

**PROPOSED EXTENSION TO DWELLING HOUSE, DETACHED OUTBUILDING,
GARDEN POND AND REPAIRS AND RESTORATION WORKS TO ORCHARD WALLS
INVOLVING REMOVAL OF EXISTING OUTBUILDINGS
AT
CHURCH GARDEN, CHURCH HILL, HAREFIELD, MIDDLESEX. UB9 6DU**

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

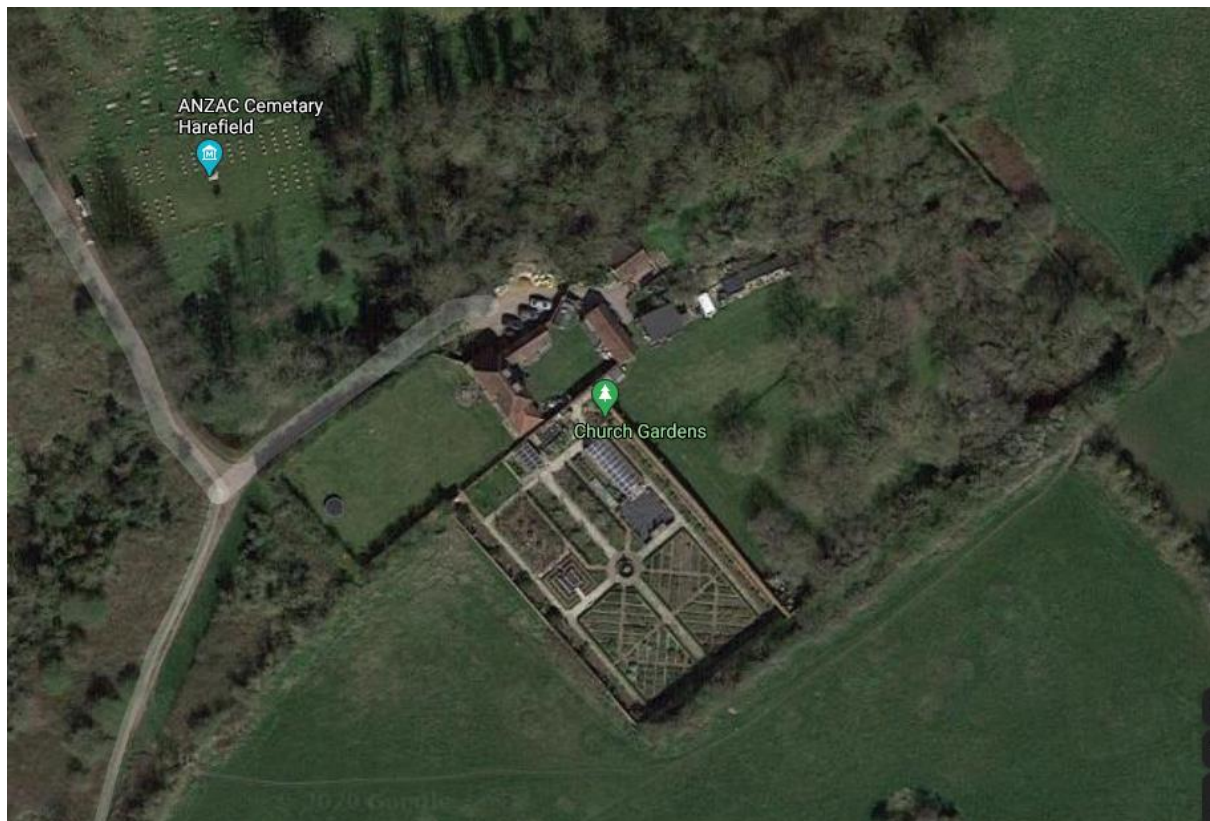
- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared in support of an Application for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for proposed works at the above property. These include the construction of a very small single storey storeroom extension to the existing dwelling house, the construction of a detached outbuilding together with the removal of existing outbuildings, the construction of a garden pond and the repair and restoration of the existing brick walls enclosing the Orchard garden area.
- 1.2 Church Gardens is a Grade II listed property which largely dates from the early 17th Century. The property comprises of a detached dwelling house, with detached annexe and garage, set in approximately three acres of grounds including a front lawn, Walled Kitchen Garden and Orchard and was originally part of The Harefield Place Estate. Harefield Place itself was demolished in the early 1800's and it is understood that the existing dwelling house was the original Coach House, though it has been altered and extended since then.
- 1.3 The Kitchen Garden and Orchard are enclosed with C17th brick walls ranging from 2.0m – 3.5m high. The enclosing walls to the Kitchen Garden area have already been repaired and restored but the walls to the Orchard Area are in a serious state of disrepair and have been included on the At-Risk Register of Listed structures for many years and are now in urgent need of attention.
- 1.4 Within the last two years, Church Gardens has been open for public visits. This originally started on the August 2018 Bank Holiday Monday, when the gardens were opened up for a few hours as part of the National Garden Scheme. Since then, there have been three subsequent Open Days in 2019 and many private visits. Unfortunately, due to the current COVID-19 situation, the gardens have not opened in 2020 but the intention is that Open Days and visits will resume in 2021 and part of the proposed works are designed to facilitate this.
- 1.5 This statement has been prepared in conjunction with a detailed Heritage Impact Assessment prepared by Dr Sarah Rutherford, Dip. Hort. Kew, M.A., Ph.D., which is included with this Application submission. Dr Rutherford prepared our original Conservation Plan for Church Gardens in 2004 and a great deal of the works proposed are in line with the recommendations within this Plan. As such, the Application submission is accompanied by detailed drawings, photographic record and full Schedule of Works in respect of the garden walls, together with a Personal Statement setting out the background and specific aims and objectives in relation to this project.

2.0 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 This property has a reasonably active planning history since being refurbished for use as a family home by Mr and Mrs McHugh in 1996-1998. Applications submitted relate to the

continuing restoration and improvement works to the property which have had to be implemented in a piecemeal and sequential manner as and when time and funds would permit and to ensure all works could be completed to the highest standard in order to retain, restore and enhance the historic fabric and character of Church Gardens. Planning and Listed Building Consents have been granted for modest single storey extensions to the main dwelling house, detached annexe and garage buildings to replace original outbuildings and repair and restoration works to the Kitchen Garden area, all of which have largely been implemented.

- 2.2 In April 2017 a submission was made to London Borough of Hillingdon for Pre-Application Advice in respect of the construction of a garden pond within the Orchard area and an underground Games Room to the rear of the existing garage. Hillingdon Planning & Conservation consulted Historic England and their written response received objected to the new building in this location and raised concerns about the size and depth of the proposed pond.
- 2.3 A follow up email submission was made to London Borough of Hillingdon on 24 August 2017 with a revised design scheme for the proposed Games Room. This submission followed consultants with and advice received from Sarah Rutherford, our Historic Design Consultant and Karin Kaye of KDK Archaeology, both of whom have been involved with this property for many years - Sarah Rutherford prepared the Conservation Plan for Church Gardens in 2004 and Karin has provided several Desk Top Reports and undertaken various Watching Briefs in respect of previous works. The revised design proposed a new, above ground Games Room building sited between the existing garage and store in conjunction with the removal of existing stores. It also allowed for a reduced pond size within the Orchard garden.
- 2.4 The Historic Environment Impact Assessment prepared by Dr. Rutherford in 2017 concluded that as the proposed building was now sited in an area of the garden already containing various adhoc structures that the visual and other effects on the historic environment setting of the rest of the walled garden, and particularly the terrace and arcade along the Northern boundary were considered to be minimal and acceptable. In terms of archaeological impact, Karin Kaye was of the opinion that this structure would cause minimal damage to the historic fabric and land form and on the basis of previous watching briefs in this area of ground, it was considered that the existing ground has been previously much disturbed and therefore unlikely to have any archaeological potential.
- 2.5 Neither, London Borough of Hillingdon or Historic England provided any further feedback on this revised submission. However, it is considered that this and the current Application Proposal largely address the original concerns raised and it is therefore hoped that these proposals will be acceptable.



Aerial view of Church Gardens

3.0 **CONTEXT**

- 3.1 The application site is located on the Southern edge of Harefield and to the rear of St Mary's Church and lies within the Harefield Village Conservation Area and the Metropolitan Green Belt.
- 3.2 The Application site, comprising of the existing dwelling house and walled gardens is Grade II Listed and is included on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens and is listed on the London Borough of Hillingdon At Risk Register of protected Buildings.
- 3.3 The current proposals relate to the ongoing restoration of Church Gardens as a unique Historic Garden but also now taking on board the development of the Gardens for public access. Our desire being, to share the ongoing restoration of this important heritage asset with the wider community and for the gardens to be financially sustainable going forward. While ensuring the long-term future for the whole historic environment within our ownership.

4.0 **USE**

- 4.1 The existing buildings at Church Gardens are in use as a detached private dwelling house with associated outbuildings including an annexe, detached garage and stores.
- 4.2 The proposed additional outbuilding is designed to be a low key and small-scale addition to the garden, very sensitive to the historic character while providing basic facilities for relatively small, supervised groups of visitors to the garden, on short visits throughout the

year. The building could function as both a tea room and a location for group meetings and events relating to the gardens and essential shelter during inclement weather.

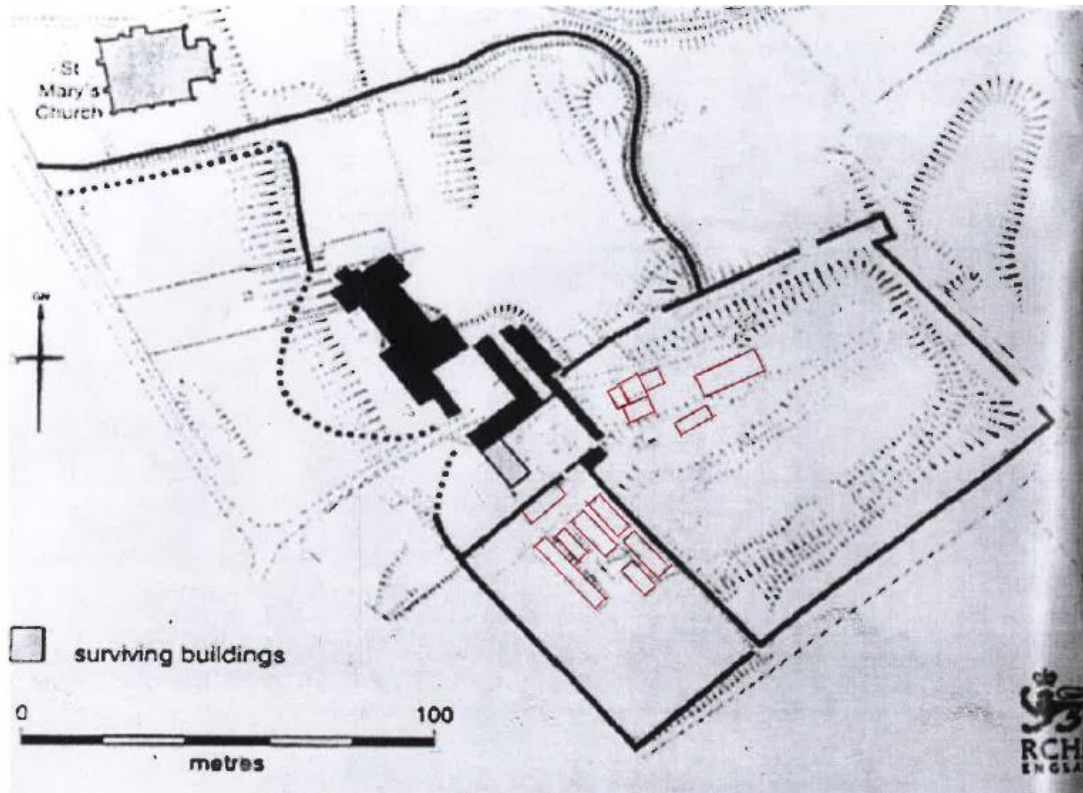
- 4.3 It is considered that this additional facility is essential to support the ongoing restoration, maintenance and upkeep of the gardens by developing a small, but valuable income stream that could be spread over most of the year. Other than erecting temporary marquees, there is no other building facility on site to accommodate visitors at present. In addition, there are no adequate disabled access to the property and no disabled toilet provision on site. This Application seeks to address all of these issues as sensitively as possible.
- 4.4 The proposed building incorporates a basement level which is fully below ground and will provide dry storage for use both in connection with the building itself and also general storage in connection with the gardens as a whole, accommodating everything from outside garden furniture, tools, equipment and materials needed in the ongoing repair, maintenance and upkeep of the property in that it will replace all of the existing storage buildings being removed as part of this submission.
- 4.5 The proposed repair and restoration works to the existing walls enclosing the Orchard Garden will allow this area of the gardens to be secured, reclaimed and planted out to enhance the full setting of the property.
- 4.6 The proposed small store room extension to the existing dwelling house will serve to provide space for general storage in connection with the use of the existing Music Room. This room is mainly used to provide private teaching and is presently very restricted by the number of instruments that need to be accommodated to facilitate this.



View from raised terrace onto location of proposed outbuilding

5.0 **DESIGN PROPOSAL**

- 5.1 The proposed outbuilding is set in the South West corner of the Orchard Garden and within an area of the property already occupied by the existing annexe, garage and tractor/mower store. Historically, this part of the property was laid out as the working yards to the main Manor House with old plans indicating that a series of buildings were set around two separate courtyards – the existing annexe building was constructed on the same footprint as the last remaining part of these structures in 2004/2005.



Copy plan from Royal Commission Survey of Church Gardens in 1997 showing the Historic footprint of Harefield Place with outbuildings and courtyards. Footprint of remaining outbuildings in the Orchard and Kitchen Gardens are outlined in red.

- 5.2 The proposed outbuilding itself is sited immediately adjacent to the existing tractor/mower store and on an area of ground previously occupied by a large double height shed. Following the construction of the garage building, this shed was removed, though some elements of other outbuildings still remain in this area and will also be removed.
- 5.3 The building is designed to sit comfortably within the context of the existing buildings and is to be of timber frame construction with black barn timber cladding externally and covered with tiled pitched roof in keeping with the existing annexe and garage buildings. All external windows and doors will be in painted timber and of a traditional design and style in keeping with the adjoining buildings.
- 5.4 Internally the building is designed as an open plan space with a small servery counter to one end in order to facilitate a multifunctional use to serve the needs of the gardens. On Open Days, the building will function as a tea room. On other days, it could accommodate a private group visit, open meeting, lecture or exhibition. The roof of the building is designed with

exposed timber trusses internally to create a sense of space and openness, with the southern wall largely glazed to overlook the main part of the gardens and the proposed natural pond.

- 5.5 The existing paved area in front of the new building will be refurbished to create an outdoor seating space, South facing and overlooking the whole of the Orchard area and the proposed natural pond.
- 5.6 The proposed natural pond is located close to the western boundary of the Orchard area, at the end of the existing stream which runs East West and is designed to form a natural culmination to the existing channel rather than it disappearing abruptly underground through a pipe and to provide an interesting feature in this otherwise empty part of the orchard. The pond will be surrounded by mixed planting to compliment its natural form and surroundings.



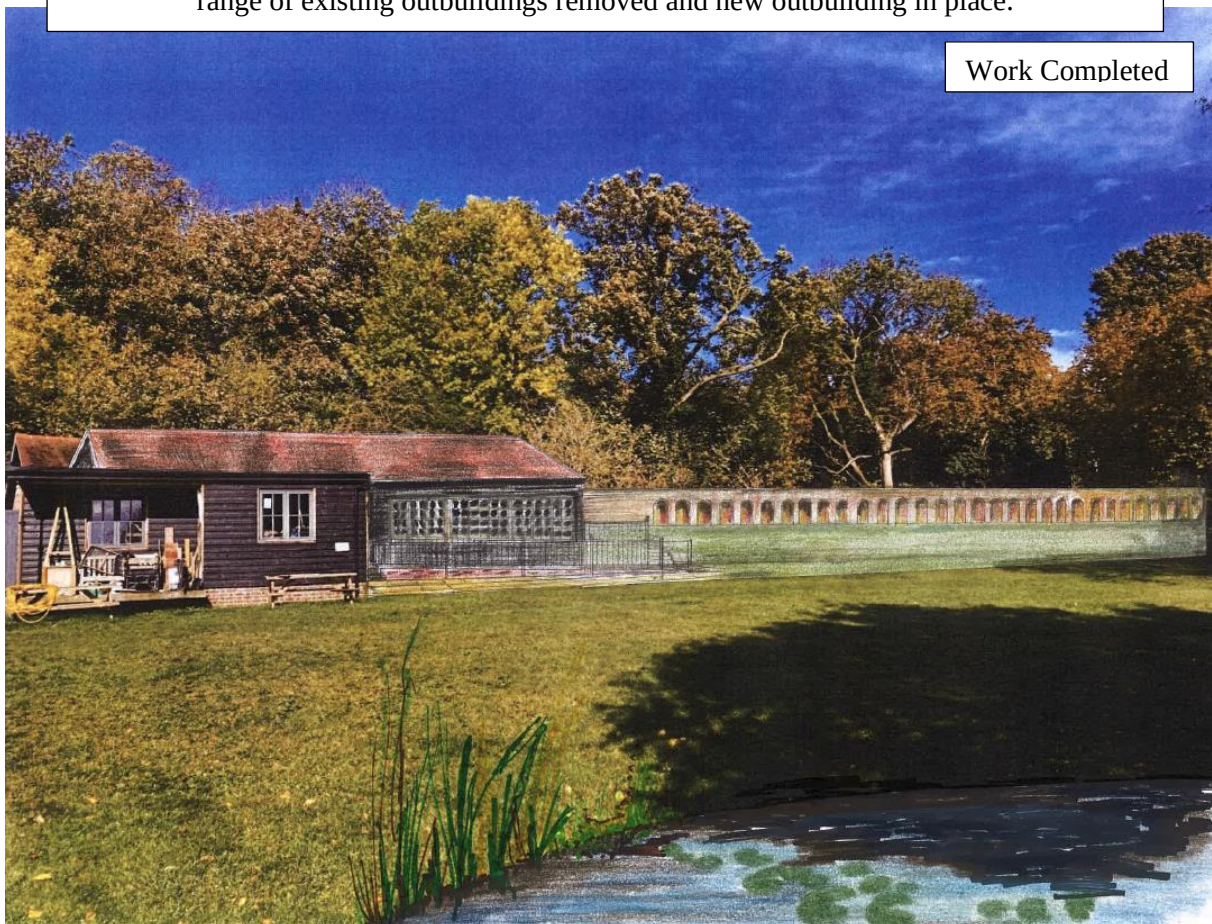
Area for proposed natural pond, created by natural flooding

- 5.7 The existing channel running through the Orchard will be refurbished, lined and replanted. It will have a pumped water feed linked in with the pond to ensure it runs all year round. In addition to providing a garden feature, the pond will enable the existing water course through the garden to be more easily managed and prevent future flood damage to the West garden wall. Presently, the existing drainage stream discharges into a narrow pipe before disappearing underground close to the Eastern boundary wall. However, this outlet frequently blocks and floods this area of the garden in heavy rainfalls.
- 5.8 This proposal also includes for the removal of a range of single storey outbuildings that run through the centre of the Orchard Garden. These buildings appear to date from the 1960's and are largely of in-situ concrete construction. It is believed at that time they were used as pig sties and stores. The original asbestos roofs to these structures have been replaced with ply sheeting to offer some protection from the elements.
- 5.9 These structures create a very unsightly and unwanted intrusion into the Orchard Garden, interfering with the original design concept for the overall space and obstructing views in all directions. It is proposed to remove all of these structures and restore this part of the garden to its original ground levels reinstating the views both through to and from the arcaded wall on the Northern Boundary.



Now – Oct 2020

Views from the centre of the Orchard towards the Arcaded wall now and proposed, with range of existing outbuildings removed and new outbuilding in place.



Work Completed

- 5.10 The Arcaded wall is the principal design feature within the whole of Church Gardens and forms the larger part of the Northern Boundary. This part of the boundary comprises of a total of 33 brick arches with recessed niches set into a retained earth bank. It is thought that this arcaded wall was originally constructed in the early 1600's as an open backdrop to an outdoor masque performance and was subsequently infilled with niches and the retained bank forming a high-level promenade from which to overlook the whole of the Orchard Area.



View of arcaded wall along raised terrace to the Northern boundary of the Orchard Garden

- 5.11 This wall is in a serious state of disrepair with many arches badly damaged or completely destroyed by the ravages of time, vegetation and falling tree branches. The arches have been largely cleared of vegetation in recent years and it is proposed to restore them to their original condition in matching brickwork.

6.0 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 This property lies within the Harefield Village Conservation Area and the Metropolitan Green Belt and as such, the proposed works take account of relevant Planning Policies with the London Borough of Hillingdon Unitary Development Plan Saved Policies (September 2012) relating to design criteria for residential new build projects have been observed in the design for this proposal. The principal Policies applicable to this development proposal scheme and how they have been considered in the proposed design can be summarised as follows:

6.2 Proposed Music Room and Store Room extension – drawing 1600/19

The floor area of the original dwelling house has been calculated at 149 sq.m.. This building has been enlarged with three single storey extensions, the Music Room, the Organ Room and the Dining Room, all of which have a combined floor area of 46sq.m. The proposed extension to the Music Room with an area of 6.8 sq.m. will increase this overall figure to 75.8sq.m. which equates to 50.8% in relation to the size of the original dwelling house.

This proposed small storeroom extension is located within the internal courtyard garden area and will be largely concealed from, any “public” view by the existing garden wall. It is therefore submitted that the proposed extension, though slightly in excess of the guideline allowance, will not adversely impact on the character of the property itself, the surrounding Conservation Area and will not impact on the openness of the Green belt setting.

6.3 **Proposed Outbuilding – drawings 1600/20 & 21**

Drawing **1600/20** details part of the site layout plan for the property to 1:200 scale but covers the area of ground containing various outbuildings. The plan indicates the range of outbuildings that were present on the site when this property was purchased in 1996. The buildings within the Orchard area were primarily single storey stores and animal shelters which were constructed in either in-situ concrete or timber and covered with asbestos sheeting. There was one higher structure within the Stores area. Over the course of time we have had all the asbestos sheeting removed and some of the structures themselves have been removed to facilitate other buildings or have collapsed; their bases and some walls are still remaining on site. The original brick annexe building has also been rebuilt.

As you will note I have calculated the floor area of each group of buildings within the Orchard area which comes to a total of **228.5 sq.m.** There was also a large poly tunnel enclosure within the Orchard area as shown on the plan, which I have not included within these figures. You will also note that there were substantial Greenhouse buildings within the Kitchen Garden area as indicated on the plan. These were brick, timber and glass structures, the majority of which have now been removed as part of the refurbishment of this area. However, these did have a total area of **229.3 sq.m..**

Drawing **1600/21** detailing the current site arrangement with floor area calculations for existing outbuildings indicated for your information. From this you will note that with stores, annexe and the garage, the total building area is **132.2 sq.m.** The proposed outbuilding is also indicated with an additional floor area of **78.0 sq.m.,** bringing the total to **210.20 sq.m.;** which is less than that of the original area of outbuildings for this part of the gardens. Please also note that the area of outbuilding within the Kitchen Garden area is substantially reduced to just **10 sq.m.** As with the existing I have not included for the poly tunnel structure within these calculations.

6.4 With regard to Planning Policy DMHD3 (basement development) the proposed basement level of the outbuilding is not designed to provide any habitable accommodation and due to its elevated position within the site, will not impact on any existing drainage systems or cause damage to the existing water environment. Furthermore, the basement level will not impact on the Conservation Area setting in that it will be fully concealed below ground. Excavations in connection with this part of the building will be accompanied by an Archaeological Watching Brief, as has been the case with all previous projects within Church Gardens. However, to date none have revealed any archaeological content.

6.5 Given the Listed Building, Conservation Area, Green Belt and Historic Garden setting of this property, the impact of these proposals on the historic environment is considered to be the primary planning issue and every effort has been made to address this in a sensitive and intelligent manner. The restoration works to the garden walls are now considered essential to prevent further disrepair and damage and with the intention to restore them to their original condition, this will greatly enhance the character of the property itself and it’s historic setting. Previous and proposed removal of 1960’s asbestos and concrete structures which seriously detract from the historic landscape and views is a major contributor to the restoration of the gardens. New buildings, where proposed, are sensitively sited, scaled and designed so as to blend in with existing structures and therefore have minimal impact on the existing character of the property and historical setting. The proposed pond, whilst adding a new design element

to these gardens is very much in keeping with the general historic landscapes of the Harefield Place Estate and will also serve to greatly assist in managing flood waters within the gardens.

7.0 LAYOUT

- 7.1 The proposed extension to the main dwelling house is set within the internal courtyard garden. It is located at the end of the existing Music Room and is extremely modest in scale and impact.
- 7.2 As previously stated, the location for the proposed outbuilding has been carefully considered in relation to its impact on the gardens and it's setting among the existing outbuildings is seen as the most unobtrusive that can be achieved. As recommended by Historic England and Historic Environment Consultants, the building is also sufficiently well located to be easily accessible, both in terms of construction and to visitors, when completed whilst offering a good outlook into the Orchard Garden.
- 7.3 The proposed pond is located at the natural end of the existing drainage channel in the Orchard Garden, where it is considered that there may well have been an open pond at some time in the history of these gardens. It's natural form follows the existing contours of the ground in this area of the garden and provides an interesting element to this otherwise empty part of the orchard. In addition, the pond will serve as a valuable tool in managing the outflow of the existing stream, in that with the present arrangement, this frequently floods in periods of heavy rainfall.

8.0 APPEARANCE

- 8.1 The proposed extension to the main dwelling will be constructed in Ibstock Hamsey stock facing brick to match the existing extension and main house. The brickwork will be laid in matching English Garden bond in a sand lime mortar. The existing window frame will be refitted in the new end wall. The new roof will be covered with Redland Rosemary plain Clay tiles with terracotta ridge tiles and painted timber fascia, soffit and barge boards, all to match the existing.
- 8.2 The materials used in the proposed outbuilding are selected to compliment and reinforce it's setting within the existing buildings. The external walls will be clad in black Barn weather edge boarding, with painted timber window and door frames of traditional style and design, in keeping with the appearance of the adjacent storage building. The roof will be covered with Redland Rosemary plain clay tiling, with terracotta ridges and painted timber fascia, soffit and barge boards, all in keeping with external appearance of the existing garage and annexe buildings.
- 8.3 The access driveway, parking area and internal courtyard will be finished with a mix of limestone paving and gravel to provide a safe and level route to and from the property whilst allowing for adequate drainage for surface water runoff.
- 8.4 The proposed pond is designed to have a very natural form and appearance to complement the existing landscape. The form will largely follow the existing contours of the garden and will occupy an otherwise empty area of open grassland. The perimeter of the pond will be designed with a mixture of planting and flint cobbles recycled from previous excavation within the gardens. This will offer an exciting opportunity to include a wider variety of plants to encourage greater biodiversity in the Orchard.

9.0 SUSTAINABILITY

- 9.1 The aim of this application submission is to secure the sustainability of Church Gardens as a historic garden to the benefit of the property itself, the local community and the wider historic environment.

The proposed restoration works to perimeter garden walls are based on the existing historic structures on the site, ensuring that the original historic fabric is repaired based on best practices in historic techniques, in order to ensure it's sustainable future for years to come. The installation of the pond, in assisting to manage flood waters will greatly protect the long-term future of the West Orchard wall.

- 9.2 Over the past twenty-five years, the Applicants have invested heavily in Church Gardens, both in terms of time and money and whilst this may have been a labour of love in the most part, it has served to rescue a great deal of this property from dereliction. However, there is still a vast amount of work to do to complete this restoration project and the additional time and monies required to do this would be well beyond the means of most normal people. No financial assistance has been sought or provided for any of the works under taken and completed to date and it is highly unlikely in the present circumstances that any such financial assistance would be available in the foreseeable future.
- 9.3 In addition to the specific restoration works that are yet to be done, there is also additional costs involved in the ongoing development of the gardens themselves, both in terms of infrastructure, planting and ongoing repair and maintenance, all of which increases with every area of ground that is reclaimed as a manged garden space.
- 9.4 Since Church Gardens opened up to public visits in August 2018, it has become evident that there is a huge interest in this historic garden and associated restoration project both within the local community and beyond and that there is a great potential for the gardens to be self – sustaining, at least in terms of ongoing operations and maintenance. Public Open days and private visits in 2018 and 2019 have generated some level of funding which could be much improved on with better facilitates and further restoration.
- 9.5 The proposed outbuilding will offer those facilities in providing a weatherproof shelter for visitors, a centre for group meetings, talks and events and will enable the gardens to be presented in a much more professional and desirable way. The outbuilding and principal garden areas will offer disabled access, which will be a major consideration of some of the visitors to the property.
- 9.6 Currently, the gardens welcome groups of between 20-30 people and there is sufficient existing parking to accommodate this number of visitors. Group visits are arranged by appointment only, lasting 2-3 hours and based on previous activity, these are limited to one or two visits per week. The intention of the proposed outbuilding is not to seek to expand the size of visiting groups, but to offer much more professional and comfortable facilities to enhance their visit
- 9.7 In addition to the above, the development of the Gardens for public access will not only assist in supporting the day to day running of the place but will also have the potential to provide employment both to family members and to the wider local community.
- 9.8 The general construction of the new outbuilding will incorporate high levels of insulation to floors, walls and roofs within an air tight structural envelope.
- 9.9 The design for the new outbuilding will incorporate rainwater harvesting to make use of the areas of sloping roof on the proposed building.

- 9.10 The use of permeable surfacing to the driveway and parking area will ensure that rainwater does not flow off the land.
- 9.11 All new windows and doors for the proposed outbuilding will be factory manufactured with an integral thermal break and fitted with sealed double glazing and argon gas fill to minimise heat loss.
- 9.12 The proposed pond is considered to be a vital part of ensuring the long-term sustainability of the Listed walls, whilst providing an attractive landscape feature that does not adversely impact on the historic character and fabric of the gardens.

10.0 SCALE

- 10.1 The scale of the proposed Music Room extension takes reference from the existing building with the existing form continued. It will therefore fully fit in with the existing structure and will largely be concealed inside the existing garden wall.
- 10.2 The scale of the proposed outbuilding takes reference from that of its immediate neighbouring buildings in accordance with the recommendations of the Historic Environment Consultant, i.e. the store, garage and annexe and as such is designed as a single storey structure with a slightly eccentric double pitched roof. The building will therefore be quite inobtrusive in it's general setting and will complement the range of outbuildings as a whole.
- 10.3 The size of the proposed pond has been considered in relation to it's setting at the end of the existing stream and the land contours of the existing garden. As such, when planted up, it will provide a well-managed, natural garden feature and essential addition to this part of the Orchard.

11.0 LANDSCAPING

- 11.1 The existing driveway and hardstanding area is to be retained and resurfaced with a mixture of limestone paving and gravel to provide a safe and level access to and from the property. Existing hedging and lawns to the side of the access driveway are to be retained and maintained. Existing planted borders to the hardstanding area are to be retained and maintained with a new rose garden to be planted around the northern perimeter.
- 11.2 The internal forecourt area is to be retained and resurfaced with a mixture of limestone paving and gravel to provide a safe and level access to and from the property. Perimeter plant beds are to be provided at new and existing buildings.
- 11.3 Paving slabs are to be used for the front entrance and pedestrian access pathways, as well as the external seating area in the Orchard Garden.
- 11.4 A bin storage area is to be provided within the front forecourt area, as per the previously approved plan. The store will feature a lockable gate and will be designed to accommodate refuse and recycling storage containers.
- 11.5 Planning Permission has already been obtained for the removal of two rows of Hazel trees along the Northern and Southern boundaries of the Orchard area in accordance with the recommendations within the original Conservation Plan for Church Gardens (2004) to

preserve the fabric of the landscape and garden walls. These works have recently been implemented to facilitate proposed restoration works to the walls.

- 11.6 The Orchard area is to be restored as close as possible to its original design with grass terraces reinstated, 1960's asbestos and concrete buildings removed and views opened up. The intention is to diversify the existing planting within the Orchard area from the monoculture of remaining Hazel trees, which were not part of the original historic landscape with new planting introduced where considered appropriate.
- 11.7 The proposed pond will introduce a new and beneficial landscape feature within the Orchard area.
- 11.8 The landscaping within the Orchard area is to be established and maintained to a high horticultural standard, in keeping with works already implemented within the Kitchen Garden and elsewhere on the property.

12.0 ACCESSIBILITY

- 12.1 Pedestrian and vehicular access to the property will be direct from the existing track from Church Hill and past St Marys Church.
- 12.2 The existing property can accommodate up to 12 car spaces which is considered sufficient to accommodate planned visitor numbers.
- 12.2 It is proposed to install a new set of access gates at the end of the private driveway to maintain a level of security for the property.
- 12.4 Disabled access will be provided from the private driveway into the property by the use of level pathways set into the gravel surfacing, leading into the internal courtyard and to the new outbuilding. Disabled access is presently available from the internal courtyard into the Orchard and Kitchen Gardens.
- 12.5 Fully accessible disabled toilet facilities will be provided within the new outbuilding.