



CEDAR LODGE STEEPLE ASTON OXFORDSHIRE

**HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT
APRIL 2019**

CONTENTS

Worlledge Associates

Introduction

Brief History of Steeple Aston

Development of Cedar Lodge

Description of Cedar Lodge

Heritage Significance

Relationship to Conservation Area

Heritage Management Policy & Guidelines

Proposals

Assessment of Impact on Heritage Significance

Conclusion

Appendix 1 - Article From Steeple Aston Parish Council Family News 2019 - Memories of Iris Murdoch

Appendix 2 - Occupiers of Cedar Lodge, formerly The Lodge, From 1841-1911 Census Returns

Appendix 3 - Gazetteer of Images

WORLLEDGE ASSOCIATES

We are a solutions-orientated heritage consultancy, committed to the effective management of the historic environment. We help our clients identify the heritage significance of their historic site, navigate legislative and policy frameworks, and find design resolutions. Our clients, who include public authorities, private individuals, community groups, and corporations, have praised our positive approach to managing change, and our eye for quality design.

Worlledge Associates was established by Nicholas and Alison Worlledge in 2014. Nicholas came to private practice with 35 years' experience working in heritage management for local authorities. This intimate knowledge and understanding of council processes, planning policy, and practice helps Worlledge Associates support clients in securing positive outcomes. Since 2014, Worlledge Associates has advised on a range of development projects for domestic, commercial, military, and educational use. Now supported by a small team of dedicated researchers and specialists, Worlledge Associates is ever-growing and has widened its remit to offer content development and training. Every member of our team brings a unique set of skills to the business, but we all believe in the capacity of the historic environment to contribute to our collective economic, social, and cultural well-being.



Fig 1: View of the garden of Cedar Lodge, looking west, showing the conservatory extension and the potting shed

INTRODUCTION

The intelligent management of change is a key principle necessary to sustain the historic environment for present and future generations to enjoy. Historic England and successive government agencies have published policy and advice that extend our understanding of the historic environment and develop our competency in making decisions about how to manage it.

Paragraphs 4-10 of Historic England's Good Practice Advice Note 2 (Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment) explains that applications (for planning permission and listed building consent) have a greater likelihood of success and better decisions will be made when applicants and local planning authorities assess and understand the particular nature of the significance of an asset, the extent of the asset's fabric to which the significance relates, and the level of importance of that significance.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2018) provides a very similar message in paragraphs 189 and 190 expecting both applicant and local planning authority to take responsibility for understanding the significance of a heritage asset and the impact of a development proposal, seeking to avoid unacceptable conflict between the asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

It has never been the intention of government to prevent change or freeze frame local communities and current policy and good practice suggests that change, if managed intelligently, would not be harmful.

This report includes a brief history of Steeple Aston and of Cedar Lodge and based on this history and fabric and defines its heritage significance. The report summarises the proposed works to Cedar Lodge and provides an assessment of the impact of these works on the identified heritage significance of the house and its setting within the Steeple Aston Conservation Area.



Fig 2: View of the north (front) elevation of Cedar Lodge showing the connection between the main range and the altered and extended service range

BRIEF HISTORY OF STEEPLE ASTON

The village of Steeple Aston is set in a small, steep valley created by a shallow tributary of the river Cherwell. The two main streets, North Street and South Street, are 250m apart at the closest point and joined at their east and west ends by Paine's Hill and Water Lane. A narrow footpath called Tuer Lane traverses the centre of the valley. The stream forms a convenient boundary between the house plots and closes which run down the hillsides. Some closes have been thrown together, but several survive intact and provide visible evidence of the layout of the early village.²

People have lived in Steeple Aston for thousands of years. A burial site near Hopcroft's Holt is believed to be from the Iron Age, dating to approximately 800 BC. Local iron gave the hill tribes the tools necessary to cultivate farms, and they soon began to settle in protected hill forts to grow the food they needed.³ Around 50 AD, the area was settled by Roman occupiers. In the 17th century, a Roman-styled tiled pavement and the remains of a Roman village were discovered by a plough, but now lie hidden under a local field.⁴

In the 6th century, Anglo-Saxon warrior-farmers from Northern

Europe occupied the area. They were likely attracted to the region because of the availability of water from springs and streams, timber and stone for construction, and the rich character of the soil.⁵

Historians have suggested that the earliest settlements in the present-day village were most likely situated on the land between St Peter's Church and the former manor house.⁶ After the advent of Christianity in Oxfordshire in the early 7th century and the establishment of the Bishopric at Dorchester in 653, settlements typically clustered around newly formed churches.⁷



Fig 3: First edition one-inch OS Map 1833 showing topography¹



Fig 4: - Oxfordshire and the neighbouring counties of Buckinghamshire and Berkshire is from the 1583 edition of the Saxton atlas of England and Wales, showing 'Steeple Aston'

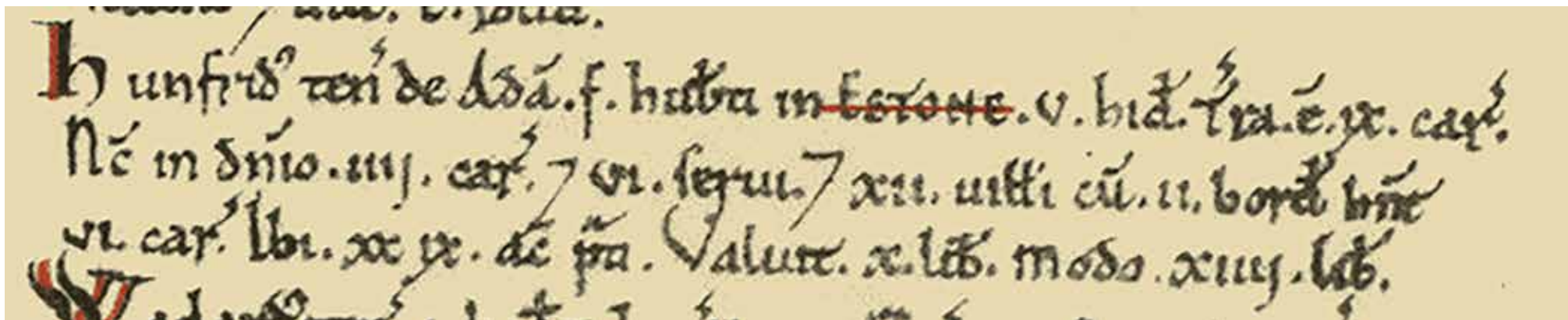


Fig 5: Entry for Steeple Aston (Estone) in Domesday Book, 1086. Source: Open Domesday

Steeple Aston appears to have escaped occupation by Danish invaders in Oxfordshire at the start of 11th century. After the Norman Conquest in 1066, a detailed survey of English land and landholdings was compiled in the Domesday Book of 1086. It records a population of 20 households, and names the lord of the manor as a man named Humphrey who ran the estate under the authority of Bishop Odo of Bayeux.⁸ Available historical records indicate that the manor then passed into the hands of the Romeney family, but was transferred to Balliol College in 1320.⁹

Over the following four centuries, lands that were once part of the manorial estate were gradually sold to yeoman farmers. A few yeoman families thrived through the steady acquisition of arable or pastureland and were in a strong position to purchase additional lands after the Enclosure Act of 1766.

The Acts of Enclosure eliminated shared, common land for agricultural use; land essential for subsistence farmers, cottagers and villagers to have enough food to survive. Major allotments of enclosed land were granted to the Rector of St Peter's Church, to Brasenose College, and to the Wing, Davis, Cottrell-Dormer, Watson, Buswel and Lamley families. The Lamley family built a home on the site of Cedar Lodge and expanded the land holdings associated with the house.

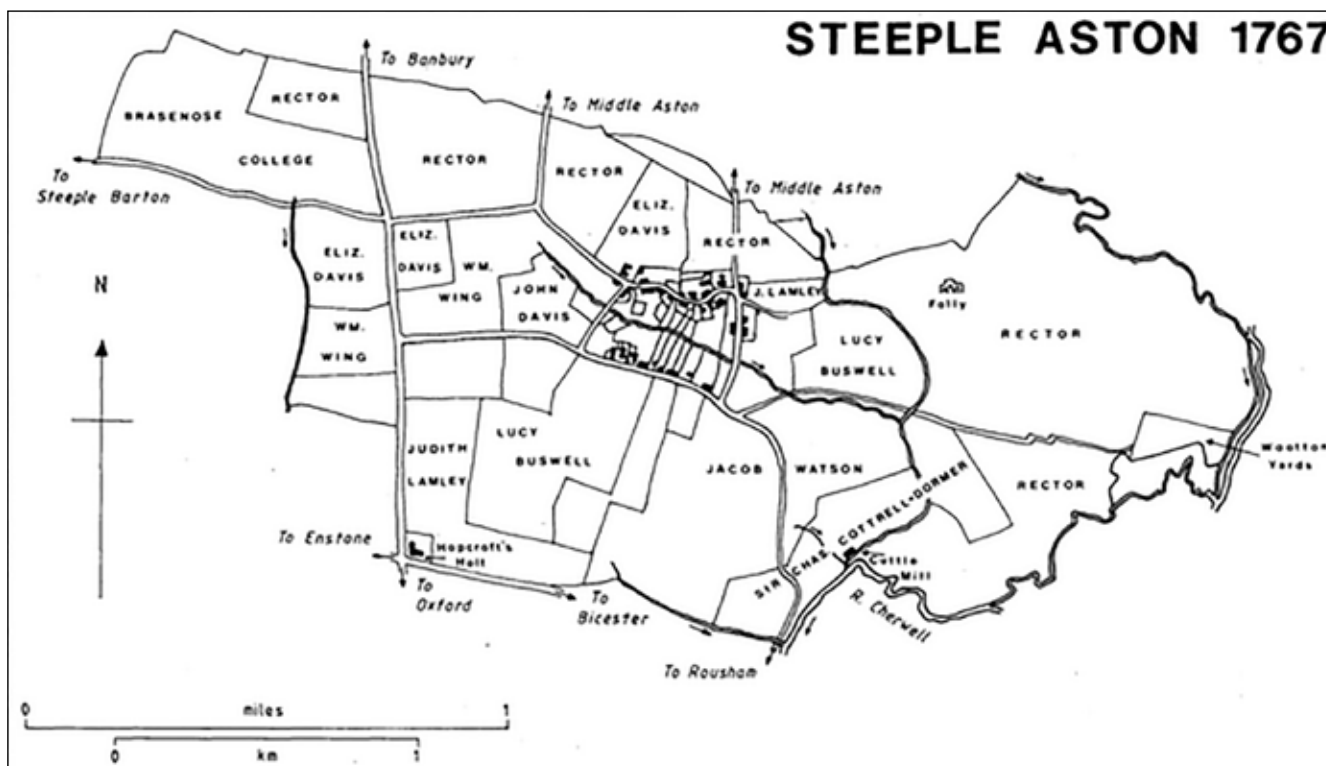


Fig 6: Steeple Aston enclosure map¹⁰

DEVELOPMENT OF CEDAR LODGE

Cedar Lodge is located to the south of North Street. Nearby are St Peter's Church, Radcliffe's almshouses and school, converted farm buildings, and the former manor house. The two-storeyed house with an attic dates to the early 18th century, but with later extensions and alterations dating from the 19th century.

According to the Victoria County History of Steeple Aston:

Cedar Lodge was the home of the Lamley family, wealthy farmers in Steeple Aston who also owned property elsewhere in the county. After Steeple Aston was enclosed in 1767, Judith Lamley obtained closes on either side of the property, thereby securing extensive grounds around the house. These were added to in the later 20th century.¹¹

The improvements of the early 19th century may have been the work of Judith's grandson, the Revd. Robert Lamley Kening, who 'scandalized the neighbourhood by preaching from the pulpit on the virtues of the French Revolution'.¹²

The VCH continues that, 'The Lamley family was established in Steeple Aston in the early 17th century. By 1662, records indicate that Henry Lamley, a husbandman, occupied a six-hearth house that may have been located on the site of the present-day Cedar Lodge'.¹³ In the 18th century, the Lamleys styled themselves gentlemen; redeveloping existing pre-enclosure plots to construct a house befitting their status.

The Enclosure Map of 1767 shows that 24 houses were built in the first half of the century, with a further 12 appearing between 1767 and 1800. Cedar Lodge appears on the Enclosure Map of 1767, meaning it was part of that first wave of construction that took place earlier in the century.¹⁴ Some scholars have dated the building to 1725.¹⁵ Post enclosure it seems clear that several plots were amalgamated and the existing buildings replaced to create a larger country residence. It is possible that the former lodge was incorporated within this latest phase of rebuilding.¹⁶



Fig 7: 25-inch OS Map of Steeple Aston surveyed 1875-1880. Cedar Lodge is located directly across the road from the Almshouses



Fig 8: View of Cedar Lodge from the road



Fig 9: Enclosure Map of 1766 showing location of Cedar Lodge



Fig 10: 25-inch OS Map 1875-81 showing location of Cedar Lodge



Fig 11: 25-inch OS Map 1919 showing some changes to the outbuildings and garden buildings

The VCH notes that Cedar Lodge was formerly known as 'The Lodge'. Newspapers identify it under this name in 1897, when the Miss Cartwright's advertised their furniture for sale as they were leaving the district.¹⁷ The 1901 census, however, records Charlotte Vincent, widow, as living at 'Cedar Lodge', Steeple Aston.

The name appears to have been inter-changeable. In June 1923 Miss Vincent advertised for sale the contents of 'The Lodge', Steeple Aston. In September 1923 a Mrs Humphrey noted her permanent address as 'The Lodge', Steeple Aston.¹⁸

In March 1925, however, Mrs Humphrey puts the house up for sale. It is advertised as 'Cedar Lodge' and is described as '*Attractive Freehold Residence, 3 reception, 7 beds, bath (h & c), 2 attics, unusual kitchen offices, stabling and outbuildings, 4 acres of ground including good gardens, tennis court, kitchen garden, and orchard*'.¹⁹ The following image c. 1900 according to the SAVA Report (2013) is noted as The Lodge.²⁰

The novelist Iris Murdoch and her husband John Bayley lived in Steeple Aston for about 30 years from 1956 to 1986. Steeple Aston Parish has published an article in its Family News titled

memories of Iris Murdoch. This is reproduced in **Appendix 1**.²¹ Drawing on memories of John Bayley, the article provides some insights into Cedar Lodge during this period.

In relation to the garden, Bayley himself commented that:

The grass of the former lawns [...] grew longer and longer and more tussocky [...] the box hedges, neat and trim when we moved in, had climbed to giant size, almost obscuring the front of the house, which faced north [...] Letting things go, a principle we had once followed almost unconsciously, was now asserting itself as a positive force.



Fig 12: Packer Collection, Oxford History Centre. Photographed c. 1900 – Note tall dormers to the south roof slope and no bay to the ground floor of the service (west) wing with extension above. Elevation appears rendered – list description refers to stucco

The article also notes that the, *'Bayleys loved swimming, and one of the garden's newer features was a swimming pool – really a large tank – fed with rainwater from the roof and known to some friends as "Iris's Wallow"'*. In relation to the house, the article notes that:

Cedar Lodge in their day was seriously run-down. As Bayley recalled it was "startlingly cheap to buy, but we discovered later that it was in bad condition, however solid it looked. Mr [George] Palmer, a veteran builder with very bright blue eyes, was soon in constant attendance". They never succeeded in heating it properly, and it was only towards the end of their time that they attempted any major alteration, trying to open up the hall and stairs.

They were very hospitable and entertained not just villagers but the Oxford intellectual and writers of their generation.



Fig 13: Image of Iris Murdoch and John Bayley in a garden with a group of writers and intellectuals. Source of the image considers it *'probably from the early to mid 1970s and possibly taken in the garden of Iris's house Cedar Lodge at Steeple Aston near Oxford'*²²



Fig 14: Aerial image c1970 (Sava Report 2013) showing house and grounds when occupied by Iris Murdoch and John Bayley. Note no dormers to the south roof slope

Using the SAVA Report 2013 and on-site observations the various phases of development of the site and the subsequent alterations and extensions can be summarized as follows:

DATE	PHASES OF DEVELOPMENT
1574	Henry Lamley living in a house on or near the site
1650	Edward Lamley listed in 1662 as living in a house with six hearths
1752	R. R. Kening married Mary Lamley
1767- 1780	Judith Lamley, Edward Lamley's widow, acquires more land and constructs new house ('The Lodge') adjacent to previous buildings, while demolishing others, including the other half of the pair of cottages leaving what is now Cedar Cottage. Builds single storey link to Lodge in ironstone. Physical evidence, including surviving wrought iron window frames and ironmongery supports a pre-1767 date for the service wing.
1806	R.L. Kening adds linking section to south front, enclosing what has been suggested as being a small service yard, (SAVA Report) with windows matching those in the Lodge; internal remodelling throughout.
1838	Tripartite sash windows inserted in the south elevation of the Lodge by Elizabeth Jones (?); south elevation rendered; first floor room alterations; first floor added to linking section . Elizabeth Jones resident in 1841 and 1851 census
1860?	First floor added to square bay on north front (WC?) with flat roof; outbuildings added to north of existing barn . 1861 census lists Ann Brooks as living at the property
1871-81	1871 and 1881 census list Mr Edmund Creek as living at the property
1891-97	Cartwright family lived at the house
1901-23	Vincent family lived at the house
1920s	Stables added to south of barn (or replaced?)
1930s?	Shallow-pitch extension added to south front linking section with bay window at Ground Floor level
1956-1986	Iris Murdoch and her husband John Bayley lived at Cedar Lodge, occupying both main and service wings as one
1960s	Bayleys create large opening from entrance lobby to main room and reposition stair , introducing a connection through to the old service wing to form a new kitchen and sitting room area
1994	D Kewley and J Maulden remove bay window and add conservatory; terrace constructed; gardens significantly landscaped

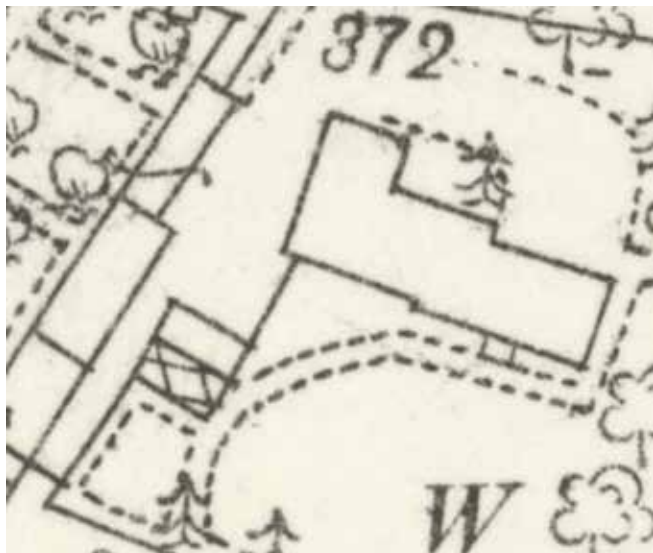


Fig 15: 25-inch map 1875 showing the potting shed to the SW of the house.

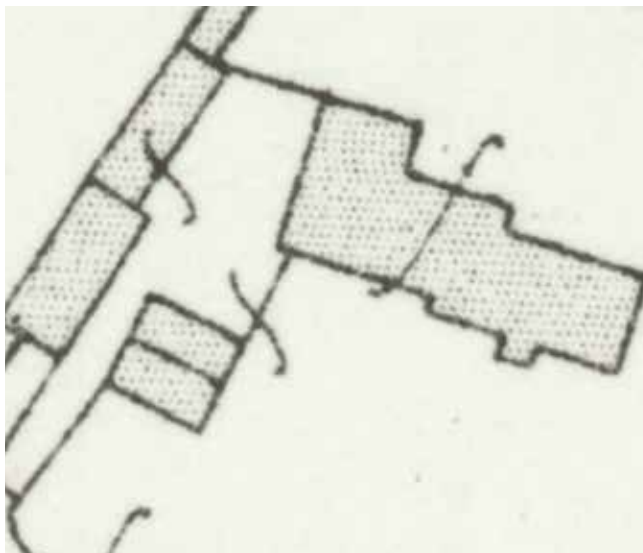


Fig 16: 25-inch maps 1919 showing the potting shed to the SW of the house.



Fig 17: Current 1:1250 map showing the potting shed to the SW of the house.

POTTING SHED

This structure lies to the south west of the house. The 1875 OS map shows a narrow building on the north side and a glazed structure on the south side. By 1919 the glazed structure appears to have been replaced by a separate solid structure on the same footprint. Today it is a building with a similar footprint of the northern part of the building on the 1875 and 1919 map divided in two.

IRIS MURDOCH

In the twentieth century, Cedar Lodge was home to famed author and philosopher, Dame Iris Murdoch. Born in Dublin in 1919, she graduated with an outstanding first from Oxford in 1942. She became assistant principal in the Treasury, where she stayed for two years while spending her evenings in Fitzrovia with writers and artists and writing her own works well into the night. From 1948 to 1936 she worked as a tutor in Philosophy at St Anne's, Oxford. In 1953, she published her first academic book, *Satre: Romantic Rationalist*. In her lifetime she wrote twenty-six novels.

Her best known work, *The Bell* (1958), explores the hunger for the spiritual in a post-theistic age.²³ Numerous books and articles make reference to Iris Murdoch's time at Cedar Lodge.

CHANGING ROLE OF THE SERVICE WING

Using the census returns for the years 1841 to 1911 it is possible to trace the occupants of the property including the number and role of servants. While 'The Lodge' is not specifically identified for some years of the census its location in North Street, and relationship to the two Alms Houses and School House opposite in the run of census returns allows the occupants to be identified with a reasonable degree of accuracy. **See Appendix 2.**

The SAVA Report 2013 notes an Elizabeth Jones as living at the property in 1838. The 1841 and 1851 census returns list her and her family and servants as living at the property. From the census returns it is noted that the maximum number of servants was 4 (1851) the lowest 2 (1911) and usually 3. The roles include Gardener, Groom, Cook, and Housemaid.

AFTER 1911

There are a number of advertisements in the local papers up to October 1924 for staff. Mrs Humphreys, who moved into the house in September 1923, on 2 October advertised in the *Banbury Guardian* for a general servant plain cooking, two maids kept. As noted above, in 1925 the house was put up for sale. It is unclear if servants were employed by the new owners. In 1956 Iris Murdoch and John Bayley took up residence. John Bayley says that for the whole time they lived here, 'we had no help in the house or garden'. **See Appendix 1.**

While there is a lack of documentation after 1924, it is considered unlikely that servants occupied the service wing post WWII, and probably earlier. It is known that there were no servants employed during the occupation by Iris Murdoch and John Bayley, and that the active use of the service wing for housing servants ceased at this date, but probably earlier.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF CEDAR LODGE

Cedar Lodge was included in the National Heritage List for England (formerly the list of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest) on 26 February 1988. It includes the following brief architectural description of the building:

Substantial house. Possibly originally mid C18, re-modelled late C18 and extended C19. Limestone and marlstone rubble with some wooden lintels; Stonesfield-slate and Welsh-slate roofs with brick stacks. Double-depth plan with service ranges. 2 storeys plus attic. Entrance front has a symmetrical window arrangement of 16-pane sashes with brick jambs and wooden lintels, and has a central 6-panel door with marlstone jambs and a C18 flat canopy with panelled soffit and shaped brackets, to extreme right a rubble projection with a similar window has been added, probably to contain a stair. Symmetrical 3-window garden front, stuccoed over limestone rubble, has a more elaborate entrance canopy with dentil decoration below round window; outer bays have architraved tripartite sashes. Two-span roof has end stacks in both sections but is of unequal spans. A late-C18/early-C19 hipped-roofed Welsh-slated range, running at right angles to the house, has a 3-window front with leaded 2-light casements at first floor, and lower windows with ornamental cast-iron grilles flanking the 6-panel door; it has been joined to the right end of the main range by a C19 marlstone linking section, altered C20. Interior: some late-C18 panelled doors and shutters. For many years the home of the novelist, Iris Murdoch. (VCH: Oxfordshire: Vol XI, p23)

The house sits behind a high wall fronting the street with two gated accesses, one either end of the wide plot. A range of outbuildings, some of which have been converted to residential accommodation, run down the west boundary of the site, aligned to sit at right angles to the street. The north (front elevation to the house) whilst imposing is relatively plain, in comparison to what appears to be a more refined and architectural south (garden elevation). The main range is 'double pile' with a central valley and gable ends, with a tiled roof, the west service range

is single span, hipped and with a slate roof. The house sits in extensive landscaped gardens, which extend down to the bottom of the valley, where there is a fishpond and also include a series of garden enclosures. Historic maps show the extent of the grounds and what used to be a walled garden in the southeast corner of the plot, now the site of a tennis court.

EXTERIOR

The 2009 aerial image clearly shows the asymmetrical double-

pitched gabled roofs to the principal range with the wider range to the south and narrow range to the north with a valley gutter. There are chimneystacks to the gable ends of the south range and a single chimneystack to the eastern end of the north range. The north range is two-storey while the south range is two-storey with attic. It is constructed in stone with the chimneystacks above the roofline in brick. It is roofed in tiles. To the west is an L-shaped lower two-storey range with slate hipped roofs, and two brick chimneystacks to the ridges. It is also constructed in stone.



Fig 18: 2009 aerial image of Cedar Lodge showing relationship to the road, the adjoining outbuildings to the west and the extensive garden. Main range with former service range to the west. Outbuildings along the west side converted to residential use

MAIN RANGE

The front (north) elevation, which was originally symmetrical, has a two-storey flat roof extension at its western end c. 1860 providing a link to the lower western range. It has a centrally placed door, with a later enclosed glazed porch, flanked by two 8 over 8 vertical timber sash windows to the ground floor and three 8 over 8 vertical timber sash windows to the first floor. The projecting extension to the west has a matching sash window to the first floor and timber casement to the ground floor.

The rear (south) elevation is also symmetrical. It has a centrally placed door with a projecting hood. The door is flanked by two tripartite timber glazed windows with 8 over 8 sashes to the centre and 2 over 2 sashes to the side margins. These ground floor windows are matched by windows to the first floor, with a round (oculi) window above the door. There are two modern dormer windows. There are two blocked windows to the east and west gables of the south range.



Fig 19: North (front) elevation of the house from the northeast showing asymmetrical gables, front elevation of the main range with the two-storey projecting c. 1860s extension and former service wing to the west



Fig 20: North elevation from the northwest showing the main range with modern timber porch the two-storey extension and the former service wing



Fig 21: Rear (south) elevation of the house with symmetrical elevation and former service wing to the west with new conservatory and reintroduced dormers to the roof.

SERVICE RANGE

The front (north) elevation has a sash window to the first floor and small fixed window to the ground floor in the linking range and a single fixed window in the north wall of the north south range. The west side elevation is symmetrical with a centrally placed door a pair of metal casements (with modern grills) either side to the ground floor and three (wrought iron) double casements to the first floor. The rear elevation has a pair of 8 over 8 vertical timber sashes to the ground floor with matching sash windows above, and a tripartite sash window in the first floor of a lean-to extension. There is a timber lean-to conservatory erected post 2000.



Fig 23: View of the former service wing from the south west showing the symmetrical west elevation of the north south range with the wrought iron casement windows, and the rear (south) elevation with sash windows and the lean-to extension, and the roof of the conservatory over the wall running south west from the elevation.



Fig 22: View of the former service wing with the link to the north-south range with timber sash to the first floor of the link and a metal casement to the ground floor on the north wing



Fig 24: View of the rear (south) elevation of the former service wing showing the 8 over 8 sash windows to the first floor casement to the ground floor on the north wing

POTTING SHED

This building lies to the south west of the house and terminates the view from the drive on the western side of the house. It is constructed of brick, with a rear (north) and west sides of solid brick with the south and eastern sides comprising a series of brick piers. The two bays of the eastern side and one bay of the south side are enclosed with timber with pairs of casement windows. The roof has a ridge set on the top of the rear (north) wall. It is hipped to the east and gables to the west covered in diagonally set asbestos cement tiles.

The substantial rear (north) brick wall is substantial and may date from the 19th century while the brick piers and infills and roof suggest an inter-war date.



Fig 26: View of the potting shed from the garden looking north showing three sections divided by brick piers with the eastern section enclosed and the hipped roof. The gable roof sits against a brick wall which has a door and a window into the end bay



Fig 27: View looking west from the garden showing the rear brick wall and brick piers with timber infilling of two bays.



Fig 25: View of the back wall of the potting shed from the north. The ridge of the hipped roof projects above the brickwork roof

INTERIOR

The ground floor comprises a large reception hall with the main staircase, occupying the whole of the west side of the principal range with a music room the east side (rear) and study to the east side (front). A door leads from the reception hall into the service range, which comprises a kitchen diner, which opens up to an external conservatory (c. 2001) to the south. A second door leads to a corridor with a WC, storeroom, secondary staircase, utility room and boiler room all on the north (front) side of the wing. There is a cellar under the western end of the principal range accessed from the service and stair corridor to the right-hand side of the main entrance.

The main staircase leads to a large L-shaped landing, which services the main and service range. There are two bedrooms to the south side, and a bathroom to the north side in the main range. A staircase from the landing on the south side of the hall provides access to two attic bedrooms. The hall steps down into the service range and provides access via a corridor/landing to three bedrooms, one en-suite, and a shower room. The secondary stair also provides access to these rooms.

COMMENTARY

It is clear from the Sava Report (2013) and recent inspections that the evolution of the buildings and subsequent changes has been quite complex, with dates for fabric, details and alterations not always clear. The layout of the main range is acknowledged as being unusual for a later 18th century house.

Considerable changes have been made from what was probably the original layout of the main range. The front door would have originally entered into a hall running front to back. The four rooms would have been arranged symmetrically off this hall.

The two principal rooms were to the rear (south). The room to the left-hand side (east) formed a third reception room, while it is thought most likely that the right-hand side room acted as a service/access corridor to the service wing and first floor. The list description suggest that it may have been in the two-storey flat roof extension on the south elevation, but this post-dates the construction of the house.

While the usual layout of late Georgian Houses was to have the stair to the first floor in the hall, at Cedar Lodge the hall is far too narrow to have ever contained a staircase. Other Georgian layouts do have stairs in a separate space to the right of left-hand side to the rear of the principal room. At Cedar Lodge the evidence and layout strongly indicate that the room to the right-hand side was a corridor link to the service wing with a staircase to the first floor and steps to the basement on the south western side of the house. Thus, while altered the stair is considered to be in its historical location with the balustrade to the landing appearing the least altered element. The wall between this service corridor was opened in the period of occupation by Bayley and Murdoch and the straight run of the stair turned to land in the reception hall created by taking down the west wall of the hall. A door opening, probably using a salvaged door frame and door from the hall, was created through to the previously

separated kitchen wing. There are clear physical clues to the removal of the two walls, with RSJ beams and loss of cornice details to the two spaces (hall and service corridor) opened up to form this room.

The two-principal reception rooms retain some original architectural detailing. The reception hall has remnants of a decorative (small flower) cornice to the south and west and part south ceiling, and the tripartite windows with shutters framed by timber pilasters. The fire surround, which picks up the small flower detail from the cornice, appears to be original. The other reception room (music room) has a simple dentil cornice, also noted in the hall, the tripartite windows framed by pilasters and a dado rail.

It is likely there was always a ground and first floor link to the service wing from the east side, prior to the adding of the two-storey extension to the front (south) elevation, which the list description conjectures may have contained a staircase. The service wing has a secondary stair (new fabric) providing access to the former servant's accommodation above and through to the principal bedrooms on the first floor. While altered internally, it is noted that there are a number of wrought iron window frames with surviving ironmongery which do support a pre-1767 date suggested in the SAVA Report. These windows are found through the 17th and into mid-18th century in service and/or secondary parts of houses. They are relatively rare surviving details as they are usually replaced with timber.



Fig 28: Reception hall showing the wall removed between the back-reception room and service corridor (entrance to which lies behind the staircase dating 1956-86). Also note the new door opening between the reception hall and the kitchen immediately right of the fireplace, also from 1956-86 (the door surround and door reused from the removed hall wall). Line of original wall noted to the left of the pilaster column adjoining the staircase. The removal of the wall and the creation of the opening removed the prior physical and visual separation and distinction between the main house and the former service wing.



Fig 30: Kitchen dining room in the former service wing showing the opening created during the 1956-86 period which joined the main reception room directly into the former service wing thus avoiding the need to enter via the historic link running along the south side of the house. Also shows the opening created by the removal of a later bay wing to gain access to the conservatory added 2001. This area is much altered



Fig 29: Reception hall looking south showing back door which was originally within a separate hall (wall removed in the 1956-1986 period) with the tripartite windows and pilasters. Cornice details still survive in both rooms



Fig 31: View of the 'music room' with more complete architectural



Fig 32: View of staircase first floor balustrade, with late 18th century detailing, which is considered to be original with the 1956-86 alterations. Staircase links through to the former service wing



Fig 33: Cellar showing the steps located under the stair case supporting suggesting it is in its original casements in the 19th or 20th century.

Two first floor bedrooms of the former service wing have been altered, one quite recently with the insertion of an ensuite bathroom. A former small box room, typical of a servant's bedroom, has been extended when a small lean-to was added over a ground floor bay window. The date for this alteration is not clear. It post-dates the c. 1900 image and is shown on the c. 1970 aerial image. The SAVA Report 2013 suggests a 1930s date and may have been an alteration after servants ceased working at Cedar Lodge.

Further images of the interior including areas that are proposed to be altered as part of the development are included in Appendix 3.

HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Heritage significance is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Annex as comprising:

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.

Placing the area in its historical context and describing its characteristics and appearance is an important component of the evidence gathering exercise to inform understanding of a place's significance and contribution of its setting. As Historic England explains in 'Conservation Principles' (2008) understanding how a place has evolved and how different phases add to or detract from its significance is a part of that exercise. The heritage significance of Cedar Lodge can be defined as follows:

- Physical evidence of a building that has evolved from its early 18th century origins and provides understanding of its development and the gentrification of the village from the 18th century.
- It exhibits evidence of several phases of change, reflecting the needs and aspirations of new occupiers and shows how the demands of contemporary society are reflected in the building's fabric and setting.
- Its history as a large detached house and its ownership by wealthy landowners contributes to understanding of the social and economic structure of the village and the impact of the wealthy middle and upper classes.
- The 'chapters' in the building's history have resulted in a change to the house, adding interest but sometimes losing part of the history and earlier evidence. Changes to the building's setting also contribute to its historical interest with evidence of the amalgamation of the closes to create the extensive garden setting.
- The garden setting is closely interrelated to the architectural composition of the house, creating a series of outdoor rooms and linked to the building's siting within the plot. The layout with planted tree belts, formal and informal gardens and lawns form part of this setting.
- The sense of enclosure to the front and sides with high stone walls and mature trees and the openness of the rear garden impart a sense of seclusion and exclusion, curating and controlling what is seen and by whom.
- The house, set in large grounds, contrasts with the smaller domestic properties, which directly abut the street edge, establishing it as a 'high status' house.
- The siting and arrangement of the outbuildings and garden compartments help our understanding of the operation of the household and the roles of those 'in service' at the house.
- The garden pavilion helps to illustrate earlier generations enjoyment of the gardens and garden setting, placing objects within the garden, designed to be seen, and from which to enjoy the gardens.
- The arrangement of buildings within the street, some directly on the back edge of the highway and linked by a series of boundary walls, and some within walled enclosures to the rear of the plots produces a picturesque composition, enhanced by the use of local materials.
- The house is recognised by the local community, but also nationally and internationally, through books and articles, as the home for 30 years (1956-1986) of Dame Iris Murdoch, an internationally acclaimed author and her husband John Bayley. During this period Iris Murdoch and John Bayley entertained Oxford Intellectuals and the writers of her generation, as well as villagers.

RELATIONSHIP TO CONSERVATION AREA

Cedar Lodge lies within the Steeple Aston Conservation Area, which was designated in 1988 and further reviewed in May 1996. In 2014 Cherwell District Council published a Conservation Area Appraisal for Steeple Aston.

The form of the village is determined by two east-west streets running along similar contours lines either side of a valley, connected by two north-south routes either end of the village to create a broadly rectangular grid. Properties front onto these streets with rear gardens running down to the stream in the valley bottom. To the north side in the main the areas are managed as private gardens. This use is part of the 20th century history of the 'closes', which previously had been in use as orchards. To the south there are gardens and paddocks, one to the east, adjacent Paines Hill, being visible from that street.

Mature trees line the valley bottom and mark property boundaries. They help, with other mature trees in large plots (e.g. the churchyard) to establish a verdant setting to the village, their height and spread helping to screen, filter and frame views in and across the valley.

The Council's conservation area appraisal for Steeple Aston describes the area as follows:

The special character of Steeple Aston is derived from its early origins as an agricultural village, centred on the church and manor. The village has developed around an open square containing paddocks, orchards and gardens. The plots within the square are a legacy of the pre-Inclosure closes, possibly from the reduction of the manor in the 16th century. These areas of land played a major role in forming the structure of the settlement and in controlling further development. Many boundaries remain intact from this period. (Page 15) [...]

North Side, the most enclosed area of the village, contains the majority of older and listed properties. The street twists and turns, and is narrow in places. The sense of enclosure is emphasised by high stone walls and dense planting, which can be found in larger domestic gardens. (Pages 18-19).

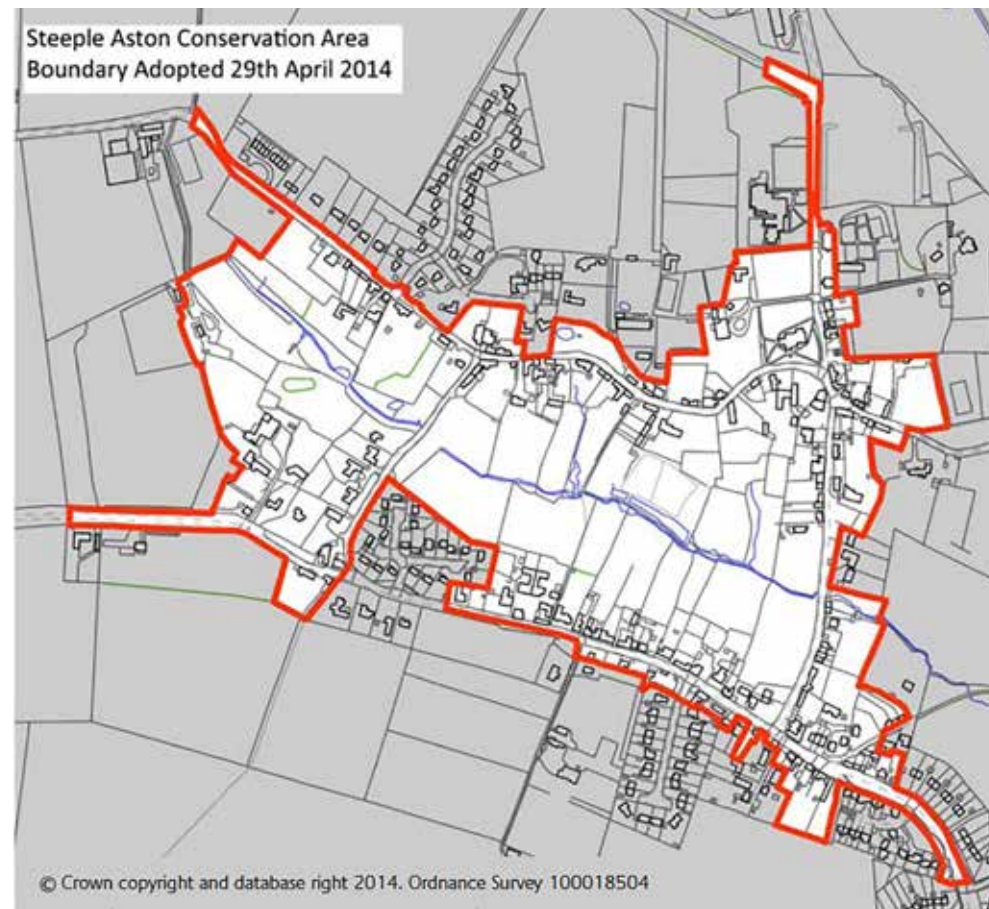


Fig 34: Map of the Steeple Aston Conservation Area

The Ordnance Survey map shows the narrow closes, which form people's back gardens, and then the larger area with the fishpond that forms the gardens to Cedar Lodge. This side of the valley is south facing, which helps to explain the collection of walled garden enclosures that form a very particular characteristic to the area behind the frontage buildings. The nature of this part of the village in addition to the walled enclosures is also characterised by ranges of outbuildings, some parallel to the street, some at right angles and some extending some distance into the depths of the plots.

The front and western side elevations of Cedar Lodge are partly visible over the top of the substantial northern boundary wall.



Fig 35: Street view of Cedar Lodge from the north east. Only a partial view of the eastern end of the house is possible when the gate is open



Fig 36: Street view over the top of the closed vehicular gate of the western end of the house due to height of street view cameras. Rear garden not visible and only limited view of the rear of the potting shed. View not possible from street level when gate closed.

HERITAGE MANAGEMENT POLICY & GUIDANCE

Conservation principles, policy and practice seek to preserve and enhance the value of heritage assets. With the issuing of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) July 2018 the Government has re-affirmed its aim that the historic environment and its heritage assets should be conserved and enjoyed for the quality of life they bring to this and future generations.

In relation to development affecting a designated heritage asset the NPPF states in paragraphs 193 and 194 that:

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification.

The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (March 2014) seeks to provide further advice on assessing the impact of proposals explaining that what matters in assessing the level of harm (if any) is the degree of impact on the significance of the asset. It states:

In determining whether works to a listed building (or its setting) constitute substantial harm, an important consideration would be whether the adverse impact seriously affects a key element of its special architectural or historic interest. It is the degree of harm to the asset's significance rather than the scale of the development that is to be assessed.

The NPPF explains in paragraphs 195 and 196 the differences between 'substantial' harm and 'less than substantial' harm, advising that any harm should be justified by the public benefit of

a proposal.

In cases where there is less than substantial harm, paragraph 196 states:

Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

The PPG also seeks to provide a clearer understanding of what constitutes 'public benefit'; as it is the public benefit that flows from a development that can justify harm, always ensuring also that considerable weight and importance is given to the desirability to preserve the setting of listed buildings in weighing the public benefits against the harm.

Public benefits may follow from many developments and could be anything that delivers economic, social or environmental progress as described in the National Planning Policy Framework (Paragraph 7). Public benefits should flow from the proposed development. They should be of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and should not just be a private benefit. However, benefits do not always have to be visible or accessible to the public in order to be genuine public benefits. It explains that public benefits can include heritage benefits, such as:

- Sustaining or enhancing the significance of a heritage asset and the contribution of its setting;
- Reducing or removing risks to a heritage asset;
- Securing the optimum viable use for a heritage asset.

Works of alteration or extension or demolition need not involve any harmful impact but whether and may be necessary to ensure a building has a viable future. Historic England in its Conservation

Principles (2008) explains its approach to managing the historic environment and how we experience changing places stating in paragraph 88:

Very few significant places can be maintained at either public or private expense unless they are capable of some beneficial use; nor would it be desirable, even if it were practical, for most places that people value to become solely memorials of the past.

It also points out in paragraph 92:

Retaining the authenticity of a place is not always achieved by retaining as much of the existing fabric as is technically possible.

It also comments in paragraph 86:

Keeping a significant place in use is likely to require continual adaptation and change; but, provided such interventions respect the values of the place, they will tend to benefit public (heritage) as well as private interests in it. Many places now valued as part of the historic environment exist because of past patronage and private investment, and the work of successive generations often contributes to their significance. Owners and managers of significant places should not be discouraged from adding further layers of potential future interest and value, provided that recognised heritage values are not eroded or compromised in the process.

Amongst the Government's planning objectives for the historic environment is that conservation decisions are properly informed. Paragraph 19 of GPA3 explains that, 'amongst the Government's planning policies for the historic environment is that conservation decisions are based on a proportionate assessment of the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal, including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset'.

It recommends the broad approach to be followed:

Step 1: identify which heritage assets and their settings are affected;

Step 2: assess whether, how and to what degree these settings make a contribution to the significance of the heritage asset(s);

Step 3: assess the effects of the proposed development, whether beneficial or harmful, on that significance;

Step 4: explore the way to maximise enhancement and avoid or minimise harm;

Step 5: make and document the decision and monitor outcomes.

Steps 1 and 2 are addressed earlier in this Report, with the heritage asset being Cedar Lodge, which is included in the National Heritage List for England, Grade II, and lies within the Steeple Aston Conservation Area.

From this summary of the national heritage management policy framework it is clear that there is a complex assessment decision-making process to navigate when considering change within the historic environment. Central to any decision is the recognition that history is not a static thing and that the significance of our historic environment derives from a history of change.

The policies and advice described above provide an essential framework to guide designers and decision makers. In this respect it is worth noting recent case law and the advice it offers on the application of policy and legislation as set out below.

S66 PLANNING (LISTED BUILDINGS & CONSERVATION AREAS) ACT 1990

Sections 66 and 72 of the Act requires local planning authorities to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses

Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Ltd v East Northants District Council, English Heritage and National Trust, 18th February 2014, and Sevenoaks District Council v The Forge Field Society, March 2014, have brought into sharp relief the weight and importance that decision makers should give to the duty under Sections 16, 66 and 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (the relevant section in relation to this appeal), which requires that special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

In Jones v Mordue & Anor [2015] EWHC 539 the Court of Appeal explains how decision makers can ensure this duty can be fulfilled: that by working through paragraphs 131 -134 of the NPPF, in accordance with their terms a decision maker will have complied with the duty under sections 16, 66(1) and 72. This report follows this advice to ensure consistency with the duty to preserve or enhance.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

A Planning Application [19/00531F] and Listed Building Application [19/00532/LB] has been submitted for *Removal of existing timber framed conservatory, internal alterations, new kitchen extension and the refurbishment of an existing potting shed to form a new garden studio.*

In summary the proposals include the following works:

DEMOLITION

- The existing 2001 conservatory to the rear (south) elevation
- Demolition of an internal wall in the potting shed and the timber and glazed infills
- The staircase in the former service wing
- The wall dividing the utility and boiler rooms
- The ensuite to a bedroom
- All existing bathroom fittings

NEW WORKS

- New kitchen extension to the rear (south) elevation
- Installing timber and glass and double-glazed panels in existing openings in the potting shed
- A new staircase in the former service wing
- New door into the north wall of the current kitchen
- New glazed door in the service corridor
- Inserting a cloakroom into the current study and installing a window in the east gable

- Inserting a non-structural partition into a bedroom to create two bedrooms and a new door onto the landing
- Re-positioning a door opening to a bedroom to remove the conflict with the door leading from the main house to the former service wing
- Inserting a non-structural partition into an existing bedroom to create a family bathroom and storage
- Re-fitting existing bathrooms and ensuite

These works are shown on the submitted plans, and with images in Appendix 3, and discussed below.



Fig 37: Close up of the tripartite window on the rear (south) elevation of Cedar Lodge for the small box bedroom illustrating the external 'gentrification' of this part of the building to match the window pattern of the main range

ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT ON HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

The proposed suite of exterior and interior works has been the subject of pre-application discussions with officers of Cherwell District Council and revised as a result of these discussions and the Pre-Application Report ref:18/00055/PREAPP dated 6 April 2018.

It is considered that the proposals recognise the heritage significance of Cedar Lodge, as articulated in the Worledge Associates Heritage Report (2017) this Heritage Impact Statement, and balances this with the reasonable expectations of the new owners to live in a house suitable for 21st century living.

Historic England in its Guideline 'A Guide for owners of Listed Buildings' provides advice on adding an extension. Page 12 states:

With the high cost of moving, more and more people are choosing to extend their homes... The first step is to understand how the house has changed in the past, its particular character and how it sits within its surroundings - its 'setting'.

New extension should not dominate a historic building: this usually means it should be lower and smaller. There is no rule on the ideal percentage increase in size: it all depends on the size, character and setting of your house.

An extension will usually have less effect on your historic home if it is built onto the back and not seen from the front. This is because the back is usually less architecturally important than the front. Side extensions may also work well.

The exterior needs to be carefully designed. You should usually aim to use matching or complementary materials for walls and the roof. However, cleverly chosen contrasting materials in a modern design may work for some buildings, where the extension can then be clearly 'read' as different to the old house. But the effect should not be so different that the extension is more prominent than the main building.

As is evidenced in many properties meeting modern lifestyles involves making the kitchen the living 'hub' of the household and providing additional living space, is a high priority. The division that once existed between entertaining spaces and service spaces no longer exists. This is reflected in how owners adapt their buildings and re-organise the internal spaces to absorb the 'service' accommodation as a part of the main house and family living.

EXTERIOR CHANGES

The principal part of the planning and listed building application is the removal of the 2001 conservatory and the relocation of the kitchen into a new extension on a slightly increased footprint. The extension has been designed in a 'neo-Georgian' style to complement the existing house, with the use of stone for the walls, slate for the roof slopes with lead for the flat sections, and small pane timber sliding sash windows, which are double glazed and double timber glazed doors onto a terrace. A glazed link, set back, is proposed to touch lightly physically and visually onto the garden wall. There are two roof lights in the flat portion of the hipped roof, and a roof light in the lead flat roof section. The use of a hipped-roof with a flat section is a traditional detail and keeps the height of the roof lower in relation to the existing building. The design reflects the Historic England advice in terms of its positioning and design approach.

The other component is the adaptation of the potting shed to a garden studio. The history of this small building is obscure, but the series of plans and the surviving fabric suggest that the north wall, which is quite substantial remains from the 19th century structure. The glass house and then solid structure shown on the 1876 and 1919 plans respectively has been removed and replaced by a structure which appears to be of an inter-war date. The proposal involves the removal of the dividing wall and the timber and glazed infills and inserting a timber infill with a door, and timber infill with a window into the eastern side bays and three double glazed sliding doors into the three bays on the south side. The asbestos cement tiles will be replaced with

slate. A new WC will be inserted into the north west corner. While the proposals will result in some visual changes, these will be minimal in relation to the garden setting of the house (see A3.13) as the infill to the west elevation will remain timber and glass. The proposal provides an active use for this redundant structure and will result in its long-term preservation within the garden setting of the house.

The conversion of the existing study to provide a cloakroom involves a proposal to insert a window in the east gable of the narrow northern range of the house (see image A3.1). The window is a six-pane casement reflecting the existing windows. This elevation, while to the front (north) side of the house is not generally visible from the road unless the gates in the substantial stone boundary wall are open (see images 30 and A3.12). While the proposal will involve the removal of a small area of existing walling, it is considered that the impact is physically and visually limited in the context of the house.

INTERIOR WORKS

These works seek to rationalise some existing spaces and improve circulation and the liveability of the house, particularly in the former service end of the house.

GROUND FLOOR

The existing service stair appears to be located in the historic position within the wing but is all new fabric. The tight winding stairs while traditional, are non-compliant, and it is understood that an owner would seek to replace them with compliant stairs. The new stair is proposed in the historic location but requires additional room on the ground floor to achieve compliance. As the current fabric is modern, albeit likely to have been based on the former stair (see images A3. 7 and 7) it is not significant, and its removal can be supported. The re-use of the historic location for this secondary stair retains the ability to read and understand its original location and function within the house.

The rationalisation of the currently separate utility and boiler rooms into a single service space by the removal of a dividing wall will have minimal physical impact and will retain and re-enforce the service role of these spaces. The removal of the wall will increase the limited light to this space (see images A3.4 and 5).

The creation of a new opening into the north wall of the existing kitchen (see image A3.3), which will become a family space, will improve access and circulation into this space with minimal physical impact and further integrate the spaces.

FIRST FLOOR

The principal changes are to two of the bedrooms on the south side of the former service wing. One involves the removal of an ensuite bathroom and the sub-division of this large single bedroom into two by inserting a non-structural partition between the two sash windows on the rear (south) elevation currently lighting this room (see image A3.9). A new door will be required off the landing to service the bedroom created to the western end of the room. The other proposal is to insert a non-structural partition into an existing bedroom to create a family bathroom and storage (linen cupboard) (see image A3.10). While the spatial quality of these rooms will change, like the ensuite, the changes are non-structural and reversible and part of the historic changes and adaptation of the buildings to meet reasonable needs of the occupiers.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE IMPACT

It is not the government's intention to stop change and stagnate history. If communities are to thrive then change is necessary. The applicant is seeking to do that in a way that adds an extra chapter to the history on the house, without erasing earlier chapters.

Physical evidence of a building that has evolved from its early 18th century origins and provides understanding of its development and the gentrification of the village from the 18th century. The proposals retain the vast majority of the fabric and evidence of this development and thus has a minimal impact

on this significance.

It exhibits evidence of several phases of change, reflecting the needs and aspirations of new occupiers and shows how the demands of contemporary society are reflected in the building's fabric and setting. The proposals retain this evidence of several phases of change, and adds a new layer demonstrating the aspirations of the 21st century owners and occupiers of the house.

Its history as a large detached house and history of its ownership by wealthy landowners contributes to understanding of the social and economic structure of the village and the impact of the wealthy middle and upper classes. The proposal represents a major injection of finance to adapt the building to meet the reasonable 21st century lifestyle expectations of the new owners. This will ensure its continued use and preservation.

The 'chapters' in the building's history have resulted in a change to the house, adding interest but sometimes losing part of the history and earlier evidence. Changes to the building's setting also contribute to its historical interest with evidence of the amalgamation of the closes to create the extensive garden setting. The proposals result in modest changes to the building without impacting on its historic garden setting.

The garden setting is closely interrelated to the architectural composition of the house, creating a series of outdoor rooms and linked to the building's siting within the plot. The layout with planted tree belts, formal and informal gardens and lawns form part of this setting. The proposals have no impact on the garden setting. The adaptation of a former potting shed to provide an active use will ensure its long-term preservation and its continued contribution to part of the historic setting of the house.

The sense of enclosure to the front and sides with high stone walls and mature trees and the openness of the rear garden

impart a sense of seclusion and exclusion, curating and controlling what is seen and by whom. The proposal has no impact on this element of the house's significance.

The house, set in large grounds, contrasts with the smaller domestic properties, which directly abut the street edge, establishing it as a 'high status' house. The proposal has no impact on this element of the house's significance.

The siting and arrangement of the outbuildings and garden compartments help understanding of the operation of the household and the roles of those 'in service' at the house. The adaptation of a former potting shed to provide an active use will ensure its long-term preservation and its continued contribution to part of the historic setting of the house.

The garden pavilion helps to illustrate earlier generations enjoyment of the gardens and garden setting, placing objects within the garden, designed to be seen, and from which to enjoy the gardens. The proposal has no impact on this element of the house's significance.

The arrangement of buildings within the street, some directly on the back edge of the highway and linked by a series of boundary walls, and some within walled enclosures to the rear of the plots produces a picturesque composition, enhanced by the use of local materials. The proposal has no impact on this element of the house's significance and its relationship to the Conservation Area.

The house is recognised by the local community, but also nationally and internationally, through books and articles, as the home for 30 years (1956-1986) of Dame Iris Murdoch, an internationally acclaimed author and her husband John Bayley. During this period Iris Murdoch and John Bayley entertained Oxford Intellectuals and the writers of her generation, as well as villagers. The proposals will ensure the long-term conservation and preservation of the house and thus this communal recognition of its connection will be maintained.



Fig 38: Garden view of Cedar Lodge looking north east and showing the rear (south) elevation of the property

IMPACT ON STEEPLE ASTON CONSERVATION AREA

The principal works proposed are to the rear (south) of the house and internal. The rear of the house is not visible from North Road and thus these works will have no impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

The proposal does include the installation of a small six-pane casement window in the east side gable at ground level on the north side of the house. Due to the high boundary wall running along the northern boundary of Cedar Lodge onto North Road, the house is generally only partially viewed from the road. The gable end is fully visible if and when the access gates at the eastern end of the property are open. Accordingly, this minor change will not normally be visible. Notwithstanding, it is considered the alterations will have no discernible impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

CONCLUSION

It is clear the site of Cedar House has been occupied since at least the 16th century, with the former service potentially dating from the early-mid 18th century, but clearly before the 1767 enclosure of the village, with the house being added to this post 1767. There have been a number of subsequent modest additions and internal and external alterations and as such the house presents a complex history of change.

Despite the post mid 20th and early 21st century changes, the kitchen and bathrooms, and services are substandard for a house of this quality and status. It is therefore not unreasonable for an owner to seek to extend, alter and upgrade the house to meet current 21st century living and contemporary life-style expectations.

The proposal has been informed and developed from an understanding of the heritage significance of the house set out in the Worledge Associations Heritage Report (2017) this Heritage Impact Report, and input from a pre-application meeting with officers of Cherwell District Council and subsequent comments. This resulted in a number of revisions to the scheme.

The proposal leaves the vast majority of the house intact. The rear extension replaces the 2001 conservatory, with the design informed by the existing architectural character and materials of the house and reflects the advice in Historic England's Guideline 'A Guide for owners of Listed Buildings'. The proposal will have only a limited visual impact on the setting on the house and its garden setting. The adaptive re-use of the potting shed provides an active use and thus the retention of this historic built element within the garden setting of the house.

The internal alterations are modest in scale and impact and retain the majority of the fabric and layout of the house, thus maintaining its significance while providing contemporary living accommodation and facilities.

The extension is to the rear of the house and not visible from public views within the Steeple Aston Conservation Area and thus has no impact on its character and appearance.

It is not the government's intention to stop change and stagnate history. If communities are to thrive then change is necessary. The applicant is seeking to do that in a way that adds an extra chapter to the history on the house, without erasing an earlier chapter.



Fig 39: Interior photograph from the living room, looking south into the garden through the 8 by 8 sash windows

APPENDIX 1: ARTICLE FROM STEEPLE ASTON PARISH COUNCIL FAMILY NEWS 2019 - MEMORIES OF IRIS MURDOCH

The novelist Iris Murdoch and her husband John Bayley lived in Steeple Aston for about 30 years from 1956 to 1986. The two writers were often seen strolling around the village, hand in hand – clearly a devoted couple.

Although often away, they made numerous friends who remember the warmth of their hospitality and the chaotic state of their house and garden at Cedar Lodge, on Northside. Just inside the door was an accumulation of autumn leaves. Everything else – from their clothes to their non-matching crockery – seemed to have come from Oxfam. It was difficult to know where to sit among dusty chairs piled with books and less identifiable object.

But they were enthusiastic hosts who plied their guests with wine and stronger drinks – often accompanied by pork pies – in a room with walls painted bright red. One neighbour, invited to dinner, was scarcely encouraged by the oval brown object, as she feared she might be served a mouse; it turned out to be a paté, and the rest of the meal was fine too. Asked who did the cooking, John Bayley explained that they had borrowed some staff from his Oxford College for the day.

In his moving memoir, Iris, John Bayley says that for the whole time they lived here, “we had no help in the house or garden”, and eventually “both were in a state in which help of any kind would have come too late”.

Others remember things a little differently: they did have a gardener at first, believed to be Ted Coombes, but never gave him any instructions. Once when Iris was away, he took it on himself to weed their gravel drive. Iris was horrified when she got back, and even tried to order poor Ted to put the greenery back where he'd found it. Later, it was noticed that the most abundant plants in the garden were Japanese knotweed and giant hogweed.

Bayley himself admits that it became increasingly overgrown during their time: “The grass of the former lawns”, he wrote, “grew longer and longer and more tussocky... the box hedges, neat and trim when we moved in, had climbed to giant size, almost obscuring the front of the house, which faced north... Letting things go, a principle we had once followed almost unconsciously, was now asserting itself as a positive force”.

The Bayleys loved swimming, and one of the garden's newer features was a swimming pool – really a large tank – fed with rainwater from the roof, and known to some friends as “Iris's Wallow”. Bayley fixed up a heating system consisting of two electric immersion heaters, and posted warnings that swimmers should take care to switch them off first.

Cedar Lodge in their day was seriously run-down. As Bayley recalled it was “startlingly cheap to buy, but we discovered later that it was in bad condition, however solid it looked. Mr [George] Palmer, a veteran builder with very bright blue eyes, was soon in constant attendance”. They never succeeded in heating it properly, and it was only towards the end of their time that they attempted any major alteration, trying to open up the hall and stairs:

“Young Mr Palmer and his helper... stood on ladders, manoeuvring a gigantic steel girder into position on top of the new brick piers. Owing to some miscalculation, this rolled steel joist, however massive in appearance, was barely long enough to span the gap, and one end only just rested on the brickwork. After it had been shrouded over with paint and plaster, I used sometimes to give it a glance of apprehension as I descended the stairs, wondering if it would come crashing down on us...”

The Bayleys loved their village home after their own fashion, but as John admits, they weren't either county or country, nor were they the sort of enterprising commuters who did up their houses

at the weekend.

Eventually they moved back to a more manageable home in Oxford, a few years before Iris began to show signs of the Alzheimer's disease which overshadowed the end of her life, and forms the sad conclusion of her husband's absorbing book.

Collected by Geoff Lane of Steeple Aston Village Archive, with thanks to Jill Duncan, and to Hanny and Roderick Nicholson, for their memories.

Mike McKinley adds:

Geoff has very nicely summarised some of the best memories of Iris. However, I can still offer a few more from others as well as from Clare and me. One of our own clearest memories contrasts with what Geoff's informants recall. We remember the Bayleys not so much strolling hand in hand as striding round the village, invariably anti-clockwise, one well ahead of the other, seemingly deep in their separate thoughts and quite unaware of one another.

But perhaps the two recollections are not incompatible: one day strolling lovingly together along North Side, another striding out further afield to exercise their separate bodies and oxygenate their separate brains to think each their own fresh thoughts.

I once shared the village hall stage with Iris. It was another words and music event, as I recall: probably more words and less music than this memorial event, but perhaps worth a mention. We and others were reciting or reading items on local history and other local interests. I read something about the history of Hopcroft's Holt and our own local highwayman, I remember. She, I am pretty sure, read something of her own. I think it was a poem, but I'm not sure. What I do remember clearly is that she was not happy on stage.



Fig 40: Oblique view of Cedar Lodge of the front (north) and side (east) elevation of Cedar Lodge

Another lasting memory that Clare and I from South Side have of Iris is the haunting calls of foxes across the valley. Gwen Stone confirmed Geoff's impression that, if their gardener had any instructions, it was not to meddle with nature in the garden. We always understood that the garden was for Iris, whatever else and perhaps even primarily, a fox sanctuary.

Incidentally, a nice little story apropos their domestic staff. Once, when Iris learnt that one of her staff was keen to buy a small house in the village but could not get together the deposit, she offered to lend them the money on flexible terms so that they could pay her back out of their earnings as and when they could. A nice little human touch about the great writer I think.

To add to Geoff's reports on parties chez Bayley I have an account from Bill Lund who used to live in Grange Cottage across the village on South Side opposite Cedar Lodge. He recalls being invited to a drinks party:

"We were greeted by Iris pointing to a large table in the hall which was loaded to the gunwales with a vast number of bottles – Iris saying, "Just help yourself". I may say we did! I remember a lot of the literary world there with JB Priestley ensconced like an emperor in one corner of the drawing room."

APPENDIX 2: OCCUPIERS OF CEDAR LODGE, FORMERLY THE LODGE, FROM 1841-1911 CENSUS RETURNS

1841			1871			1901 "CEDAR LODGE"		
NAME	ROLE	EMPLOYMENT	NAME	ROLE	EMPLOYMENT	NAME	ROLE	EMPLOYMENT
Elizabeth Jones		Independent	Edmund Creek	Head	Retired Farmer & Landowner	Charlotte Vincent	Head	Of Independent means
Emma Winchester		Independent	Ann Creek	Mother	Landowner	Ellie Vincent	Daughter	
Elizabeth Badham		Independent	Mary S Rowland	Niece		Sarah Davenport	Servant	Lady's Maid Domestic
Richard Wodham		Male servant	Ann Walton	Servant	Nurse Domestic	Alice Connington	Servant	Cook Domestic
Anne Moore		Female servant	Ann Cowling	Servant	Cook	Ada Bossom	Servant	Housemaid Domestic
Jemima Gomon		Female servant	Harriet Franks	Servant	Housemaid			
1851			1881			1911 "CEDAR LODGE"		
NAME	ROLE	EMPLOYMENT	NAME	ROLE	EMPLOYMENT	NAME	ROLE	EMPLOYMENT
Elizabeth Jones	Head	Fundholder	Edmund Creek	Head	Retired Farmer	E Madeline Vincent	Head	Private Means
Winchester Henry Jones	Son	Scholar	Ann Walton	Servant	Housekeeper domestic servant	Elizabeth Boddington	Servant	Occasional Cook
Emma Winchester	Sister		Lucy Walton	Servant	Housemaid domestic servant	Mary Ann Miller	Servant	Temporary Housemaid
William Timpson	Servant	Gardener	Charles Scragg	Servant	Agricultural labourer			
Anne Moore	Servant	Cook						
Anne White	Servant	Housemaid						
Ann Pastto	Servant	Kitchen maid						
1861			1891 "THE LODGE"					
NAME	ROLE	EMPLOYMENT	NAME	ROLE	EMPLOYMENT			
Ann Brooks	Head	Fundholder	Sarah Cartwright	Head	Living on own means			
Mary Hughes			Catherine Cartwright	Daughter				
Sarah Harris		Formerly servant	Mary Cartwright	Daughter				
Elizabeth Morgan	Servant	Cook	John C Cartwright	Grandson				
Mary Freeman	Servant	Housemaid	Rose Moore	Servant	Cook Domestic servant			
Thomas Higgs	Servant	Groom	Emma A Tuck	Servant	Housemaid			

APPENDIX 3: GAZETTEER OF IMAGES RELATING TO PROPOSED WORKS

GROUND FLOOR



Fig A3.1: Study to the left-hand side of door where a cloakroom is proposed to be inserted and a small window created in the end wall

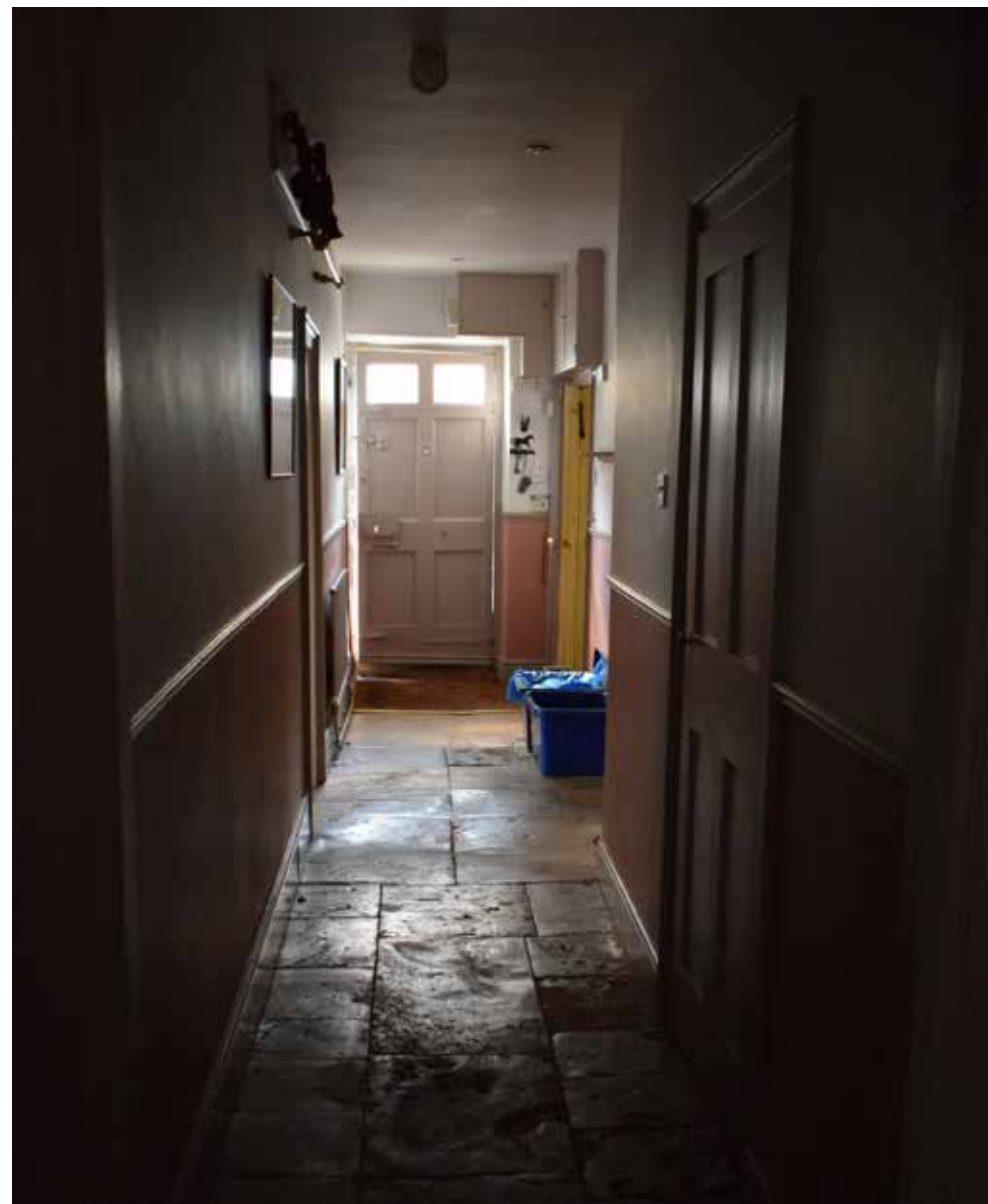


Fig A3.2: View from the service corridor of the main range to the side door of the former service range with a new door proposed on the left-hand side to the kitchen. Glazed door to be inserted just beyond the door on the right-hand side



Fig A3.3: Looking into the kitchen/diner from the 2001 conservatory with c. 1960s opening from the main house into the former service range. New door proposed in the wall where the Welsh Dresser is located to the left of the door from the Reception Hall



Fig A3.5: Boiler room which is proposed to be combined with the utility room adjoining with access via the existing door



Fig A3.4: Utility room which it is proposed to combine with the boiler room with the removal of the dividing wall. Existing door to be blocked and access via the door into the boiler room



Fig A3.6: The stair in the service wing which appears to have been recently replaced. Proposal is to remove and install a new, compliant stair in this location



FIRST FLOOR



Fig A3.7: Balustrade of the current stair (recent) removed and new balustrade installed. Door to the current bedroom adjacent to the door opening from the main range to be moved to remove conflict with this door



Fig A3.9: Small box room extended c. 1930s by a lean-to extension over a ground floor bay window. Original size of the room marked by encased ceiling beam.



Fig A3.8: Bedroom in former service wing with ensuite inserted. Proposal involves the removal of the ensuite and installation of a non-structural dividing wall to create two bedrooms

EXTERIOR



Fig A3.10: 2001 conservatory which is to be demolished and replaced by a new kitchen extension



Fig A3.11: Eastern gable wall where a small window is proposed to be inserted at ground floor to serve cloakroom



Fig A3.12: View from the southeast of the house with the conservatory to be replaced and the potting shed to be converted to a garden studio

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