



# **CEDAR LODGE STEEPLE ASTON OXFORDSHIRE**

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**ENSUITE PROPOSAL  
HERITAGE IMPACT STATEMENT  
JULY 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 (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.



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>

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.<sup>5</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>6</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>7</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'

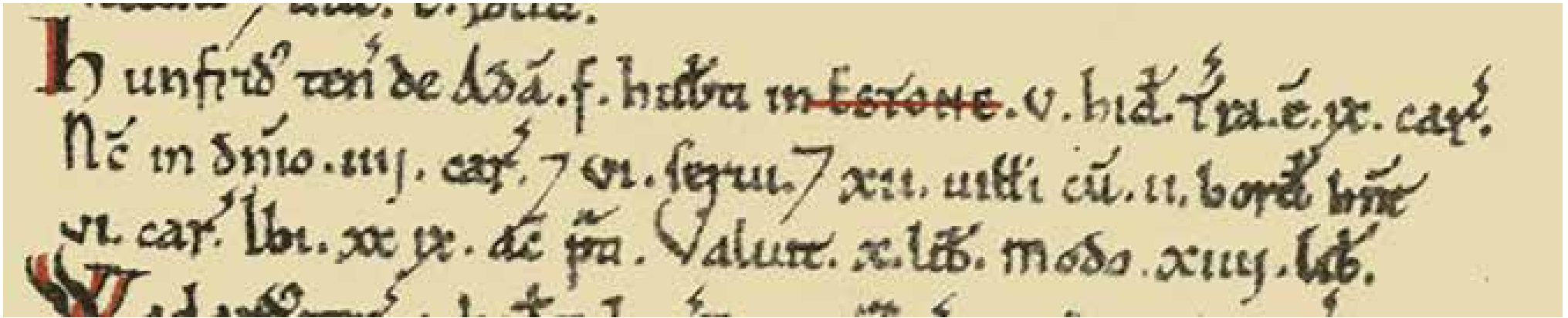


Fig 5: Entry for Steeple Aston (Estone) in Domesday Book, 1086. Source: Open Domesday

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>8</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>9</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.

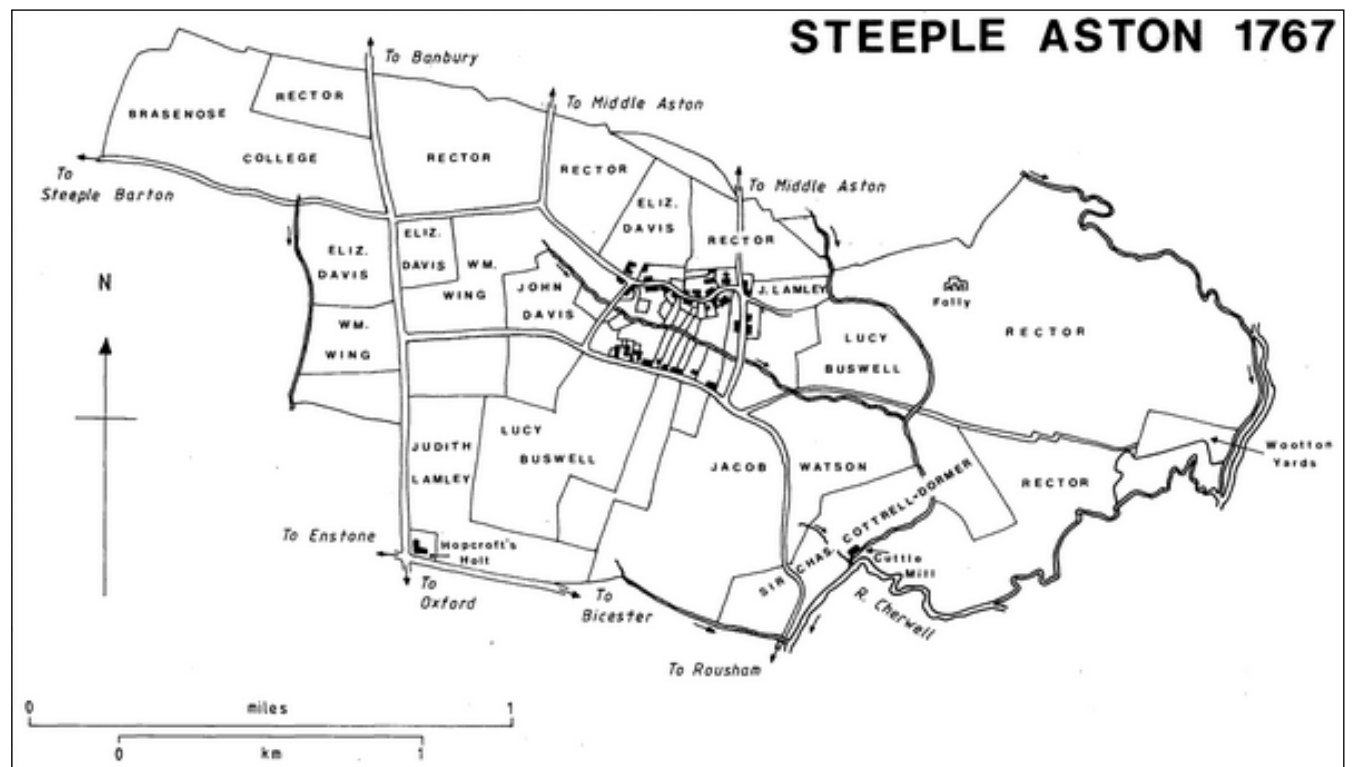


Fig 6: Steeple Aston enclosure map<sup>10</sup>

## 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>11</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>12</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>13</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>14</sup> Some scholars have dated the building to 1725.<sup>15</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>16</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>17</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>18</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>19</sup> The following image c. 1900 according to the SAVA Report (2013) is noted as The Lodge.<sup>20</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>21</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>22</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

## 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 SAVA Report (2017) and physical evidence suggest that what is now the service wing was a former farmhouse dating from pre 1767 and only became the service wing once 'The Lodge' was constructed c 1767-1780 to become a Country Residence. 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 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 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 24: View of the rear (south) elevation of the former service wing showing the 8 over 8 sash windows to the first floor

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



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.

## 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 building and subsequent change 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 or 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.

The principal bedroom on the western side of the house (yellow) has two doors, one providing access off the landing and the other currently to a small narrow cupboard. An inspection of the skirting board bedroom on the east side (dark pink) bedroom on the wall dividing the room from the hall, shows evidence that there was previously a matching door in this wall. These two doors provided access to a room located at the southern end of the landing lit by the round windows. Further evidence for this is in the coving on the landing, which abruptly terminates, marking where a wall once was.



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



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'





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

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.**



Fig 34: The wall between the bedroom and the hall landing showing the second door currently to a narrow cupboard but originally to a room at the southern end of the landing



Fig 35: The wall between the bedroom and the hall landing mirroring the other bedroom. Clear evidence from the skirting board that there was a previous matching opening in this wall, since blocked



Fig 36: Close-up of the skirting board showing the later inserted piece matching the location and width of the door opening in the other bedroom. Clear evidence there was a door to a shared room at the southern end of the landing lit by the round window

## PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The ownership of the property has changed recently and the new owners are proposing significant investment in the property to meet their family needs. Planning permission and listed building consent have already been granted for an extension and alterations to provide a new kitchen and family room (19/00531/F, 19/00532/LB). A separate listed building consent application for the installation of an ensuite to the main bedroom was refused. This application proposes an alternative location for the ensuite and includes a range of other minor works:

In summary the proposal includes:

- Removal of the modern staircase at the southern end of the hall landing to the two-attic bedrooms; creating an alternative opening to the attic space with a pull-down ladder to provide access.
- Insertion of a non-structural partition wall across the southern end of the hall landing to create an ensuite bathroom and re-opening the door from the western bedroom (yellow) to provide access.
- Inserting a non-structural wall in the eastern most bedroom in the former service wing to create a small home office at the southern end and storage at the northern end. The door to the study will be half glazed to provide borrowed light.
- Removal of the doors and modern partition to a separate toilet in the ensuite off the second principal bedroom and re-fit the ensuite.
- Remove modern partition to enlarge existing family bathroom.
- Enlarge the existing stairwell opening to the service stair (approved to be replaced under 19/00532/LB) to overcome safety issues.



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

It is considered that the proposals recognise the heritage significance of Cedar Lodge, as articulated in the Worlledge 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.

### INTERIOR WORKS

These works seek to rationalise some existing spaces and improve the liveability of the house.

### GROUND FLOOR

A detailed review of the approved replacement service stairs has revealed that the stairwell opening is required to be enlarged to allow the staircase to be compliant with current requirements. This will result in the stair landing further east on the first-floor landing under the window, and some changes to the existing partition below the current staircase to provide structural support to the enlarged opening. This minor loss of fabric is considered to be justified in order to ensure the provision of a compliant staircase.

### FIRST FLOOR

#### New ensuite

Physical evidence from both bedrooms and the landing, strongly suggests that there was a partitioned room at the southern end of the hall landing, currently occupied by the modern staircase to the two loft rooms. Given the historic joint access to this space from the two principal bedrooms it is most probable that this was previously a dressing room.

The removal of the modern staircase and inserting of a non-structural partition, close to the line indicated by the change in the coving to this part of the hall, to re-create a room to be used as an ensuite to the main bedroom is supported. Reinstating this room will contribute to reinstating the historic integrity of this part of the landing and help understanding of the how the spaces were once occupied.

The inserting of a new loft hatch with a retractable staircase to provide access to the two loft rooms will have a minimal physical and visual impact in this space.

#### Bedroom

This bedroom was extended to the south and a tripartite sash window inserted c 1930s. The proposal is to insert a non-structural partition to create a small home office at the southern end. The balance of the room would be used to store clothes with both walls lined with fitted wardrobes. The non-structural partition will have a half-glazed door to provide some borrowed light the northern room

#### Bathrooms

The proposed works are of a minor change to the previous approval which allowed for the complete re-fitting of the existing ensuite and the bathroom to the western end of the former service wing. Both changes provide enlarged spaces to the bathrooms and involve the removal of modern non-structural partitions and ceilings.

### 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. It will be noted that the proposals are internal only and will not result in any harmful impact on the building's external appearance or setting.

**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 fabric and evidence of this development and thus results in no harm to the site's heritage 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 and importantly reinstate a historic 'dressing room'. There is no impact on the building's setting.

**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.

## 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 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.

Cherwell District Council refused listed building consent, ref:19/00703/LB to create an ensuite in part of the former service wing. This resulted in the owners reviewing options and submitting the current proposal for an alternative location for an ensuite. This is based on clear physical evidence in both principal bedrooms and the hall landing, of a former room at the southern end of the hall landing, possibly used as a shared dressing room. The proposal seeks to re-instate a former layout and thus is an entirely appropriate solution that will enhance understanding of the former layout of the first floor.

The balance of the proposal arises from a review of the approved works for the two existing first floor bathrooms, and the requirement for the approved replacement staircase to comply with contemporary needs and requirements. These are considered to have no harmful impact on the heritage significance 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.



Fig 38: 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 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 39: 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

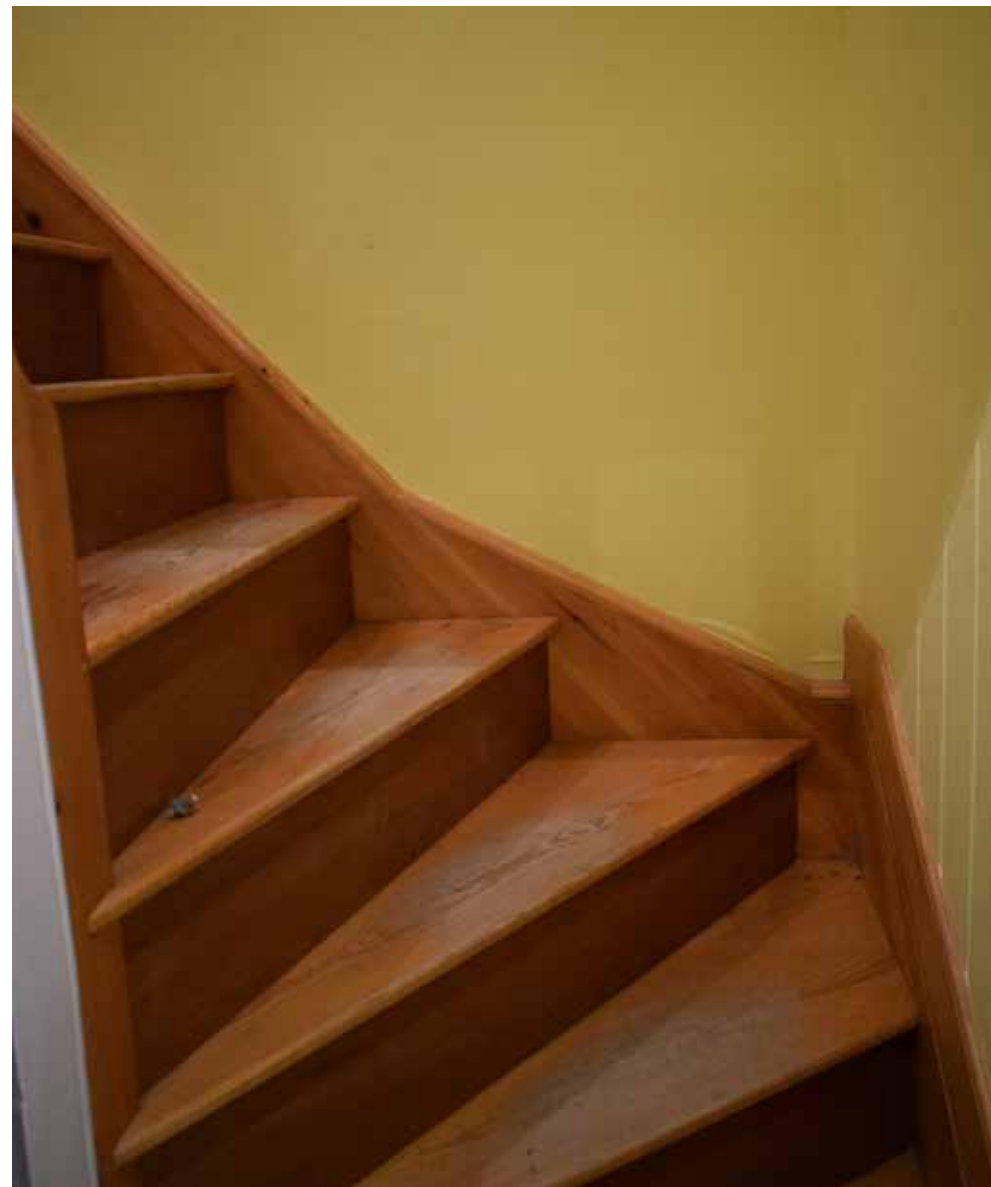


Fig A3.1 & A3.2: The stair in the service wing which appears to have been recently replaced. Proposal is to remove and install a new, compliant stair in this location

## FIRST FLOOR



Fig A3.3: Balustrade of the current stair (recent) removed and new balustrade installed. The compliant staircase will land just under the window.



Fig A3.4: 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. The non-structural partition will create a home office at the window end



Fig A3.5: View of the ensuite to the Master bedroom. Non-structural wall to toilet to be removed.



Fig A3.6: Bathroom in the former service wing to be enlarged by relocating modern cylinder heater and enclosure and moving the approved partition.

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