



JF HERITAGE



Elizabeth House, The Street, Meopham, DA13 0AJ Kent

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Prepared by: Jeremy Fazzalaro BA MSc IHBC ACIfA

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Document Details	
Project Number	0024
Author	Jeremy Fazzalano BA MSc IHBC ACIfA
Version	2

The past is not dead, it is living in us, and will be alive in the future which we are now helping to make.

William Morris – Founder of SPAB

1. Introduction

- 1.1 J F Heritage provides specialist heritage advice. Jeremy Fazzalaro has over 15 years of experience working experience in the heritage and planning sectors. He is skilled in heritage conservation, planning and urban design, archaeology desk-based assessments, appraisals, historical research, and all conservation Issues. Jeremy is a Full Member of the IHBC and Associate member of the CIFA with a MSc Historic Conservation from Oxford Brookes University.
- 1.2 This Heritage Statement has been prepared by J F Heritage on behalf of Mr Macpherson in order to comply with Policy HE5 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), applicants are required to provide a description of the significance of the heritage asset and/or its setting and sufficient information to understand the impact on any heritage assets affected.
- 1.3 This Heritage Statement provides an overview of the significance of the site, details of the proposal and considers the impact of the development on the significance of the heritage assets.
- 1.4 The proposals comprise alterations to the existing modern ground-floor rear kitchen extension, the demolition of the existing modern ground-floor rear WC extension, and associated internal and external alterations and refurbishment works. This Heritage Statement has been prepared in support of the proposals following detailed comments received from the Council and the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), which requested further assessment of the significance of the building and the potential impact of the proposed works on its historic fabric and special interest.
- 1.5 The application site comprises a two-storey Grade II listed building dating from the late 17th century. Formerly used as a workhouse and later as the village post office, the building was extended during the 19th and 20th centuries. Elizabeth House was designated as a Grade II listed building on 26 July 1983.
- 1.6 The site is located within The Street, Meopham Conservation Area. The proposed works have the potential to directly affect the significance of the Grade II listed building and, by virtue of its location within the conservation area, may also have an indirect impact on the character and appearance of The Street, Meopham Conservation Area.

1.7 The relevant planning decisions have been included below:

Reference	Proposal	Decision
20251135	<u>Changes to existing ground floor rear extension.</u> <u>Removal of existing ground floor WC/Utility room rear extension. Internal alterations and refurbishment.</u>	Pending Consideration
20251136	<u>Application for Listed Building Consent for the changes to existing ground floor rear extension. Removal of existing ground floor WC/Utility room rear extension. Internal alterations and refurbishment.</u>	Pending Consideration
20020300	<u>Change of use of ground floor shop to residential use.</u>	Application Permitted
19930587	<u>Front elevation attic window replacement</u>	Application Withdrawn
19830281	<u>Erection of conservatory at the rear</u>	Application Permitted

Table 1: Planning history of the site

2. Legislation and Policy

2.1 *Heritage Legislation*

Listed buildings are afforded legal protection under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act, 1990. Sections 16 (2) and 66 (1) of the Planning Act require the local authority or decision maker to give special consideration to the desirability of preserving the listed building. There is a strong presumption against the granting of permission or listed building consent that would harm the special interest of the listed building. Any harm to the heritage assets must be weighed against the public benefit as outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

2.2 *National Planning Policy Framework*

The NPPF sets out government policy on the historic environment which includes designated and non-designated heritage assets such as listed buildings, conservation areas and locally listed buildings.

2.3 The definition of significance is set out in the glossary of the NPPF as *‘the value of the heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historical. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also its setting’*. Significance is defined as consisting of four main constituents: architectural interest, historic interest, artistic interest and archaeological interest. Historic England’s guidance on *Conservation Principles* expands on significance and identifies four values that can contribute to significance, these are:

- Historic Value
- Aesthetic Value
- Communal Value
- Evidential Value

2.4 The requirement for a heritage statement is covered under policy HE5 (1) of the NPPF which states *‘Development proposals affecting heritage assets should be accompanied by an assessment of the significance of the assets affected (including any contribution made by their setting) and of the potential effect of the proposal on their significance. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets’ importance and no more than is necessary to understand the potential effect of the proposal on their significance. The relevant historic environment record should be referred to in making this assessment, and appropriate expertise employed where necessary.*

2.5 Policy HE6 of the NPPF provides that where development would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, that harm should be weighed against the public benefits arising from the proposal.

2.6 *Local Planning Policy*

The Development Plan for Gravesham currently comprises the Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) together with relevant saved policies of the Gravesham Local Plan First Review (1994). The following policies are considered particularly relevant to the proposals:

- Policy CS19 – Development and Design Principles, which seeks to secure high-quality development that responds positively to local character, townscape and the historic built environment.
- Policy CS20 – Heritage and the Historic Environment, which recognises heritage assets as an irreplaceable resource and seeks their conservation, protection and enhancement in a manner appropriate to their significance.
- Saved Policy TC2 – Listed Buildings, which seeks to safeguard the special architectural and historic interest of listed buildings and their settings.
- Saved Policy TC3 – Development Affecting Conservation Areas, where applicable, requiring development to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of conservation areas.
- Saved Policy TC7 – Other Archaeological Sites, where archaeological remains may be affected by development.

3. **Historic Development**

Listed Buildings

- 3.1 Elizabeth House is a Grade II listed building located within The Street, Meopham Conservation Area (**Fig 1**). The building was designated on 26 July 1983. It dates from the late 17th century and was subsequently refaced, a common practice during the 18th century to update the appearance of earlier buildings. The property was further altered in the 19th century with the addition of a gabled porch. Between 1724 and 1834, it served as the parish workhouse before later being used as the village post office.
- 3.2 To the north and north-west of the site are Dorrington Cottage (Grade II) and The Well House (Grade II). Owing to the location and nature of the proposed development, it is not considered that the setting or significance of these listed buildings would be affected. Accordingly, they have not been assessed further within this Heritage Statement.

Conservation Area

- 3.3 The site is located within The Street, Meopham Conservation Area, which was designated by Gravesham Borough Council on 23 January 1970. The Council adopted the Conservation Area Appraisal in 1999, which was subsequently reviewed and amended in 2016. The conservation area contains a number of listed buildings, including Elizabeth House. The application site makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area.



Fig 1: The designated heritage assets in the area

Historic Development

- 3.4 Meopham is an historic rural parish situated on the dip slope of the North Downs approximately 9 miles south-east of Dartford. Documentary evidence records the settlement as *Meapaham*, reflecting its Anglo-Saxon origins¹. Historically, the parish was extensive, extending for almost five miles north to south, with the principal village located along The Street around the parish church and Court Lodge. The surrounding landscape comprised a mixture of chalk downland, agricultural fields, small hamlets and areas of coppice woodland, reflecting the parish's long-established agricultural character.
- 3.5 The village developed as a dispersed linear settlement focused on The Street, with historic buildings, farmsteads and public buildings gradually accumulating along the route over several centuries. The parish church of St John the Baptist, Court Lodge and other historic buildings formed the nucleus of the settlement, while later development extended along the principal road linking the surrounding hamlets. By the post-medieval period, Meopham had become an established rural community providing services to the surrounding agricultural landscape.

¹ Edward Hasted, *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent: Volume 3* (Canterbury, 1797), *British History Online* <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/survey-kent/vol3/pp356-367>

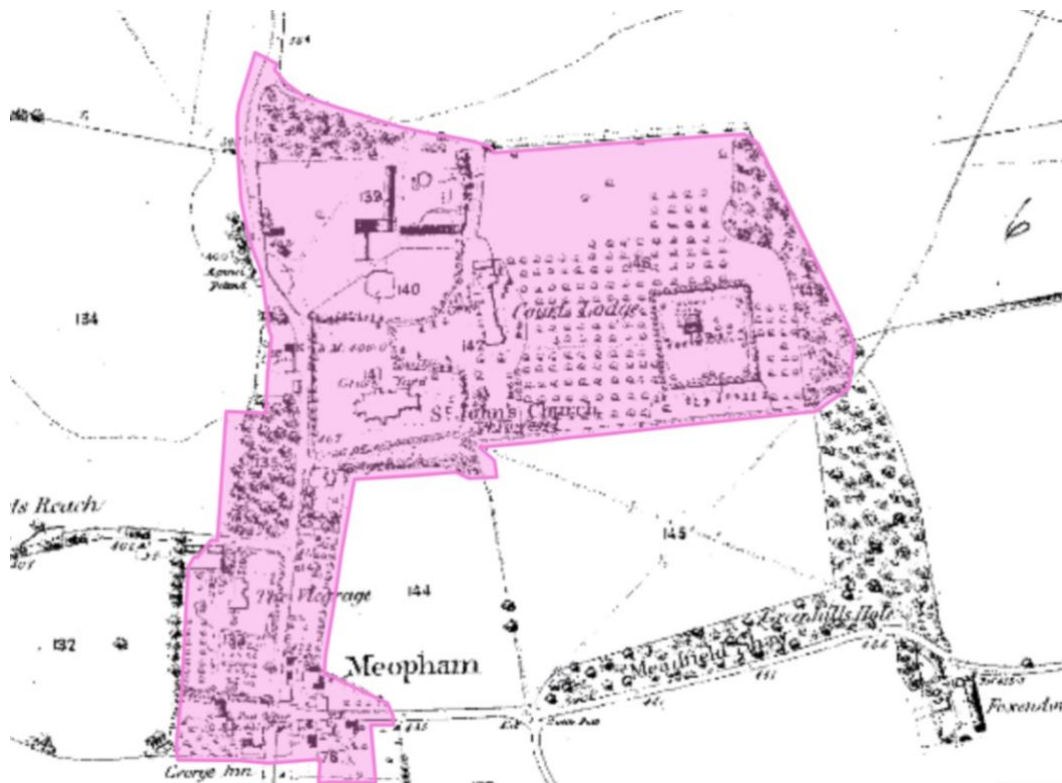


Fig 2: First edition OS map (1862-1875)

- 3.6 Historic mapping (**Figs 2 and 3**) demonstrates that The Street had largely assumed its present form by the early 19th century. Subsequent Ordnance Survey mapping records gradual infill and expansion during the 19th and 20th centuries, although the historic linear form of the village remained largely intact. This pattern of incremental development, together with the survival of numerous listed buildings and mature landscape features, contributes significantly to the special architectural and historic interest of the The Street, Meopham Conservation Area.
- 3.7 Elizabeth House occupies a prominent position on The Street within the historic core of the village. The building originated as a late 17th century structure and is understood to have served as the parish workhouse before later being used as the village post office. The building was extended during the 19th and 20th centuries to accommodate changing functional requirements while retaining its historic character. Its continued presence within the historic streetscape illustrates the gradual evolution of Meopham from a small rural parish into the village seen today

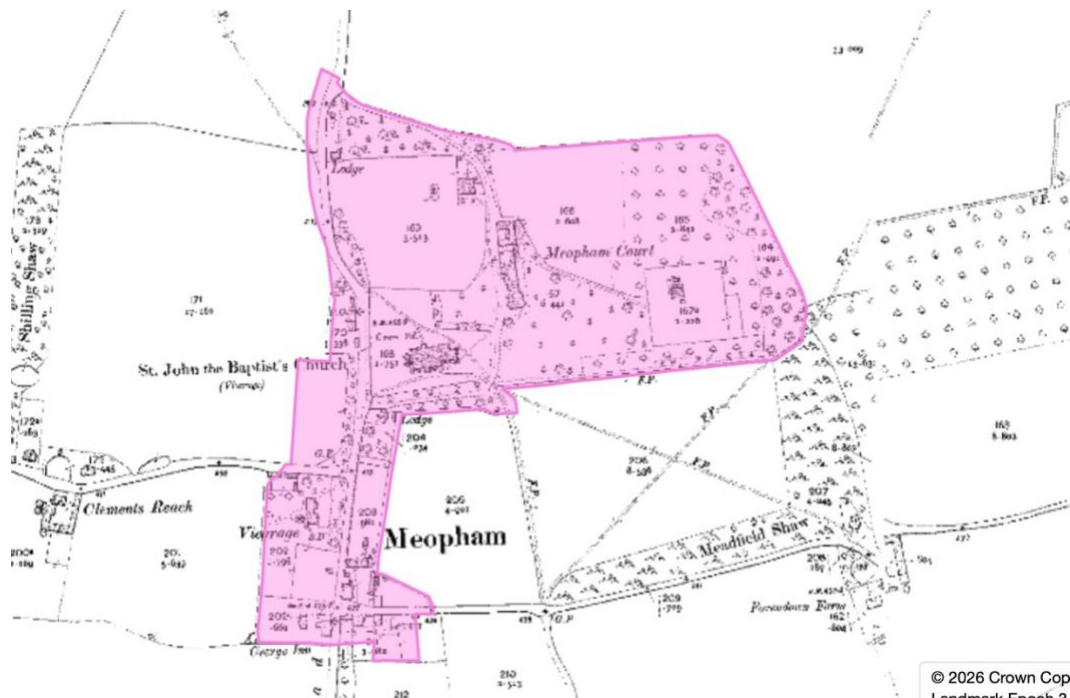


Fig 3: 3rd edition OS map (1907-1923)

- 3.8 The historic development of Meopham demonstrates a gradual and organic evolution centred upon The Street, with comparatively little change to its historic street pattern between the 19th century and the present day. The survival of historic plot boundaries, mature gardens and orchards, together with the concentration of listed buildings surrounding the Parish Church of St John the Baptist, underpin the significance of the The Street, Meopham Conservation Area. Elizabeth House forms an important component of this historic townscape, both through its architectural interest and its long-standing civic role as the former parish workhouse and later village Post Office.

Historic Map Regression

- 3.9 A historic map regression has been undertaken to understand the development of the site and wider area. The Historic Environment Record, Historic England Archive and various online resources have been consulted in preparation for the assessment.

Historic Development of the Site

Nineteenth Century

- 3.10 The First Edition Ordnance Survey (**Fig 4**) records Elizabeth House as an established building occupying its present position at the junction of The Street and Wrotham Road. The building is identified as the Post Office (P.O.), confirming its civic function by the mid-19th century. The principal building appears broadly consistent with its historic core, with only limited ancillary structures shown to the rear.

3.11 The surrounding settlement comprised a dispersed linear arrangement of historic buildings fronting The Street, including the George Inn opposite, the Vicarage to the north-west and the Parish Church of St John the Baptist immediately to the north. Extensive gardens, orchards and agricultural land surrounded the village, reinforcing its rural character.

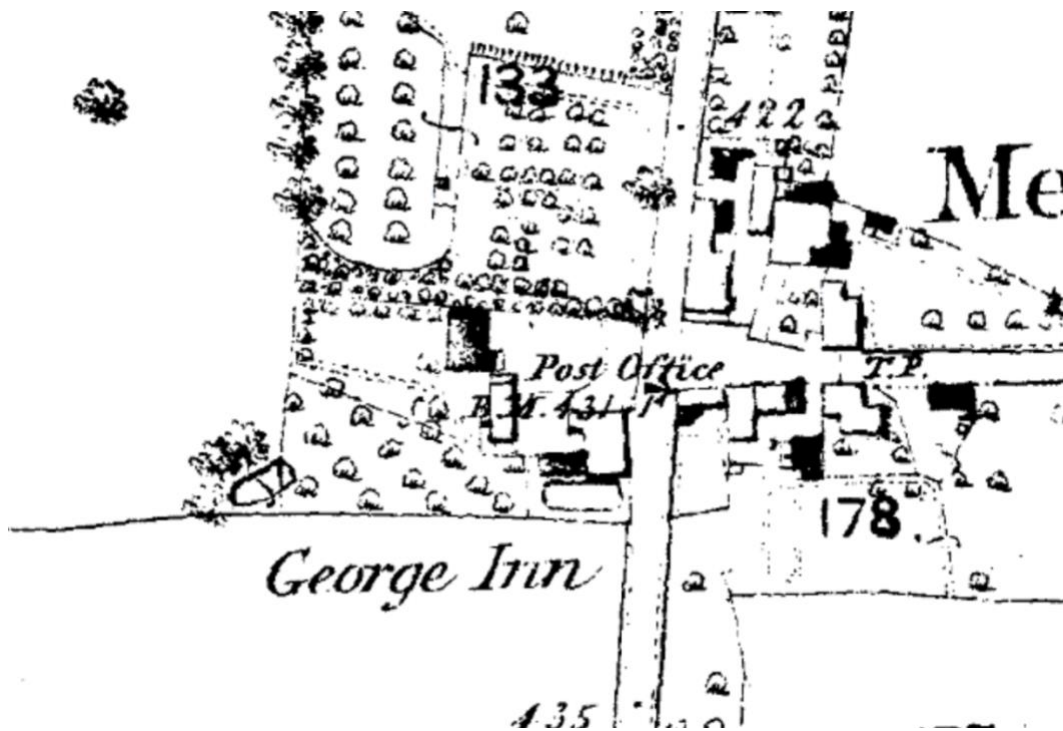


Fig 4: OS map showing Elizabeth House (1862-1875)

3.12 By the close of the 19th century (**Fig 5**), the overall form of Elizabeth House remained largely unchanged, with only minor alterations to its footprint. The continued identification of the building as the Post Office demonstrates its ongoing importance within the village. The wider settlement exhibited very limited expansion during this period. Historic buildings continued to define The Street, while orchards and generous garden plots remained a characteristic feature of the village core. The historic street pattern and relationship between the principal buildings remained intact, illustrating the gradual and organic evolution of Meopham.

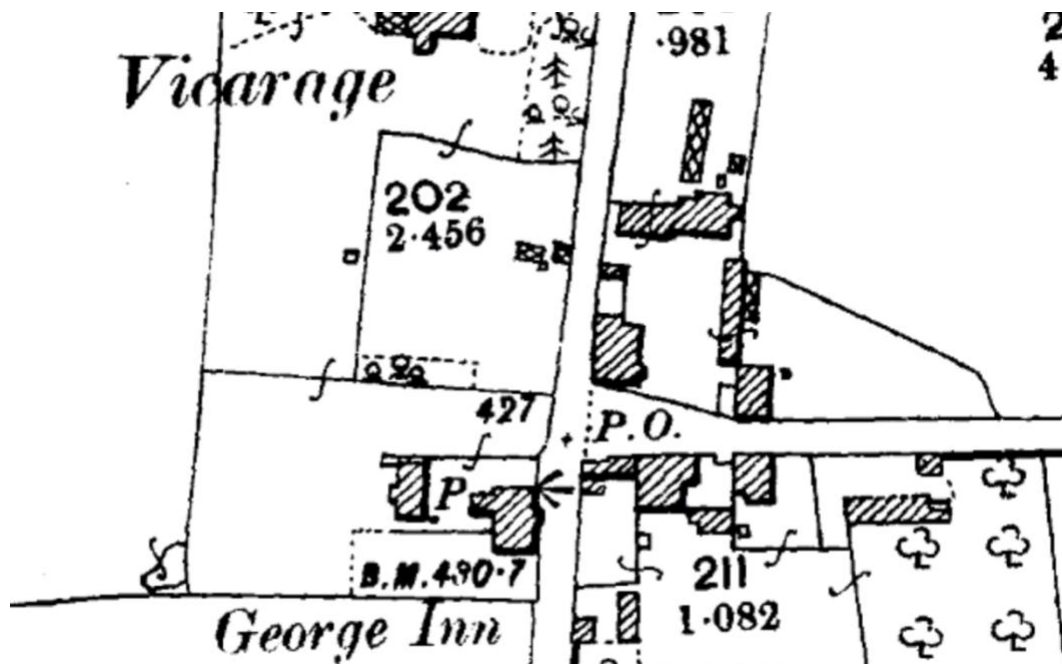


Fig 5: OS map showing Elizabeth House (1897-1900)

Twentieth Century

- 3.13 The Fourth Edition Ordnance Survey (**Fig 6**) indicates modest additions to Elizabeth House, principally to the rear of the historic building. These alterations appear to represent incremental adaptation to changing functional requirements rather than substantial redevelopment, with the historic core remaining clearly legible. Elsewhere within the village, only limited infill development had taken place. The historic alignment of The Street, together with the relationship between Elizabeth House, the church, the George Inn and surrounding buildings, remained substantially unchanged.
- 3.14 The 1990 aerial photography illustrates the continued evolution of the property through the addition of ancillary rear structures and changes to the surrounding curtilage. Nevertheless, the principal historic building retained its prominence within the streetscape. Mature trees and gardens continued to contribute positively to the setting of both Elizabeth House and the wider conservation area.

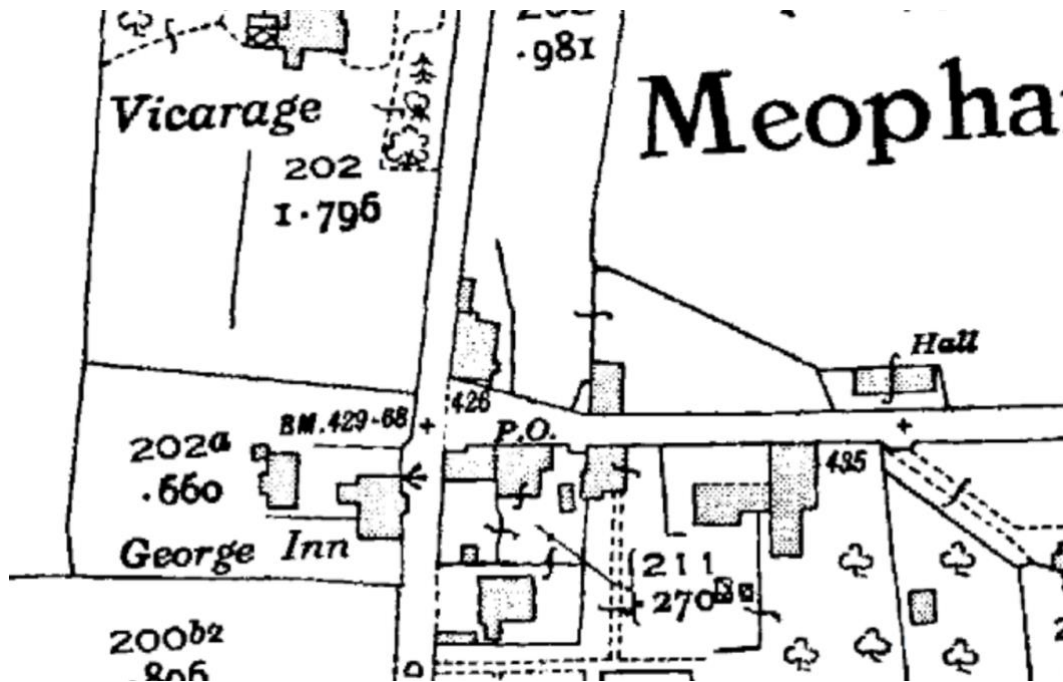


Fig 6: OS map showing Elizabeth House (1929-1952)

- 3.15 The 2016 aerial photography (**Fig 7**) demonstrates that the overall historic form of Elizabeth House has remained largely intact despite later additions. The property continues to occupy a prominent position within the historic village core, while mature landscaping and open spaces maintain its relationship with neighbouring heritage assets. Although 20th century residential development has occurred beyond the historic core, the historic linear form of The Street and the character of the conservation area remain readily appreciable.



Fig 7: Aerial photograph of the site in 2016

Summary

- 3.16 Historic mapping and aerial photography demonstrate that Elizabeth House has undergone gradual, incremental change rather than comprehensive redevelopment. The historic 17th century core has remained the principal element of the building, while later additions largely reflect changing functional requirements associated with its use as a workhouse and subsequently the village Post Office. Likewise, the wider settlement of Meopham has retained its historic linear form throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, with limited infill and the continued survival of mature gardens, orchards and open spaces preserving the rural character of the conservation area.

4. Significance

- 4.1 The NPPF defines significance as *“The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting.”* Historic England defines significance in *Conservation Principles* as *“The sum of the cultural and natural heritage values of a place, often set out in a statement of significance.”*
- 4.2 The NPPF defines setting as *“The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.”* Historic England defines setting in *Conservation Principles* as *“The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.”*
- 4.3 In accordance with Historic England’s guidance *Conservation Principles* there are several elements and values that can contribute to the significance of the building, this includes: architectural, historic, evidential, and artistic interest and aesthetic, historic, evidential, and communal values. The setting of a heritage asset may also contribute to its significance.
- 4.4 This statement analyses the significance of the building and is in accordance with Historic England’s guidance on Statements of Significance.

Conservation Areas

- 4.5 Conservation Areas are designated based on their special architectural or historic interest. Historic England has published guidance in respect of the designation and management of conservation areas, and this provides a framework for the appraisal and assessment of the special interest and significance of a conservation area.

Listed Buildings

- 4.6 Listed buildings are designated heritage assets that have special architectural or historic interest that are, for the time being, included in a list compiled or approved by the Secretary of State under Section 1 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990; for the purposes of that Act. The principles of selection for listed buildings are published by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and supported by Historic England’s Listing Selection Guides for each building type.

Assessment

- 4.7 The following desk-based assessment of heritage significance is proportionate to the importance of the Identified heritage assets. It is intended to provide a sufficient level of description to understand the likely impacts of future change through the proposed development, given its nature and extent. This assessment work is based on review of existing published information, desktop only archival research, and one on-site visual survey.

Character and Appearance of the The Street, Meopham Conservation Area

- 4.8 The application site is located within The Street, Meopham Conservation Area, designated in recognition of its special architectural and historic interest. The conservation area encompasses the historic core of the village, centred upon The Street and focused around the Parish Church of St John the Baptist, Meopham Court and a concentration of listed buildings which illustrate the gradual development of the settlement from the medieval period onwards.
- 4.9 The character of the conservation area is defined by its historic linear settlement pattern, with buildings generally arranged along The Street within irregular plots that reflect the organic evolution of the village. The survival of historic plot boundaries, mature gardens, orchards and open spaces creates a spacious rural character that distinguishes Meopham from more densely developed settlements.
- 4.10 Buildings within the conservation area display a variety of architectural styles and periods, although the prevailing character is established by timber-framed and brick-built vernacular buildings dating from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries. Traditional materials, including red brick, timber framing, weatherboarding, handmade clay tiles and Kent peg tiles, contribute to the area's distinctive local identity.
- 4.11 The mature landscape is a defining characteristic of the conservation area. Trees, hedgerows, orchards and generous garden spaces soften the built environment, frame important viand reinforce the historic relationship between the village and the surrounding agricultural landscape. These features contribute significantly to the rural setting and historic character of the conservation area.
- 4.12 Historic mapping demonstrates that the core of the village has remained remarkably consistent since at least the mid-19th century, with comparatively little alteration to the street pattern or the relationship between the principal historic buildings. This continuity contributes strongly to the significance of the conservation area and enables the historic evolution of the settlement to remain readily legible.
- 4.13 Elizabeth House occupies a prominent position within this historic streetscape and makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the conservation area through its

age, architectural quality, historic associations and relationship with neighbouring listed buildings. Together with the surrounding mature landscaping and traditional boundary treatments, the building reinforces the historic character and significance of the conservation area.

Architectural and Historic Interest

- 4.14 Elizabeth House is a Grade II listed building of special architectural and historic interest dating from the late 17th century (**Figs 8-20**). The building is understood to have originated as the parish workhouse, before later serving as the village Post Office until its conversion to a single dwelling in the early 21st century. These successive phases of occupation illustrate the changing social and economic development of Meopham and contribute significantly to the building's historic interest. The statutory list description notes its former use as the parish workhouse between 1724 and 1834 and records the survival of much original timber framing and roof timbers.



Figs 8 & 9: Views of the front and side elevation of Elizabeth House



Fig 10: View of stairs and modern floor covering Fig 11: View of cellar



Fig 12: View of timber sashes and door.



Fig 13: View of modern staircase and floor.

- 4.15 Architecturally, Elizabeth House is representative of the vernacular building traditions of Kent. The building retains its late 17th century scale, form and proportions, characterised by a rendered principal elevation, red brick rear elevation, steep Kent peg tile roof with bonnet hips, central chimney stack and traditional timber-framed construction. The survival of exposed timber framing, roof timbers, original fireplaces and inglenooks provides important evidence of historic construction techniques and contributes significantly to the building's special architectural interest.



Fig 14: The living room



Fig 15: View of the inglenook in the ground-floor rear reception room



Figs 16 & 17 Views of the fireplace in the first-floor games room and of the ground-floor inglenook in the study/snug

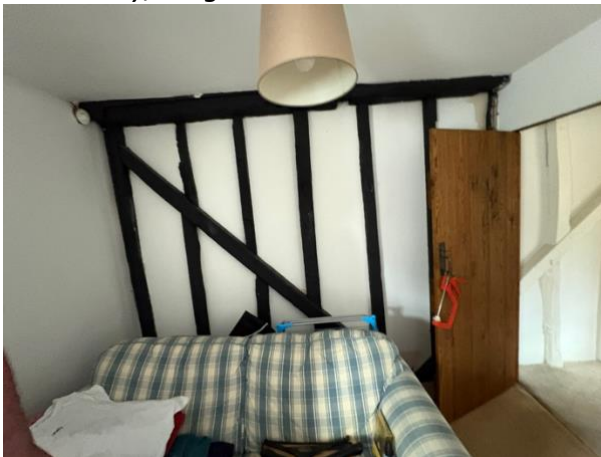


Fig 18: View of modern stud wall and Victorian door



Fig 19: View of the master bedroom



Fig 20: View of attic and landing



Fig 21: View of historic and modern timbers

- 4.16 Although the building has been altered during the 19th and 20th centuries, these changes illustrate its continued adaptation to meet changing functional requirements. Nineteenth-century cast-iron casement windows, boarded doors and alterations associated with its use as a Post Office form part of the building's historic evolution and contribute

positively to its significance. Conversely, many twentieth and 21st century interventions, including modern plasterboard partitions, modern floor finishes and skirtings, the inserted steel beam, modern staircase, modern windows, plastic rainwater goods and later rear utility extension, are of comparatively limited heritage significance.

Windows and Architectural Evolution

- 4.17 The principal elevation displays a varied arrangement of window openings comprising vertically sliding sash windows flanking the principal entrance and casement windows to left side (**Figs 24-25**). This asymmetrical composition reflects successive phases in the building's evolution. The timber sash windows to the ground floor snug were likely replaced due to deterioration, with cost also influencing the decision. The first floor casement windows appear to be the same size, suggesting that they may have been purchased together to achieve economies of scale. This is further demonstrated by the snug window apertures having been reduced in size specifically to accommodate the replacement casement windows. This suggests that the casements were selected as a standardised replacement, rather than being designed to suit the original openings. Although the existing casement windows contribute to an understanding of the building's historic development, they do not appear to form part of the original late 17th century phase of construction. Instead, they are considered to represent a later stage in the building's adaptation and changing use. Such alterations illustrate the evolving nature of vernacular buildings, which were frequently modified over time.
- 4.18 From the 18th century onwards, vertically sliding sash windows became an established form of principal elevation fenestration in southern England, including through the alteration and improvement of earlier buildings. The surviving sash windows therefore make an important contribution to the architectural character of Elizabeth House and reflect a significant phase in its historic evolution.
- 4.19 The varied window arrangement possesses evidential value as part of the building's architectural development. However, this significance should be understood within the wider context of the building's overall heritage values, where the principal significance continues to reside in the surviving late 17th century timber-framed structure, historic roof, chimney stack, fireplaces, plan form and other surviving historic fabric.



Fig 22: View of timber casements on first floor



Fig 23: View of modern window



Figs 24-25: View of the existing cast-iron casements with timber frames at ground-floor level.

Plan Form and Evolution

- 4.21 The internal arrangement of Elizabeth House has evolved considerably over more than three centuries. Historic evidence, together with surviving structural fabric, suggests that the building may originally have been constructed as a variation of the lobby-entry house, a common vernacular house type of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Subsequent subdivision associated with its use as a parish workhouse, followed by adaptation as the village Post Office and later conversion to a single dwelling, has substantially altered the original internal layout.
- 4.22 Evidence of former partitions survives within the building, including scars visible within the ceiling structure and the retained structural arrangement associated with the central chimney stack. Previous alterations, including the insertion of steelwork and removal of historic partitions during the 2004 conversion, have modified the legibility of the original plan, although sufficient evidence remains to illustrate the building's historic evolution.
- 4.23 As noted by R.W. Brunskill, vernacular buildings frequently evolved incrementally in response to changing domestic and functional requirements. Elizabeth House represents a good example of this process, where successive phases of adaptation have become part of the building's historic development without entirely obscuring its 17th century origins.

Evidential Value

- 4.24 Elizabeth House possesses considerable evidential value through the survival of its historic structural fabric. Exposed timber framing, roof timbers, inglenook fireplaces, chimney stacks and elements of the original structural frame provide physical evidence of 17th century construction methods. Historic fabric retained throughout the building enables an understanding of its construction, development and subsequent adaptation. The later alterations are also evidentially significant insofar as they demonstrate the building's continued occupation and changing use. However, the 20th century extensions and modern alterations generally possess lower evidential value than the historic core.

Historical Value

- 4.25 The building derives considerable historical significance from its long association with the social history of Meopham. Constructed as the parish workhouse and later adapted for use as the village Post Office, Elizabeth House has played an important civic role within the community for over three centuries.
- 4.26 Historic mapping demonstrates the continued prominence of the building within the historic core of the village throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Together with neighbouring listed buildings, including the Parish Church of St John the Baptist, the George Inn and Meopham Court, Elizabeth House contributes to an understanding of the historic development of Meopham as a rural parish centred upon The Street.

Aesthetic Value

- 4.27 The building possesses considerable aesthetic value through its traditional scale, proportions, materials and craftsmanship. Its rendered principal elevation, clay tiled roof, traditional fenestration and surviving vernacular detailing contribute positively to the architectural quality of the streetscape. Internally, exposed timber framing, inglenook fireplaces, historic beams and roof timbers provide an appreciation of the building's age and evolution. Although altered, these surviving features remain the principal contributors to the building's special architectural interest.

Communal Value

- 4.28 Elizabeth House has considerable communal value through its long-standing role within the life of Meopham. Its historic use as the parish workhouse and subsequently as the village Post Office means that the building has served generations of local residents and forms part of the collective memory of the village. The building continues to act as a prominent landmark within the historic core of Meopham and contributes positively to the identity and historic character of the conservation area.

Contribution of Setting to Significance

- 4.29 The significance of Elizabeth House is also derived from its setting. The immediate setting includes the garden area to the rear and from The Street, where the buildings architectural form, historic development and special interest are best appreciated. The building is experienced as part of the surrounding historic townscape, where its relationship with adjacent historic buildings, the established building line and the character of the street all

contribute to an appreciation of its architectural and historic interest. The setting enables the building's significance to be understood and appreciated and therefore forms an important component of its overall significance. It makes a small but positive contribution to significance.



Figs 26-27: View of the garden and immediate setting of the listed building

Contribution to The Street, Meopham Conservation Area

- 4.30 Elizabeth House makes a positive contribution to the significance of the The Street, Meopham Conservation Area through its architectural quality, historic associations and prominent position within the historic streetscape (**Figs 26-27**). The building occupies an important corner plot on The Street within the historic core of the village, where it forms part of a cohesive group of historic buildings including the Parish Church of St John the Baptist, Meopham Court and the George Inn. Historic mapping demonstrates that this relationship has remained largely unchanged since at least the mid-19th century, reinforcing the area's strong sense of historic continuity. The building also contributes through the use of traditional materials, its historic scale and form, and its relationship with mature gardens, boundary walls and open spaces that define the rural character of the conservation area.

Summary of Significance

- 4.31 Elizabeth House is a heritage asset of high significance whose special interest derives principally from its surviving late 17th century timber-framed core, historic plan form, traditional materials and long association with the social development of Meopham. The principal significance resides within the original structure, including its timber frame, roof structure, chimney stack, fireplaces, inglenooks and surviving historic fabric. Nineteenth-century alterations and features contribute positively to an understanding of the building's continued evolution and occupation. By contrast, later twentieth and 21st century additions, including modern partitions, the rear utility extension, plastic rainwater goods, UPVC windows and other recent interventions, make a comparatively limited contribution to the building's significance and should therefore be afforded less weight when considering the impact of proposed alterations.

5. Summary of Proposal

- 5.1 In accordance with the NPPF, published in August 2026, the significance of the identified heritage assets, namely Elizabeth House and The Street, Meopham Conservation Area, has been proportionately assessed in **Sections 3 and 4**. This assessment is based on a review of published sources, desktop and archival research, and a site visit.
- 5.2 Relevant heritage legislation, policy, and guidance have also been taken into account, including the statutory duties outlined in the *Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990*, national policy set out in the August 2026 NPPF, including Policies HE4, HE5, HE6 and HE9 as well as local policies and guidance for development within the historic environment. Collectively, these sections and appendices provide the necessary context for the local planning authority to consider the application and assess its potential impact on heritage assets.
- 5.3 This section outlines the proposed development and the planning history of the site. This information is based on data gathered from the planning portal website, supplemented by information provided to me, and further supported by a site visit to the property.
- 5.4 The proposals (**Figs 28-37**) seek to refurbish and sensitively adapt the listed building to provide a functional family home while conserving and enhancing its special architectural and historic interest. The works have been developed to retain and repair significant historic fabric wherever possible, whilst introducing carefully considered interventions that support the building's long-term conservation and continued viable use.

The principal works comprise:

- Internal refurbishment, including alterations to the ground floor layout and the replacement of later floor finishes where appropriate.
- Modifications to the staircase arrangement to improve circulation and facilitate compliance with current Building Regulations in a manner that minimises impacts on the historic fabric.
- Retention, repair and conservation of historic features, including exposed timber beams, flint walls, fireplaces, historic joinery and other surviving elements of significance.
- Installation of secondary glazing to selected historic windows and replacement of later windows with traditionally detailed painted timber sliding sash windows.
- Introduction of a new wood-burning stove within the existing inglenook fireplace together with associated minor repairs.
- Formation of a new utility/WC within a reversible lightweight partition.
- Structural alterations associated with the replacement of a modern support post and associated engineering works.

- Repair and upgrading of the existing kitchen extension, including renewal of the roof covering, insulation improvements, replacement rooflights and alterations to the rear elevation incorporating a glazed gable and French doors.
- Demolition of the existing modern lean-to WC extension.
- Formation of new openings to the rear elevation, including a reinstated window opening and new glazed doors providing improved access to the garden.
- Internal environmental improvements, including the installation of breathable wall insulation, ceiling repairs and underfloor heating.
- External repairs including brickwork repairs, renewal of rainwater goods and associated conservation works using traditional materials and techniques.
- The proposals have been informed by an understanding of the building's significance and seek to retain historic fabric wherever practicable, whilst ensuring the building remains capable of continued sustainable use.

5.6 Following comments received from the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), the applicant commissioned this revised Heritage Statement and Heritage Impact Assessment to provide an updated assessment of the significance of the listed building and the potential impact of the proposed works.

5.7 SPAB advised that a Heritage Impact Assessment should be submitted and that the previous assessment had not been prepared by a conservation-accredited heritage consultant. This revised document has therefore been prepared by J F Heritage, an independent heritage consultancy, to provide a proportionate assessment of the building's architectural and historic interest, the contribution of its setting to significance, and the potential effects of the proposals on its special interest.

5.8 The assessment has been informed by a review of available historic information, an understanding of the existing building fabric, site observations, and consideration of the proposed works against relevant heritage policy and guidance.



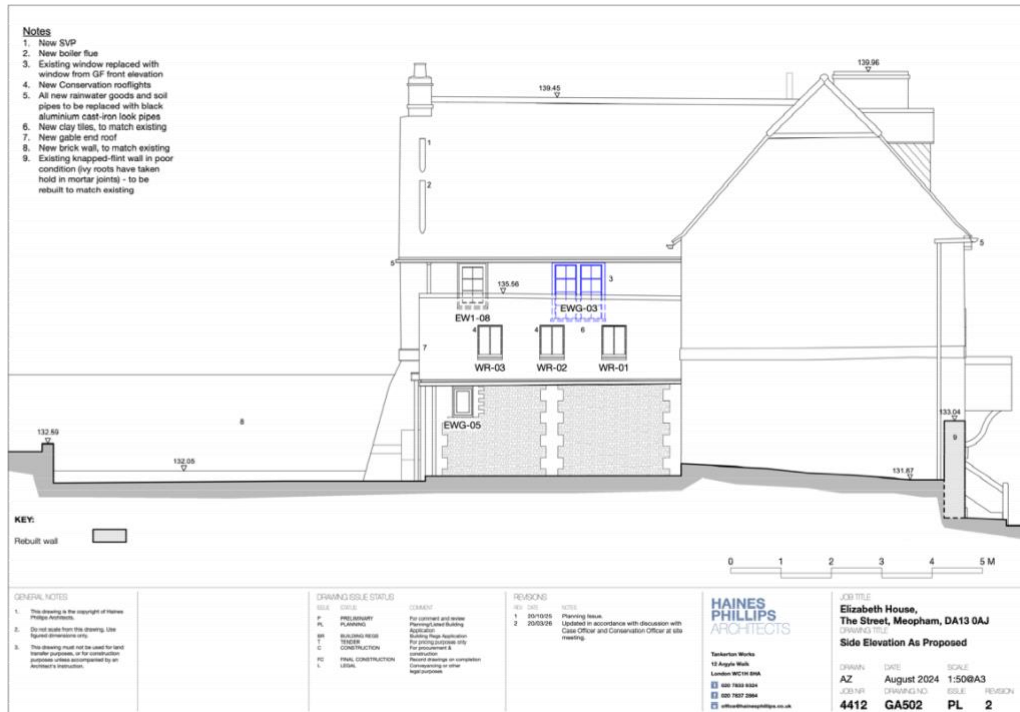


Fig 30: Proposed site elevation (Haines Phillips Architects)

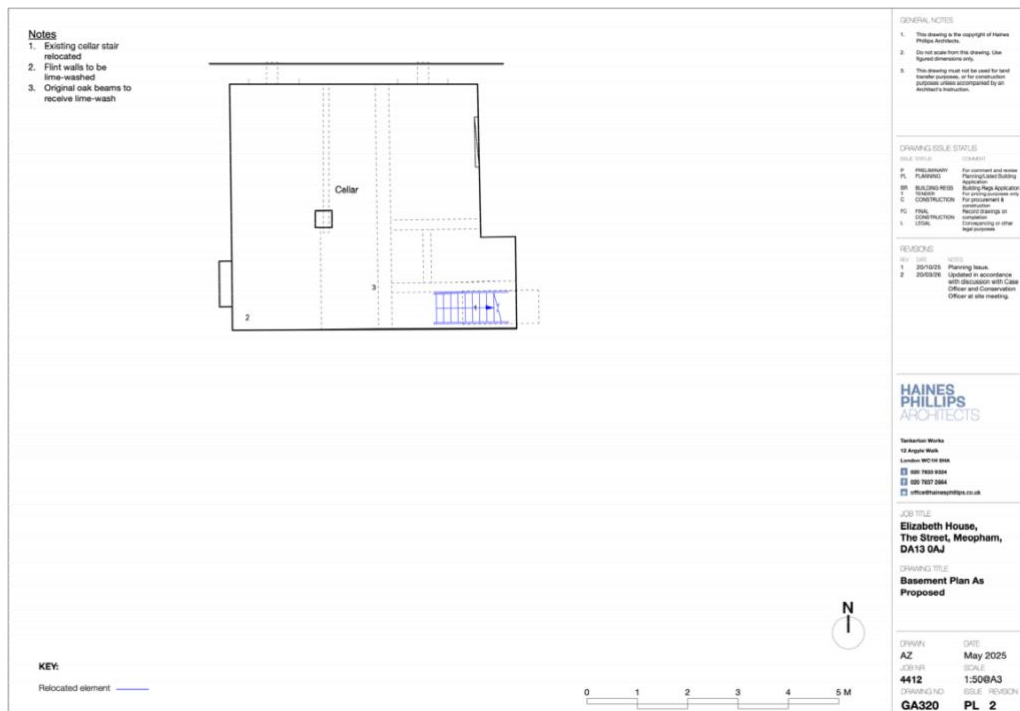


Fig 31: Proposed basement plan (Haines Phillips Architects)

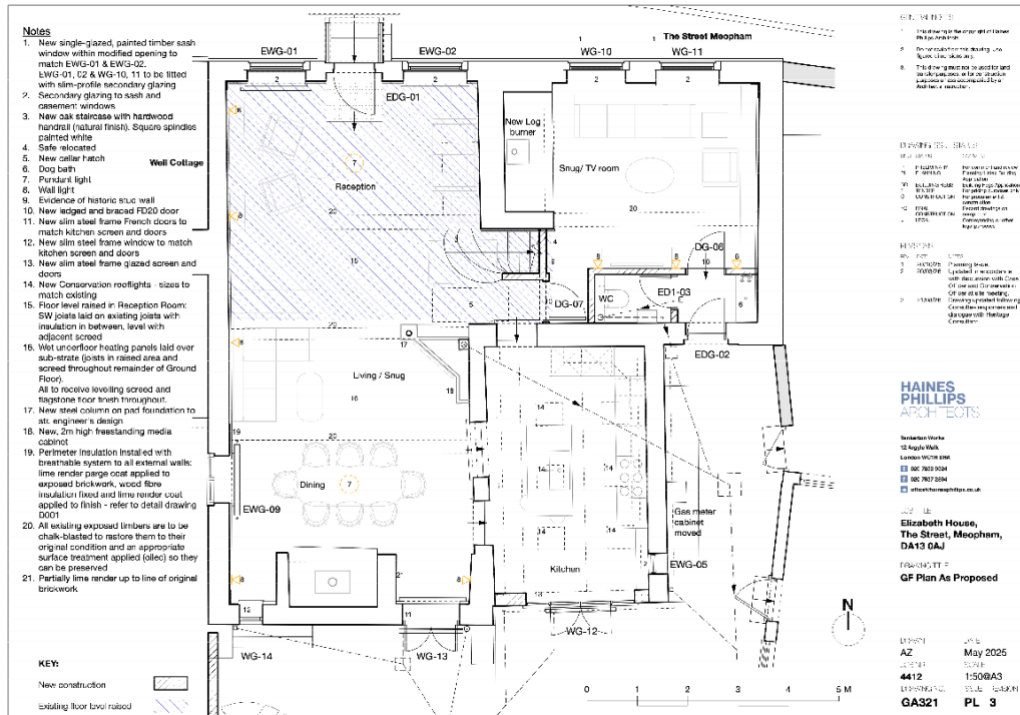


Fig 32: Proposed ground floor plan (Haines Phillips Architects)

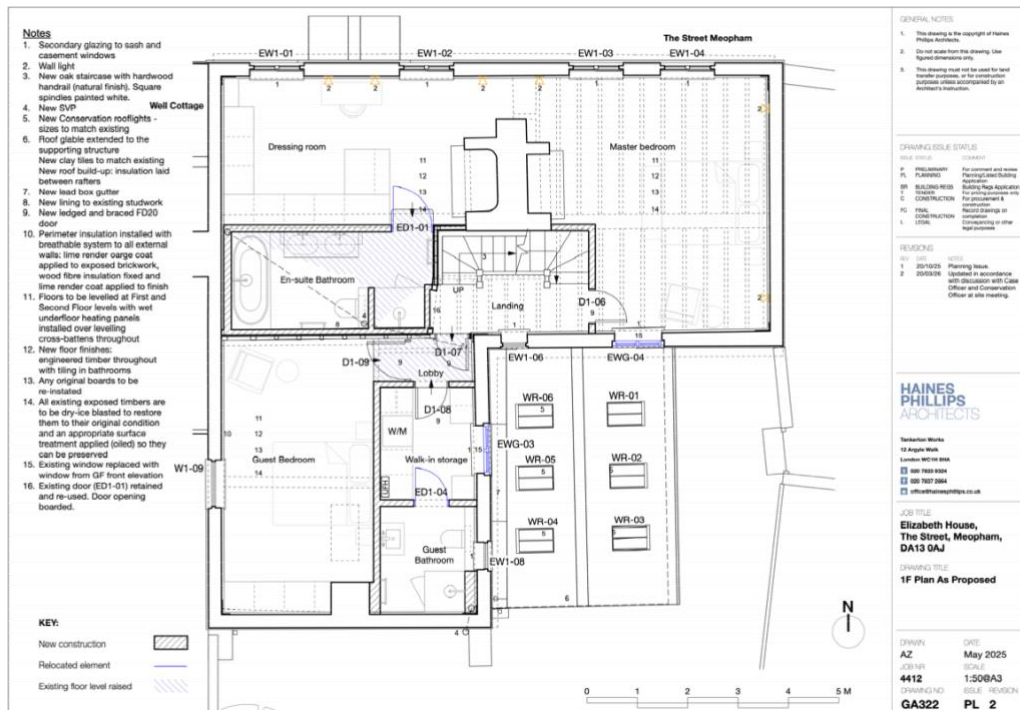


Fig 33: Proposed first floor plan (Haines Phillips Architects)

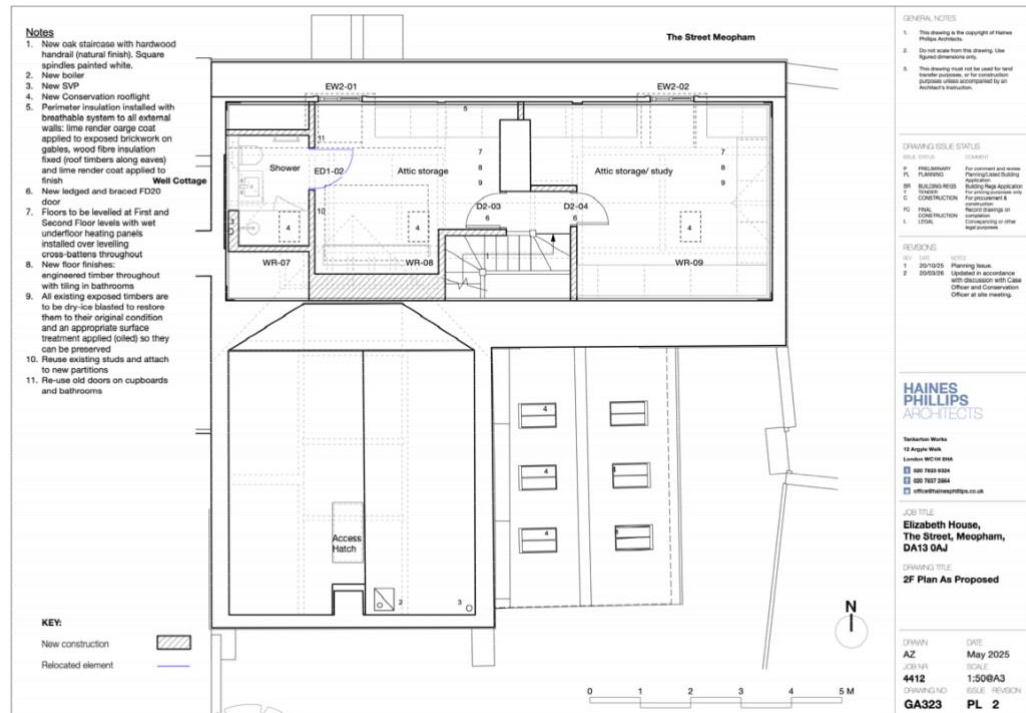


Fig 34: Proposed second floor plan (Haines Phillips Architects)



Fig 35: Proposed roof plan (Haines Phillips Architects)

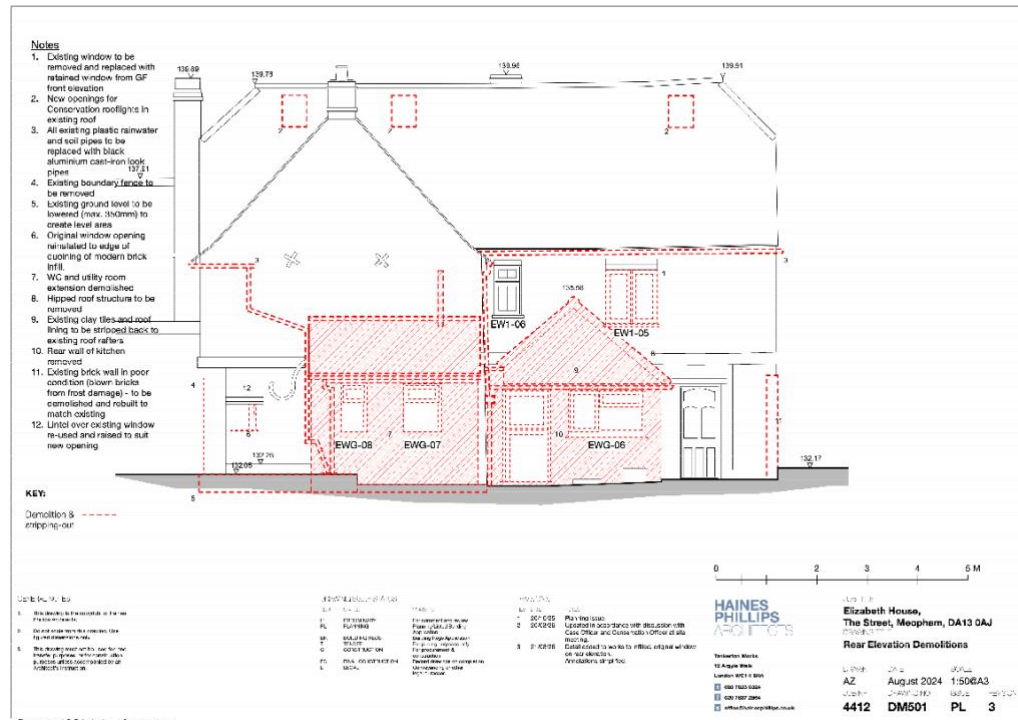


Fig 36: Rear elevation demolition plan (Haines Phillips Architects)

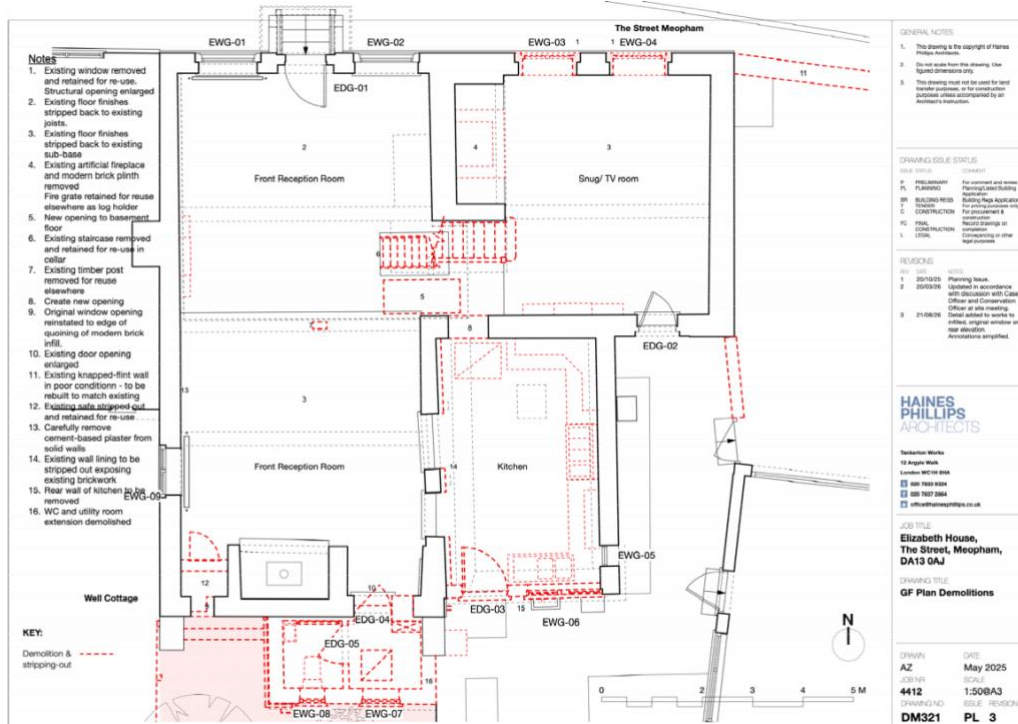


Fig 37: Ground floor demolition plan (Haines Phillips Architects)

6. Impact Assessment

Cellar Proposals

- 6.1 The proposed works to the cellar have been carefully considered to retain historic fabric and improve the long-term conservation of the listed building. The existing timber staircase is not considered to be original and makes no special contribution to the historic or architectural significance of the building. However, it will be retained and relocated as part of the proposals, avoiding unnecessary loss of existing fabric and supporting the sustainable reuse of materials.
- 6.2 The existing flint walls and historic oak beams will be retained and finished with a breathable limewash. Limewash is a traditional vapour-permeable finish that allows moisture movement through the fabric, helping to reduce the risk of deterioration associated with impermeable modern coatings. The use of limewash is therefore an appropriate conservation measure that will assist in protecting these historic elements and securing their long-term preservation.

Ground Floor Proposals

- 6.3 The proposed works to the ground floor have been carefully developed to secure the long-term viable use of the listed building whilst respecting and conserving its special architectural and historic interest. The proposals adopt a conservation-led approach, retaining significant historic fabric wherever practicable, repairing traditional materials and ensuring that new interventions are sympathetic, limited in extent and, where possible, reversible.
- 6.4 The removal of the existing modern timber floor finish will result in the loss of later fabric that makes no positive contribution to the significance of the listed building. The proposed raising of the floor level within the front reception room to align with the adjoining spaces is a discreet intervention that will improve the functionality and accessibility of the accommodation whilst retaining the existing structural arrangement. The introduction of insulation and underfloor heating will improve thermal performance and comfort without detracting from the historic character of the building. The existing modern staircase is to be replaced with a traditional style staircase, more in keeping with the heritage and character of the property.
- 6.6 The associated treatment of the exposed flint wall and historic oak beams is similarly conservation-led. These elements will be retained and finished with a breathable limewash, a traditional vapour-permeable coating that allows moisture to evaporate naturally whilst protecting the underlying fabric. This approach will assist in preventing deterioration, improve the long-term performance of the historic materials and ensure their continued contribution to the character of the building. The introduction of a new cellar hatch in a revised location represents a minor alteration required to improve access and functionality. The intervention will have a negligible impact upon the significance of the listed building.

- 6.7 Within the kitchen, the retention and repair of the existing screed, together with the introduction of a traditional flagstone floor finish, will reinforce the historic character of the space. The replacement of deteriorated roof coverings with matching clay tiles, together with new lead flashings and gutters, represents appropriate repair using compatible traditional materials. These works will improve weather resistance and secure the long-term protection of the building fabric. The introduction of insulation within the roof and replacement ceiling will improve environmental performance whilst having only limited impact upon historic fabric.
- 6.8 The alterations to the later kitchen extension, including the replacement of the existing end wall with a glazed gable and the installation of slim steel frame windows and doors, represent the most visually notable external intervention. However, these works affect a later addition rather than the principal historic structure and seek to improve the relationship between the building and its garden. The proposals remain sympathetic in scale and detailing. Furthermore, it is noted that listed building consent was previously granted in 1983 for a substantially glazed conservatory addition to this part of the building, demonstrating that a more open relationship between the extension and garden has previously formed part of the building's evolution.
- 6.9 The installation of conservation rooflights and replacement of the existing rooflight within the kitchen extension will improve natural daylight whilst maintaining a discreet appearance through the use of appropriately detailed conservation rooflights positioned within the secondary roof slope. The reinstatement of the previously blocked window opening within the rear reception room represents a positive intervention, restoring a lost historic feature and improving the legibility of the building's historic development. The relocation of the existing casement windows to the rear elevation also provides an opportunity to remove later first floor windows and replace them with retained historic cast iron joinery from the ground floor. This will improve the material and architectural quality of the rear elevation whilst ensuring that existing historic window fabric remains within the listed building and continues to contribute to its significance.
- 6.10 Similarly, the removal of the existing lean-to WC/utility extension, which makes limited contribution to the significance of the listed building, and its replacement with a more coherent opening incorporating traditionally detailed French doors will improve the appearance and functionality of the rear elevation. An existing opening is present between the main building and the WC extension. Following removal of the WC extension, the opening will need filling to prevent weather entering the property. No damage will occur to the historic structure.
- 6.11 Within the Snug/TV Room, the removal of the later wrought iron fire grate and alterations to the hearth to accommodate a wood-burning stove will improve the functionality of the fireplace whilst retaining the existing bricks for reuse and conserving the character of the inglenook. The retained fire grate will remain within the building, maintaining its historic association with the property.

- 6.12 The proposed stud partition forming a new WC and utility room represents a lightweight and reversible intervention. Documentary evidence indicates that partitions existed within this room prior to later alterations, meaning the proposal reflects the historic evolution of the space rather than introducing an entirely new subdivision. The raised floor construction required for drainage has been carefully designed to avoid unnecessary disturbance to the existing structure and will be fully reversible.
- 6.15 The replacement of the existing timber post with a steel column is required as a consequence of previous structural alterations involving the insertion of a steel beam. As the existing post can no longer fulfil its structural function, its retention and reuse elsewhere within the building ensures that historic material is conserved wherever practicable. The proposed steel column represents the minimum intervention necessary to secure the continued structural stability of the building.
- 6.16 The repair of the rear inglenook fireplace using traditional lime render will remove visually intrusive modern repairs and introduce a more appropriate breathable finish. Similarly, the removal of cement-based plaster and replacement with a breathable lime render and wood fibre insulation system represents a significant conservation improvement. These works will enhance moisture management, reduce the risk of deterioration associated with impermeable materials and improve the environmental performance of the building.
- 6.16 The repair and re-skimming of ceilings represents routine maintenance with negligible impact upon significance. The retention and reuse of 19th century doors within the altered layout demonstrates a commitment to conserving historic joinery, whilst the relocation of the historic safe ensures that this feature remains within the building.
- 6.17 The safe had previously been moved by the previous owner and therefore is not currently in its original location. Overall, the ground floor proposals have been carefully designed to balance modern living requirements with the conservation of historic character and fabric. The proposals will therefore secure the continued sustainable use of the listed building whilst conserving and, where appropriate, enhancing its special architectural and historic interest.

Windows and Secondary Glazing

- 6.18 The proposals include the installation of aluminium secondary glazing to selected historic windows together with the replacement of the later casement windows on the principal elevation with traditionally detailed painted timber sliding sash windows.
- 6.19 The existing arrangement of sash and casement windows reflects successive phases in the building's development and contributes evidential value through illustrating its adaptation over time, including its former use as the village Post Office. The replacement of the existing casement windows will therefore result in the loss of later historic window fabric and a change to the existing asymmetrical fenestration arrangement. This represents a limited degree of harm to this aspect of the building's significance.

- 6.20 However, the existing casement windows are not considered to form part of the principal late 17th century fabric of the building. The proposed replacement windows have been designed as traditionally detailed painted timber sliding sashes which are sympathetic to the age, character and architectural proportions of the principal elevation. While minor alterations to the single-skin brickwork above will be required, these will not result in damage to the original structure. The proposals therefore seek to reinstate the original character of the building.
- 6.21 The existing casement windows removed from the principal elevation are proposed to be retained and relocated to the rear elevation, where they will replace existing later windows. This will allow the historic window fabric to remain within the listed building rather than being discarded. Although relocation will alter the existing relationship and evidential value of the principal elevation, the continued reuse of the windows represents an appropriate mitigation measure and will improve the quality and historic character of the rear elevation through the removal of later windows.
- 6.22 The introduction of slim-profile secondary glazing to selected historic windows will improve thermal performance whilst retaining the historic windows themselves and avoiding their wholesale replacement.
- 6.23 Overall, the proposed alterations to the fenestration will result in a limited degree of less than substantial harm, principally through the loss of the existing casement windows from their current positions and alteration of the established fenestration arrangement. This harm is considered to be at the lower end of the less than substantial harm spectrum and is mitigated through the retention and reuse of the existing historic windows elsewhere within the building and the introduction of traditionally detailed replacement windows.

Formation of New Window Opening

- 6.24 The proposals include the reopening of an infilled window (**Figs 38 & 39**) aperture within the rear elevation adjacent to the existing inglenook fireplace. The aperture measures approximately 310mm wide by 450mm high internally and is currently infilled with a single skin of brickwork laid in Portland cement mortar. The infill has not been toothed or tied into the surrounding wall fabric and is of comparatively poor construction. The existing lintel and cill survive, together with evidence of three missing bricks to the right-hand reveal when viewed externally.
- 6.25 The proposed works would carefully remove the existing cementitious infill by diamond cutting the mortar joints and this process will also be used for the new sash windows to the front elevation, with the intention of avoiding damage to the surrounding historic fabric. The existing lintel and cill would be retained and the missing bricks to the reveal reinstated using appropriate materials.

- 6.26 The physical evidence indicates that the present infill represents a later alteration to the building and that a window opening previously existed at this location. The survival of the lintel and cill, together with the manner in which the infill has been constructed and its poor relationship with the surrounding historic wall fabric, supports this interpretation. The proposal should therefore be understood principally as the reopening of a former aperture, rather than the formation of an entirely new opening within an undisturbed historic elevation.
- 6.27 The removal of the existing infill will nevertheless involve a localised intervention in the historic fabric and therefore result in a degree of harm to the significance of the listed building. However, the affected area is relatively limited and the intervention has been designed to retain the surrounding historic wall fabric, existing lintel and cill. The reopening of the former aperture will also improve the legibility of the building's historic development. The proposed window is designed to relate to the existing metal windows at first-floor level. The use of aluminium reflects the existing material palette of the building, which comprises a combination of sash windows to the principal elevation and later metal and uPVC windows elsewhere. Given the small scale and rearward location of the opening, the proposed window is considered unlikely to have a significant effect on the architectural character of the listed building or its contribution to the conservation area, subject to appropriate detailing, profile and finish.
- 6.28 Overall, the works will result in a limited degree of less than substantial harm, principally arising from the localised intervention required to remove the infill and install the new window. This harm is considered to be at the lower end of the less than substantial harm spectrum and is mitigated by the physical evidence for the former opening, retention of the existing lintel and cill, careful removal of the infill and reinstatement of the missing masonry.



Figs 38 & 39: View of the existing infilled aperture.

First Floor Proposals

- 6.29 The proposed first-floor alterations have been carefully designed to improve the functionality of the accommodation whilst respecting and conserving the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building. New works are generally lightweight, sympathetic and reversible. The reconfiguration of the first-floor layout will allow the building to better meet contemporary living requirements without fundamentally altering its historic plan form. The principal historic spaces remain legible, and the significance of the building will be maintained.
- 6.30 The existing plasterboard ceilings will be repaired and re-skimmed where appropriate. Should historic ceiling beams be revealed during the removal of modern finishes, these will be retained, repaired where necessary and incorporated into the completed scheme. This provides an opportunity to reveal and conserve historic fabric that is currently concealed, improving understanding of the building's traditional construction. The existing exposed timber beams and joists will be retained throughout. These elements make an important contribution to the character of the first-floor accommodation and their continued retention will preserve the legibility of the building's historic construction.

- 6.31 The removal of modern cement-based plaster from the perimeter walls and its replacement with a breathable insulation system comprising lime-based finishes and wood fibre insulation represents a significant conservation benefit. The removal of incompatible impermeable materials will improve the ability of the historic walls to regulate moisture, reducing the risk of deterioration whilst improving thermal performance. The use of traditional breathable materials is appropriate to the construction of a historic solid-wall building and will contribute to its long-term conservation. The original stud partition adjacent to the staircase will be retained in situ. The introduction of Fireline boarding represents a discreet intervention required to improve fire resistance and comply with current Building Regulations, whilst retaining the historic timber framework beneath.
- 6.32 The removal of later non-original stud partitions between the guest bedroom and bathroom areas will result in the loss of fabric of limited heritage value. Their replacement with new lightweight timber stud partitions in revised positions will improve the functionality of the accommodation whilst remaining reversible and avoiding unnecessary impact upon significant historic fabric.
- 6.33 The retention and reuse of historic doors throughout the first floor represents a positive conservation approach. The reuse of the doors demonstrates a commitment to conserving historic joinery wherever practicable. New fire-rated ledged and braced timber doors have been designed to reflect the character and detailing of existing doors, ensuring that necessary improvements to fire safety can be achieved without detracting from the historic appearance.
- 6.34 The existing inglenook fireplaces will be retained and remain unaffected by the proposed works, preserving important historic features. The reopening of the blocked opening adjacent to the inglenook will reinstate a former feature and improve understanding of the original arrangement of the room. As the proposal restores a historic relationship rather than introducing a new alteration, it represents a positive contribution to the significance of the listed building.
- 6.35 The removal of existing modern floor finishes will result in the loss of later fabric that makes no contribution to significance. The existing timber joists will be retained and preserved, with new cross-battens introduced only where required to achieve a suitable floor construction. The localised raising of floors within the master bathroom and adjoining lobby has been carefully designed to accommodate drainage while avoiding unnecessary disturbance to historic fabric. The installation of underfloor heating panels beneath new timber floorboards will improve thermal comfort whilst providing an unobtrusive heating solution that avoids visual clutter and reduces the need for intervention into historic walls.
- 6.36 The replacement of modern rear and side elevation windows with historic timber casement windows relocated from the front elevation represents a positive conservation outcome. The approach retains historic windows within the building rather than discarding them and improves the appearance of secondary elevations through the introduction of more

appropriate traditional materials and detailing. The installation of slim-profile secondary glazing to retained historic windows provides a sympathetic and reversible means of improving thermal efficiency and acoustic performance without altering the external appearance of the listed building.

- 6.37 Overall, the first-floor proposals have been carefully developed to balance modern requirements with the conservation of historic character and fabric. The works prioritise retention, repair and reuse, while new interventions are limited, sympathetic and reversible.

Second Floor / Attic Proposals

- 6.38 The proposed works to the second floor and attic have been carefully designed to improve the usability of the roof space whilst preserving the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building. The existing arrangement of two principal rooms will be retained, with only a modest alteration through the introduction of a small en-suite shower room to improve modern functionality. The location of the new shower room above the proposed first-floor bathroom has been carefully considered to allow drainage and services to be consolidated into a single route. This approach minimises intervention into historic fabric and represents a sensitive solution to accommodating modern facilities within the building.
- 6.39 The existing exposed historic timber roof structure, including beams and rafters, will be retained. These elements make an important contribution to the character of the attic space and provide evidence of the building's historic construction. Their continued exposure will preserve this understanding and maintain the historic character of the accommodation. The existing plasterboard ceiling and eaves linings will be upgraded to incorporate insulation and new finishes. These works will improve thermal performance whilst ensuring that significant historic roof elements remain visible and protected.
- 6.40 The introduction of three conservation rooflights within the rear roof slope represents a limited intervention required to improve natural lighting and ventilation. Their location on the less prominent rear elevation and the use of appropriately detailed conservation rooflights will ensure that their visual impact remains minimal whilst improving the usability of the attic accommodation. The replacement of the modern stud partition enclosing the stair landing will remove later fabric that makes limited contribution to the significance of the listed building. The new fire-rated stud partitions are lightweight and reversible, allowing compliance with current Building Regulations whilst avoiding unnecessary impact upon historic fabric.
- 6.41 Importantly, sections of planted-on studwork considered to have historic value will be retained and reused as exposed features within the new partitions. The proposed fire-rated ledged and braced timber doors have been designed to match the existing historic joinery. The reuse of reclaimed historic door within the new shower room opening further demonstrates the commitment to retaining and conserving original building elements.

6.42 The removal of the existing modern floor finish will result in the loss of later fabric of limited heritage value. The existing timber joists will be retained and preserved, with new cross-battens introduced only where necessary. The installation of timber floorboards over underfloor heating panels will improve comfort and energy efficiency whilst respecting the historic structure beneath. Overall, the second-floor proposals represent a sensitive adaptation of the attic accommodation. The works retain significant historic fabric, reuse original materials where possible and introduce only limited reversible interventions.

External Alterations

6.43 The proposed external works are primarily repair and maintenance interventions intended to preserve the fabric of the listed building, improve its long-term performance and enhance its setting. The introduction of three conservation rooflights within the rear roof slope of the main roof, together with a new boiler flue and soil vent pipe, represents a limited alteration to the roofscape.

6.44 Their location on the less prominent rear elevation ensures that their visual impact will be minimal, whilst the use of appropriately detailed conservation rooflights and careful making good will maintain the character and appearance of the building. The works to the kitchen extension roof, including the replacement of defective coverings, flashings and associated repairs, are considered appropriate conservation works. The use of matching traditional materials will improve weather resistance and secure the long-term preservation of this later addition.

6.46 The replacement of existing plastic rainwater goods and soil pipes with black aluminium cast iron-effect fittings represents an enhancement to the external appearance of the building. The existing plastic components are not appropriate to the historic character of the property, and their replacement with more traditional-looking materials will improve both the appearance and durability of these elements.

6.47 The proposed specialist repair and repointing of defective brickwork to the rear and side elevations represents a positive conservation intervention. The works will address areas of deterioration, prevent further loss of historic fabric and improve the long-term performance of the masonry through the use of compatible materials and appropriate repair techniques. The rebuilding of the existing knapped flint boundary wall enclosing the driveway represents a necessary conservation repair. The wall has deteriorated due to vegetation growth and ivy penetration into the mortar joints. Careful rebuilding using matching flint and traditional methods will preserve this important boundary feature and maintain its contribution to the setting of the listed building.

6.48 Similarly, the rebuilding of the brick boundary wall between the driveway and rear garden represents appropriate repair to a deteriorating historic boundary element. The use of matching brickwork and compatible mortar will maintain the appearance of the boundary treatment and its contribution to the streetscape.

- 6.49 The replacement of the existing close-boarded timber boundary fence with a new brick wall to match the existing house represents an improvement to the setting of the listed building. The existing fence makes limited contribution to the historic character of the property, whereas a traditional brick boundary treatment will provide a more coherent and appropriate enclosure. The proposed works to the rear garden, including the protective structural glass covering over the historic well, represent a sensitive intervention that will improve safety whilst allowing this historic feature to remain visible and appreciated. The associated landscape improvements, including the remodelling of the steps to create wider seating areas, will enhance access and provide an improved setting from which the historic well can be understood.
- 6.50 The lowering of the existing paved area adjacent to the rear reception room to create a natural stone-paved terrace will improve accessibility and strengthen the relationship between the house and garden. The use of natural stone is appropriate within the historic setting and will provide a more sympathetic external finish. Overall, the external alterations represent a positive conservation approach focused on repair, maintenance and enhancement.

Impact upon the Meopham Conservation Area

- 6.51 The proposals are considered to preserve the character and appearance of the Meopham Conservation Area. The principal elevation will continue to retain its historic form and character, while the proposed replacement sash windows have been designed to reinforce the traditional architectural character of the building. The rear elevation is less prominent within the public realm and the proposed works will principally involve later fabric and the reopening of a former window aperture. The removal of later uPVC windows and their replacement with retained historic casement windows, together with repairs using traditional materials, will improve the architectural quality of the rear of the building. The proposed works will therefore maintain the positive contribution Elizabeth House makes to the conservation area's historic character and appearance.

Public Benefits

- 6.52 The proposals deliver a range of public and heritage benefits consistent with Policy HE6 of the NPPF, including:
- the repair and conservation of significant historic fabric;
 - the removal or improvement of inappropriate later materials and alterations;
 - the use of traditional materials and construction techniques appropriate to the listed building;
 - improved thermal performance through sympathetic and reversible measures;
 - improved resilience of the building through repair of the external envelope, rainwater goods and drainage systems;
 - the continued occupation and sustainable use of the listed building as a family dwelling, securing its long-term maintenance and conservation.

- 6.53 Collectively, these measures will improve the condition, resilience and sustainability of Elizabeth House whilst ensuring that its architectural and historic significance is maintained for future generations. The proposals have been informed by a detailed understanding of the significance of Elizabeth House and have been developed around the principles of conservation-led repair, minimum intervention and sustainable adaptation.
- 6.54 Overall, the proposals will result in a limited degree of less than substantial harm to the significance of Elizabeth House. The identified harm arises principally from the alteration of the existing fenestration arrangement through the removal of the later casement windows from the principal elevation and from the localised intervention required to reopen the former window aperture within the rear elevation.
- 6.55 The level of harm is considered to be at the lower end of the less than substantial harm spectrum. The impact is mitigated through the retention and reuse of the existing historic casement windows elsewhere within the building, the reinstatement of a demonstrably former opening, retention of the existing lintel and cill, reinstatement of missing masonry and the use of traditionally detailed replacement windows. These interventions should be considered alongside the wider conservation benefits of the proposals, including the retention and repair of significant historic fabric, removal of inappropriate later fabric, improvements to the environmental performance of the building and measures to secure its continued viable use.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 This Heritage Statement and Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared by J F Heritage on behalf of the applicant to assess the significance of Elizabeth House, a Grade II listed building, together with its contribution to the character and appearance of the Meopham Conservation Area, and to consider the impact of the proposed repair, refurbishment and alteration works. The assessment has demonstrated that the proposals have been informed by a thorough understanding of the building's architectural and historic significance and have been designed to retain and conserve those elements which make the greatest contribution to its special interest.
- 7.2 The proposals have been developed following detailed comments received from Gravesham Borough Council and the SPAB. The revised scheme adopts a conservation-led approach that seeks to minimise intervention within the historic fabric wherever practicable. Significant features, including the historic timber frame, exposed beams, fireplaces, inglenooks, flint walls, roof structure and other surviving elements of historic fabric, will be retained, repaired and conserved using appropriate traditional materials and techniques. Environmental improvements, including secondary glazing, breathable insulation and underfloor heating, have been carefully designed to improve the building's long-term performance whilst respecting its historic character and significance.

- 7.3 The assessment has identified that the majority of the proposed works comprise repairs, environmental improvements and alterations to later fabric which preserve, and in some instances enhance, the significance of the listed building. Limited harm arises through the alteration of the existing fenestration arrangement, including the removal of later casement windows from the principal elevation, and through the reopening of the infilled former window aperture within the rear elevation. These interventions have been carefully designed to minimise their impact, with the existing historic windows retained and reused to replace inappropriate windows to the rear and the new opening informed by physical evidence of an earlier window.
- 7.4 The proposed alterations to the existing kitchen extension, demolition of the modern lean-to WC extension and associated rear alterations are confined principally to later additions which make a comparatively limited contribution to the significance of the listed building. These works will improve the functionality, environmental performance and long-term sustainability of the property whilst respecting the historic building and preserving its contribution to the character and appearance of The Street, Meopham Conservation Area.
- 7.5 In accordance with Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, special regard has been paid to the desirability of preserving the listed building, its setting and those features which contribute to its special architectural and historic interest. The proposals are considered to result in a limited degree of less than substantial harm, principally arising from alterations to the existing fenestration arrangement and the localised intervention required to reopen the former window aperture. The identified harm is considered to be at the lower end of the less than substantial harm spectrum and does not affect those elements which make the greatest contribution to the special interest of the listed building.
- 7.6 The proposed works preserve the character and appearance of The Street, Meopham Conservation Area. The majority of the external alterations are confined to the rear of the building where they will have a limited visual impact, whilst the repair of historic fabric, renewal of traditional materials and removal of unsympathetic modern additions will preserve and, in several respects, enhance the contribution made by Elizabeth House to the historic streetscape.
- 7.7 In accordance with Policy HE6 of the NPPF, the identified less than substantial harm should be weighed against the public benefits arising from the proposals. These benefits include the comprehensive repair and conservation of significant historic fabric, the removal or replacement of inappropriate later interventions, the retention and reuse of historic window fabric, improvements to the building's environmental performance through sympathetic interventions, and securing the continued viable use and long-term conservation of an important designated heritage asset.

7.8 Overall, it is considered that the proposals represent a sensitive, proportionate and conservation-led response to the opportunities and constraints presented by Elizabeth House. The scheme has been informed by a detailed understanding of the building's architectural and historic significance and seeks to preserve those elements of greatest interest whilst enabling the building to continue to function as a sustainable family home. The identified harm is principally associated with alterations to the later fenestration and the reopening of the former window aperture and is considered to be at the lower end of the less than substantial harm spectrum. The harm is outweighed by the conservation and public benefits arising from the repair, enhancement and long-term stewardship of the listed building. The proposals therefore accord with the statutory duties of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the relevant policies of the August 2026 NPPF, and the relevant local planning policies

Appendix 1 – List Description

Heritage Category:
Listed Building

Grade:
II

List Entry Number:
1350241

Date first listed:
26-Jul-1983

List Entry Name:
Elizabeth House (The Post Office)

Statutory Address 1:
ELIZABETH HOUSE (THE POST OFFICE), THE STREET

Details

TQ 66 NW MEOPHAM THE STREET 4/92 Elizabeth House (the Post Office) II

C17 rendered front. Rear wall of red brick. L-shaped, of 2 storeys and attics. String course stepped up over sash window, one each side of entrance door. Tiled roof with bonnet hips. Central chimney. Two cast iron casements with glazing bars east of sash windows. Wood casements and dormers above. Gabled C19 porch. Single-storey flint faced rear projection. Internally 2 ingle fireplaces to central chimney and one in 2-storey wing. Much original timber framing and roof timbers exposed. Used as workhouse 1724-1834.

Listing NGR: TQ6442366014
Legacy

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

Legacy System number:
356821

Legacy System:
LBS

Appendix 2: Photographs

Exterior

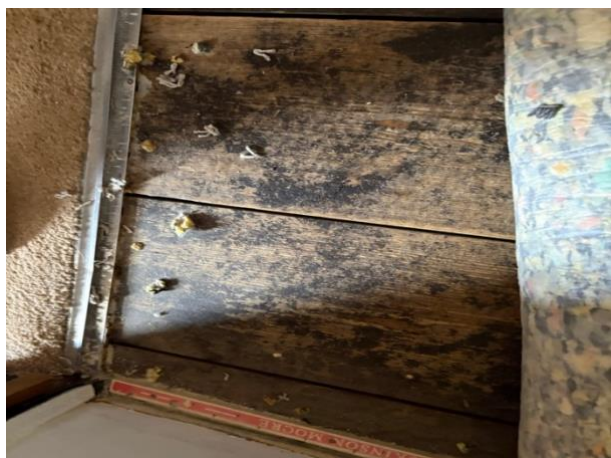


Cellar and Ground Floor





First Floor





Second Floor/ Attic



This document has been prepared on behalf of the applicants solely to provide supporting information for a planning application submitted to the Local Authority. It is not intended for use by any other party, and no responsibility is accepted to anyone other than the applicants. The information contained herein is provided exclusively for statutory planning purposes.

No part of this report is to be copied without prior written consent from the author. Whilst every effort is made to provide detailed information, J F Heritage cannot be held responsible for errors within this report.

J F Heritage provides specialist heritage advice. Jeremy Fazzalano has over 15 years of experience working experience in the heritage and planning sectors. He is skilled in heritage conservation, planning and urban design, archaeology desk-based assessments, conservation area appraisals, historical research and dealing with all conservation Issues. Jeremy is a Full Member of the IHBC and Associate member of CIFA with a MSc Historic Conservation from Oxford Brookes University.