

THE FISHERY, THE WARREN, CAVERSHAM, READING, BERKSHIRE

HERITAGE STATEMENT



JPHERITAGE

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PROJECT: The Fishery, The Warren, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire

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THE FISHERY, THE WARREN - HERITAGE STATEMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

- 1.1.1 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by JP Heritage Ltd on behalf of Mr and Mrs Topham to inform proposals for alterations to the listed building, an extension to an existing garage and alterations to the boundary wall and site access at The Fishery, Caversham. The Fishery is a Grade II listed building. A grade II listed barn associated with Chazet Farmhouse lies to the north of The Fishery.
- 1.1.2 The document provides an assessment of the heritage significance of the listed building and of the impacts of the proposed works. This has been undertaken to meet the requirements of the LPA in accordance with paragraph 207 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, Revised December 2024).

1.2 Nature of the proposals

- 1.2.2 The proposed scheme is for internal and external alterations to the listed building.

1.3 Heritage designations

- 1.3.1 The Fishery was added to the statutory *List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest* at Grade II on 14th December 1978. The list description reads as follows:

A complex of mainly late C19 or early C20 extensions to a core of C17 or early C18. An eel-fishery mentioned on this site in mediaeval times. River front. 2½ storeys red brick. Old tile roof. 3 bay centre with later projecting gable breaks. Glazing bar sashes to centre and 2 gabled dormers. Ends have 1 range of circa 1900 windows, square bays on ground floor. Lean-to porch. Entrance side: kitchen projection to right, flanking cross wings and 2 hipped 2 storey projections in centre. Modern glazing to windows.



Figure 1: South elevation of The Fishery

1.4 References in the Berkshire Historic Environment Record (Heritage Gateway)

- 1.4.1 The Berkshire Historic Environment Record does not include any information on The Fishery.

1.5 Planning history

1.5.1 The relevant planning history for The Fishery is as follows:

PL/05/0048 and PL/05/0412 – Refurbishment of existing dwelling, including a single storey side extension, reinstatement of outbuildings and new boundary wall (Approved).

PL/89/1126 – First floor extension over garage to form dressing/ensuite shower room and games room.

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 NPPF (Revised December 2024)

2.1.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out national planning policy relating to the conservation of the historic environment. It advises that in determining planning applications *‘local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made to their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance (paragraph 207).*

2.1.2 Annex 2 of the NPPF defines a Heritage Asset as being *‘a building, monument, site, place area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions.’* Heritage assets are the valued components of the historic environment. They include designated heritage assets and non-designated heritage assets.

2.1.3 In determining planning applications, the NPPF advises that local planning authorities should take account of (paragraph 210):

- 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.

2.1.4 Specific guidance on the treatment of designated heritage assets (listed buildings) emphasises the need to understand the significance of a heritage asset in order to determine impacts on the historic environment (paragraph 212). It advises 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 (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.*

2.1.5 Paragraph 213 continues by stating 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’.*

2.1.6 Paragraph 214 states that where a development will result in substantial harm to, or total loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset, permission should be refused, unless this harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits, or a number of criteria are met.

- 2.1.7 Where less than substantial harm is identified paragraph 215 requires this harm to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed development and, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
- 2.1.8 Specific guidance on the treatment of non-designated heritage assets emphasises the need to understand the significance of a heritage asset in order to determine impacts on the historic environment (paragraph 216). It advises that ‘The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset’.

3.0 THE HERITAGE ASSET AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

3.1 Understanding the history of the heritage asset

- 3.1.1 The Mapledurham tithe map (1841) shows The historic core of The Fishery with a rectangular footprint located within a roughly rectangular garden on the eastern side of a track leading to the river. Chazey Farm is shown to the north.



Figure 2: Extract from the Mapledurham tithe map (1841)

- 3.1.2 The 1st edition of the Ordnance Survey map (1878) shows the rectangular footprint of The Fishery with a projecting element, probably a porch, on the south elevation. The extent of the garden appears to have remained unchanged. A greenhouse is shown to the north of the house, which was called Fishery Cottage at this time.

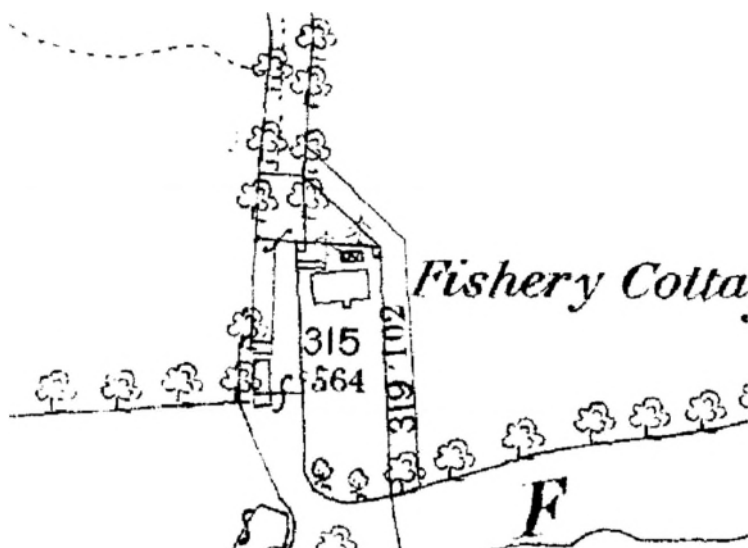


Figure 3: Extract from the 1st edition of the Ordnance Survey Map (1878)

- 3.1.3 The 2nd edition of the Ordnance Survey map (1899) shows the extension of the house and the grounds at The Fishery. The house had been extended with a projecting wing on the eastern side, two rear extensions and a western side extension. The grounds had been extended to include the track leading to the river shown on earlier historic maps. Three outbuildings are shown to the west of the house and smaller structures along the angled boundary to the north. A conservatory is shown attached to the eastern side of the house.

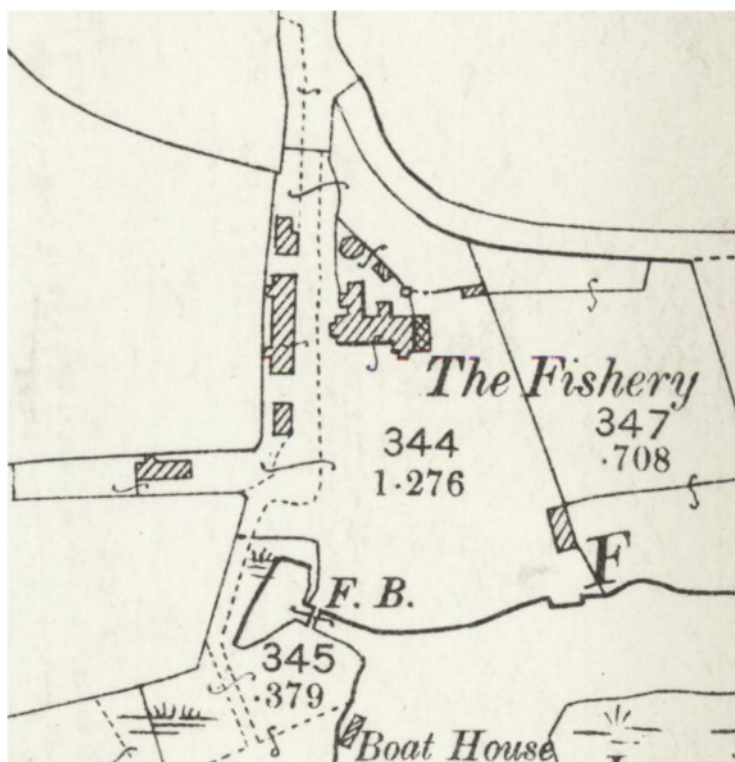


Figure 4: Extract from the 2nd edition of the Ordnance Survey map (1899)

- 3.1.4 The 3rd edition of the Ordnance Survey map (1913) shows the western wing projecting southwards and suggests that the lean-to on the north side of this wing had been built. A projecting element on the north-east side of the building had been built by this time and the

conservatory reduced in size. There are no apparent changes to the footprints of the outbuildings/garden structures.



Figure 5: Extract from the 3rd edition of the Ordnance Survey map (1913)

- 3.1.5 An early 20th century photograph of the south elevation of The Fishery shows the pattern of window openings on this side of the original 18th century cottage, two flanking wings with balconies over ground floor bays, an open-sided porch to the right and a flush sided bay window with no central door to the right.



Figure 6: Early 20th century photograph of the south elevation of The Fishery

- 3.1.6 The 1934 edition of the Ordnance Survey map shows further changes on the eastern side of the house with the construction of a square plan structure which further reduced the size of the conservatory. No other apparent change can be observed.

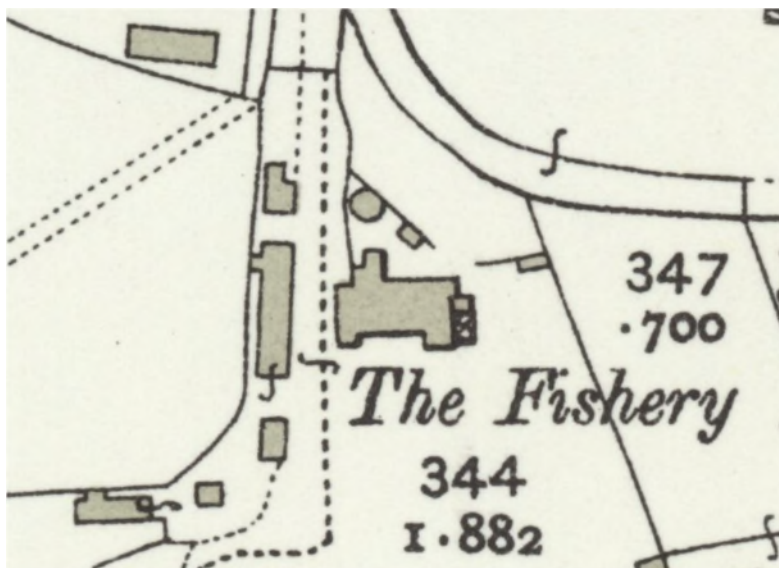


Figure 7: Extract from the 1934 edition of the Ordnance Survey map

- 3.1.7 The 1959-60 edition of the 1:1,250 Ordnance Survey map shows a number of changes to the footprint of the house, including the enlargement of the projecting elements on the north-east corner, an extension to the rear, a canted bay window to the rear and an enlargement of the conservatory on the eastern side of the house.



Figure 8: Extract from the 1959-60 edition of the 1:1,250 edition of the Ordnance Survey map

3.2 Understanding the form of the heritage asset (refer to figures 54 and 55 for suggested phase plans)

Phase 1 – Early 18th century

- 3.2.1 Phase 1 is a 2-storey, 2-unit house of brick construction in Flemish bond. All elevations apart from the front elevation are masked by later extensions (rear wall can be observed in the Phase 2 entrance hall/passage). The front elevation is symmetrical and includes a mix of horned and unhorned sash windows with multi-paned upper and lower sashes. The central window on the ground floor was originally a door as demonstrated by the pattern of closer bricks and brick infill/straight joints below sill level. The window openings to the left and right on the first floor have been reduced slightly in width, as demonstrated by infill brickwork. It also appears that the ground floor openings have been modified to accommodate slightly smaller sash windows.



Figure 9: South elevation of the Phase 1 cottage

- 3.2.2 The ground floor is a single space but was originally two rooms of unequal size typical of 2-unit plans. A modern steel defines the position of the original partition. There are chamfered axial beams on each side of the modern steel beam. Exposed joists demonstrate that the original ceiling finish was lath and plaster. There is a fireplace with brick jambs and a timber lintel on the western side of the ground floor. The presence of a fireplace demonstrates that this larger room would have originally functioned as a kitchen/living room. The smaller apparently unheated room on the eastern side of the Phase 1 footprint would probably have been a parlour and also potentially used for storage. An original winder stair may have been on this side of the 2-unit cottage. There is a door along the rear wall and a blocked door adjacent to it.



Figure 10: Ground floor of Phase 1

- 3.2.3 The first floor is divided into two rooms of unequal size. The larger room on the western side includes a fireplace with a beaded surround and later mantel shelf and grate. The plank and batten cupboard door to the left of the fireplace is 18th century. The 4-panel door to the right is late 19th to early 20th century. There is a late 19th to early 20th century door that leads to the smaller first floor room which is currently a bathroom. Stairs leading to the attic cuts into this room. The stairs are constructed using machine sawn timber and presumably relates to the late 19th century remodelling of the house (Phase 2).



Figure 11: Western room on the first floor



Figure 13: Eastern room on the first floor looking towards a 4-panel connecting door and later stair enclosure

- 3.2.4 The roof structure of Phase 1 is characterised by clasped purlins and collars. The common rafters remain as expressed features and include evidence for a lath and plaster finish. The latter suggests that the attic has historically been used as part of the accommodation of the house. Axial beams are visible in the floor.



Figure 14: Attic of Phase 1

Phase 2 – Late 19th century

- 3.2.5 Phase 2 includes east and west gabled wings and extensions to the rear (north). The eastern gabled wing includes a single storey bay window that has been altered by the insertion of central doors. The low balustrade cresting the bay window shown on the early 20th century photo has been removed. Otherwise, the window pattern remains the same as in the early 20th century. There is an original porch in the angle between the original cottage and the wing.



Figure 15: South elevation of the eastern wing

- 3.2.6 The western wing includes the same details in terms of a bay window and a first floor mullion and transom window with multi-paned top lights. There is an original part-glazed door on the left-hand side of the west elevation with an expressed timber lintel. The decorative glazing includes coloured glass and painted glass showing a fish and the name *The Fishery*. The porch is relatively recent.



Figure 16: Oblique view of the western wing



Figure 17: Part-glazed door on the left-hand side of the west elevation

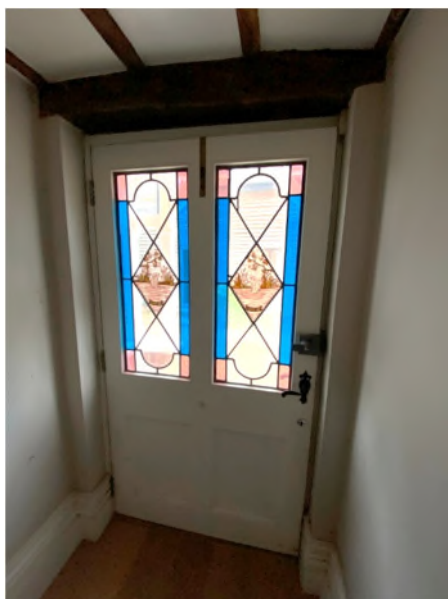


Figure 18: Internal view of the part-glazed door on the west elevation



Figure 19: Detail of the painted glass

- 3.2.7 The single storey rear wing is of brick construction with a projecting bay on the west elevation and a small opening with a margin light sash window to the left. The large opening with a mullion and transom window on the north gable end elevation replaced a window and door as part of the 2005 approval. The shorter projection of the roughly central extension to the rear is largely masked by later extensions and is not particularly legible externally.



Figure 17: Single storey rear extension



Figure 18: North elevation of the single storey rear extension

- 3.2.8 The interior of the eastern wing has been much altered at ground floor level. This primarily relates to the removal of the original east external wall which included a chimney breast/fireplace. The original northern wall at ground floor level has also been removed. The existing floor plans of the 2005 scheme that there was staircase that abutted this section of wall.

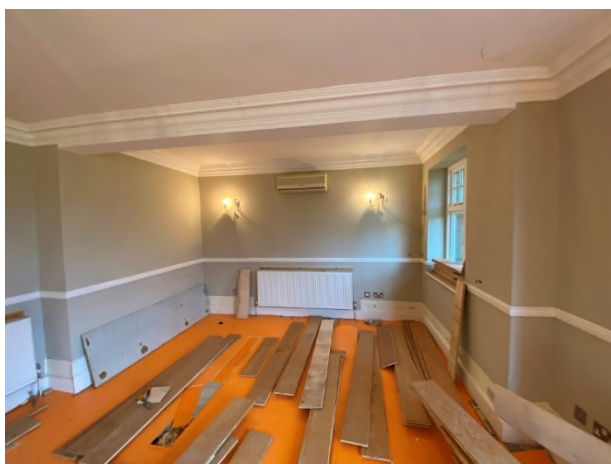


Figure 19: Removed section of the Phase 2 external wall and chimney breast on the east side of the eastern wing



Figure 20: Removed section of the northern external wall of Phase 2

- 3.2.9 Based on the 2005 plans, the section of wall/partition with double doors appears to be original. The location of the demolished chimney breast and the position of the partition, as shown on the 2005 plan, shows a symmetrical layout with a central fireplace.

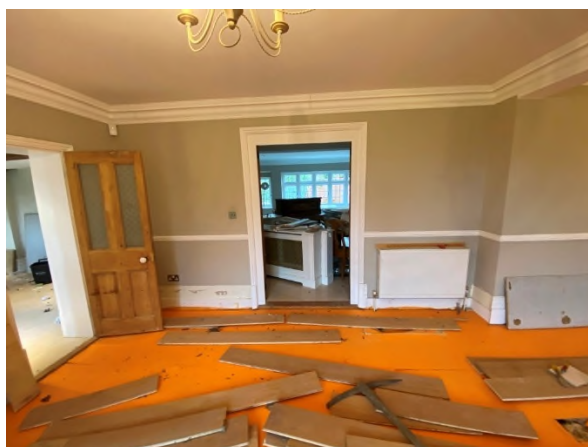


Figure 21: Original partition with modern double doors

- 3.2.10 The first floor of the east wing has been much altered as a result of the removal of a partition in the same position as the double door partition on the ground floor below and of a staircase. The partition on the north side of the first floor room aligns with the rear wall of the Phase 2 wing



Figure 22: First floor of the east wing looking north



Figure 23: View towards a removed staircase and internal partition wall looking north on the first floor of the east wing

3.2.11 The ground floor layout of the west wing includes an entrance hall and a room with a fireplace and a bay on the south side. The glazed doors and top lights of the bay are modern replacements.



Figure 24: Ground floor room of the west wing



Figure 25: Entrance hall

- 3.2.12 The first floor of the west wing appears to have been a large bedroom with a fireplace and access to the rear from the landing. The first floor has been much altered by the insertion of modern partitions.

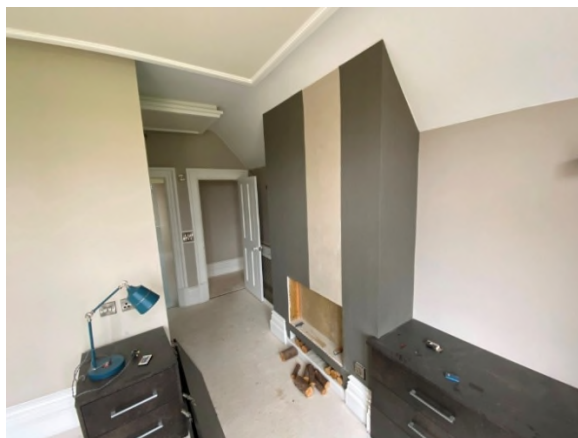


Figure 26: Chimney breast and modern partitions on the first floor of the west wing

- 3.2.13 The ground floor of the small central rear extension has also been much altered with the insertion of beams and posts. There is a chimney breast with a turn of the century style grate along the east wall. The original external north wall has been removed. The first floor of this element is less altered and includes a late 19th to early 20th century fireplace. The north external wall has been removed.



Figure 27: Ground floor of the central rear extension viewed from the entrance hall



Figure 28: First floor of the central rear extension

- 3.2.14 The existing plan submitted with the 2005 applications show that there was a partition with what appears to have been a chimney breast to the north of the projecting gable (west elevation). This would make sense as this extension was presumably a service wing and would have included a kitchen. As such, this space has been much-altered.



Figure 29: Ground floor of the single storey rear extension looking north

- 3.2.15 The entrance hall remains defined by beams and joists to the rear of the Phase 1 part of the house. The Phase 2 landing also remains relatively intact.



Figure 30: Phase 2 entrance hall



Figure 31: Phase 2 landing looking west

Phase 3 – Early 20th century

3.2.16 Phase 3 changes to the house include the addition of a single storey lean-to extension on the north side of the Phase 2 west wing and, according to historic map regression, an extension on the north-east side of the east wing. The lean-to is of brick construction with a casement window and segmental arched brick head on the west elevation. The interior is characterised by modern cupboards. The southern side of the 2-storey projecting element on the north-east side of the Phase 2 east wing correlates with the footprint of a structure in this location. It is possible that this was a single storey structure but not clear. The south wall has been removed. The interior is characterised by modern finishes.



Figure 32: Early 20th century lean-to on the north side of the west wing



Figure 33: Interior of the lean-to



Figure 34: Interior of the projecting element on the north-east side of the Phase 2 east wing

Phase 4 – Probably 1920s

3.2.17 Phase 4 includes a 2-storey rear extension to the east wing, an extension to house the current staircase and the addition of a 2-storey canted bay window on the rear elevation.



Figure 35: 2-storey rear extension



Figure 36: Extension housing the existing staircase



Figure 37: Dormer on the west side of the service wing roof



Figure 38: 2-storey canted bay extension

- 3.2.18 The 2-storey extension to the east wing created an additional room on each floor. The ground floor is a single space but included partitions for a downstairs loo and a store on the 2005 plan. The 2005 existing elevations show that the north elevation formerly had a pair of part-glazed doors flanked by leaded lights. The current strip of windows is therefore modern. The first floor is a bedroom with a corner fireplace and a metal fire surround typical of early 20th century style. The canted bay increased the size of the central Phase 2 extension to the rear.



Figure 39: Ground floor of the 2-storey extension to the east wing



Figure 40: First floor of the 2-storey extension to the east wing



Figure 41: Ground floor of the canted bay window



Figure 42: First floor of the canted bay window

3.2.19 The staircase extension is characterised by a flat leaded roof and tile hanging. Of note, the flat roof appears to extend over the ridge of the service wing to form a flat roof dormer on the west elevation (**Figure 37**). The style of the staircase accessed from the Phase 2 entrance hall is consistent with 1920s style. The flat roof dormer on the west elevation may have been created to form a first-floor water closet. This space has been much altered by modern alterations.



Figure 43: Staircase viewed from the entrance hall



Figure 44: Staircase viewed from the landing

Phase 5 – 1936-1959

3.2.20 Phase 5 is interpreted as a single storey extension to the Phase 2 service wing and the 2-storey element on the eastern side of the extended east wing. The service wing extension formed part of a larger addition which has been demolished.



Figure 45: East elevation of the extension to the service wing

3.2.21 The 2-storey side extension may have incorporated part of the Phase 3 element in this position. Logically, the 2-storey extension post-dates the Phase 4 extension to the east wing. This addition is of brick construction with a double pitched roof. The ground floor is a boiler room. The first floor is a bathroom.



Figure 46: 2-storey side extension to the east wing

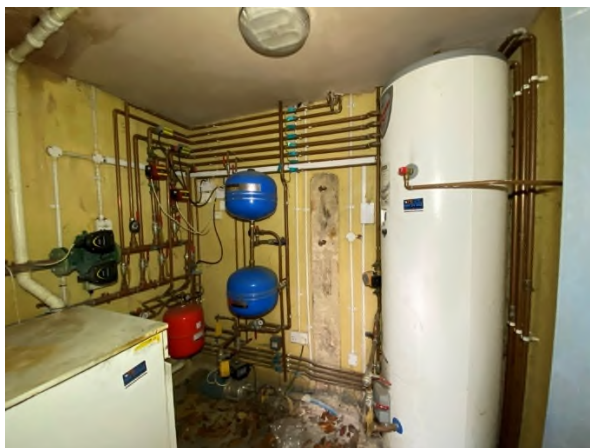


Figure 47: Boiler room on the ground floor



Figure 48: Bathroom on the first floor

Phase 6 – Late 20th and early 21st centuries

3.2.22 Later 20th and early 21st century extensions to the house include the replacement of a conservatory with a single storey brick extension on the east side of the Phase 2 east wing and the infilling of the area between the Phase 5 service wing extension and the Phase 4 staircase extension.



Figure 49: Modern infill of the area between the service wing extension and the staircase extension



Figure 50: Brick extension replacing a conservatory on the east side of the east wing (2005)

Boundary wall

3.2.23 The boundary wall to the north of the house was built as part of the 2005/2006 approved works. This wall is of no heritage value.



Figure 51: Modern brick boundary wall

Garage and sheds

3.2.24 The garage to the north-west of the house was built replacing a ruinous structure in this position as part of the 2005/2006 approved works. The garage is of no heritage value.



Figure 52: Modern garage to the north-west of the house

3.2.25 There are modern sheds to the north of the garage which are of no heritage value.



Figure 53: Sheds to the north of modern garage

3.3 Assessment of the significance of the heritage asset

Phase 1

- 3.3.1 Phase 1 is interpreted as a 2-unit cottage dating from the early 18th century. The front elevation includes evidence for a roughly central door that would have provided access to the principal room on the ground floor, i.e. a living/kitchen room served by an open fireplace. The definition of the ground floor plan has been blurred by the removal of a partition. However, the legibility of the original layout is preserved by the pattern of axial beams and a transverse steel. There is evidence for a blocked-up doorway along the rear wall and a modern door opening. It is unusual for a 2-unit plan house to have a rear door and so the blocked-up door possibly relates to the late 19th century expansion of the original cottage and provided access from the entrance hall.
- 3.3.2 The fireplace with brick jambs and a timber lintel contributes to the historic character of the interior. The windows on the front elevation are all replacements but are probably of 19th century date. There are internal shutters on the ground floor that are of interest. The position of the original stair is currently unknown but was probably located in the smaller room on the east side of Phase 1. The first-floor layout is better defined. The larger bedroom on the western side was originally heated by a fireplace and there is an 18th century plank door to cupboard on the left-hand side of the chimney breast. The roof structure appears to be relatively intact.

Phase 2

- 3.3.3 Phase 2 represents the substantial enlargement of the original cottage to create a large house within extended grounds. This included the addition of an east and west wing to provide principal reception and living rooms with views southwards across a garden towards the river, an entrance hall with access from the western side of the house, perhaps a library to the rear and a single storey service wing.
- 3.3.4 The ground floor room in the west wing remains relatively intact and is accessed from the entrance hall and this room includes a fireplace. There is a bay window with central French Doors (later replacements) which is of the same design as the bay on the south side of the east wing. The principal ground floor room in the east wing has been more fundamentally as a result of the removal of the east external wall and chimney breast. The stairs shown on the 2005 plans, which may have been a back stair, was also removed as part of the 2005/2006 approval. The partition with the double doors appears to be part of the Phase 2 layout.
- 3.3.5 The first floor of the west wing was originally one room but now has modern partitions subdividing the space into a bedroom, lobby/passageway and a bathroom. The first floor of the east wing has been altered as a result of the removal of a staircase and a partition which lines up with a surviving partition on the ground floor.
- 3.3.6 The entrance hall is more legible at the western end and includes an original door. The definition of the eastern part of the entrance hall is blurred as a result of the Phase 4 staircase insertion which perhaps replaced a late 19th century staircase in this part of the entrance hall. The 'library' accessed from the eastern end of the entrance hall has been much altered by later alterations but the proportions of the room remain legible and there is a fireplace along the east wall. The first floor over the 'library' is better defined and includes a metal fire surround.

- 3.2.7 The layout of the rear service wing has also been altered as a result of the removal of a partition with a chimney breast which probably defined the Phase 2 kitchen. The space to the north of the kitchen would probably have served as a scullery, pantry etc. The ground floor is now a single room. The bay and margin light window on the west elevation are of interest but the window on the north elevation is modern.

Phase 3

- 3.3.8 Phase 3 is the construction of a lean-to extension on the north side of the entrance hall. The original door was from the Phase 2 kitchen and this space would have served as a pantry or similar. Less clear is the projecting element on the eastern side of the east wing, as defined on historic maps.

Phase 4

- 3.3.9 Phase 4 is the extension of the northern side of the east wing, the insertion of a 2-storey bay window and an extension for a staircase. This work was carried out between 1913 and 1932, probably in the 1920s. The ground floor of the northern extension to the east wing is blurred by the 2005/2006 approved scheme and the pattern of doors and a window altered by the insertion of a wide window. The first floor of this element includes a corner fireplace with a cast iron surround typical of early 20th century style. The 2-storey canted bay window increased the size and natural light to the 'library' and is characterised by leaded lights. The staircase extension includes a leaded flat roof, tile hanging and leaded lights. The staircase is dowel jointed and of typical early 20th century style.

Phase 5

- 3.3.10 Phase 5 is represented by an extension to the service wing and the construction of the 2-storey projecting element on the eastern side of the east wing.

Phase 6

- 3.3.7 Phase 6 are late 20th century and early 21st century extensions and alterations that are of no heritage value.



Figure 54: Suggested ground floor phase plan



Figure 55: Suggested first floor phase plan

4.0 ASSESSMENT OF IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Proposals

4.1.1 The proposed scheme is for the following:

House - exterior

- New porch and door on the north elevation of the Phase 2 service wing;
- Alterations to the north elevation of the Phase 4 extension to the east wing;
- Removal of a flat roof infill extension;
- Reinstall a balustrade to the bays on the front elevation;
- Insertion of a lantern to the Phase 6 side-extension roof;
- Replacement doors.

House – ground floor interior

- Alterations to a partition in the Phase 2 east wing;
- Block up door to the Phase 3 utility room;
- Reconfigure the staircase;
- Alterations associated with the reconfigured staircase;
- New openings in the east wall of the Phase 2 service wing;
- Alterations to pantry.

House – first floor interior

- Remove modern partitions in the west wing;
- Block a door in the central rear wing;
- Insert a new partition in the east wing.

External works

- Removal of carports and garden sheds.

House - exterior

- 4.1.2 **New porch** – A new porch is proposed on the north elevation of the service wing. The rationale behind this is that the north elevation has become the functioning ‘front’ elevation of the house but without the definition of a clear entrance. The proposed part-glazed doors and windows with leaded lights have been designed to blend with the established character of windows on the north elevation. The proposed porch therefore references the aesthetic values of the existing porches. The south elevation would still read as a principal elevation rather like a ‘garden front’ which was typical of houses of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The pre-application comments were broadly supportive. The proposed porch and French doors would impact on a modern window and would require the removal of a small area of brickwork (**figure 18**). This elevation formerly had a smaller window and a door. Impacts on late 19th century historic fabric would therefore be very low.
- 4.1.3 **French doors and windows on the rear elevation** – The existing window in this location is modern and replaced part-glazed French doors and a window with leaded lights (**figure 35**). This element of the proposals would reinstate the original appearance of this part of the rear elevation. The pre-application comments recognised that this would have beneficial impacts.
- 4.1.4 **Removal of a flat roof infill extension** – This is modern and of no heritage value (**figure 49**). Removal of this element would better define the various phases of historic development to the rear of the house.
- 4.1.5 **Balustrade to bays on the south elevation** – This element of the proposed scheme would reinstate a lost feature and represents a beneficial change (**figures 1 and 6**). The pre-application comments were supportive of the proposal.
- 4.1.6 **Insertion of a lantern to the Phase 6 extension** – The Phase 6 extension is modern and replaced a conservatory in this position (**figure 50**). Historic maps show a long tradition of a conservatory here and the proposed glazed lantern would to a certain extent reflect this.
- 4.1.7 **Replacement doors** – It is proposed to replace modern solid doors on the north and east elevations of the Phase 5 extensions (**figures 46 and 49**). The proposed part-glazed doors would be in keeping with the style of doors that characterise the exterior of the listed building.

House – ground floor interior

- 4.1.8 **Alterations to a partition in the Phase 2 east wing** – This partition appears to be original to the late 19th century layout (**figure 21**). The historic floor plan here has been blurred by modern alterations which include the creation of a central double door opening and the infilling of probably an original doorway. It is proposed to remove the infill from the blocked door opening to create a wider opening through this [partition. As such, there would be

minimal physical impacts on historic fabric and the definition of the rear and front rooms and the historic floor plan would remain legible.

- 4.1.9 **Block up door to the Phase 3 utility room** - The existing door and architrave are of 20th century date (**figure 34**). The door could be fixed shut and infill recessed to preserve the position of the door.
- 4.1.10 **Reconfigure the staircase** – The existing staircase is of c. 1920s date, perhaps a little earlier, and is typical of the period (**figures 43 and 44**). Although of relatively recent date, the stair is not without interest and is the only stair surviving in the house. The proposed rotation of the staircase would reuse as much of the existing as practicable with any replacement elements to match existing. The proposal provides the opportunity to raise the height of the handrail which is currently quite low and proportionally looks incongruous. The proposals would retain a staircase in the current position and would not therefore adversely impact on the historic floor plan of the listed building.
- 4.1.11 **Alterations associated with the reconfiguration of the staircase** – The proposed reconfiguration of the staircase would include the removal of an existing part-glazed door and the insertion of a partition to form a cupboard along the line of the staircase balustrade. This part of the ground floor plan is late in date, has been altered and is of low to negligible heritage value. Small sections of internal partitions relating to the late 19th century extensions to the house would be removed and would have a low level of heritage impact. The overall proportions and footprint of the rear service wing would remain highly legible. `
- 4.1.12 **New openings in the service wing** – The 2005 plan shows that there were two doorways to a larder and a lobby on the east side of the service wing. The proposed alterations would reinstate both these doorways and would better reveal historic circulation routes and the historic floor plan.
- 4.1.13 **Alterations to pantry** – It is proposed to reinstate a doorway on the east side of the pantry (as shown on the 2005 ground floor plan) to form a plant room/store which would be modestly extended into the dining hall. The proposed partitions that would project into the Phase 2 service wing would be reversible and would have a very modest impact on the proportions and character of this space.

House – first floor interior

- 4.1.14 **Remove modern partitions in the west wing** – The partitions on the first floor of the west wing are all modern (**figure 26**). Removal of some of these partitions would represent a heritage benefit.
- 4.1.15 **Block a door in the central rear wing (proposed family bathroom)** – The 4-panel door in this position relates to the Phase 4 works associated with the existing staircase. This doorway is of relatively low heritage value and does not relate to the earlier phases of the historic floor plan.



Figure 57: Door to a cupboard on the first floor of the central rear wing

4.1.16 Insertion of a partition on the first floor of the east wing – The existing partition on the first floor of the east wing relates to the position of the removed back stair and probably relates to the late 19th century layout of the house (**figure 23**). The 2005 plan shows a partition for a landing providing access to bedroom 3 on the south side of the east wing. This was removed as part of the 2005 works. The proposed partition would reinstate the definition of the original landing and would better reflect the original layout of the late 19th century east wing.

External works

4.1.17 Removal of carports and garden sheds – The carports are modern and unsightly. The removal would represent an enhancement to the setting of the listed building. The sheds are also modern and of no heritage value.



Figure 58: Existing carports

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

5.1.1 This assessment describes the character and significance of The Fishery and assesses the heritage impacts of the proposed scheme. As such, it is considered that this Heritage Statement meets the requirements set out in paragraph 207 of the NPPF and local planning policy and provides sufficient information regarding the built heritage.

- 5.1.2 The conclusions of this report are that The Fishery was originally built as a 2-unit cottage, probably in the early 18th century. The original cottage was substantially enlarged in the late 19th century to create a large house with extended grounds. It is this phase (Phase 2) that most heavily influences the aesthetic values of the listed building. The enlarged Phase 2 house includes an east and a west wing with an entrance hall separating the main accommodation from a service wing to the rear. Early 20th century alterations include extensions to the rear, including a canted bay window and a staircase that perhaps replaced a late 19th century stair in the same position. Later 20th century and early 21st century alterations have somewhat blurred the definition of the historic floor plan and include some changes to the exterior that are of no heritage value.
- 5.1.3 The proposed scheme has responded positively to pre-application comments. Alterations to the exterior would remove later additions and alterations that are not positive contributors and replaced with doors/windows that would be more in keeping with the aesthetic values of the house and reflect the design and layout of doors/windows shown on the 2005 plans.
- 5.1.4 The interior layout was much altered as part of the 2005 approved works, particularly in the east wing and in the service wing to the rear. The proposed alterations in the east wing would retain the legibility of the floor plan on the ground floor and would reinstate a partition defining a landing shown on the 2005 plans. Modern partitions that blur the definition of the first floor of the west wing would be removed and the original proportions and size of the first-floor space better revealed. The proposed scheme would therefore better define the historic floor plan and the hierarchy of spaces in the east and west wings. The reinstatement of blocked doors would better reveal historic circulation routes. The rear service wing was opened up to create a single space as part of the 2005 works. The proposed scheme would not alter the overall proportions and size of this space as it is today, with the exception of a small extension to the original pantry to create a plant room/store. The proposed use of this space as a dining hall would form part of creating a defined entrance into the house on the northern side of the building, i.e. the north elevation functioning as the 'front' of the house and the south side remaining as a principal elevation but in keeping with a 'garden front'.
- 5.1.5 As such, it is considered that the proposed scheme would sustain the significance of the listed building and its setting in accordance with the NPPF and Reading Borough Local Plan Policies with regards to the historic environment.

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