

HERITAGE STATEMENT.

2 Deanery Cottages ,Sonning.

Replacement front gates.

Feb 2026

INTRODUCTION: Deanery Cottage is a grade II listed building situated in Sonning conservation area.

This application is to replace the front gates of No.2. These gates are the only entrance to this cottage and therefore form an important part of its future heritage and its "presentation" to the High Street.

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS And BACKGROUND;

I have visited the property many times over the last 5 years, and have come to the conclusion that it has quite a chequered history. On my first visit I concluded it is a building of "two halves".

The southern section is probably 18th century and was and was constructed with the remainder of the southern half of the building, as single dwelling which has subsequently and reasonably recently subdivide into three dwellings.

The northern part of the cottage is late 20th century, about 1970, with conventional cavity external walls, regularised timber joists and rafters.

The roof is definitely of a modern construction with use of modern fixings and regular spacings.

I have searched 4-5 historic maps of Sonning but the most relevant one to this application is dated 1968. This identifies two separate dwellings with a gap between them and "The Grange" (the repair workshop of the adjoining owner) to the north, with the same separate building in the rear of our site. Note these two dwellings were called Cleaver Cottage and Deanery Cottage.

It is believed that Deanery Cottage was originally named as such because it was probably opposite the main entrance to the medieval Deanery on the other side of the High Street.

Looking carefully at the "Listing History", it would appear that Cleaver and Deanery Cottages were originally Grade III but were upgraded to Grade II when the listing system was reviewed in the latter half of the 20th century.

The original listing did not appear to include the northern part (the modern half of 2 Deanery Cottages) or the detached building at the rear of the site, but the modern part of the building is now integral with the rest of Deanery Cottages and falls into the overall listing status.

Recent records show that between 1930s and 1950s, it was owned by a [REDACTED] who was the resident Builder and Carpenter/Joiner in the village.

It is not difficult to work out that the northern part of 2 Deanery Cottages was an open gap in the High Street with a builder's yard and workshop at the rear and [REDACTED] lived in the cottage to the south, then called Deanery Cottage with its attached neighbour, Cleaver Cottage.

Since 1970, Deanery Cottage has been extended and partly rebuilt to the north, as I originally suspected on my first site visit. The building has also subsequently been subdivided into three dwelling units, and this application just deals with the northern part of the group. The subdivision is not at all tidy, which is illustrated by the awkward arrangement of the narrow garden of the neighbour and the clumsy Flying Freehold required to resolve the bathroom and entrance arrangements for each separate dwelling.

PROPOSAL FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF THE FRONT GATES.

I refer specifically to my accompanying Design & Access Statement.

The existing gate and fence, were constructed with a delapidated 1970s soft wood shiplap pattern, that had a great deal of decayed timber.

They were installed as part of the 1970s northern extension to the property when [REDACTED] retired and closed his construction business down. They always looked a bit like an after-thought.

This application is proposed to replace them with a pair of quality oak gates that will have a long and useful life, to reflect the age and heritage of Deanery Cottage. Refer to my drawing DN 16 which shows the proposed pattern of the new gates.