed to be removed and offer a small heritage benefit. Additionally, the modern, unnecessary, boxing-out of the existing staircase is to be reduced to improve usability and circulation into the proposed living room. These design proposals are considered to improve readability of the primary internal arrangements and offer a heritage benefit.

Scheduled Monument

- 5.34 The proposed scheme is focused on internal alterations and minor landscaping which are unable to impact the special interest of the Scheduled Monument. The proposed development, including the positioning of the bin & cycle stores, is considered to result in no material change to the setting of the Schedule Monument. The monument stands beyond the Site and is screened by mature trees which provide a clear differentiation of setting. To ensure this buffer is maintained the proposed landscaping strategy includes the strengthening of the tree line to help preserve and sustain the setting of the Scheduled Monument.

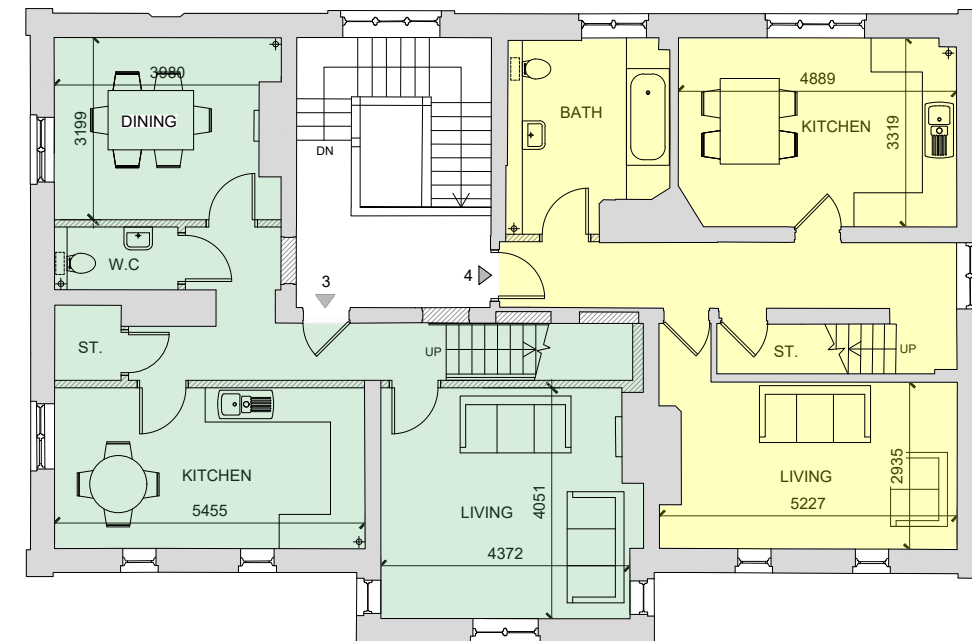


Figure 5.7 Proposed First Floor

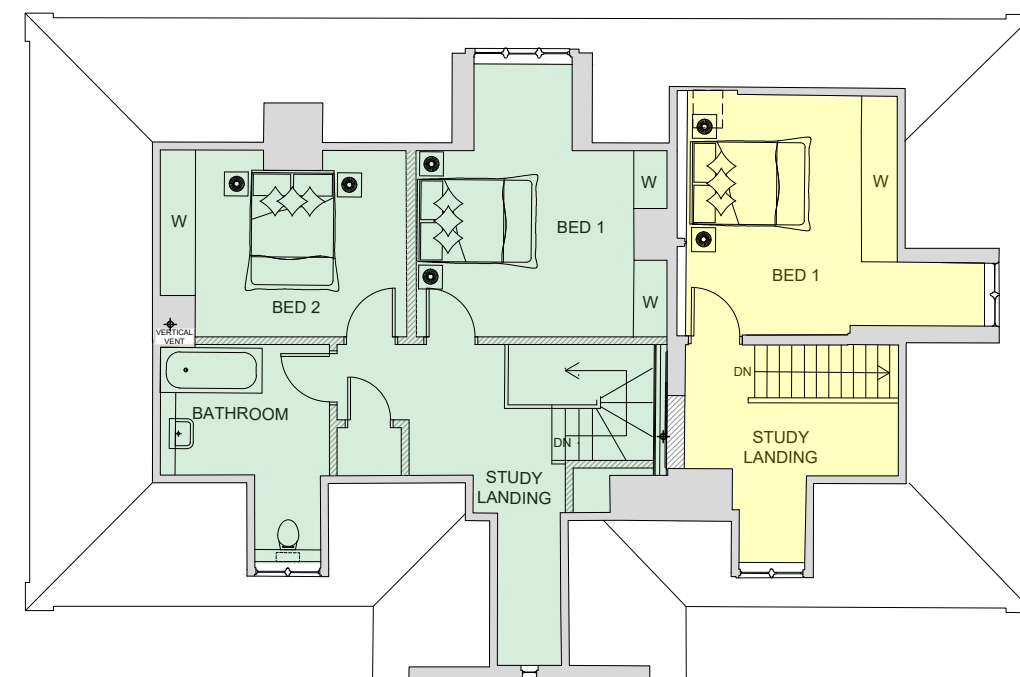


Figure 5.8 Proposed Second Floor

Section 7

Conclusion.

6 | Conclusion

- 6.1 This report has been prepared to accompany an application for Full Planning and Listed Building Consent in relation to Moat House. It has been written with regard to Historic England Advice notes and relevant policy and guidance.
- 6.2 The assessment has considered the historic development of the Site and surrounding area to demonstrate and inform an assessment of significance of the building, and its contribution to the setting of nearby Schedule Monument of the Moated Site north of Moat House. A Site visit was undertaken to identify special interest and inform the production of significance plans.
- 6.3 The proposals have built upon heritage specific guidance to ensure the proposed scheme is sensitive to the building's special interest and includes heritage benefits . As a result, it is considered that the proposed scheme would result in overall no harm and provide a realistic optimal modern day use for the building.
- 6.4 The building is currently vacant and contains modern partitions and furnishings which relate to a former office use. The proposed scheme would placed the asset into a viable use consistent with its conservation and ensure the special interest of the building is maintained for future generations.
- 6.5 The proposed scheme is considered to be accordance with the Act, and in alignment with Wokingham Borough Council's policies on heritage and design. The assessment of the scheme has been carried out in accordance to the relevant legislation and policy, including Chapter 16 of the NPPF.

Appendix 1

Statutory Entries .

Moat House

Grade::

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List Entry Number:

1419613

Date First Listed:

28-July-2014

List Entry Name:

Moat House

Statutory Address:

Moat House, Biggs Lane, Arborfield, Reading, RG2 9LN

Details

MATERIALS: red brick, in English bond, with rubbed brick dressings, a tiled roof and brick chimney stacks.

PLAN: the building lies to the south of a scheduled medieval moated site (NHLE 1009886). It is rectangular in plan, with a projecting central bay on the symmetrical south-east elevation and a shallow, single-storey service bay to the north-east.

Internally the ground and first floors are arranged with rooms on either side of a spinal corridor, and in the attic, rooms are on the northern side.

EXTERIOR: it is a building of three bays and of two storeys with an attic. It has a chamfered brick plinth, a brick storey band, the central course laid on the diagonal, creating a chevron effect, and interrupted by plain pilaster strips at the angles. It has a continuous deep cyma and dentil eaves cornice, beneath a slightly flared, hipped roof. Tall, square stacks have moulded brick caps.

The entrance is on the asymmetrical north-west elevation. It has a shallow, broken-pedimented brick doorcase, consisting of a rubbed brick four-centre arch with a tall voussoir, flanked by narrow windows. Above is a three-light window within a flared, eared architrave on a tall base flanked by shallow scrolled brackets. The door is of three fielded panels beneath a broken pediment. There is a brick mounting block to each side of the door. At first floor, to the right, is a recessed moulded panel, dated 1906. Windows have rectangular leaded lights in ovolo moulded timber mullioned and transomed casements ranging from two to six lights, in plain brick openings with quarter-moulded brick cills. Apparently original, there is a centrally-placed three-light, flat-roofed dormer, with tile hung cheeks.

The elevation onto the private garden is symmetrical, with a projecting central bay beneath a shaped ‘Dutch’ gable, the windows diminishing in size per storey in Jacobean manner: a three light window on the ground floor, a two light window on the first floor and a narrow window in the gable head. Again, the flanking bays have two-light windows to the ground floor and a pair of single lights to the first floor. There are two, flat-roofed two-light dormers with tile hung cheeks, to the attic. There is a doorway concealed in the return of the projection giving access the former dining room.

INTERIOR: the main entrance leads into a stair hall which is dominated by an oak screen in Jacobean manner. The shape of the tapering shafts is replicated in the finials to the stair newels. The stair is of open-well, closed-string type with turned balusters, a heavy moulded rail and square newels with ball finials on tall tapering shafts.

Doorcases are moulded, and doors, where they survive, have six moulded panels. Rooms to the ground and first floors have picture rails, deep skirtings and moulded cornices. Fireplaces have been replaced and date from the mid-C20. Windows, including those in the attic, have iron stays and pigtail catches; some have been replaced.

Moated site north of the Moat House

Scheduled Monument

List Entry Number:

1009886

Date First Listed:

01 March 1977

Statutory Address:

Moated Site north of the Moat House, Biggs Lane, Arborfield, Reading, RG2 9LN

Details

Dry medieval moated site in the valley of the River Blackwater. It has a single island and is visible as earthworks on the south, east and west sides, where there is a graded ditch approximately 10m wide. The island rises to c. 1m, and the banks up to 2m. The moat bottom gradually rises to the north, where the moat is back-filled. The island is fairly level with a slight rise to the north-west corner, the site of the old farmhouse. The upper parts of the outer banks have been planted with trees and shrubs.

The scheduled area includes the island, ditch and a 2m buffer zone for its protection, and comprises a roughly square area of c.60m x 60m. The boundary is set at an appropriate position to ensure the conservation of the potential buried structural and environmental remains within the moat. The scheduling covers the entirety of the island, hence offering protection to the potential buried remains of former structures and gardens and to environmental deposits, important sources of information for the historic development of the site and the life of its inhabitants.



Delivery | Design | Engagement | Heritage | Impact Management | Planning
Sustainable Development | Townscape | Transport

Edinburgh: 11 Alva Street | Edinburgh | EH2 4PH

Glasgow: 177 West George Street | Glasgow | G2 2LB

London: Da Vinci House | 44 Saffron Hill | London | EC1N 8FH

Manchester: This is The Space | 68 Quay Street | Manchester | M3 3EJ

Birmingham: The Colmore Building | 20 Colmore Circus Queensway | Birmingham | B4 6AT

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