



# **CEDAR LODGE STEEPLE ASTON OXFORDSHIRE**

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**HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT  
AUGUST 2019**

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## 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 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, defines its heritage significance. The report summarises a proposal to insert a 'jib' door into a bedroom at Cedar Lodge and provides an assessment of the impact this might have on the identified heritage significance of the house. As the works are all internal no assessment has been undertaken in relation to Cedar Lodge's location 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.<sup>2</sup>

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.<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup>

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.<sup>5</sup> 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.<sup>6</sup>

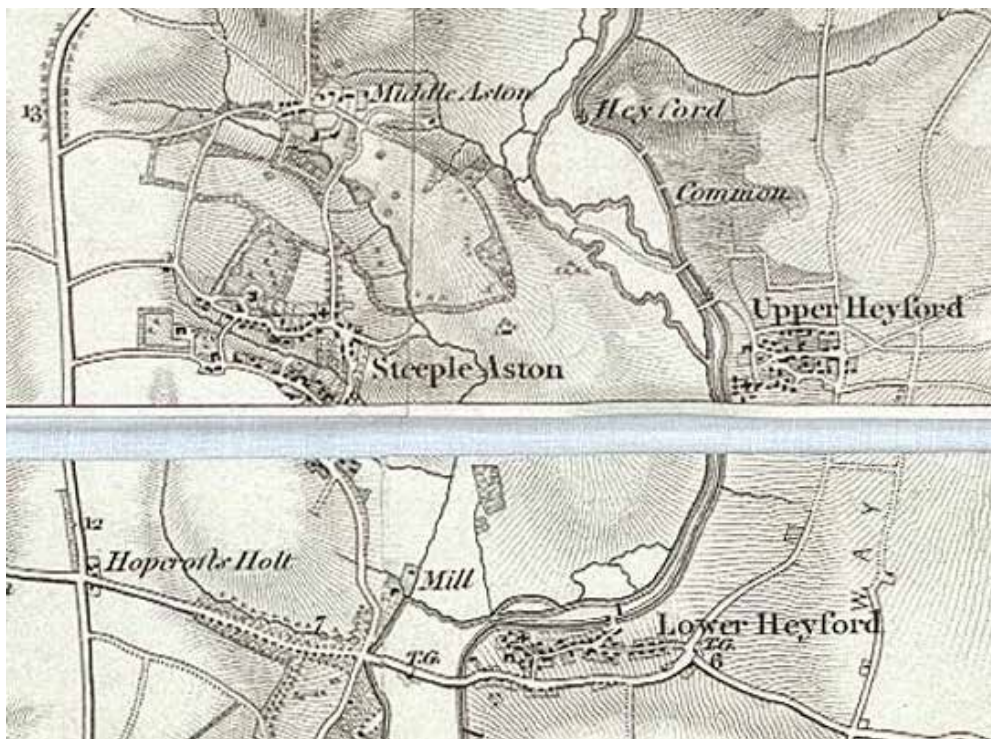


Fig 3: First edition one-inch OS Map 1833 showing topography<sup>1</sup>



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'

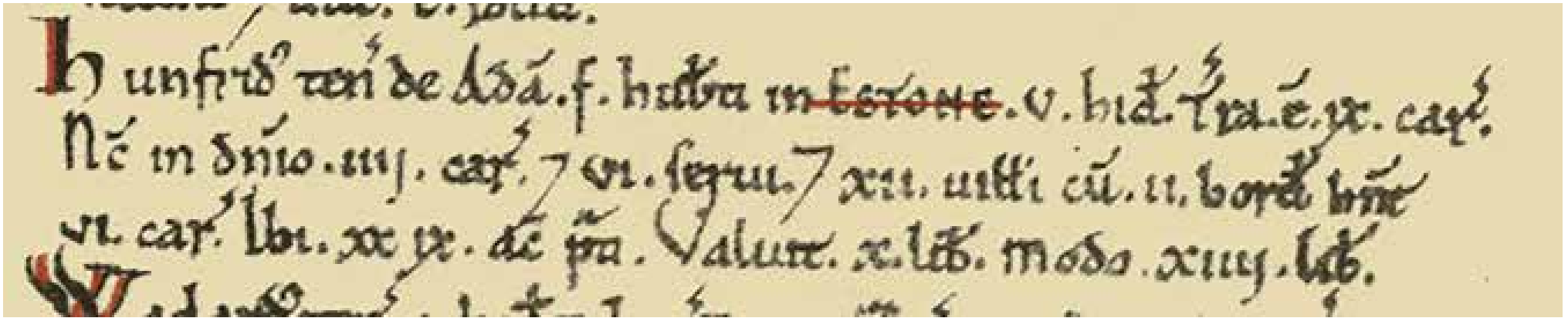


Fig 5: Entry for Steeple Aston (Estone) in Domesday Book, 1086. Source: Open Domesday

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.<sup>7</sup> Available historical records indicate that the manor then passed into the hands of the Romeney family, but was transferred to Balliol College in 1320.<sup>8</sup>

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.

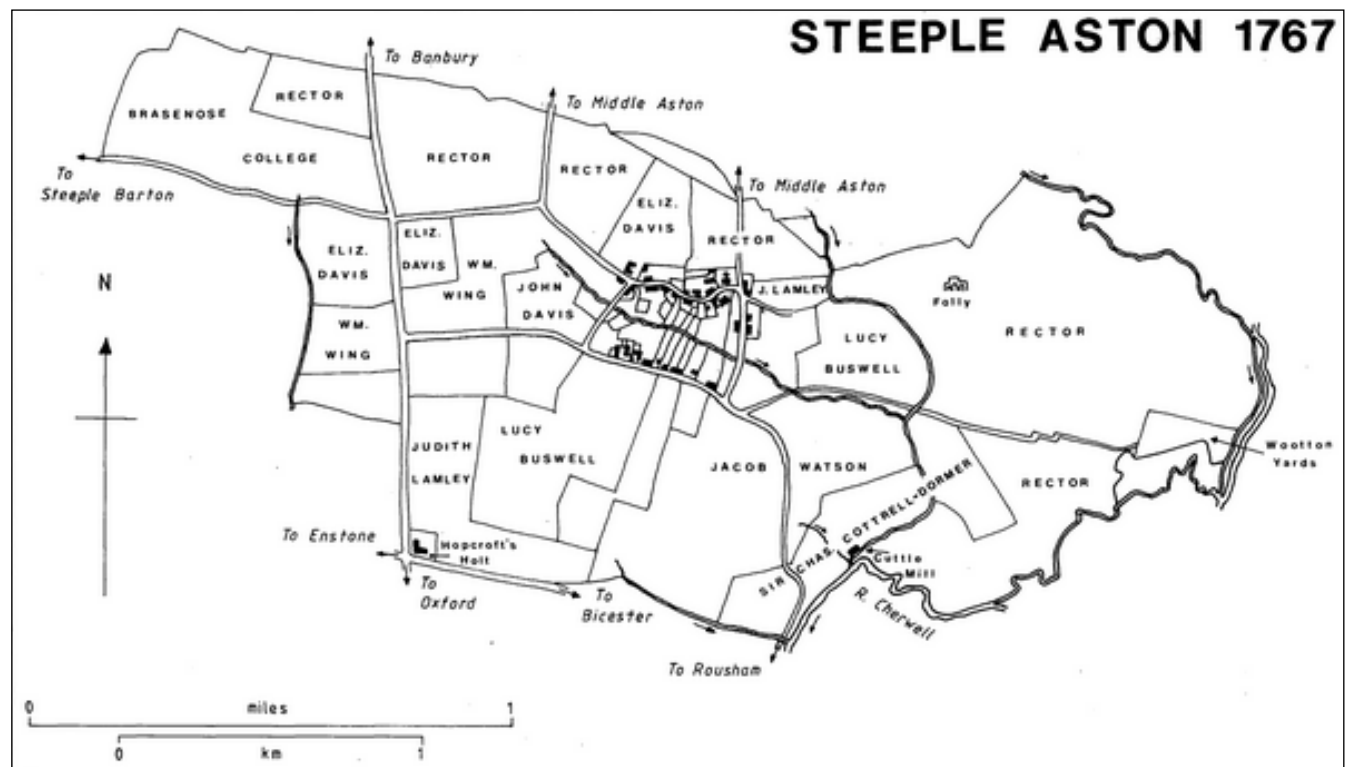


Fig 6: Steeple Aston enclosure map<sup>9</sup>

## 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.*<sup>10</sup>

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'.<sup>11</sup>

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'.<sup>12</sup> 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.<sup>13</sup> Some scholars have dated the building to 1725.<sup>14</sup> 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.<sup>15</sup>



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.<sup>16</sup> 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.<sup>17</sup>

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*'.<sup>18</sup> The following image c. 1900 according to the SAVA Report (2013) is noted as The Lodge.<sup>19</sup>

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**.<sup>20</sup> 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'*<sup>21</sup>



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: Iris Murdoch photographed by Ida Kar, 1957. Held by the National Portrait Gallery, London

### 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.<sup>22</sup> Numerous books and articles make reference to Iris Murdoch's time at Cedar Lodge.

## 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 16: 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 17: 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 18: North elevation from the northwest showing the main range with modern timber porch the two-storey extension and the former service wing



Fig 19: 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 SAVA Report (2013) concludes that what is now the service wing was a former farmhouse dating from pre 1767 and only became absorbed as part of the service wing once 'The Lodge' was constructed around 1767-1780 to become a small Country Residence. It was subsequently extended in the 19th century. The extent of survival of the earlier building is thought to be limited. Physical examination of the fabric tends to confirm the view that there is very little of the earlier building left.

The front (north) elevation has a sash window to the first floor and small sixed 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 21: 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 20: 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 22: View of the rear (south) elevation of the former service wing showing the 8 over 8 sash windows to the first floor

It is noted that the window chosen for the south elevation does not reflect, or seek to match the former service wing 8 over 8 sash windows, but the tripartite windows of the south elevation of the main house, suggesting the owners at the time clearly considered the enlarged bedroom visually formed part of the main house

### 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.



Fig 23: View of the back wall of the potting shed from the north. The ridge of the hipped roof projects above the brickwork roof



Fig 24: 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 25: View looking west from the garden showing the rear brick wall and brick piers with timber infilling of two bays.

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, providing access via a corridor/landing to three bedrooms, one en-suite, and a shower room. The secondary staircase 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 have 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 or left-hand side of the main range, 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.

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.





Fig 26: 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 28: 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 27: 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 29: View of the 'music room' with more complete architectural details (cornice for example)



Fig 30: 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 31: Cellar

## CHANGING ROLE OF THE SERVICE WING

Up until WWI any house of middle-class status in England would have employed servants, and houses were designed to provide the service accommodation required by the household. This included making separate bedrooms and amenities for servants to live-in. There was normally a clear division between the main house and service accommodation with a separate service staircase.

Andrew Clarke writes that:

*The servants would normally use a different route to get to the various parts of the house and would aim to be seen as little as possible. This was not because they were considered beneath notice: on the contrary, it was so that they could do their work uninterrupted by the requirement to exchange civilities. Houses evolved so that domestic staff could go about their task without interruption, not to ensure the privacy of the residents. They had none.*<sup>23</sup>

John Burnett also points out '[t]hroughout the nineteenth century and until the First World War domestic service constituted [the largest single employment for English women], and the second-largest employment for all English people'.<sup>24</sup>

This was clearly the case in Steeple Aston, with a number of houses having live-in servants. Using the census returns for the years 1841 to 1911 it is possible to trace the occupants of Cedar Lodge (formerly The Lodge) including the number and role of servants. While 'The Lodge' is not specifically identified for some years in the census, its location in North Street and relationship to the two Alms Houses and School House opposite 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 return 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 living in the house was 4 (1851) the lowest 2 (1911) and usually 3. Their roles include Gardener, Groom, Cook, and Housemaid.

After 1911, it is still possible to identify servants at Cedar Lodge using advertisements in local newspapers. There are a number of advertisements in the local papers up to October 1924 for staff at Cedar Lodge. 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, and no advertisements have been found seeking staff to work at the house thereafter. It is therefore unclear if any 'live-in' servants were employed by the new owners or employed up to the outbreak of WWII.

After the World War II the way country houses were occupied, and the occupants themselves, changed. Changing technologies meant that fewer staff were required; changing patterns of employment and the impact of a world war made it difficult to recruit staff; the cost of running a country house estate (with very high post war taxes) all contributed to significant changes.

In 1956 Iris Murdoch and John Bayley took up residence at Cedar Lodge. John Bayley says that for the whole time they lived here, 'we had no help in the house or garden'. See **Appendix 1**.

We know that Iris Murdoch and John Bayley kept no servants during their time at Cedar Lodge, and so from 1956 at the latest, the service range was incorporated by the owners as living space. The historic layout of the house, however, suggests that parts of the service range were utilised as accommodation for the family much earlier in the house's history.

Visible dormers in a photograph c. 1900 might suggest that the attic space was used as accommodation at this time, however,

there are several reasons to question this. The current attic stairs are located in the space between the principal bedrooms to the rear to the house. Two doors once accessed each bedroom where the staircase is now located (one remaining but blocked, another removed but evidence survives). These doors must either have opened out onto a shared dressing room, or served as the main doorways to the bedrooms. Either way, if there was a previous staircase, it could not have existed in this position. The only alternative location for an attic staircase is further toward the front of the house. The width of the hallway is 1.7m, which would mean that the hallway could accommodate a narrow staircase of about 0.9m with 0.8m as hallway to pass. This is also true of the ground floor hallway of the house. As the current location of the stairway from ground to first floor occupies 1.9m, we consider it unlikely that such a diminutive staircase would have existed in this position. Even if it did, the attic space is small and unheated (NB there are no fireplaces, recesses are to the sides of the chimney breasts), and so would not have been occupied by the family.

It is unlikely that servants would have slept here because they would have to pass through the main range. We conjecture, therefore, that the attic was not used as accommodation, but accessed by a ladder and used for storage (despite the dormers present c. 1900). A 1925 sale advertisement states the house has '7 beds, bath (h. & c.), 2 attics'. These seven rooms include three in the main range (two principal rooms and the smaller room now an ensuite), and four in the service range (the larger room with an ensuite probably historically divided into two). This supports the hypothesis that the 'two attics' were not used for accommodation at this time. Evidence from the photograph in the 1970s showing the dormers removed does not represent a change of use by this time. Rather, the installation of the current dormers by 2009 at the latest was likely added at the same time as the staircase to the attic and represents the first time the attic was used for accommodation.



Fig 32: Bedroom in former service wing, to the west, with ensuite inserted

Census information (Appendix 2) indicates that there are usually about 3 or 4 family members, and 3 or 4 servants at any one time. Two of the servants (the Groom and the Gardener) very possibly lived in ancillary accommodation to the house, leaving just two servants occupying the service range. This means that there were likely only two or three servants needing accommodation in the service range, and three or four members of the family plus guests needing 'main' accommodation. As there are only two principal bedrooms (for the heads of the household and their guests), at least one more 'main' room is required for the children. The room at the front of the house which is now an ensuite, and the room adjacent to the principal bedroom are likely candidates. We think it likely that both rooms were used by the family.

Furthermore, the rather unusual layout of the staircase at the front of the house, which features a small landing between the main range and the service range, allows easy access to both sides of the house. The main staircase also serves the extended bedroom, therefore, increasing the likelihood that it would have been used by family members. This is especially true considering the extension to bring it into line with the garden elevation of the main range and installation of windows matching the main range.

The layout of the house, width of the hallway, location of the main staircase and bedroom doors, all suggest that the owners of this house would have previously occupied at least one room of the service range. It seems most likely that the bedroom they would have occupied is the one now proposed as an ensuite bathroom.

## 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 is 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 sit directly along 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.

## 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) 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) 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 WORKS

The proposed works involve the insertion of a 'jib door' between the bedroom on the south west side of the main house and the bedroom immediately adjoining to the west. This involves the removal of the modern bookcases on the western side of the room and the creation of a door opening.

The principal bedroom has a 6-panel door from the landing and also a similar 6-panel door to a narrow cupboard (perhaps once a dressing room, now hallway taken over by a staircase) in the eastern wall. There is a simple skirting-board dado and plaster cornice.

While it is a principal bedroom its details are simple with the primary focus of the room being the tripartite window and the fireplace, the prominence of which is reduced by the book cases, which are to be removed to better re-instate the spatial and visual quality of the room.



Fig 33: First floor plan showing the relationship of the two rooms



Fig 34: Eastern wall of the bedroom with the entrance door and a door to a narrow cupboard simple skirting, dado and cornice



Fig 35: Western wall showing the simple skirting, dado and cornice, and the centrally placed fire surround and bookshelves which are proposed to be removed. The opening is proposed to the right-hand side of the fireplace surround





Fig 36: The tripartite window in the main bedroom



Fig 38: The adjoining bedroom looking towards the eastern wall



Fig 37: The bedroom showing the c. 1930 extension, marked by the ceiling beam, and the tripartite window which matches those of the garden elevation of the main range

## ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT ON HERITAGE SIGNIFICANCE

Historic England, in its on-line advice making changes to your property, provides advice on making internal changes to listed buildings:

*The layout of a historic house is valuable because it tells the history of how the house was used when first built, and how it might have changed over time, because of fashion and as living standards improved.*

*With old houses it's usually a good idea to work with the historic 'grain' of the building when thinking about making internal alterations. This usually means **keeping the main rooms** and the stairs in their existing positions.*

*It may be possible **to remove internal walls** to make larger rooms or to divide a large room to make smaller spaces. But **this will very much depend on the importance of the wall or room**. In most cases - and usually in listed buildings - you will be expected to keep old walls, or at least enough to show where they were. [Emphasis added]<sup>25</sup>*

The proposed works do not alter the layout of the building, insert or remove walls but seeks to make a connection between two existing rooms.

In relation to extensions it considers the issue of making new openings. While this is not the case with this proposal, the advice is considered relevant. It comments, *'sometimes you will need to create a new opening. This needs careful consideration as in certain cases, such as medieval timber-framed buildings, removing part of a wall to form a doorway can cause structural problems. A new doorway **may also spoil the design of a panelled or significantly decorated room'*** (pages 12-13) [Emphasis added].

The principal bedroom, which is the subject of this proposal, is not panelled or significantly decorated, but it is acknowledged

that in the context of Cedar Lodge, a modest late 18th century house, the proportion of the room and the surviving detailing add to the architectural history of the building.

### ALTERING THE PROPORTIONS OF THE BEDROOM

In recognition of the existing architectural character of the bedroom, and in response to concerns raised by Cherwell District Council Officers, it is proposed to make the connection between the two rooms using a 'jib door'.

Peter Nicholson defines a jib door as one, *'intended to be concealed, either from its leading to a private room, or from there being no corresponding door, and it is therefore made flush with the surface of the wall, being generally canvassed and papered over, or painted the same as the room; the design being to conceal the door as much as possible, or to preserve the symmetry of the side of the room it is in'.*

C E Papendiek similarly defines a jib door as, *'one so constructed as to be entirely in the same face or faces of a wall, thus preserving the dado and subbase of the door, and thereby keeping uniformity in the room'.*

Richard Brown, comments on the various devices used to conceal doors in country houses, mentioning a false bookcase, a false brick wall or more simply the use of matching finishes. In relation to the plan form of bedrooms spaces, Brown comments on the importance of having an interconnecting door with the 'dressing room' as well as an external door, so that the servant may enter (p. 179).

The relationship between servants' accommodation and their access to other principal spaces is evident in the layout and design of the country house. These points of access and routes do not conflate the hierarchal distinction between each, but register the way these buildings were occupied and contribute to the history of the place.

Jib doors were used from the late 17th century through to the 19th century, usually in houses of high status with fine panelled or plaster decorated rooms. One of the earliest uses of 'jib doors' are in the rooms constructed for William and Mary at Hampton Court Palace at the end of the 17th century. Following the fire in 1988 a photographic record was undertaken, and the National Archives notes two images *'King's Dressing Room; jib door on north wall* and *Apartment 6; King's Writing Closet; jib door on north wall'*. There is a jib door in King William II's closet which leads to a private privy.

At Faringdon House, Oxford, a house included in the National Heritage List for England, Grade I, recent sales particulars noted a bedroom on the first floor, *'with a fireplace, two windows looking out over the park and a jib door leading to its en-suite bathroom'*. It is unclear when the door and ensuite were installed.

Other examples are included in **Appendix 3**. These included Buckingham Palace, London, Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire, Oxburgh Hall, Norfolk, Wimpole Hall, Cambridgeshire, Croome Court, Worcestershire, Tottenham House, Wiltshire, Eynsham Hall, Oxfordshire and the White House, Washington DC.

Historic precedent and contemporary architectural advice show that the introduction of a jib door is an entirely legitimate way in which the proportions and architectural detailing of a room can be preserved. The proposed use of a jib door in one of the principal bedrooms at Cedar Lodge will have a minimal impact on the visual appreciation and understanding of the room, or its architectural character.

### LAYOUT AND FUNCTION OF ROOMS

18th century small country houses typically features a 'main range' including the main entrance, principal entertainment spaces, and principal bedrooms, as well as a 'service range', which provides the kitchen and laundry facilities and



Fig 39: The King's Closet, Hampton Court Palace with a jib door adjacent to the bed leading to a velvet covered toilet



Fig 40: The Red room at Faringdon House, Oxfordshire

accommodation for staff. The service ranges can either be behind or alongside the main range. By design the service ranges are generally plainer than the main range and thus aesthetically evidence their function.

Cedar Lodge incorporates many of the features typified by the norms of the 18th century, but also demonstrates key differences. These can be summarised as follows:

- The service range probably incorporates parts of the earlier building;
- The rooms in the 'service range' adjacent to the west of the main house may always have provided accommodation for the

owners. This is due to a lack of other viable accommodation in the attic, and layout of the stairs. Census data, indicating that more family members than staff occupied the house, also supports this conclusion;

- The service range was in part gentrified during the second quarter of the 20th century with the addition of a bay window and extension of the room above with a tripartite windows which reflects the architectural language of the main range;
- Later in the 20th century from 1956 when Iris Murdoch resided at Cedar Lodge the principal ground floor room was joined to the kitchen spaces in the service wing with a new doorway through, colonising that part of the service wing as a part of

the main living spaces;

- On the first floor the accommodation was used as a part of the family accommodation, with Iris Murdoch's study located in the service wing;
- Post 1986, an ensuite was added to one of the bedrooms in the former service wing as a guest room;
- A conservatory was added to the rear of the ground floor of the service wing, further integrating it as part of the family house.

Cedar Lodge is a smaller country house and it is evident that the service wing was absorbed as a part of the main living of the house by the 20th century at the latest.

It is considered that the proposals recognise the heritage significance of Cedar Lodge, as articulated in the Worledge Associates Heritage Report (2017) and this Heritage Impact Statement.

### 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 existing layout and relationship of rooms and the evidence of this development and thus will have 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 part of 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 a modest internal change 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 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 situated along the rest of the street, 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 proposals result in a modest internal change to the building without impacting on its historic garden setting.

**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 proposal, as part of a major investment of funds to upgrade the house to meet 21st century lifestyle, will ensure the long-term conservation and preservation of the house and thus this communal recognition of its connection will be maintained.

## REASON FOR REFUSAL

On 25 June 2019 Cherwell District Council refused listed building consent (ref: 19/00703/LB) for the 'creation of a jib door between bedroom and bathroom to create an ensuite with associated works,' for the following reason:

'That the proposed breach through between the original farmhouse and the later service wing would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of this designated heritage asset through the erosion of the distinction between the principal and service accommodation. In the absence of identified public benefit to outweigh the less than substantial harm, the proposal is contrary to Policy ESD15 of the Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 Part 1 and saved Policy C18 of the Cherwell Local Plan 1996 and Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.'

### OFFICER REPORT

The delegated report sets out the case officer's analysis and understanding of the site's heritage significance, and assesses the nature and extent of the impacts of the proposed works on that significance. In defining the site's significance the case officer says:

- The historic evolution from farmhouse to country house is part of the building's core significance;
- There are two distinct elements of accommodation – the main house (household) and service wing (staff) connected via the hallway at ground level and the landing at first floor level.

Based on these two matters the case officer then agrees with the Council's heritage expert in concluding that the proposed work of alteration would result in less than substantial harm because it would:

- Undermine part of the core significance of the listed building (breaching through between original farmhouse and service wing)

- Lead to the loss of evidence about the development of the property over time;

She concludes that there is no public benefit to justify that harm and recommends refusal of listed building consent.

### COMMENT

#### Historic Evolution

The main range was not a farmhouse adapted to form a country house and thus this cannot be part of its core significance.

Both the heritage report (Worledge Associates 2019) and the SAVA report (2013) on the analysis of the site's history share the same conclusion. There is evidence to suggest that an earlier building may have been incorporated as a part of the creation of Cedar Lodge and that the service range incorporates part of that earlier building. As the SAVA report points out there are 'inconsistencies in the building design and construction that would support this conclusion, though what survives of the earlier building could be very little. SAVA also point out that some materials may also have been re-used in the new build.

The evolution of the site is not as the Council suggests, that the main range was the 'farmhouse' to which was added the service range. Cedar Lodge never operated as a farmhouse. Indeed, the evidence points to the fact that the owners (Lamleys) were wealthy farmers, acquiring a cluster of plots to build a new home appropriate to their standing. This means that the building did not 'evolve'. It was substantially constructed in one period as a redevelopment proposal to build a substantial country house. The main range does not predate the service range. Furthermore the 1841 – 1911 Census returns (see Appendix 2) show that the occupiers were of independent means or retired farmers, who employed staff. However, probably from the 1930s there was no in service staff.

#### DISTINCT ELEMENTS OF ACCOMMODATION

The officer's report (paragraph 8.5) explains that 'the existing

dwelling' consists of two distinct elements of accommodation: the principal dwelling and the service range. This is not correct. The property operates as one single unit of accommodation.

What is clear is that there have been subsequent additions and alterations to the service wing during the 19th century and internal alterations and remodelling in the 20th century to improve and upgrade the accommodation, absorbing what was historically the service range as a part of the main use of the house. Both physical alterations and the way it is used suggest that internally there are not two distinct elements of accommodation.

In terms of the physical arrangement the officer's report comments (paragraph 8.5) that the service range is connected to the main house via the hallway and landing. This is inaccurate. There is a service connection immediately to the right of the front door (historically the hall area). This has been changed with the staircase, realigned, the wall between hallway and an adjoining principal room removed and a new opening created on the ground floor to incorporate the rooms on the ground floor of the service range as part of the main living spaces to the house. This has also involved removing a chimney breast and dividing wall and constructing a new conservatory as a part of the re-purposing of the building to meet modern needs.

In terms of the use of the two parts the officer continues in paragraph 8.6 to explain that the service wing provided accommodation for staff with routes around the house that were separate from their employer, concluding that 'there is normally a clear division between the principal dwelling and service accommodation'. Externally this is evident in the form, scale and detailing of the two parts. Internally this is not correct and not the case. There are not two distinct elements of accommodation - it is all lived in as one. There is no in service staff that occupy the service wing (as historically, but not currently, may have happened). In service staff have not existed possibly since before WWII. In the context of the history of the house and its

evolution during the 19th and 20th centuries the absorption of service range accommodation as part of the main range happened some time ago. This is part of the history of this house and is similar to the history of many other small and even large country houses. The way they are used has 'evolved' to meet changing needs of society. At the time of listing there was no clear division internally between the two parts. Externally the refused proposals would have changed nothing.

Even if the use of the wing is considered to be part of the more recent history of the house this must be relevant and material because the works associated with the absorption of the service wing as a part of the use of the main house into the service range have been sanctioned by the local planning authority (it gave listed building consent and planning permission for the works). It is a recorded and approved stage in the evolution of the property reflecting the modern history of the country house.

#### UNDERMINE CORE SIGNIFICANCE

The evidence clearly shows that the 'functional separation between principal and service ranges', which the officer argues would be undermined by the proposed works, (paragraph 6.4 and 8.9 of the officer's report) long since ceased to exist.

The officer's argument that all these works predated listed

building control, implying that the changes would not have been approved (Paragraph 6.6) is simply not true. The Council gave approval in 1994 for changes to extend the service range as part of the main use of the house. Even so, at the time Cedar Lodge was listed in 1988 the service range had already long since ceased to operate as such. Indeed, that the list description makes mention of Iris Murdoch emphasises the point that the service range was already used as part of the main house and arguably, for its association with the well known author, it holds some significance in such a role.

Externally there will be no impact on the architectural form and detailing of the two parts of Cedar Lodge. It will be noted though that despite its external appearance the west wing has not had a service '**function**' since probably before WWII. This change in function can be read in the south elevation with the eastern bedroom immediately adjoining the main house, being extended c 1930s and a tripartite window inserted to match the main house, and not the 6 over 6 sash windows of the rest of the west wing.

Furthermore the Council has recently granted planning permission and listed building consent for an extension to the existing kitchen and dining facilities, which reinforces the fact that the service wing is now part of the main use of the house

with a different role to its historic one and with connections and circulation that reinforce this changed function.

#### LOSS OF EVIDENCE

The officer's report discusses the circulation around the building commenting in paragraph 8.5 and 8.6 that the ground floor hall and first floor landing are components that allow understanding of the movement between service and main ranges. These routes will not be affected and the proposal will allow the historical functional relationship and how it has been subsequently adapted to be 'read' and understood.

The case officer's confirms in her delegated report that 'there are no objections in principle to the use of a jib door' and she acknowledges that 'the use of a jib door would preserve the architectural proportions and detailing of the room'. She adds 'if the application were considered to be acceptable in principle it would be a sensible solution to the issue'. This seems somewhat contradictory but it is concluded that the point she is seeking to make is that the use of the service range room as an en-suite to the main house bedroom is objectionable in principle not the provision of the jib door. Therefore in a different circumstance there would be no objection.

## ADDRESSING THE COUNCIL'S REASON FOR REFUSAL

This listed building consent application involves the provision of a jib door in the main bedroom to connect to the adjoining room. By definition the jib door will form part of the existing architecture of the room, preserving its proportions and historic detailing. There will be steps beyond the door to mediate the change in levels. As accepted by Council officers the principle of a jib door is acceptable.

The jib door is a feature **added** and will not involve any existing features being taken away.

The proposed works will preserve existing circulation routes and the two staircases. The landing areas will remain. The existing layout of the building will not change and the existing visual division between the main range and the service range will not be affected.

Considered against the Council's reason for refusal of the previous scheme it can be concluded:

- Cedar Lodge did not evolve from farmhouse to country house as described by the Council. In relation to the origins of Cedar Lodge the proposed jib door will not result in any adverse impact on that aspect of the building's significance.
- The distinction, as currently exists, between the main range and the 'service range' will not be affected, internally or externally.
- The principle of a jib door is acceptable and its inherent design will ensure that there is no visible 'breach through' to the service wing.
- There will be no loss of evidence about the development of the property over time. Indeed, the history of the house

continues to evolve as the house has been adapted for use without in-house staff. This proposal is a part of the house's living history and adds to its interest without undermining its significance.

Assessed against the building's identified heritage significance this proposal would not result in any harm. Considered against the Council's identified concerns it is concluded that those concerns have been addressed and the proposals justified.

### JUSTIFICATION

The Council expressed the opinion on the previous, refused, proposal that there were no public benefits to outweigh the harm that the officer identified. The case officer argues that the owner's expectations and needs were not public benefits and stating that the dwelling is capable of functioning as a family dwelling as existing and the work is not necessary to secure a viable use for the dwelling.

This conclusion is flawed. The officer is not qualified to determine what is or is not the appropriate level of facilities for a property of this type. That the original owners were of sufficient status and means to require (and expect) a house of visible architectural quality and in house staff with modern, up to date, facilities and equipment suggests in the 21st century that the equivalent level of accommodation would include en-suites to the main bedrooms. It is certainly not for the officer to decide what is or is not an appropriate level of accommodation for a house of this status.

PPG, Historic Environment, paragraph 014 states:

'The vast majority of heritage assets are in private hands. Thus, sustaining heritage assets in the long term often requires an incentive for their active conservation.' This reinforces the point

provided in the Government and Historic England advice that effective conservation is not about preventing change and not about turning living places into museums. It is about recognising property owner's needs and seeking ways to meet those needs without compromising the heritage significance a place may hold.

As part of the long-term future of a place the owner's interest can be a public benefit.

Historic England's Conservation Principles (2008) explain in paragraph 86 how private interest can be a public interest stating:

'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.'

It should be noted that Historic England cautions against an inflexible approach in 'Making Changes to Heritage Assets' (2016) stating in paragraph 3:

'An unreasonable, inflexible approach will prevent action that could give a building new life; indeed it can eliminate that use. A reasonable and proportionate approach to owners' needs is therefore essential.'

## CONCLUSION

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

The proposal reflects the advice in Historic England's Guideline *'A Guide for owners of Listed Buildings'* and other advice on internal changes to listed buildings. The proposed use of a jib door to create access to an adjoining bedroom preserves the proportions and architectural detailing and character of a principal bedroom and is a well-established architectural device. The removal of the bookcases to allow the creation of the jib door will reinforce the proportions and architectural character of the room.

This is acknowledged by Cherwell District Council in the officer's delegated report on the refused listed building consent application, 19/00703/LB.

The proposed alteration is minimal in scale and impact and retains the layout of the house, thus maintaining its heritage significance.

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 41: Garden view across the valley, taken from the attic of Cedar Lodge



## 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 increasing 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 A1.1: 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: EXAMPLES OF THE USE OF JIB-DOORS

Research has revealed a number of examples of the use of jib doors being used in houses and rooms of high status and architectural quality.

At Buckingham Palace, the White Drawing Room, has a jib door: 'It is regularly used for audiences and small gatherings. The Queen enters the room via a hidden door disguised as a mirror and cabinet before receiving guests'.

At Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire, there is a jib door in the wall of the State Bedroom leading to an adjoining dressing room.



Fig A3.1: Hidden door the White Drawing Room Buckingham Palace



Fig A3.2: Image of the State Bedroom and the jib door

The National Trust in its website 'Discover Secret Doors' lists a number of its other properties with 'jib doors'. These include Oxburgh Hall, Norfolk. It writes, 'There are seven concealed doors at Oxburgh Hall, in Norfolk. Can you find the one in the library? This door is hidden within a wall of bookcases and is decorated with real book spines, with tongue in cheek titles that reference events and people from the history of Oxburgh.'



Fig A3.3: Jib door in the library at Oxburgh Hall, Norfolk

Also, 'The mansion at Wimpole Estate, Cambridgeshire, is riddled with false and hidden doors. Many doors are painted or wallpapered so that they blend in, making them very tricky to spot. In the Georgian period such devices were a popular way of maintaining the 'balance' of interiors. Can you spot them all?'

At Croome Hall, Worcestershire the jib door is off the principal

staircase. The National Trust writes, 'the 'hidden' doorway connects the main house to the red wing. The door was created by the 6th Earl of Coventry, in the late 18th century, during his later life when he became less mobile. It enabled him to retreat to his lavish private quarters, especially during times when the house was full of visitors. The 'jib' door was decorated so that it blended into its surroundings.'



Fig A3.4: Jib door off the staircase at Croome hall, Worcestershire



Fig A3.5: Jib door at Tottenham House, Wiltshire

At Tottenham House, Wiltshire, the Earl of Cardigan (Brudenell-Bruce) had a private boudoir on the ground floor with a private stair direct to the servants' accommodation 'so that he could be attended to without staff having to negotiate a route through the main 'public spaces'. Similarly, the Masons at Eynsham Hall, Oxfordshire, had a private staircase between a study and servants' quarters.



Fig A3.6: One of two concealed or 'jib doors' either side of the fire place in the Oval Office, at the White House

The use of 'jib doors' is found across Europe and in the United States of America, where the most famous examples are in the White House, Washington DC. In the later 19th century jib doors were installed in the Red and Blue rooms, with a two in the Oval Office.

An article on the doors in the Oval Office wrote on the 'concealed' doors – 'This sort of door is a design solution typically used by an architect for a door of secondary importance that doesn't fit the design scheme. For instance, it may conflict with the symmetrical layout of the room. The Oval Office has two major doors, three windows and two more window/doors and the two concealed doors'.

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