

LOWER BRINSOP

TITLE

Heritage Statement
for Alteration Works at Lower
Brinsop (formally White
House Farm), Brinsop May
2025

SITE ADDRESS

Lower Brinsop
Brinsop
Herefordshire
HR4 7AT





Introduction
White House

Lower Brindop (formally Whitehouse Farm) is a Grade II listed building (*List Entry 1081973*) of considerable architectural and historical interest, located in the rural hamlet of Lower Brinsop, Herefordshire. The farmhouse dates back to the late medieval period, originating in the 15th century as a substantial timber-framed open-hall house. Over subsequent centuries, the building underwent numerous adaptations, notably receiving an 18th-century brick facing, which today encapsulates its earlier structural fabric. Lower Brindop Farmhouse is part of a wider historic farmstead that includes several attached ancillary structures, namely a cider house, bakehouse, and wain house, collectively reflecting the agricultural heritage and self-sufficient character of traditional Herefordshire farm complexes.

This Heritage Statement has been prepared to support an application for Listed Building Consent relating to minor alterations intended to sensitively enhance the use and appreciation of the building. Specifically, the works involve: **(1)** reopening a historically blocked window in the central range, which was concealed during internal

alterations when the property briefly functioned as an inn in the late 19th to early 20th century, and **(2)** reinstating a lean-to conservatory on the west elevation, a structure clearly evidenced by historic mapping and surviving physical traces on the building fabric.

This document sets out a comprehensive historical background of the property, a detailed assessment of its heritage significance, an analysis of the impact of the proposed interventions, and a justification explaining why these alterations are appropriate and beneficial from a conservation perspective. The proposals are fully illustrated and detailed in the accompanying site plan and existing/proposed drawings, with supporting evidence provided by a dendrochronological report (2024) and historic maps, which are appended to this application for reference. The proposed works seek to maintain the delicate balance between conservation and contemporary use, ensuring the continued preservation and enhancement of the Farmhouse’s distinctive historical character and significance.

LOCATION

The Grade II listed Lower Brinsop (White House Farm), a historic timber-framed residence dating from the late medieval period, occupies a tranquil position in the rural hamlet of Lower Brinsop, Herefordshire. Nestled approximately six miles northwest of Hereford, Lower Brinsop is defined by its distinctly pastoral character, set within gently undulating countryside dotted with historic farmsteads, vernacular cottages, and traditional agricultural structures built predominantly from local stone and brick.

Lower Brinsop lies just west of the village of Brinsop itself, where the Grade I listed Brinsop Court, historically associated with the influential Dansey family since the 13th century, has long provided a manorial anchor to the surrounding settlements. The hamlet’s peaceful, secluded setting is reinforced by the local topography, its landscape interspersed with ancient orchards, medieval fishponds, and mature hedgerows.

Historical documentation, including the Domesday Book, records nearby Brinsop, then noted as ‘Bruneshopa’, as a modest settlement under ecclesiastical influence, indicating a sustained habitation dating from at least the 11th century. The etymology

of Brinsop, likely derived from Old English elements translating to “Brūn’s enclosed valley,” provides additional insight into the locality’s origins as an agricultural and pastoral centre, established amidst more prominent medieval villages and manorial estates of Herefordshire.

The history of White House Farmhouse is intrinsically connected with this wider historical context. Over centuries, its occupants have contributed to local agricultural practices, landholding patterns, and rural life, reflecting the evolving social and economic history of Herefordshire. The presence of adjoining ancillary farm buildings—such as the cider house, bakehouse, and wain house—further underscores the agricultural heritage and self-sufficient character typical of the region’s farmsteads.

Today, White House Farmhouse and its associated structures are complemented by carefully maintained gardens and traditional landscape features, such as the historic fishpond. Together, these elements define the enduring rural charm and historical significance of the site, reinforcing its role as a distinctive feature within the tranquil Herefordshire countryside.



Aerial View of Lower Brinsop with White House circled. Microsoft, 2025

BUILDING DESCRIPTION

White House Farmhouse is a fine example of 15th-century vernacular architecture, substantially remodelled in the 18th century. Located centrally within an historic farmstead complex, the dwelling is primarily timber-framed, faced with Georgian red brick elevations and detailed with stone quoins. Its steeply pitched, concrete-tiled and slate roof structure contains the smoke-blackened timbers of an original medieval open hall, notably featuring decorative cusped V-strut braces.

The symmetrical front elevation is punctuated by evenly spaced casement windows beneath segmental brick arches, reflecting its later Georgian alterations. The attached ancillary structures, including a cider house, bakehouse, and timber-framed wain house, further reflect the agricultural heritage and domestic character of the site.

Internally, the farmhouse retains significant early fabric, including chamfered beams, original oak floorboards, Victorian fireplaces, and remnants of earlier wattle-and-daub panelling. A Victorian-era staircase and altered ceilings indicate a history of thoughtful modernisation and adaptation.

At the west elevation, historical mapping and surviving masonry details evidence a former lean-to conservatory, now removed, with remnants of lead flashing still visible. The structure's architectural

composition, combining medieval origins with later Georgian sophistication, significantly enhances the rural character of Lower Brinsop, harmoniously blending with the surrounding landscape and historic farm buildings



HISTORIC DEVELOPMENT



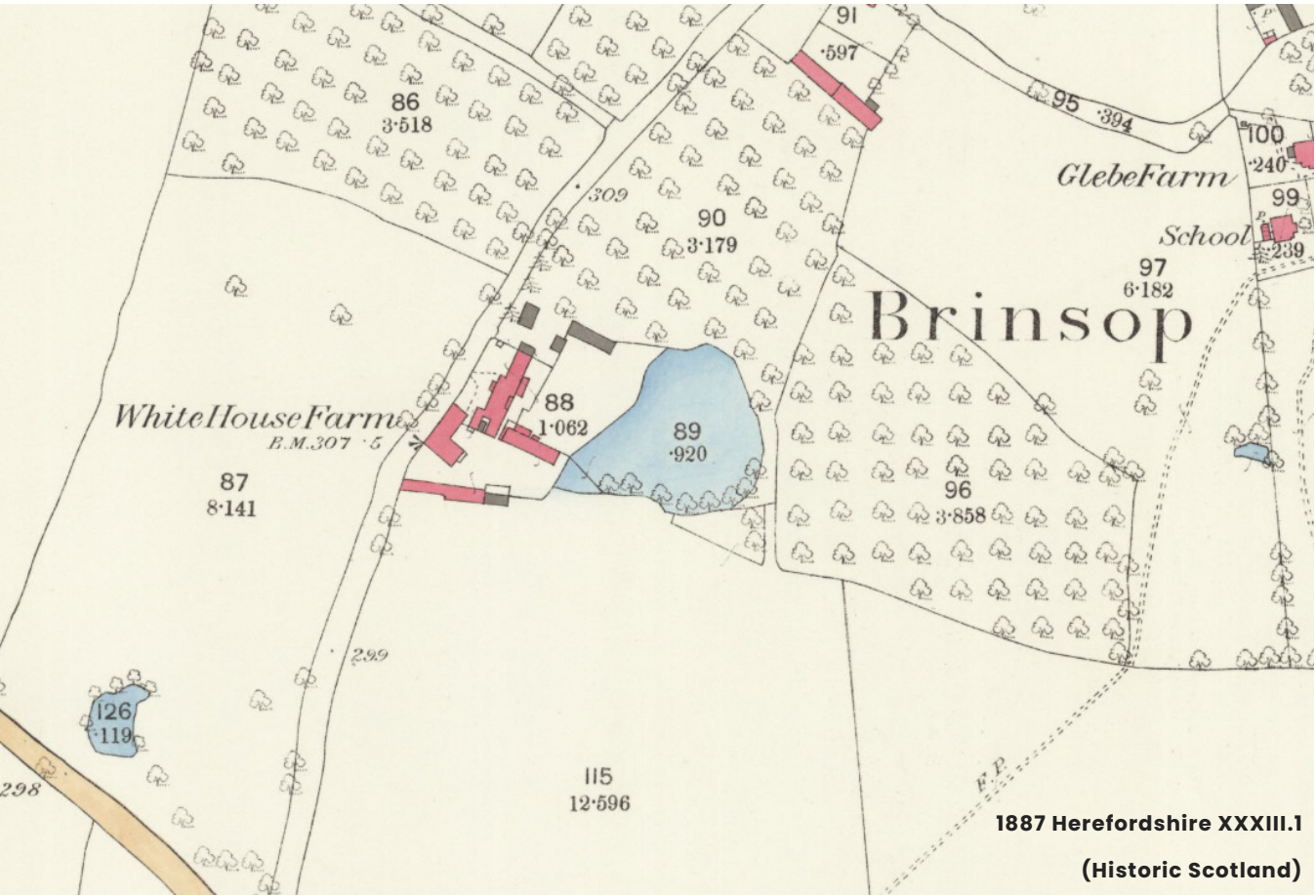
Lower Brinsop – 1843 Tithe Map (National Archive)

ORIGINS AND EARLY HISTORY

Lower Brinsop Farmhouse has evolved over many centuries from a substantial late-medieval hall-house. Architectural evidence indicates an original open hall structure of at least three bays, characterised by heavily smoke-blackened roof timbers suggesting the use of an open central hearth. Surviving cusped “V-strut” braces in the central roof trusses, a purely decorative carpentry detail, reflect considerable status and wealth at the time of its construction.

Recent dendrochronological analysis undertaken in 2024 confirmed the building’s medieval origins. Analysis of the central truss timbers, forming part of the original open hall, revealed tree-ring sequences spanning from 1383–1459, establishing a likely felling date between AD 1470 and 1500. This dating aligns closely with the stylistic characteristics of the surviving cusped bracing, placing the farmhouse’s construction firmly within the late 15th century.

Although early documentary evidence specifically naming “White House” or “Lower Brinsop” is sparse, the building’s proximity—approximately 500 yards west—to St George’s Church and its associated medieval fishpond strongly suggest a domestic complex of some significance. Fishponds were typically indicative of manorial residences, reinforcing the possibility of an early connection to the nearby manor of Brinsop Court, historically held by the Dansey family from the 13th century onward. Given its architectural sophistication and scale, Lower Brinsop Farmhouse likely originated as a prominent yeoman or minor gentry house under the broader manorial estate. The official Grade II listing similarly notes the timber-framed structure as dating to at least the 17th century, explicitly recognising its incorporation of an earlier 15th-century core.



Thus, by the late medieval period, Lower Brinsop Farmhouse was already an established site, serving as a substantial residence or manor farmstead within the parish of Brinsop. Its surviving fabric provides rare and valuable insight into the domestic architecture and social hierarchy of rural Herefordshire in the 15th and 16th centuries.

17TH -18TH CENTURY DEVELOPMENT

The standing farmhouse today is principally 17th-century in construction, with timber-framed walls later refaced in brick. The core four-bay structure and two-story layout are typical of the 1600s. Notably, timber framing with wattle-and-daub infill would have formed the original exterior, until the 18th-century red brick facing was added as an update. This brick refacing (along with dressed stone corner quoins on the gable ends) gave the old half-timbered house a more modern, symmetrical Georgian appearance, reflecting improved fortunes or changing architectural taste in the late 1700s.



Window dedicated to Wordsworth
St George, Brinsop

The building's irregular plan evolved by accretion: by this time it had a central hall range with gabled cross-wings at each end.

Around the farmhouse, several ancillary farm buildings also took shape in the 17th–18th centuries. On the north-east end, a two-story former cider house

(stone rubble ground floor with timber-framed upper floor) was attached, while to the south-west a one-and-a-half-story bakehouse (mostly stone, with a brick façade and bread oven) was joined to the house. Parallel to the bakehouse, a timber-framed Wainhouse (wagon shed) formed a courtyard, indicating a traditional farmyard layout. These outbuildings – likely contemporaneous with the post-medieval farmhouse, point to Lower Brinsop Farm's role as a working farmstead by the 17th–18th century. The Herefordshire Historic Environment Record notes that the house is "2 storeys, timber-framed, but mainly faced with 18th-century brickwork... Built probably in the 17th century, but extensively altered in the 18th", and that adjacent outbuildings north and south are timber-framed and "probably of the same date". In summary, the 1600s saw Lower Brinsop take its present form as a timber-framed hall with cross-wings, and the 1700s brought significant upgrades, brick cladding, new roofing (slate replacing thatch or stone tiles), and the expansion of its farmyard facilities, solidifying its status as an important farmhouse in Lower Brinsop.

19TH CENTURY: ESTATE FARM AND OCCUPANTS

During the 19th century, Lower Brinsop Farm remained a prominent farmstead within Brinsop parish. Following the end of the Dansey lineage, the entire Manor of Brinsop, including Brinsop Court and its associated farms, was sold in 1815 to the economist David Ricardo as a financial investment. Ricardo himself never resided there, passing away in 1823, and the estate was subsequently managed by his family and successors. Ricardo's son later leased out Brinsop Court as a 550-acre farm, which suggests that farms within the manor, likely including Lower Brinsop Farm, were occupied by tenant farmers. By the mid-19th century, Lower Brinsop was occupied by local farming gentry. William Adams is specifically listed as a resident at "Whitehouse, Brinsop" in an 1856 directory, indicating he was either

the owner-occupier or a principal tenant farmer under the broader estate. Earlier tithe records from 1843 list Thomas Lewis as the tenant and John Lee as the landowner, providing evidence of the farm's tenancy history.

Throughout the Victorian period, Lower Brinsop Farmhouse underwent internal modernisation. In the mid-19th century, improvements included raising the ceilings of the first floor in the south-east wing and installing small Victorian fireplaces in the bedrooms. These modifications, along with an early kitchen range, indicate ongoing updates to enhance domestic comfort. Despite these changes, Lower Brinsop Farm remained fundamentally an agricultural homestead, with its attached cider house and bakehouse actively used for farm production and domestic baking, reflecting a largely self-sufficient rural lifestyle.

By the late 19th century, Lower Brinsop was recognised as one of the notable residences in the area. An 1895 county directory names "White House" as the residence of Mrs Edwards, a local farmer and hop grower. The same directory lists David Ricardo, Esq., and Edward William Plowright, Esq., among the chief landowners in Brinsop parish, demonstrating that the farm continued to operate within a broader manorial context. It is likely that the Edwards family occupied multiple local holdings at this time, including Brinsop Court, as they are also mentioned there. Other commercial residents included Edwards and Hunt at Brinsop Court, and James Ford at New House.

Of cultural note, William Wordsworth and Robert Southey were frequent visitors to Brinsop parish during this period. Indeed, Wordsworth planted a tree at Brinsop Manor, commemorated by an inscription in St George's Church:

"In memory of William Wordsworth, the Poet Laureate, a frequent sojourner in this parish; the gift of some among the many admirers of his genius and character, A.D. 1873."

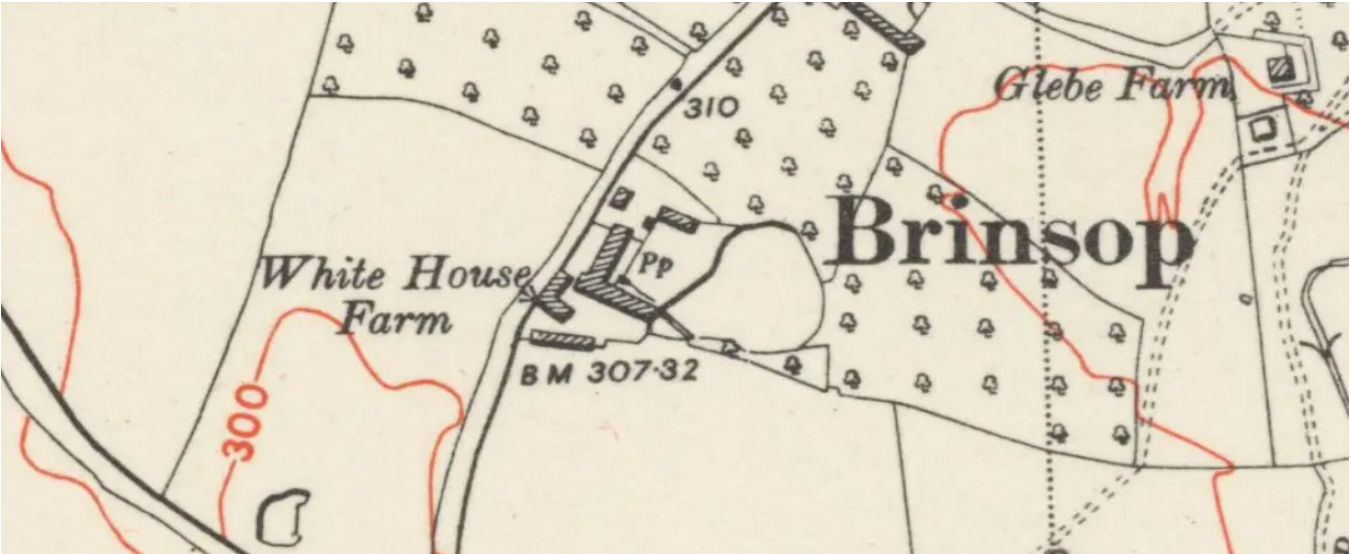
This inscription was added following significant restoration of the church in 1866–67, costing approximately £900, and highlights the area’s literary associations. Census records from the late 19th century document a declining population in the parish, with only about 26 houses recorded in 1881, further emphasising Lower Brinsop’s status as one of the principal farmhouses sustaining the local community at that time.

Between the tithe map of 1843 and the first Ordnance Survey map of 1880, notable agricultural structures were added to Lower Brinsop Farm. These included a substantial barn running east-to-west along the southern boundary, complete with ancillary lean-to buildings, nearly rivalling the dwelling in size. To the north of the farmhouse, additional significant structures included a large timber Wainhouse and an extension to the cider barn, also timber-framed. These buildings remained prominent features into the early 20th century but appear to have been largely removed by the mid 20th century, marking another chapter in the evolving agricultural landscape of the farm.

20TH CENTURY: DECLINE, CONVERSION AND RESTORATION

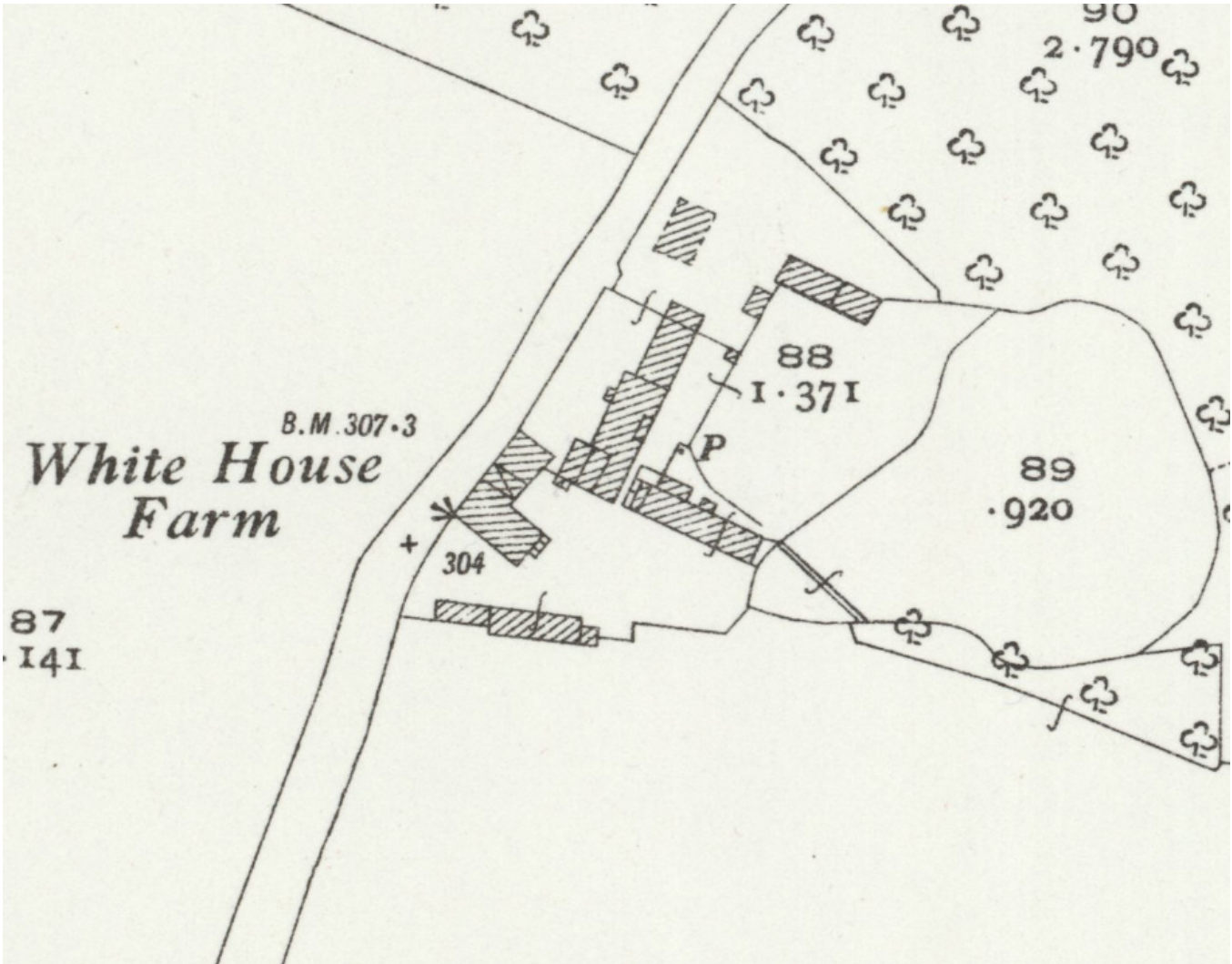
In the early 20th century, the ownership of Brinsop passed through new hands. By the 1900s, Colonel Hubert Delaval Astley owned Brinsop Court (he was a noted antiquarian and ornithologist who resided there until his death in 1925), and possibly Lower Brinsop remained part of the Brinsop Court estate during his tenure. It continued to serve as a farmhouse, and its historic character was appreciated by antiquarians, the Royal Commission’s 1932 inventory duly recorded “White House Farm” as a 17th-century timber-framed house “faced with 18th-century brickwork” and noted its old outbuildings. The property was Grade II listed in 1953 under the name “White House Farmhouse and attached buildings”, recognising its architectural and historical significance.

By the late 20th century, however, traditional farming at Lower Brinsop had waned. In the 1980s the complex underwent a major change of function, it was converted into a country pub and time-share holiday accommodation. The farmhouse and its outbuildings (with their picturesque timber frames and rural setting by an old fish pond) made an attractive hospitality venue. This brief incarnation as “The Dog and Duck” pub marked the first known use of the property as an inn or public house,



1945 Herefordshire XXXIII.NW

(Historic Scotland)



1929 Herefordshire XXXIII.1

(Historic Scotland)

a departure from its purely domestic/ agricultural past. The conversion inevitably introduced some alterations (e.g. modern service installations, and by this time part of the roof had been redone in concrete tiles). However, the structural integrity, the medieval core and Georgian brick façade, remained intact.

In 2005, Lower Brinsop was rescued from its commercial phase and restored to a private dwelling. The early 21st-century owners undertook renovations to return the house to a single-family residence while preserving its historic features. Since then, parts of the Lower Brinsop have been sensitively adapted into holiday cottages (the former cider house and wainhouse are now self-catering apartments), blending heritage

architecture with modern use. Throughout all these changes, the site’s historical essence endures: one can still discern the original hall-house roof timbers within the attic, walk between the old bakehouse and cart shed in the courtyard, and enjoy the landscape of gardens and the medieval fishpond that has graced Lower Brinsop Farm for centuries. From its 15th-century beginnings as a minor hall, through Georgian farm prosperity, to near dereliction and revival, Lower Brinsop Farmhouse encapsulates the evolving rural life of Brinsop. It stands today not only as an architectural palimpsest but as a tangible link to the economic and social history of the parish, reflecting feudal manorial ties, agricultural developments, and the eventual shift toward heritage and tourism in the 20th century.

RECENT PLANNING HISTORY

EARLY CONVERSIONS AND CHANGE OF USE (1992–2001)

1992: CONVERSION OF “THE WAIN HOUSE” TO HOLIDAY ACCOMMODATION; PLANNING PERMISSION GRANTED WITH OWNERSHIP TIE CONDITION TO FARMHOUSE.

2001 (REF: DCN011199/F): CHANGE OF USE APPROVED FROM PUBLIC HOUSE (“THE DOG & DUCK”) TO PRIVATE RESIDENTIAL DWELLING.

MID-2000S ALTERATIONS (2005–2008)

2006 (REF: DCC060212/L): LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR REFURBISHMENT OF “THE OLD STABLES,” INCLUDING REROOFING, REWIRING, HEATING INSTALLATION, KITCHEN UPGRADE, AND PORCH REMOVAL; APPROVED WITH CONDITIONS.

2008 (REF: DCC081834/L): LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR EXTERNAL WEATHERBOARDING TO GABLE ENDS OF “THE CIDER PRESS” AND “THE WAIN HOUSE”; APPROVED.

MODERNISATION OF “THE HAY BARN” (*NOW SEPERATE PROPERTY*) (2011–2019)

2011 (REFS: N111018/FH & N111019/L): APPROVED PLANNING AND LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS AT “THE HAY BARN,” REPLACING METAL BALUSTRADES WITH TIMBER, CLADDING STAIRCASE, BALCONY SIZE REDUCTION, AND REMOVING UNDER-BALCONY STORAGE.

ROUTINE TREE WORKS: APPLICATIONS/NOTIFICATIONS REGULARLY SUBMITTED AND APPROVED FOR TREE MAINTENANCE, REMOVALS, AND REPLACEMENTS.



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Designations: White House Farmhouse (together with its attached farm buildings) is protected as a Grade II listed building, reflecting its special architectural and historic interest. The listing description emphasises the farmhouse’s multi-phase development and the survival of historic fabric from each period, which make the building an instructive example of the evolving rural vernacular. In summary, the significance of White House Farmhouse and its site can be outlined as follows:

ARCHITECTURAL INTEREST

The building is a fine example of a vernacular timber-framed farmhouse with later upgrades. It retains a substantial proportion of historic fabric from several periods: late-medieval oak roof timbers (including the smoke-blackened, cusped trusses of the former open hall), 17th/18th-century timber framing (now largely encased in 18th-century brickwork), and 19th-century additions (such as the extended cross-wing, Victorian joinery, and fireplaces).

The survival of the medieval roof structure with its hints at decorative bracing is of particular note, as such features are relatively rare and indicate the building’s status in the 15th century. The overall form, a central two-storey hall range with two and a half-storey gabled cross wings, remains legible and is characteristic of a prosperous farmhouse evolved over time. Ancillary structures like the stone rubble bakehouse (with intact bread oven) and the timber-framed cider house and wain house add to the architectural ensemble, illustrating the functional diversity of a historic farmstead.

HISTORIC INTEREST

The farmhouse clearly reflects the changing patterns of rural life and domestic arrangements from the medieval period through the 19th century. Its phased development, from open hall to multi-room house, then to gentrified Victorian residence (and even a period of use as a public house), provides insight into social and economic history. Each



layer of the building's fabric tells a story: the medieval hall speaks to 15th-century agrarian society and building techniques; the 18th-century brick refacing corresponds to an era of improved farming prosperity or new ownership modernising the property; the Victorian alterations reflect 19th-century trends (both the desire for comfort, smaller fireplaces, higher ceilings, and the fashion for ornamental conservatories). The fact that the property served as a pub in the 1980s also ties it to local community history. Overall, White House Farmhouse embodies the evolution of a significant rural homestead over ~500 years.

GROUP VALUE

The listing includes attached agricultural buildings (cider house, wain house, and bakehouse) which, together with the farmhouse, form an attractive and coherent historic farmyard group. This group value enhances the significance of each component, as their physical and functional relationship is still apparent. The presence of the large pond (a former fish pond or mill pond adjacent to the house) and surrounding historic landscape elements (orchard plantings, etc.) further contribute to the site's setting and significance, as they preserve the rural context and agricultural character of the heritage asset.

SIGNIFICANT FEATURES AND FABRIC

In the context of the proposed works, certain features of the building are particularly relevant:

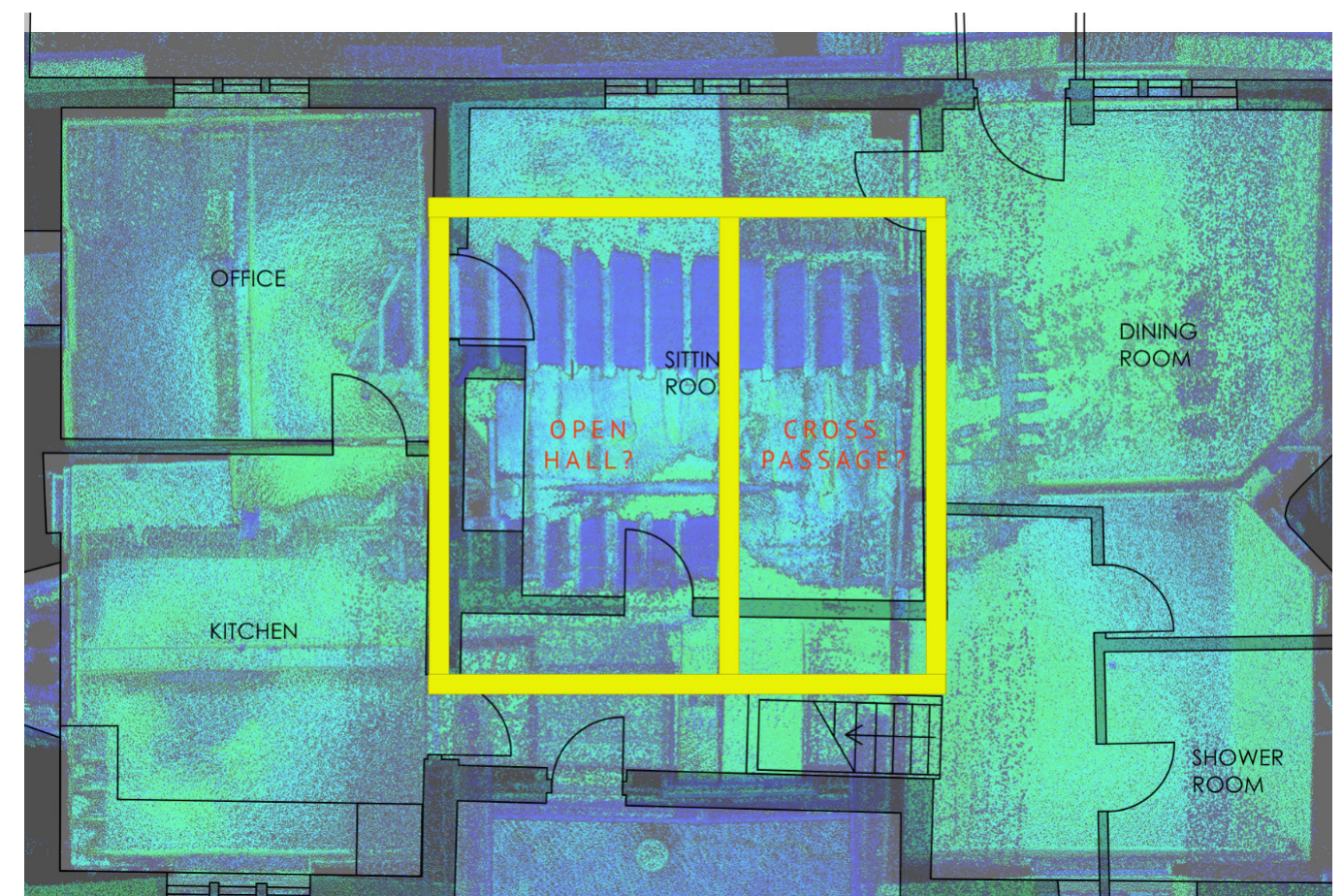
- The window opening in the central range that is currently blocked is itself part of the historic fabric, likely an original (or at least pre-20th-century) external window that was in-filled. The opening's position and size suggest it was intended to light the central hall or landing area. While it is now concealed, reopening it offers the chance to restore a lost feature of the facade and reinstate natural light to the interior. Any surviving evidence of the old window (such as lintel, sill, or remnants of a frame within the wall) is of interest, though at present it is concealed by later finishes and its survival unlikely.

The blocking material (brick infill and the inserted cupboard) is of much more recent origin and not considered to hold significance, rather, it obscures an earlier design. The late-Victorian secondary staircase in front of this window (which will be retained) is itself a part of the building's story, though of lesser architectural merit; its preservation ensures that aspect of the phase remains legible, even as the window is reintroduced. Overall, the significance of the window opening lies in its contribution to the original design and lighting of the house, which will be better appreciated once unblocked.

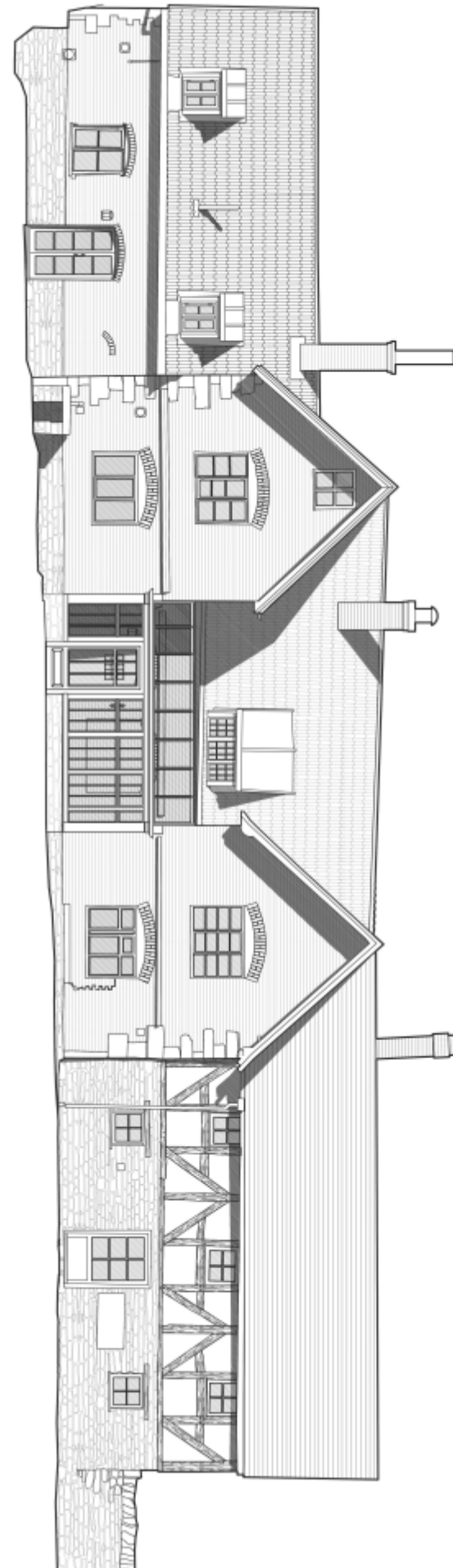
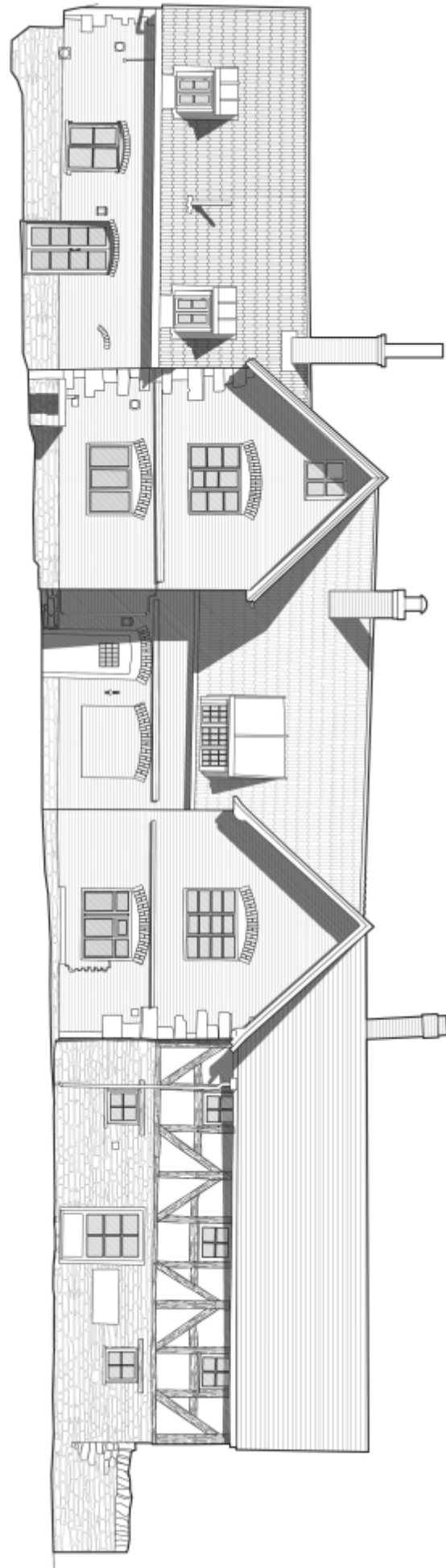
- The former lean-to conservatory on the west elevation, although now lost, is an element of the building's 19th-century history evidenced by the physical marks and historic maps. As an addition, it was a modest structure subordinate to the main house, but it likely had aesthetic and functional value for past occupants. Its removal has left the west side of the house somewhat plain; however, the ghost outline of its roof on the cross wings is an interesting historic trace. The space where it stood is currently an area of modern paving/yard adjacent to the house. While the conservatory itself (as original fabric) no longer exists and thus does not directly contribute to the current significance, reinstating it in a historically-informed manner is seen as a way to enhance the asset, by visually restoring the completeness of the Victorian composition and allowing this chapter of the house's history to

be appreciated anew. The lean-to's former presence is part of the building's significance in terms of illustrating Victorian lifestyle; its reconstruction (with appropriate design differentiation) can be considered a heritage benefit that will recover some lost visual/historic continuity without falsifying the record (as evidence for it is concrete).

In summary, White House Farmhouse derives its significance from its age, well-preserved vernacular construction, the palimpsest of historical changes visible in its fabric, and its role as part of a larger farmstead group. Any interventions to the building must therefore be assessed in terms of how they affect these aspects of significance, particularly the surviving medieval/early fabric, the legibility of its evolution, and the character of the historic farm ensemble.



Location of small medieval hall within White House Farm - Remnants of three trusses and some rafters survive but extent is unknown, given the short bay it has been assumed that this was the cross passage.



ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT OF THE PROPOSALS



Photo showing bricked up window with its cementitious pointing.

The proposed works are (1) reopening the blocked window in the central range, and (2) constructing a new lean-to conservatory on the west elevation (on the footprint of the former conservatory). Each of these interventions has been carefully considered to minimise harm to the listed building's fabric and character. The anticipated impacts are as follows:

REOPENING OF THE BLOCKED WINDOW (CENTRAL RANGE) This involves the removal of a non-original cupboard and the removal of the infill material that currently blocks the old window opening. The cupboard is a later insertion (20th-century fabric) and does not contribute to the building's significance. Its removal

will not affect any historic structural elements, it will, in fact, reveal the original wall and window aperture behind. Similarly, the masonry infill in the window opening is of relatively low significance (common brickwork from the late 1800s or early 1900s). Taking out these infills will cause negligible loss of historic fabric; instead, it will restore an earlier element of the building's design. Once opened up, a new timber window will be installed to match the style of other traditional casement windows in the house (it will be made to the appropriate dimensions of the revealed opening). This new window will re-establish a uniform fenestration pattern and improve internal natural light. The works will be done with care

to preserve the original aperture and to make good the reveals, although we do not expect any damage. Internally, the late-Victorian staircase adjacent to this area will remain in place; the reopened window will be just partially clipped by the stair running alongside it, allowing light into that stair hall. The overall impact of unblocking the window is positive: it removes an insensitive later alteration, better reveals the building's historic layout, and has no adverse effect on the building's integrity. The change will be visible externally (a new window where currently there may be a blank wall or mismatched patch), but this visibility is a reversal of an incongruous alteration, thus it will enhance the external appearance by returning it closer to its original/historic look. In heritage terms, this action does not constitute harm but rather an enhancement of significance (recovering a lost feature).

REINSTATEMENT OF LEAN-TO CONSERVATORY (WEST ELEVATION)

The construction of a new lean-to conservatory on the west side will have some physical and visual impacts, all

of which have been mitigated through careful design. The new structure will sit on the footprint of the original (historic) conservatory, abutting the two cross-wing end walls and the central range.

Physical impact on historic fabric: The connections to the historic walls will be done with minimal intrusion. The proposal calls for using a stone plinth wall for the conservatory that will be built up against the existing masonry but with straight joints, meaning the new work will not be toothed or bonded into the old stonework. This clear junction will mark the addition as new and also avoid the need to remove portions of the original walls, essentially, the conservatory will be a freestanding lean-to that lightly ties into the farmhouse where necessary for weatherproofing. Flashings will be inserted into mortar joints to waterproof the roof connection, thereby avoiding cutting into the old walls. Some small penetrations (for fixings or bolts) may be required to secure the conservatory frame to the building, but these will be limited and designed to go into mortar or replaceable fabric wherever possible. No character-defining



Leanto Conservatory Design



Original flashing line of leanto conservatory on return of brickwork

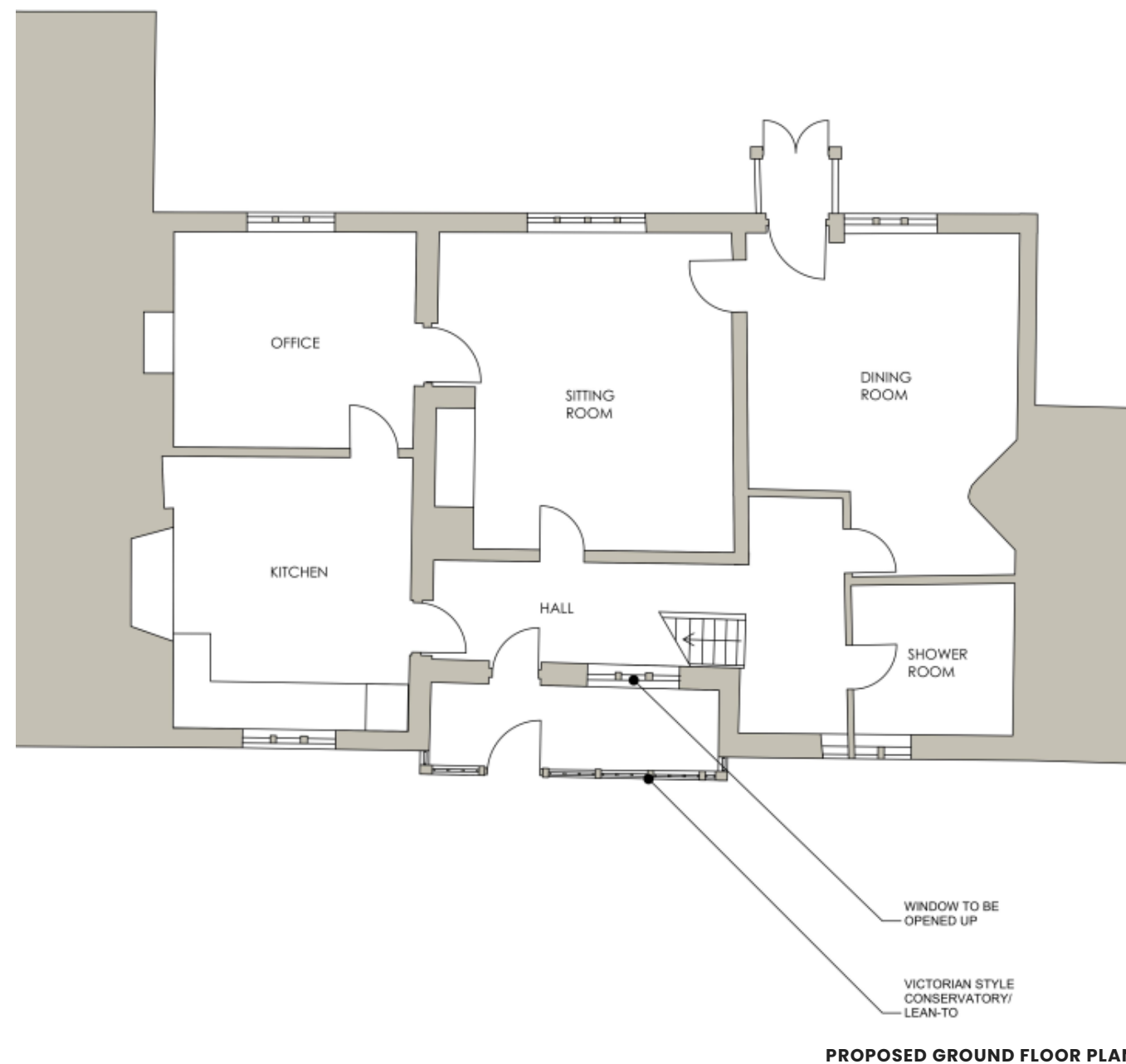
features on the west elevations will be lost or altered. The existing entrance door will stay and its place thus, the introduction of the conservatory will not necessitate any new openings or removal of historic doors/windows. Internally, the impact is minimal, the conservatory will simply be accessible via an existing door, but no original interior elements are removed.

Visual and aesthetic impact: The addition will change the exterior appearance on the west side by reintroducing a lean-to volume. However, this is in keeping with the documented historic appearance, the west side historically was not an open elevation but featured the glasshouse. The new conservatory is being designed in the traditional style of a 19th-century Victorian glasshouse, with painted timber glazed framing and a glazed roof. This stylistic approach ensures the structure is sympathetic to the period of the house when such a feature existed. At the same time, the new construction will be distinguishable as contemporary work: the masonry plinth will match the existing stone in color and texture, but the straight vertical joint line will visibly separate new from old stonework; the quality of new glass and joinery, and subtle detailing differences, will make clear that it is a 21st-century addition done in a heritage style. The height and roof pitch

of the conservatory will sit below the eaves of the cross wings, respecting the subordination of the lean-to to the main house. Its transparent nature (glass walls and roof) means the massing will not feel heavy or overwhelming against the historic building, one will still perceive the form of the old house through it. In views of the property, the conservatory will read as a low, ancillary structure nestled between the wings, screened from the principal front and side elevations (it will be most visible from the garden). This reduces any impact on the farmhouse's primary architectural elevations. Overall, the reinstatement of the lean-to conservatory is assessed to cause no adverse harm to the listed building. On the contrary, by re-introducing a feature that was historically part of the house's Victorian identity, it provides a degree of enhancement. It will restore balance and context to the west side of the building, and the use of authentic materials and traditional design will be in keeping with the character of the house. Any slight impact from attaching a new structure is mitigated by the reversible nature of the addition, the conservatory could be removed in the future without permanent damage to the historic fabric, due to the construction approach (this reversibility is a key conservation principle for additions to listed buildings).

Overall Impact Summary: The proposed works have been designed to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of White House Farmhouse. There will be no loss of significant historic fabric, only later alterations are being removed (the cupboard and infill) and new construction is being applied in a sensitive manner. The legibility of the building's evolution will not be harmed; in fact, it will be improved. The medieval and post-medieval parts of the structure remain untouched. The Victorian phase will actually be better represented after the works (with the stair retained, the window returned, and the conservatory

rebuilt). The character and setting of the farmstead will remain intact, as the scale and location of the addition are modest. In terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) tests, the works constitute "less than substantial harm", indeed arguably no harm, to the significance of the heritage asset; any minor harm from the attachment of new fabric is outweighed by the heritage benefits of revealing and reinstating historical features. The key heritage values (architectural, historic, and group value) of the site will be preserved or enhanced by this proposal.



The justification for these proposed works is grounded in the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of White House Farmhouse while securing its optimum viable use as a family dwelling. National and local heritage policy encourages sensitive adaptation of historic buildings so they can continue to be used and appreciated by future generations. In this case, the works offer clear heritage benefits and meet the tests of necessity and minimal impact:

- Reopening the Historic Window:** This intervention is justified because it restores an original feature of the building that was lost due to a past alteration. The blocked window currently detracts from both the exterior appearance (creating an anomaly in the elevation) and the interior quality (reducing light and historic authenticity in the room). By reopening it, the proposal better reveals the significance of the asset, literally uncovering part of its historic fabric and design. The improvement in natural lighting and symmetry will also make the space more usable and pleasant, supporting the building's continued residential use. Importantly, this can

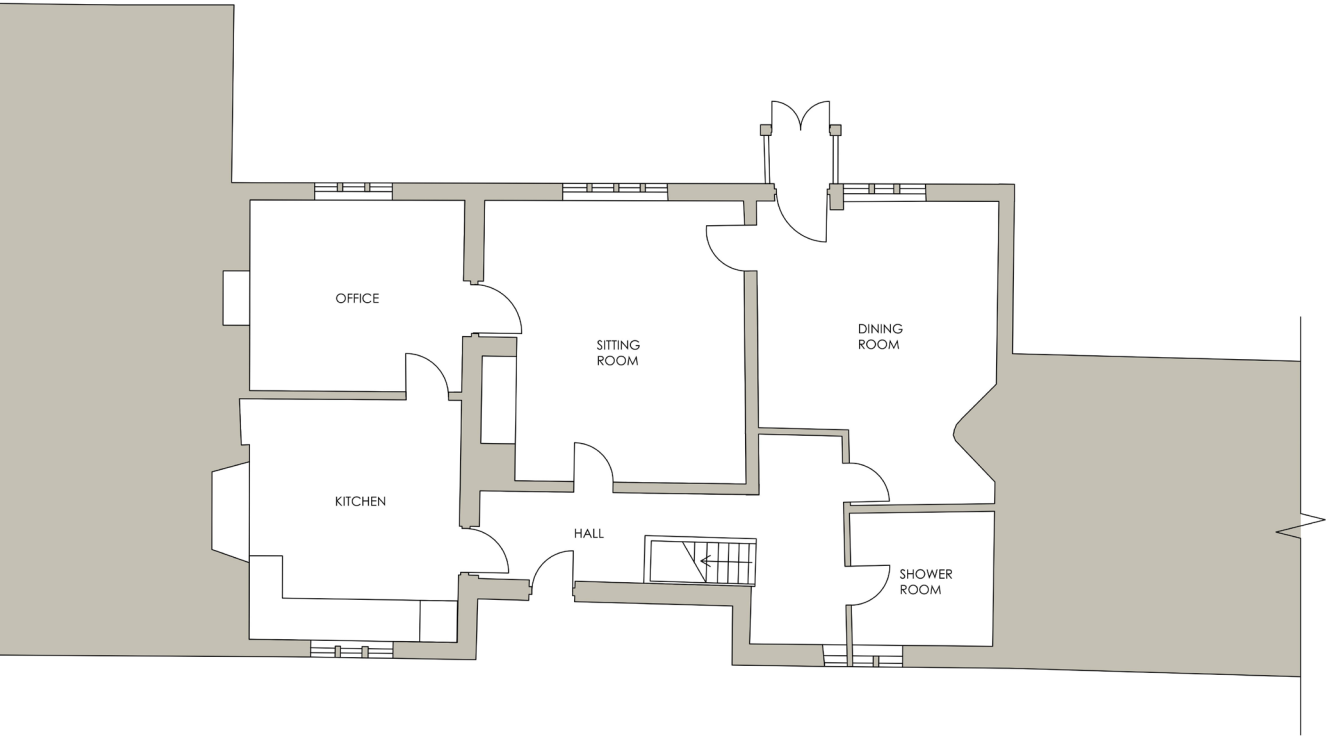
be achieved with virtually no harm: the fabric being removed is of negligible significance, whereas the fabric being revealed is original. The new window insert will be crafted to match the period style, ensuring it does not appear out of place. Overall, this work is a reversal of an unsympathetic change and is wholly in line with conservation best practice. It addresses the changing needs of occupants (providing light/views) in a way that reinforces the historic character rather than detracting from it.

- Reinstating the Lean-to Conservatory:** The addition of a conservatory is driven by both historical and practical justifications. Practically, the homeowners desire additional usable space and a connection to the garden that a conservatory would provide, a common and legitimate need for an dwelling of this size. Rather than adding an arbitrary modern extension, they have chosen to reconstruct a feature that historically existed on the building. This approach is strongly justified by the evidence (mapping and physical traces) and aligns with conservation philosophy, which often supports reconstruction of lost elements where there is clear documentation and where it would

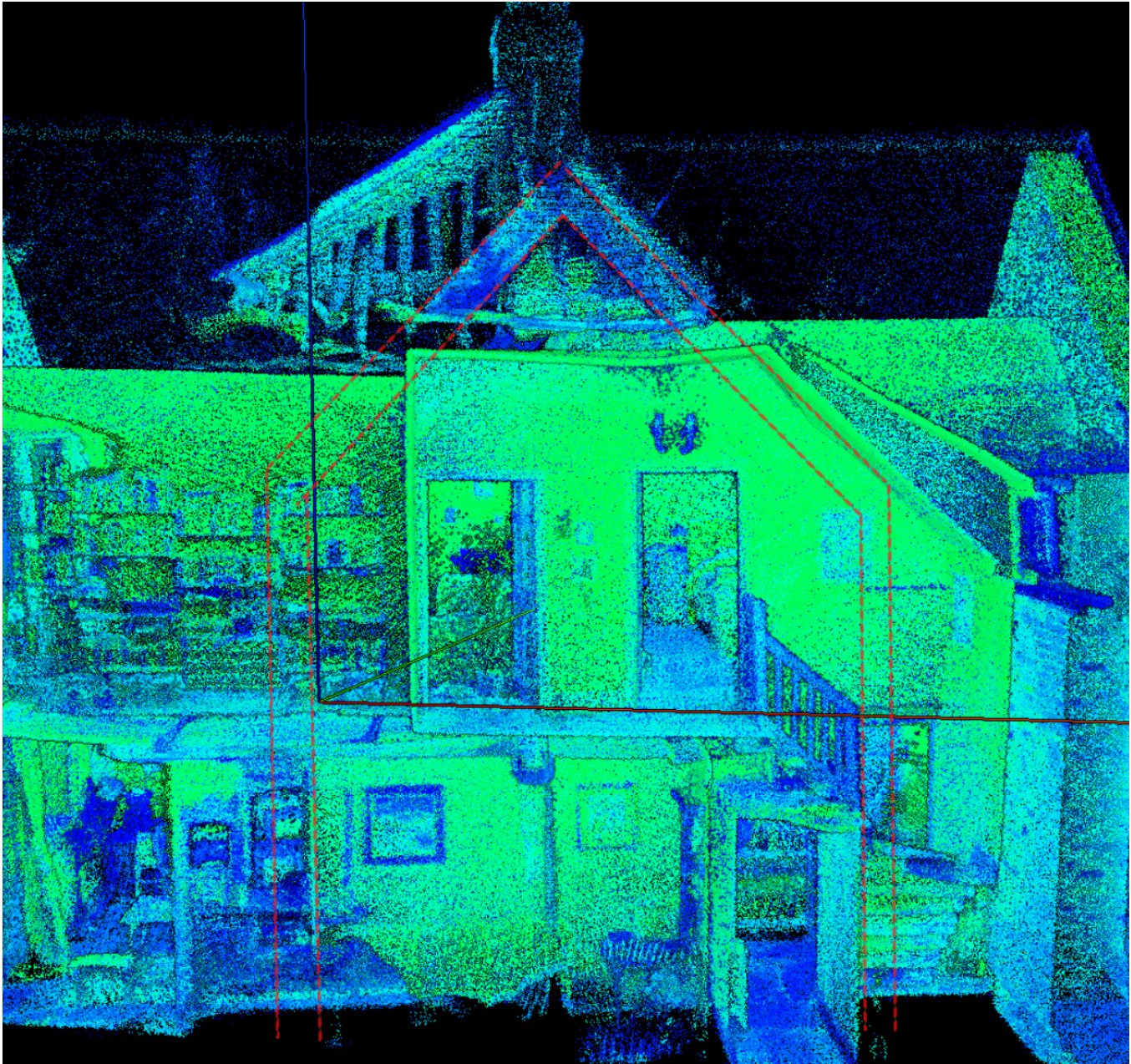
enhance understanding of the heritage. By recreating the lean-to in Victorian style, the proposal pays homage to the building’s 19th-century heritage. The design has been carefully developed to ensure compatibility: using a stone plinth matching the farmhouse’s stonework ties it visually to the old structure, while the predominantly glass superstructure remains lightweight and subordinate. The straight-joint junctions and other subtle details will mark it as a modern intervention, thus avoiding any false sense of history. In terms of public benefit, reinstating the conservatory will visually enrich the heritage asset, offering viewers (and the occupants) a more complete picture of how the farmhouse appeared in its Victorian heyday. The work can thus be seen as a restoration that enhances the architectural composition of the listed building. Additionally, providing this new amenity space helps ensure the house meets contemporary living requirements, which is crucial for its ongoing sustainable use. A sympathetic conservatory in the historic location is far

preferable, from a heritage standpoint, to a new extension placed elsewhere without precedent. Therefore, the lean-to proposal is justified as an outcome that balances the needs of the present with respect for the past.

In summary, the proposals have been formulated to benefit the heritage asset. They resolve past interventions that detract from significance (in the case of the blocked window) and reinstate a historically appropriate feature that adds value and utility (the conservatory). The works are modest in scope and reversible, and they have been designed with input from heritage specialists to ensure compliance with best practice. By implementing these changes, the owners aim to secure the long-term enjoyment and preservation of White House Farmhouse. The special interest of the building will be unharmed, indeed, it will be reinforced, meeting the requirements of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to preserve the building’s character.



EXISTING GROUND FLOOR PLAN



Rough location of historic hall within the building. so far only the apex of the truss has been uncovered.

CONCLUSION

The proposed reopening of a blocked window and reinstatement of a lean-to conservatory at Lower Brinsop are well-considered, heritage-led proposals. They respond to clear evidence and aim to enhance the listed building’s historic character and functionality. The interventions will preserve the asset’s integrity, cause no harm to its significant elements, and indeed bring positive improvements by recovering aspects of the building’s authentic appearance. The local planning authority is invited to approve these minor works, which will ensure that this Grade II listed farmhouse continues to be cherished and used in a manner that celebrates its rich history while accommodating necessary modern living requirements.

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Planning Application Records (Herefordshire Council)

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Ref: DCC060212/L (2006), Listed Building Consent for refurbishment of "The Old Stables".

Ref: DCC081834/L (2008), Listed Building Consent for external weatherboarding on outbuildings.

Ref: P220323/F (2022), Conversion of "The Hay Barn" into one residential dwelling, removal of previous ownership condition.

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Manorial and Parish History Sources

Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England), Herefordshire, Vol. II (1934), entry for White House Farm.



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Secondary Architectural and Historical Sources
Pevsner, N. (1963), Buildings of England: Herefordshire.

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This report was compiled as a result of a walkover survey, research and the application of professional judgement. This report is to remain valid for one year and to support this application only.



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