

Heritage Statement

This Heritage Statement has been prepared to identify the heritage assets potentially impacted by the proposed changes to Little Gables, as well as the broader setting in which the property is situated.

The purpose of this statement is to outline all heritage assets that may be affected by the proposal, to describe their significance, and to assess the potential impact of the proposed development on their historical, architectural, and cultural value, including any direct effects.

Heritage assets encompass both designated and non-designated assets. In this context, Little Gables is classified as a Non-Designated Heritage Asset. While not officially listed (e.g., as a Grade I or Grade II listed building), it retains considerable historical, architectural, and cultural importance.

The property is located within a Conservation Area, which is a designated zone of historical or cultural significance subject to special planning controls designed to preserve its character and appearance. These controls extend not only to the property itself but also to the surrounding setting, including its relationship with neighbouring properties and other heritage assets.

In accordance with Paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), proposals affecting heritage assets must be accompanied by a Heritage Statement to ensure that the potential impacts are fully understood and carefully considered.

This statement will assess the significance of the heritage assets affected by the proposed development, evaluate any potential harm to these assets, and propose measures to mitigate such impacts where necessary.

Site Name Little Gables

Address Little Gables, Sindlesham Rd, Arborfield, Arborfield Cross, Reading RG2 9QE

Schedule of works

Please state the type of proposal e.g. extension to a listed building, internal alterations

Our client is looking to construct an additional single storey side extension in keeping with the existing, a second storey extension over the existing single storey along with a new porch on their semi detached property. The brick details have been designed to match the existing Flemish Bond (where indicated on elevations), brick header detail above windows to match existing, stone cills to match existing, the addition of a crown roof over the new single storey extension, crease tile detail to be retained on the second storey extension and pitched roof to replace existing single storey flat roof. A new velux window has been indicated in the existing en-suite and two roof lights in the new single storey flat roof. New doors and windows to match existing.

1. What heritage asset(s), including their setting, are potentially affected by the proposals?

Conservation Area / Non-Designated Heritage Asset.

2. Using the information obtained through research and on-site analysis provide a summary of the history of the site/building.

Little Gables is a residential property located on Sindlesham Road in Arborfield Cross, Reading, Berkshire. The house is situated on a thoroughfare within the Arborfield area, which has a rich history.

Arborfield Cross has been a crossroads for many centuries, serving as a central point for the local community. The area gained additional significance in 1919 when the War Memorial was erected at the crossroads.

The village of Arborfield, including Arborfield Cross, has a history that dates back to Saxon times. The medieval settlement by the River Loddon included a manor house and a wooden church, both of which were later rebuilt—the church in the 13th century and the manor house in 1603 and again in 1842. A mill powered by the river produced high-quality paper.

In the 15th century, a group of buildings had already been established at or near the crossroads, with two inns creating a centre for trade for the local farming community and travellers. Some of these old buildings are now in the Conservation Area.

Little Gables appears to have once been part of a farm property and matches the layout and style of the neighbouring property at Lychgate.

There has been a single storey rear extension added previously, and the proposed plans too look to enhance what was installed and provide an aesthetic that is more in keeping with the local character.

3. What research have you undertaken to understand the significance of the heritage asset(s) affected?

arborfieldhistory.org.uk

4. What is important about the affected heritage asset(s) ('the significance')?

The significance of an affected heritage asset refers to its value in terms of its historical, architectural, cultural, or aesthetic importance. Several key factors to be considered are:

1. **Historical Importance:** Little Gables appears to have been part of a previous working farm.
2. **Architectural Value:** Little Gables boasts a series of architectural features in the original property which include; projected brick headers to the windows, soldier courses to the heads of windows and doors, creased/corbelled tiles, brickwork in the style of a Flemish bond – and with different brick types, brick chimney stack and extended eaves.
3. **Aesthetic Value:** The character and visual impact of the existing building needs to be considered – especially in relation to how it sits within the surrounding environment.

The significance of the asset helps inform decisions about the level of protection or intervention that may be necessary. When changes or developments are proposed, the potential impact on this significance must be carefully considered to ensure that any alterations do not undermine the asset's value or diminish its contribution to the cultural and historical fabric of the area.

5. How will the proposals impact on the significance of the heritage asset(s) and their setting?

When developing the proposals and assessing their potential impact on the significance of the asset and its setting, several key factors were carefully considered:

Direct Physical Impact on the Asset:

- **Alterations to the Structure:** The design proposals have been developed with a deep respect for the current character of the existing structure. The proposed changes replicate the existing architectural elements, ensuring continuity and preserving the asset's original identity.
- **Material Impact:** A careful selection of materials has been made to complement the existing property. The proposed materials are intended to match the original in both texture and appearance, with particular attention paid to the brickwork patterns, maintaining the integrity of the original design.

Visual or Aesthetic Impact:

- **Altered Views:** The potential impact on the setting has been thoroughly considered. The single-storey side extension is designed to be in keeping with the neighbouring Lychgate Cottage, while the two-storey rear extension respects the existing form and scale of the property. The proposals aim to minimize visual disruption and maintain the visual cohesion between the asset and its surroundings, where the overall aesthetic character is of paramount importance.

- **Design Compatibility:** The design seeks to enhance the property while maintaining its visual harmony with the existing structure and the broader area. Every effort has been made to ensure that the new additions integrate seamlessly, reinforcing the property's aesthetic appeal within its context.

Impact on Historic or Cultural Context:

- **Disruption of Historical Narrative:** The proposals are carefully designed to preserve and enhance the relationship between the asset, Lychgate Cottage, and the surrounding environment. This ensures the continuity of the historical narrative and the preservation of important contextual links.
- **Loss of Meaning or Identity:** The proposed changes have been thoughtfully crafted to reinforce the property's role as a "community landmark." The design seeks to enhance the social significance of the property, ensuring that it remains an important and meaningful part of the local cultural landscape.

Impact on the Setting:

- **Changing Surroundings:** The development carefully considers the potential impact on the surrounding streetscape and landscape. The design aims to complement and integrate with the existing environment, ensuring that the character of the area is respected while accommodating these changes.
- **Preservation of Character:** Within a Conservation Area, maintaining the integrity of the wider context is vital. The proposed development has been designed to enhance the overall character of the area, ensuring that it harmonises with the surrounding environment and does not negatively affect the unique qualities of the Conservation Area.

Minimising Harm:

- Potential negative impacts on the heritage asset and its setting have been carefully mitigated through thoughtful design. This includes using materials that closely match the original building, ensuring that new constructions are discreet and sympathetic to the existing structure, and preserving important views and relationships with neighbouring properties to maintain the integrity of the surrounding environment.

In conclusion, the proposals have been designed with careful consideration for the asset and its setting. Every effort has been made to respect and preserve the building's original character, ensuring that alterations are sympathetic to its architectural and historical significance. The design aims to enhance the visual and aesthetic qualities of the property while maintaining harmony with its surroundings. Furthermore, potential impacts on the historic context and local environment have been minimized through thoughtful design choices and the use of complementary materials. Overall, the development seeks to safeguard the integrity of both the heritage asset and its broader setting, ensuring that it continues to contribute positively to the community and the Conservation Area.

6. How has the proposal been designed to conserve the significance of the heritage asset(s) and their setting?

The proposed design has been carefully developed to preserve and enhance the key features of the existing property, ensuring continuity and respect for its architectural character. Given the property's distinctive features, significant effort has been made to integrate them into the proposed extension, ensuring a seamless connection between old and new.

Several key characteristics and aesthetic elements have been thoughtfully considered and replicated, including but not limited to:

- **Materials:** The side single-storey extension will utilise materials that mirror the Flemish bond and brick types found on the original building, preserving the integrity of the brickwork, which is one of the property's defining features.
- **Second Storey Extension:** The proposed second-storey extension will align with the existing brickwork patterns, ensuring cohesion with the original structure.

- **Brick Detailing:** The accentuated brick detailing around the heads of the windows has been replicated on both the front elevation and a window on the rear elevation, reinforcing the building's architectural style.
- **Chimney Stack:** The existing chimney stack will be retained, with a subservient roof design that extends as required, maintaining the original feature's prominence and character.
- **Eaves:** The eaves have been extended in keeping with the current design, contributing to the building's overall aesthetic harmony.
- **Hipped Roof:** A hipped roof design for the proposed two-storey extension has been chosen to soften its visual impact and ensure it remains consistent with the overall aesthetic of the property.
- **Crown Roof:** The single-storey extension will feature a crown roof, mirroring the design of Lychgate Cottage's extension. This roof style, with an 'up-and-over' pitched section followed by a flat section (not visible from ground level), ensures a visual connection with the neighbouring property while maintaining symmetry and balance between both buildings.
- **Tiled Detailing:** Corbelled or creased tiled corners will be applied to the two-storey extension, echoing the design details on the rear single-storey section, adding continuity and depth to the architecture.
- **Window and Door Details:** Soldier course headers will be used above windows and doors on the side and rear elevations to break up the massing and maintain visual continuity with the original structure.
- **Minimised Expansion:** The proposed two-storey rear extension will be built over the existing foundations, avoiding the need to extend further into the garden and minimizing the impact on the surrounding setting.
- **Consideration of Changing Surroundings:** To account for potential future changes in the landscape, such as the reduction of trees and hedges, the two-storey extension has been positioned at the rear of the property to reduce its visual impact, ensuring it remains harmonious with the evolving setting.

The proposed design strives to respect and reinforce the existing character of the property while thoughtfully integrating new elements that complement its architectural legacy and surrounding context.