

# Heritage Statement Addendum

1. The following statement supports and updates the heritage assessment carried out by heritage consultant Mr. C.J. Richards MBE BA(Hons) Dip Arch Cons IHBC, dated the 10th of April 2016. [Resubmitted as part of this application]
2. Mr. Richards statement concludes that: Westbury House has an east - west aspect, such that the principle elevations are the east elevation, facing onto a formal garden; and, the north elevation facing onto Ryelands Road.
3. This addendum supplements Mr. C.J. Richards statement and investigates the significance of Westbury House, in accordance with national planning policy requirements. To establish whether a harm is caused to the significance of the heritage asset, and whether the application preserves and enhances the heritage significance for future generations.

## The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

4. This addendum investigates historic map records, in order to understand better the chronology of change that has occurred within the immediate urban area of Leominster. Investigating areas within the parcels of land that surrounds Westbury House. This is carried out in accordance with the Core Planning Principle stated within the NPPF para 17 and 128: *'conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for the contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations'*.
5. This addendum investigates fully NPPF para 65: *'Local planning authorities should not refuse planning permission for buildings or infrastructure which promote high levels of sustainability because of concerns about incompatibility with an existing townscape, if those concerns have been mitigated by good design (unless the concern relates to a designated heritage asset and the impact would cause material harm to the asset or its setting which is not outweighed by the proposal's economic, social and environmental benefits).'*
6. Chapter 12 of the NPPF Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment requires that: *'heritage assets are recognised as an irreplaceable resource... and they are conserved in the many appropriate to their significance'*.
7. There is a requirement under para 126 of the NPPF for: *'new development to make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and [seek] opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of the place.'*

8. Para 132 of the NPPF states that: *'Significance can be harmed or lost through alteration or destruction of the heritage asset or development within the setting. As heritage assets are irreplaceable, and harm or loss should require clear and convincing justification.'*
9. Para 131 of the NPPF, requires during determination of a planning application for the local planning authority to take account of: *'the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness'*.
10. Para 137 of the NPPF states that: *'Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites **and within the setting of heritage assets to enhance or better reveal their significance.** Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably'*.

## Listed Building Description of Significance

11. The listed building description for Westbury House [set out in the 'C.J. Richards' report], states little about the south and west elevations. It is clear from this listing description that both these elevations do not form the principle elevations of the building's significance. The south and west elevations do of course fall within the curtilage of the grade ii listed building.
12. Furthermore, in modern times the west and south elevations of Westbury House have been compromised by modern development, which has lead to the creation and addition of: an external staircase access to upper levels, a flat roof terraced area, and a glazed lean-to conservatory.
13. The interior of the building is not mentioned within the listed building description, as it is unremarkable, and has been developed in modern times, during it's conversion to flats. It therefore is not significant and is not considered as part of this application.
14. It is of course relevant within the chronology of development that the changes that have occurred to Westbury House are significance over the buildings history – as a record of change over time. But it is clear that the significance of the south and west elevations, compared with the north and east elevations, are less significant.

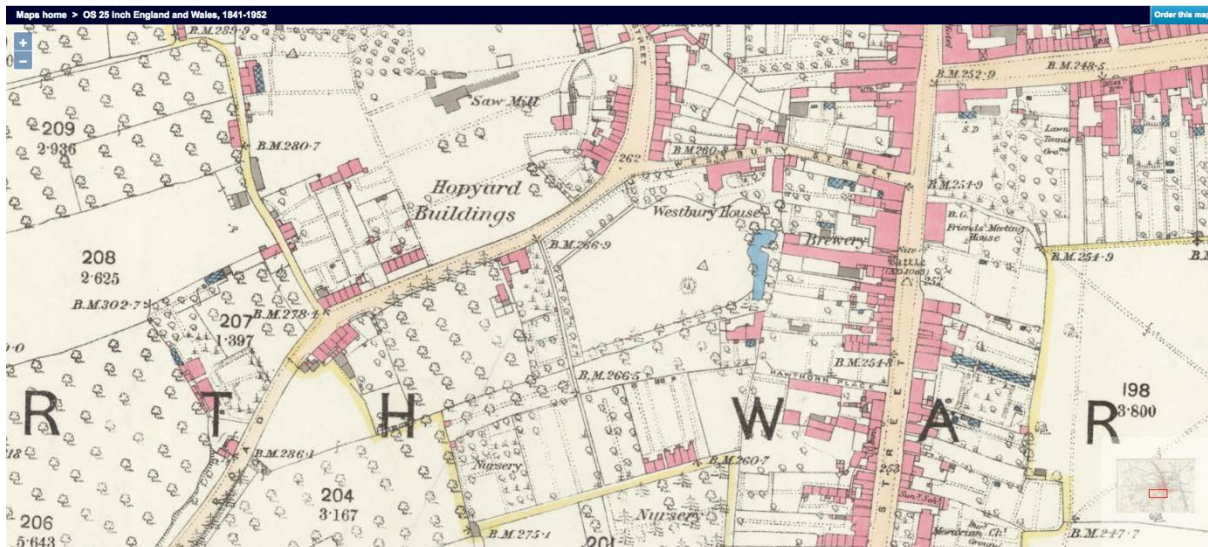
## Historic Map Record

### C 1842-1852

PLATE 1:



Plate 2:



15. These maps reveal that the dwelling known as 'Westbury House' today [located at point BM 266.9], is not the actual Westbury house – as recorded on the map – located further to the east. It is clear from these maps, from the mid 1800's, that there is a substantial residence known as Westbury House surrounded by extensive grounds with tree lined walks, a lake and orchards. This is positioned next to a label

‘Westbury House’. It roughly aligns where Aldi is located today.

16. The above indicates that over time, as a result of the expansion of Leominster, the original Westbury House has been lost [for reasons not covered by this addendum], and there must have been a renaming of the dwelling located on the application site – reusing the name ‘Westbury House’.
17. The dwelling on the map, located in the position where Westbury House is located today, shows a tree lined walk that extends from the east elevation and continues in a southerly direction to a crossing of plot boundaries. Then it turns towards the east and runs towards the centre of Leominster, for some distance. This crossing, together with the tree avenue and east boundary wall, is significant as it continues to appear as a reference point in later map revisions.
18. A footpath walk to the east of Westbury House is shown as a double line on the map and indicates the location of a footpath, which remains to this day.
19. There is a pond located some distance from the site, to the east, and it is clear from this map that the grounds, in front of the principle east elevation of Westbury House, would have been quite substantial in character. Whilst the re-naming of Westbury House is placed some distance to the east, on the map, these grounds are associated with a brewery and would have been significant to the setting of Westbury House.
20. Land to the south of the application site is bounded by smaller plot boundaries, they are substantial in size. It is clear that these plot areas have intensive use: either brewery industries, or farming; perhaps as orchards involved in cider and Perry production. The names that appear on the map – ‘Ryelands’ and ‘Hopyard Buildings’ – suggests a strong brewing connection. The changing subdivision suggests separate ownerships, and control, over time, and land not necessarily associated with, or significant to, Westbury House. There is a clear boundary separation between Westbury House and the surrounding plots. [Plate 2]
21. The garden area south of Westbury House [application site] shows formal trees and there is a dotted path that crosses this garden area, heading towards the boundary wall that crosses east west on the plan. Beyond this east west wall it is clear there are ‘nurseries’ present.
22. Land to the west of Westbury House is bounded by large plot boundaries and there are few buildings located along Ryelands Road. It is clear from these maps that the area was principally used as urban agriculture, with larger buildings located and scattered around the urban edges of the town of Leominster.



## C 1902

PLATE 3



Plate 4:



23. This series of maps shows the expansion of Leominster towards the west. The lake has been removed and is now built upon. It is apparent that larger orchard plots have been subdivided, to form smaller more intensively managed plots.
24. The 'brewery' works is now described as 'cider' works, and the street adjacent is named as Westbury Street. The original Westbury House still remains intact as do much of the grounds.

25. An orphanage appears to the west of Ryelands Road, and a cattle market to the north.
26. Fewer orchards appear in the immediate area, which suggests that they have been removed for more intensive urbanization, and the subdivision of land parcels is more tightly drawn. It is clear from these maps that the garden to the south of Westbury House was subdivided, as a large area that is now shown cleared and without orchards. [Plate 4]
27. A dotted line is more pronounced and this extends as an access route across the garden space connecting to Ryelands Road. [Plate 4]
28. The tree lined footpath still remains, this can be seen running south from Westbury House and turning right towards the east, as it did in the 1846 map; however, it appears to be less significant. The pond has been lost from the map, and the building we know as Westbury House today [application site] appears to have been extended – as it shows a longer L-shape in plan.

## C 1926

PLATE 5:



29. This map shows more infilling of plots to create more urbanization as the town of Leominster expanded further to the west.
30. The trees and orchards are represented within some of the plots, particularly on land to the west of Ryelands Road, and to the immediate west and south of the



application site

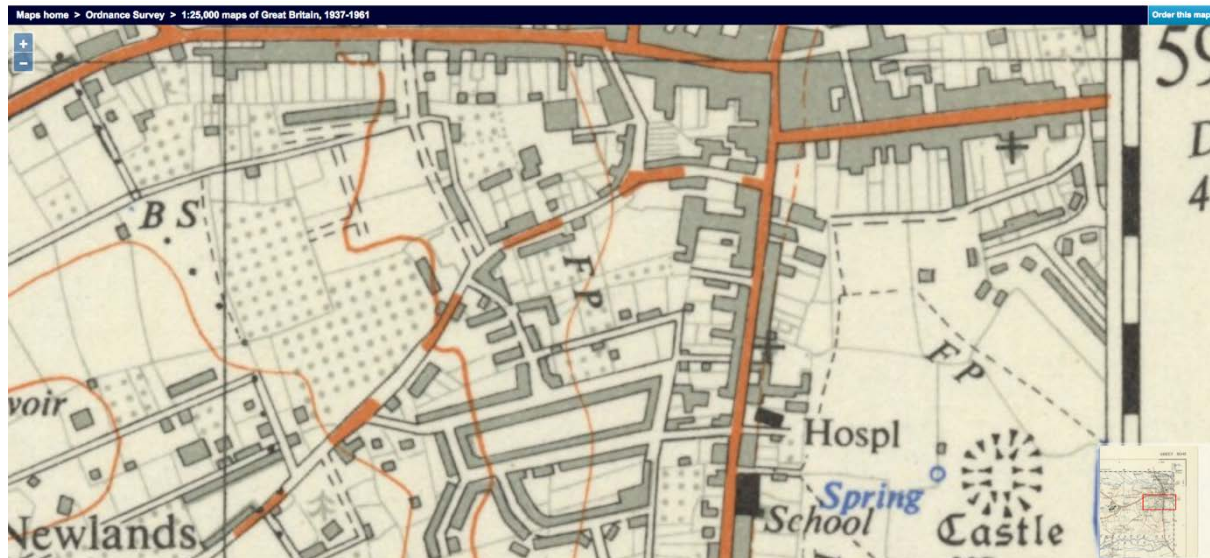
31. For the first time, it is possible to see the area to the rear elevation of Westbury House has been reduced in size, now filled in with separating walls and a wall that is diagonal in alignment. The east west boundary wall crossing the site has been removed to elongate the plot boundary.
32. Subdivision of land along Ryelands Road to the west of Westbury House appears for the first time and this is prior to terraced development.
33. The angled wall that heads south on the plan appears to sub-divide the rear of Westbury House and there is an outbuilding associated with this wall structure.
34. Westbury House itself has been extended again to the southwest corner, this map shows the property to be now more square in plan.
35. The footpath remains clear to the east elevation of Westbury House, however the dotted path that crosses the formal garden of Westbury House has been removed as have the formal gardens.

## Post War

PLATE 6:



Plate 7:



36. Post war construction has resulted in plots to the west of Westbury House being filled in during the 1940-50's. This is where terraced houses appear for the first time, with more linear garden alignments separating garden walls to the rear elevation of Westbury House. The angled wall has been removed, and the plot boundary is now wider and more linear.
37. To the east the gardens remain largely the same as they did in the 1920's. But the tree lined footpath is no longer significant in this map.
38. The terraced areas appear subdivided in the earlier map, but unbuilt, and terraced buildings appear in the later map for the first time, thought to date from the 1940's - 1950's.
39. It is clear that much of the modern infilling has occurred in recent times, since the 1960's, this has occurred to the east and south of Westbury House. [Plate 8]



## Modern Times

Plate 8:



## Summary

40. It is clear from the study of the historic record of maps the area surrounding Westbury House was a more substantial property than it appears today. There is another Westbury House located further to the east, set within substantial landscaped grounds with a lake. This property has been lost from the plan, and replaced by urban infilling, and subsequently the re-naming of Westbury House further to the west has occurred.
41. At the time of the first expansion of Leominster it is clear from the maps that the current Westbury House always faced onto extensive landscaped grounds and parkland to the east facing towards the centre of Leominster. This demonstrates the significance of the east elevation of Westbury House compared to the other cardinal elevations.
42. A secondary principle elevation, to the north, faces onto Ryelands road. This is denoted by the projecting bay window that afforded occupants of Westbury House the ability to view both up and down Ryelands Road, to observe passing trade en-route to Leominster town centre.
43. As a result of less significance afforded the south and west elevations of Westbury House this is where historic development has occurred. This is principally to the west along Ryelands Road itself. But development has occurred also to the south, in the

form of changes to the subdivision of boundaries, and the changing nature of ownership, and access, to plot boundaries. In more recent times infilling has occurred, replacing orchard plots and garden areas, with the rear of Westbury House itself becoming more extended, to appear long and linear and less square, which is how the garden to the south of Westbury House appeared historically.

44. It is in recent modern times that the east-west boundary wall was removed from the garden area, and the access path removed, which historically separated Westbury House and connected nurseries to Ryelands Road.
45. What remains significant is a single mature Copper Beach tree. It is apparent that this is a tree remaining from the tree-lined-walk that at one time would have bounded the substantial grounds associated with Westbury House, and the original dwelling called Westbury House, located to the east. This tree is therefore very significant historically, although it is unmentioned within the listing.
46. No other historic trees remain, however the footpath to the eastern boundary does remain on the plan, having lost much of it's tree-lined-walk the eastern boundary wall remains, which is also significant.
47. In modern times it is apparent the boundary brick walls to the west and south have been rebuilt in many forms, with the crossing east-west boundary wall being removed altogether. Plot boundaries have also been reformed, and repositioned, to create new urban subdivision towards the west along Ryelands Road.
48. It is clear from the maps that the site area, where the proposal is located, has always been an open and disconnected patch of land, separate from Westbury House.

## Conclusion

49. Over time Westbury House has lost its significance within the general urban setting, as land associated with the property, to the east, has been built upon. This has reduced the significance of the building within the wider street scene setting, when viewed at a distance, although the appearance close-up, when viewed along Ryelands Road, remains largely unchanged.
50. Historically, the property would have appeared as a substantial residence along Ryelands Road, set within orchards a short distance from the town centre. This is now no longer the case, as the property is contained by 20thC and 21stC development, to east and west.
51. It is clear also from the listing description, and historic map research, that the main front of the property, the east elevation, has remained so throughout it's history. The proposal preserves the significance of this east elevation.
52. It is clear that the elevations to the south and west are less significant historically. As map research shows, the sub-division of plots overtime has resulted in infilling to the south and west of Westbury House, and these plot areas were not associated with Westbury House. This has carried on in recent times, with modern infilling development to the south and west, and the removal of the east-west boundary wall, which has caused the rear garden to the south of Westbury House to become longer

and linear. The existing Holy tree demarks where this boundary would have been positioned and records the historic boundary that formed the limit of formal gardens of Westbury House.

53. The listed building description makes little reference to the south and west elevations of Westbury House. This is confirmed by the fact that recent development of the heritage asset itself has been allowed to take place within these two elevations, and within the curtilage. This development has resulted in unsympathetic development of Westbury House to take place. A brick garage, a timber shed, a UPVC glazed conservatory, and the painting and rendering of brickwork to the listed building itself – have all contributed to the reduction in the significance of the south and west elevations of Westbury House over time. The proposal seeks to enhance this area by removing concrete hard standing and flood lighting.
54. The Copper Beach tree is very significant historically, as it records the presence of the tree-lined-walk and the foot path, both of which remain to this day. Whilst this tree, when planted, would have been much shorter it would have allowed views out over the gardens to the east. This is now no longer possible, due to the substantial height of the tree, and the presence of modern housing and development that has occurred in recent times to the eastern boundary of Westbury House.
55. The plot of land to the south of Westbury House is not significant in terms of the historic setting of the heritage asset, as this plot area has continued to change over time, and it does not form an original plot boundary of Westbury House. It is clear the rear garden to the south was more square in plan and the main aspect of the house was oriented to the east, and not to the south.
56. The long linear nature of the garden to the south of Westbury House, as it appears today, is not how the garden would have appeared historically. There would have been a wall crossing the site, in the position where the Holly tree is located. [This is shown on proposal drawings for the record]
57. Given that the proposed development would be substantially screened by the mature trees, and the Holy tree, the proposed dwelling would be located within the parcel of land that has always been located beyond the historic curtilage and setting of Westbury House. As such the proposal would not cause a harm to the significance of the heritage asset, or the significance of its setting, when viewed from the south.
58. Furthermore, the proposal provides the opportunity to restore gardens to the immediate south elevation of Westbury House, and within what is the historically significant garden area and setting of Westbury House. This would take place in the form of: removal of concrete and the reduction in hard standing area, the introduction of formal gardens, the provision of more sympathetic bonded gravels, the introduction of more sensitive lighting, the removal of the timber shed, and the softening of the elevation adjacent to the brick garage by placement of planted formal beds. Notwithstanding these enhancements there would be a reduction in parking area, and an improvement to highway safety also, so that the significance of the historic setting can be enhanced for future generations.
59. Moreover, the location of the proposed development would be accessed via a proposed small gravel foot path. A path was also present historically, located within



this area.

60. The row of mature trees to the east would remain as part of the proposal, as does the historically significant east boundary wall adjacent to the footpath. Whilst the proposal does not reconstruct the east-west boundary crossing wall, the proposal would remain subservient to these landscape features, providing a stop-end, re-introducing a more square shaped formal landscape character to the south elevation of Westbury House.
61. The proposed development would retain the current layout of garden walls, although these walls are largely modern in their location, the shrub planting associated with these walls would help to integrate the proposal within the landscape setting.
62. It is clear from the above that the proposed development would not bring about a harm to the significance of the heritage asset, moreover the proposal would be an opportunity to enhance the setting of an important local heritage asset, and restore the formal square shaped garden to the south elevation.
63. In that regard, in accordance with NPPF policies, the Local authority should be minded not to refuse planning permission for the proposed building, which would promote sustainable development and be compatible within the existing townscape, resulting in the promotion of good design, which does not impact or cause material harm to the heritage asset or its setting. Resulting in the proposal bringing about economic, social and environmental benefits, in support of sustainable housing, in Leominster town centre.

**ARCHITECT GARRY THOMAS RIBA – THOMAS STUDIO 2018**