



Heritage Impact Assessment

Willington Lodge, Horseman's
Green, Wrexham

CB Homes Ltd

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Willington Lodge

Executive Summary

This report has been prepared in support of a planning application to convert a detached barn into an indoor wedding venue and bridal suite. The barn is located adjacent to and within the grounds of Willington Lodge, Horseman's Green. Willington Lodge and its surrounding land is currently used as an events and leisure venue.

Planning permission is being sought for the change of use of an existing barn, a replacement extension, entrance porch/balcony structure, and associated landscaping. This Heritage Impact Assessment has been written to identify the significance of the Willington Lodge and its setting and the impact of the development on that significance. This is in accordance with national planning guidance on the historic environment.

The significance of Willington Lodge derives from its development as a planned farmstead in the mid-19th century. The application barn is contemporary with the wider farmstead and presents some features of note including the strong brick columns and decorative barge board to the northern gable.

The proposed change of use and extension to the barn would be a natural extension to the current event and leisure use of the site. There would be a slight change to the setting of the Willington Lodge by virtue of the alteration and extension to the barn. The way in which Willington Lodge, attached ancillary buildings, and the former farm courtyard is experienced would not change because of the proposal. Willington Lodge would remain experienced and appreciated as a prominent building of interest when travelling along Willington Road, its contextual and functional relationship to the surrounding historic farming landscape would be preserved.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This heritage impact assessment has been prepared in support of a planning application to convert a detached barn into an indoor wedding venue and bridal suite. The barn is located adjacent to and within the grounds of Willington Lodge, Horseman's Green.
- 1.2 The proposal includes, and is described in more detail in Section 6: -
- the change of use of the barn to wedding venue and bridal suite,
 - the replacement of the existing barn roof with slate,
 - Replacement of the existing lean-to extension with a more solid construction,
 - Associated landscaping and boundary treatment.
- 1.3 The purpose of the assessment is to describe the significance of nearby heritage assets and their setting. This information will subsequently highlight any impact of the proposal on the significance of the assets. It will identify mitigating measures, where necessary, to address this impact.
- 1.4 This document has been prepared following a site visit in April 2023. It is to be read in conjunction with other associated documents in relation to the planning and listed building consent application.

2.0 Legislative and policy background

- 2.1 Under Section 66 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 local authorities must give special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Wales) Regulations 2012 as amended by the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Wales) (Amendment no 2) Regulations 2017 introduced the obligation to submit a Heritage Impact Assessment with all applications for listed building consent.
- 2.2 The Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016 enables Welsh authorities to give more effective protection to the historic environment by further improve procedures for its sustainable management and to provide further transparency on decision making. This is read in conjunction with Planning Policy Wales and Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment.
- 2.3 National guidance is within Planning Policy Wales (edition 11, 2021): Chapter 6: Distinctive and Natural Places. This places great emphasis on protecting the natural and built environment for historic, scenic aesthetic and nature reasons, recognising that they give places their unique identity and distinctiveness. This includes the protection of historic buildings, preserving sites on the register of historic parks and gardens and the character and appearance of conservation areas and setting, based on their significance and the impact of changes.
- 2.4 Historic assets are described within PPW as historic buildings, parks, gardens, landscapes, townscapes, and archaeological sites. Nationally important historic assets will normally be designated.
- 2.5 Wales Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment, (October 2017), sets out national planning policy in respect to the conservation of the historic environment. It states that the planning system should look “to protect, conserve and enhance the significance of historic assets.” The impact of any planning decisions that change the historic environment in terms of its significance and heritage values where they contribute to the character of place must be fully considered by the decision maker. Section 7 states in 1.7 that “In policy terms, the historic environment is defined as 6: “All

aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and deliberately planted or managed.

- 2.6 The historic environment is described in Wales Technical Advice Note 24: Historic Environment, (October 2017) as “All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and deliberately planted or managed.” A historic asset is: “An identifiable component of the historic environment. It may consist or be a combination of an archaeological site, a historic building or area, historic park and garden or a parcel of historic landscape. Nationally important historic assets will normally be designated.”
- 2.7 Setting is not a heritage designation. However, “the setting of an historic asset includes the surroundings in which it is understood, experienced, and appreciated embracing present and past relationships to the surrounding landscape. 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. Setting is not a historic asset but has value derived from how different elements may contribute to the significance of a historic asset.” TAN 24 (paragraph 1.25)
- 2.8 The definition of significance in relation to heritage policy is defined in Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the historic environment in Wales (Cadw, 2011). “To identify the heritage values of an asset, its history, fabric, and character must first be understood. The relative significance of the different values then needs to be considered. It will be necessary to compare the values of the asset under consideration with others in the locality, region or even nationally, depending on its importance.”
- 2.9 Other relevant Cadw guidance is contained in the ‘Setting of Historic Assets in Wales, Cadw (May 2017), ‘Heritage Impact Assessment in Wales, Cadw (May 2017). Managing Change to Listed Building in Wales. Relevant local plan policies are in the Denbighshire Local Development Plan 2006 – 2021.

- 2.10 There is therefore a balanced view required on use, viability, and conservation. If harm is identified, the degree must be given sufficient weight and balanced against the public benefits generated by the proposals. In the Bramshill case in the Court of Appeal, Lord Justice Lindblom stated “what amounts to “substantial harm” or “less than substantial harm” in a particular case will always depend on the circumstances. Whether there will be such “harm”, and, if so, whether it will be “substantial”, are matters of fact and planning judgment.”
- 2.11 In terms of assessing setting, special regard should be had for preserving the setting of a listed building. Case law has determined that preserve means to not cause harm to the setting, rather than to not change the setting. If there is harm, whatever magnitude, then the harm, must be evaluated in terms of assessing and mitigating positive and negative impacts in a holistic and balanced manner. This is to establish an overall conclusion on the level of harm, the weight that could be attributed to each element, seasonal effects and non-visual impacts and mitigating measures including public benefit.
- 2.12 Relevant local plan policies are in the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan: 1996 - 2011; adopted 2005. Policy EC9 relates to listed buildings and stipulates the legislative requirements.

The Wrexham Council document 'Converting Rural Buildings' states:

The emphasis in any conversion scheme must be upon demonstrating that the building in its present form is suitable for the proposed new use.

3.0 The application site and identified heritage assets.

- 3.1 The application site is a barn within the former farmstead associated with Willington Lodge, Willington Lane, Horseman's Green. The barn is within the setting of the Grade II listed house, is detached from the main built form of the house and is clearly associated with the historic farming processes. The building is currently vacant, used only for occasional storage due to the open sided nature of the barn. The barn is likely contemporaneous with the house, dating to mid/late 19th century.
- 3.2 The designated heritage assets that are relevant in considering the proposed development are identified below:
- Listed Building: Willington Lodge (Grade II)

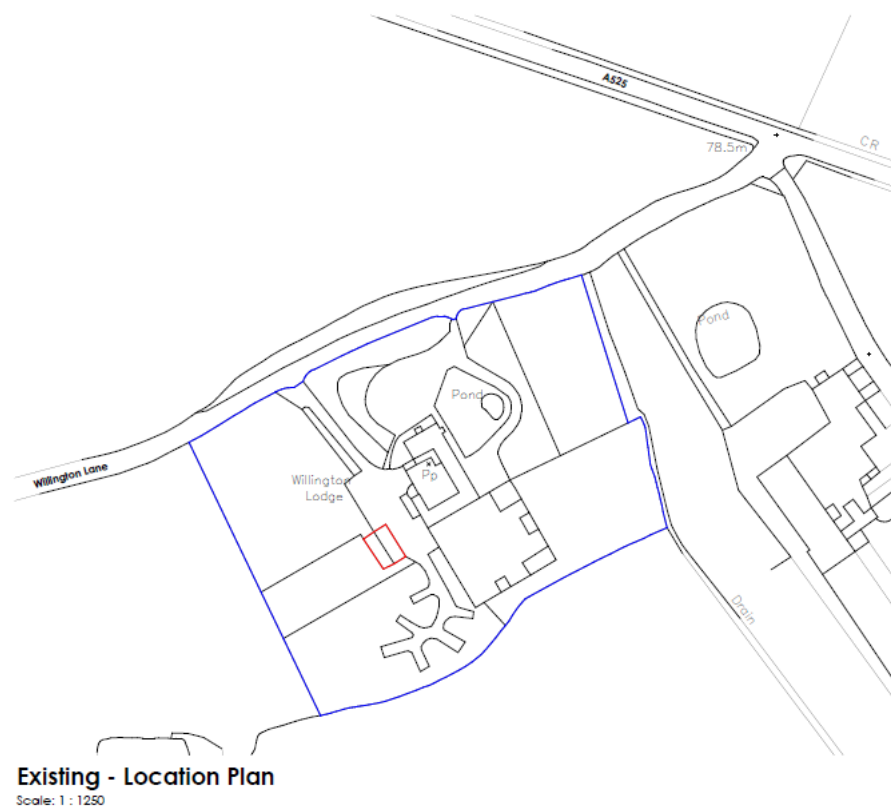


Fig 1. Site Location Plan (copyright D2 Architects)

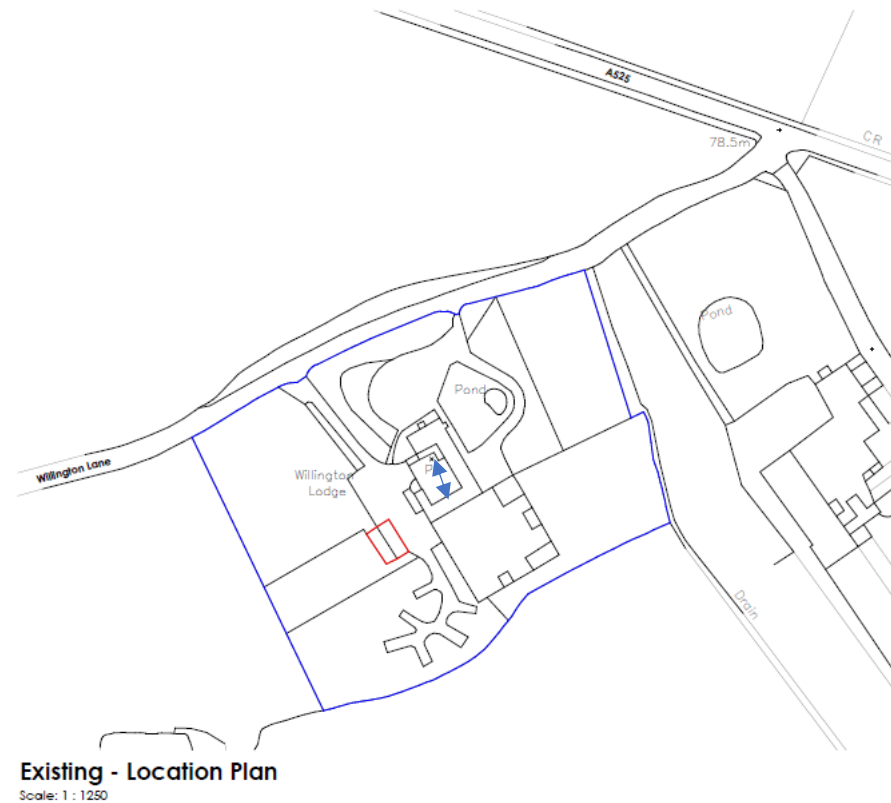


Fig 2. Location of Relevant Heritage Assets

Blue arrows – Grade II listed building relevant to the proposed development. The site sits opposite a designated historic landscape which is set to the north side of Willington Lane.

4.0 Historical context and heritage assets

- 4.1. Willington Lodge is a Grade II listed building formally a working farmstead dating from the mid-19th century. It is located close to the small hamlet of Horseman's Green in the wider community of Hanmer in the rural south-east of Wrexham County close to the Wales-England border. The site sits to the southern side of Willington Lane and is surrounded by open fields, many of which are still farmed by nearby farms such as New Hall Farm to the immediate east.
- 4.2. The site was developed as a farmstead during the mid-19th century. Prior to this the land was used for agriculture. The Tithe Map and accompanying apportionment shows the presence of a house with garden (Plot 482) with the surrounding fields (481, 483, 484) laid with grass, wheat, and potatoes. The land was tenanted by George Joyce. The land owner was Lord Kenyon
- 4.3. Lord Lloyd Kenyon was a British politician and barrister who served as Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales from 1788 until his death in 1802. He was born to a country gentleman and was first educated in Hanmer and later Ruthin. The Barony was created in 1788 giving the title of Baron of Gredington, in the County of Flint. The Barony remains today with the Lloyd Tyrell-Kenyon, 6th Baron, although land ownership has changed.
- 4.4. The Tithe Map shows the presence of the road network that is still present today. Willington Lane runs from the nucleated settlement of Horseman's Green eastward towards what is now the A525, the main route from Wrexham southwards. At this time the area around the site is predominantly farmland with single buildings dotted along the roadways. Landscape features such as ponds, possibly marl pits, are visible in the field systems.
- 4.5. The farmstead is first seen on the 1873 OS Six-inch mapping appearing mostly in its current form. Titled here as Willington House. The house is set back from the road with a prominent space and entrance to its frontage. To the rear the traditional courtyard form of the workings part of the house can be seen. Access to this part of the site is to the right of the site, as it is today. The more formal entrance to the house is to the left, as remains today.

- 4.6 A building in the rough location of the application barn appears to be shown on this map suggesting it contemporaneous with the house and the farming function. The barn is set outside of the defined curtilage of the farmstead, being set into the adjacent field. The barn is constructed of red brick columns with timber panelling, a third of the eastern elevation is fully open, which may indicate a previous use as a threshing barn, and latterly perhaps used to store farm vehicles. The brickwork is laid in garden wall bond which is typical of the period and is evident both internally and externally. The roof is of corrugated metal sheeting and appears to have modern timbers. There is some evidence of at least a partial first floor. The building is sited with equal access from the farmyard and the surrounding fields and was likely used has a hay loft/store and for storing of farm equipment.
- 4.7 The site goes through very little, if any, change over the following century. The OS Six-inch mapping shows the change in name from Willington House to Willington Lodge and this remains to the present day. The site is an excellent example of a complete and well-preserved small C19 farmstead, with house of a positive architectural character.

5.0 The significance of the heritage assets

5.1 Assessing significance is embedded in national planning policy. Heritage values that contribute to a greater understanding of significance are identified by Cadw's Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales (2011) as being: -

- Evidential
- Historical
- Aesthetic
- Communal

5.2 There are six commonly accepted levels of significance. These are as follows: -

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| • Outstanding | Highest level of importance, SAMs, WHS, Grade I / II* listed buildings, Historic Parks & Gardens |
| • High (significant) | Grade II listed buildings, Historic Parks and Gardens and conservation areas |
| • Medium (moderate) | Locally listed buildings, and those buildings that contribute to a listed building's setting. |
| • Low (limited) | Limited heritage value |
| • Neutral | Neither positive nor negative features |
| • No significance | Features that detract from the heritage values |

5.3 Heritage Values – Willington Lodge (Grade II)

Evidential Value - High	The former farm complex survives in its intended form and layout as evidenced by historic mapping sources, particularly OS Six-inch England and Wales surveyed 1873 where it is shown as Willington House. The house retains its ancillary buildings from its former farming association. Of note is the single story former cheese room, rear courtyard, and surrounding brick buildings.	Overall significance High
Historical Value –High <i>(Special Historic Interest)</i>	The land on which the site is constructed was once under the ownership of the Kenyon Family, who became Barons of Gredington in 1788. The peerage being created for Sir Lloyd Kenyon who served as Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales. The historic farmstead is associated with dairy farming a key industry within the area and across in Cheshire throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. The building is listed for its special historic interest.	
Aesthetic Value – high / <i>(Special Architectural Interest)</i>	Constructed of chequered brick with hipped slate roof of two storeys and three bays the late-Georgian style house has a commanding presence within the surrounding open countryside. The four chimney stacks of 2 and 3 square brick shafts with zigzag patterned tile work are of note within the roofscape. The symmetry and simplicity of the elevations presenting the traditional hierarchy of window form and simple stone banding running through the centre of the elevations gives a restrained but polite composition. The porch to the main entrance is of interest providing some strong but restrained detailing. The building is listed for is special architectural interest.	
Communal Value - Low	Willington Lodge has previously been a private residence associated with the farm limiting its communal value. However, it may retain some historic communal value as a prominent working farm in the area. Its communal value is likely increased through its current use as a leisure venue.	

5.4 Heritage Value – Barn (within setting of Willington Lodge)

Evidential Value - Medium	The barn building is likely contemporary with Willington Lodge as it appears on historic mapping sources at the same time, particularly OS Six-inch England and Wales surveyed 1873 where it is shown as Willington House. The brick columns of the barn are constructed in garden wall bond which was typical of the 19th century.	Overall significance Low
Historical Value – Low <i>(Special Historic Interest)</i>	The barn has always been associated with Willington Lodge and the original farming practices. The rural setting of the asset can still be appreciated which adds to its historical interest.	
Aesthetic Value - Low <i>(Special Architectural Interest)</i>	The barn is of a simple form with some features of note such as the brick columns throughout and the large cart opening. Timber barge boards in an undulating pattern are also of note.	
Communal Value - Low	The barn has limited communal value having been used as part of the farmstead and now for storage.	

5.5 The setting of heritage assets

- 5.5.1 Although setting is not a heritage asset, it still requires assessment. To understand how adjacent designated heritage assets are experienced it is important to define the contribution that the existing site makes to their significance. The assessment is based on aspects of setting, following the staged approach recommended by Cadw in their technical guidance on the Setting of Heritage Assets in Wales. Step 1 of Cadw's approach is to identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected. Step 2 is to define and analyse the settings to understand how they contribute to the significance of the historic assets and the ways in which the assets are understood, appreciated, and experienced.
- 5.5.2 Willington Lodge is set back from the road with the application barn set further back and to the very edge of the site. The barn is visible when travelling along Willington Lane approaching from the west. It is read as an agricultural building with open fields to the front and sides and is very much read as an expected piece of built form within the open landscape setting. Willington Lodge is visible behind the barn, revealing itself more and more as one travels along Willington Lane. Despite its scale the barn reads clearly as part of the agricultural character of the area and very much subordinate, even separate, to the house.

5.6 Key Points:

- The historic association as a 19th century farmstead.
- Its locally distinctive context, materials and character that helps to define its sense of place.
- Its relationship to the wider countryside setting in which the building is still read as forming part.

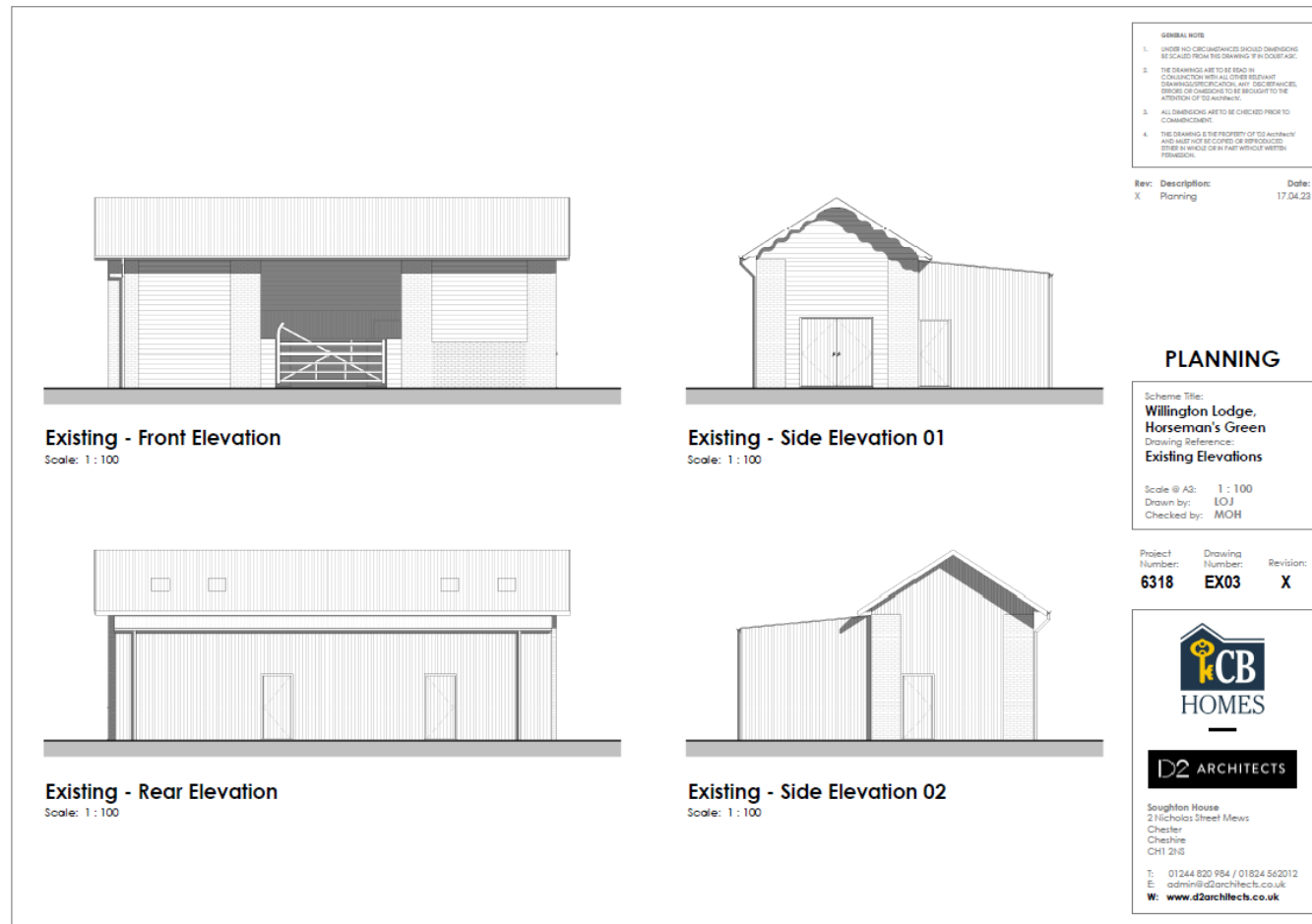


Fig 4. Existing elevations - south-east (Copyright: D2 Architects).

Note large opening to front elevation, strong brick pillars, and undulating barge board.



Fig. 5 Photograph of front elevation showing open portion and historic brickwork.



Fig.6 North and South gables.

Note distinctive undulating barge boards to the north gable. South gable shows signs of degradation.



Fig. 7 Internally

Brick columns are present. The roof seems to have been replaced at some point with new timbers present.

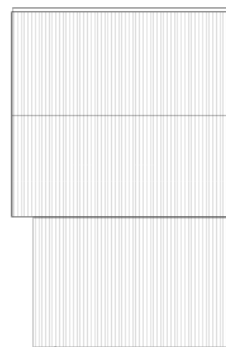
6.0 Impact of The Development Proposal on The Heritage Assets

- 6.1. The application proposes the conversion of the traditional agricultural barn to convert a detached barn into an indoor wedding venue and bridal suite. The proposal would retain the existing barn structure, replace the existing lean-to extension, and replace the existing sheet roof with slate.
- 6.2. The barn sits to the south-west of the main complex of buildings adjacent to the field network associated with the former farmstead. To the immediate south of the barn is an area of the site that is used as a caravan and camping site. A main access route from Willington Lane leads through the site past the barn and into the caravan and camping park. It is not proposed that this arrangement would change because of the proposal.
- 6.3. The application site is part of a wider historic farmstead complex which is listed at Grade II. The barn makes an important contribution to the setting of this heritage asset. The complex sits within a historic farming landscape with several historic field boundaries still in place today. Other landscape features such as ponds to the west of the site are likely the sites of former marl pits.
- 6.4. Traditional post and rail fencing, mature hedgerows and trees bound both the curtilage of the site and define areas within, with the buildings set back from Willington Lane. It is not proposed that this would alter because of the proposal. The area to the front of Willington Lodge is a combination of grassed land and hardstanding. Mature trees frame the building giving it stature within the landscape.
- 6.5. The application barn is visible from Willington Lane, particularly when approaching from the west. The Lodge and attached buildings are visible in the background, the barn is very much read as a subordinate building on the site with an ancillary historic function. Its relationship with the remaining open fields immediately adjacent directly relates to its position on the site and its former farming use.
- 6.7. The application proposes to change the use of the barn to accommodate wedding ceremonies with some accommodation in the form of bridal suite. The farming use has long since ceased and Willington Lodge already operates a leisure and events use with weddings being part of the existing offer

together with camping and caravanning. The proposed would be a continuation of this use through sensitive re-use of an existing building in a considered manner.

- 6.8 The barn as some features of note, of which include the structural brick columns that are present both internally and externally and are crucial the barns character. As part of the proposal these would be kept with the internal arrangements made around them keeping the open floor plan. A first floor is proposed within the barn to facilitate some accommodation. There is some evidence within the barn of joist holes in the masonry suggesting that a first floor in some form has been present in the past. This was likely a hayloft or feed store.
- 6.9 The barn contributes positively to setting of the Willington Lodge in terms of its spatial relationship, historic functionality and subservient siting, scale, and form. The proposal seeks to retain the historic form of the barn with a replacement of the existing corrugated metal lean-to. The proposed extension would be predominantly single storey with a central gable section adding a minor addition at first floor. This addition would increase the massing of the barn slightly when viewed from the west. However, the proposed form retains the traditional gable form and simplicity of the structure whilst creating a sensitive and desirable addition to the building. The extension would result in a minor change to the setting of Willington Lodge through the visual change to the barn.
- 6.10 The most prominent alterations are to the western side of the building and so the key views of the site from the western approach will experience some minor changes. However, the barn will maintain its traditional agricultural character and its clear ancillary position as part of the historic farmstead complex. The ability to understand and appreciate the special character of Willington Lodge would not change resulting in no harm to its setting.
- 6.11 In terms of materiality the proposal takes its lead from the existing building. The existing brick work and timber cladding is to be retained and repaired as required. The existing will use a combination of timber cladding to the single storey elements and brickwork within the taller central section. The existing corrugated metal roof of the barn will be replaced in traditional slate, with the extension following suit. The use of slate on traditional farm buildings is common and considered to be a sensitive approach. The existing roof is in a poor state of repair in areas and its replacement in a high quality and appropriate materials will bring a slight heritage benefit to the wider site. The existing timber barge boards are of interest and their detailing is to be carried through into the new extension.

- 6.12 In terms of materiality the proposal takes its lead from the existing building. The existing brick work and timber cladding is to be retained and repaired as required. The existing will use combination of timber cladding to the single storey elements and brickwork within the taller central section. The existing corrugated metal roof of the barn will be replaced in traditional slate, with the extension following suit. The use of slate on traditional farm buildings is common and considered to be a sensitive approach. The existing timber barge boards are of interest and are to be carried in to the new extension.
- 6.13 New windows are proposed within the eastern elevation that currently presents the large former cart opening. This opening is to be infilled with timber cladding which is an acceptable solution. However, the proposed windows have a relatively domestic feel to them and could potentially benefit from amendments to a more traditionally agricultural form, although it is acknowledged that the building does not currently benefit from any windows. Similarly the balcony, although relatively see through, might also benefit from removal.
- 6.14 The proposed change of use and extension to the barn would be a natural extension to the current event and leisure use of the site. There would be a slight change to the setting of the Willington Lodge by virtue of the alteration and extension to the barn. The way in which Willington Lodge, attached ancillary buildings, and the former farm courtyard is experienced would not change because of the proposal. Willington Lodge would remain experienced and appreciated as a prominent building of interest when travelling along Willington Road, its contextual and functional relationship to the surrounding historic farming landscape would be preserved.
- 6.15 The building is appropriate for the proposed use in its current form, with the proposed extension replacing an existing to create a higher quality addition. The proposal would have a neutral heritage impact resulting no harm to the setting of the heritage asset.



Existing - Roof Plan
Scale: 1 : 100



Existing - Ground Floor Plan
Scale: 1 : 100

GENERAL NOTE

1. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD DIMENSIONS BE CALLED FROM THE DRAWING IF IN DOUBT ASK.
2. THE DRAWINGS ARE TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH ALL OTHER RELEVANT DRAWINGS OR SPECIFICATIONS. ANY DISCREPANCIES, ERRORS OR OMISSIONS TO BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE ARCHITECT.
3. ALL DIMENSIONS ARE TO BE CHECKED PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT.
4. THE DRAWING IS THE PROPERTY OF D2 ARCHITECTS AND MUST NOT BE COPIED OR REPRODUCED EITHER IN WHOLE OR IN PART WITHOUT WRITTEN PERMISSION.

Rev:	Description:	Date:
X	Planning	17.04.23

PLANNING

Scheme Title:
**Willington Lodge,
Horseman's Green**
Drawing Reference:
Existing Plans

Scale @ A3: 1 : 100
Drawn by: LOJ
Checked by: MOH

Project Number:	Drawing Number:	Revision:
6318	EX02	X

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Fig 8. Floor plans as existing (Copyright D2 Architects)

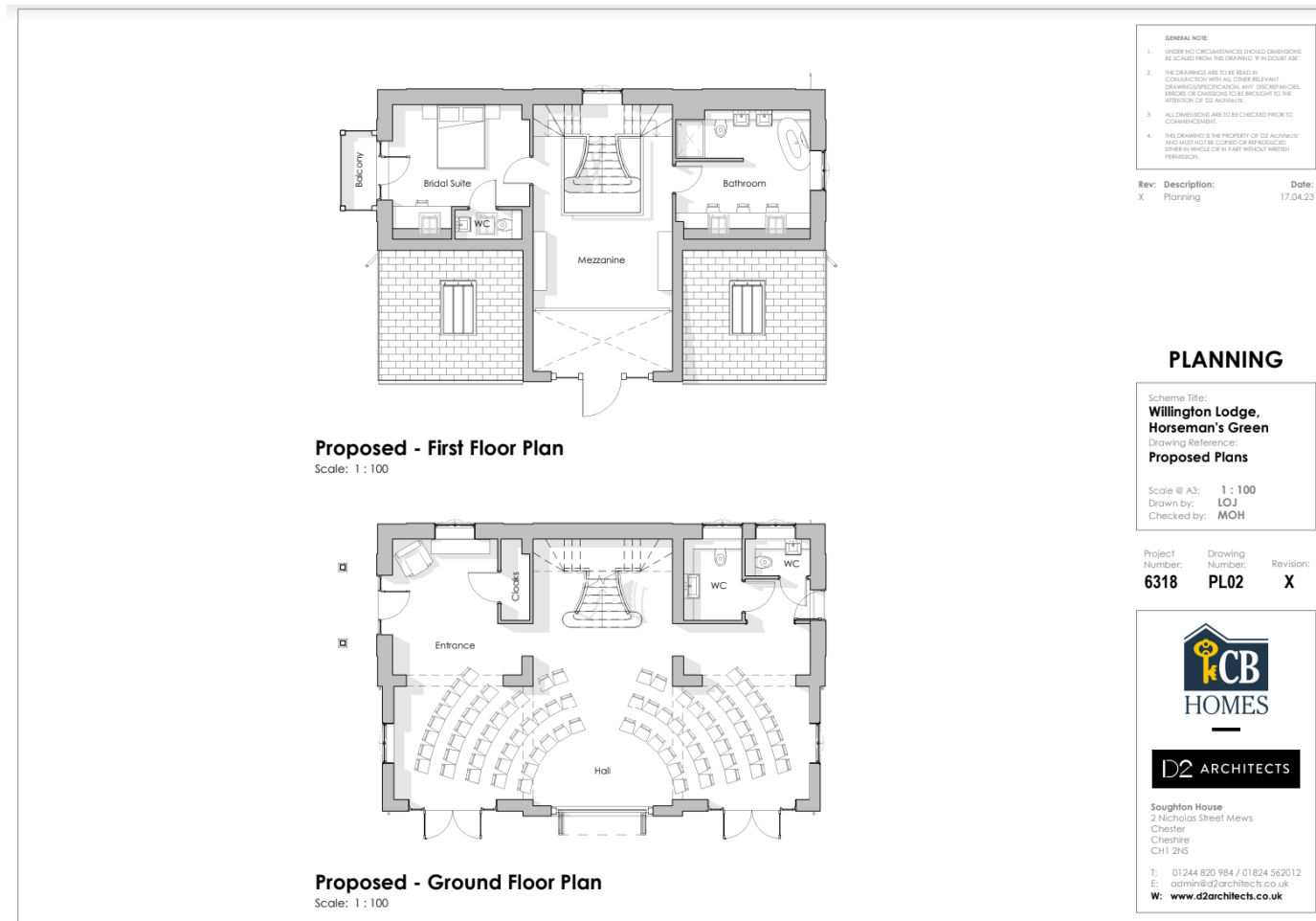


Fig 9. Floor plan as proposed (D2 Architects)



Fig. 10 Proposed Elevations (D2 Architects)

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 The application seeks planning permission for the conversion and extension of a traditional barn at Willington Lodge. Willington Lodge is a Grade II listed building, the application barn is within the setting of this asset. The wider site sits within a historic farming landscape which contributes positively to the setting and understanding of the site.
- 7.2 The proposals follow the five principles outlined for 'new work or alteration to a significant place' in Section 28 of Cadw's 'Conservation Principles for the sustainable management of the Historic Environment in Wales', March 2011. These are:
- The need for the work is fully justified - The works are justified in terms of the understanding of the barn's original function and its subsequent conversion to an indoor wedding venue and bridal suite. It allows the barn conversion to be used in a beneficial and appropriate way, in a way that is generally well contained within the existing footprint. It harmonises new development with old in terms of scale, mass, proportion, and rhythm.
 - There is sufficient information to understand the significance of the building and the proposals upon it.
 - The proposals would not materially harm the values of the buildings which are reinforced or further revealed.
 - The proposals, by virtue of their reuse, have a positive impact on the value of the heritage asset and by establishing a beneficial and sustainable use for the outbuilding retains it.
 - The quality of the design and execution must add value to the existing asset. The designs and materials chosen are a carefully response to the building's character and historic fabric. There is a clear distinction between historic and new fabric.
 - The long-term consequences of the proposals are positive and the special interest of the group of buildings are preserved. It would positively affect the ability to appreciate and understand the architectural and historic interest of the building and is an evolutionary process of use and appearance.
- 7.3 The proposed change of use and extension to the barn would be a natural extension to the current event and leisure use of the site. There would be a slight change to the setting of the Willington Lodge by virtue of the alteration and extension to the barn. The way in which Willington Lodge, attached ancillary buildings, and the former farm courtyard is experienced would not change because of the proposal. Willington Lodge would remain experienced

and appreciated as a prominent building of interest when travelling along Willington Road, its contextual and functional relationship to the surrounding historic farming landscape would be preserved.

7.4 The application should respectfully be supported.