
Statement Heritage

Cabins for tourist accommodation, Walled Gardens, Sidbury Manor, Sidmouth, EX10 0QE .

Heritage Impact Assessment:

SH Ref SIDM0918

02/10/2018



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This project was commissioned by Sir George Cave and carried out by Daniel Ratcliffe BA MA MCIJF in September 2018

The views and recommendations expressed in this report are those of Statement Heritage and are presented in good faith on the basis of professional judgement and on information currently available. It should not be used or relied upon in connection with any other project than that intended.

Non Technical Summary

This assessment has explored and presents the significance of the walled garden complex at Sidbury Manor, finding it to be largely contemporary with the laying out of the wider *picturesque* parkland and construction of the house in 1878-9.

The garden forms part of an 'inner park' comprising an arboretum, and lawns in more *gardenesque* and formal styles. The walled complex includes a formal pleasure garden, reconfigured in 1899 and again in the past 20 years, in addition to the remains of hot and alpine glasshouses, two well preserved ranges of bothies and offices, and the two main productive vegetable and fruit garden enclosures in which development is proposed.

The significance of the garden is found to lie in its historic and architectural values, which illustrate both late 19th century estate food production and working practices whilst comprising an important formal part of interesting and regionally important gardens.

The enclosures, at the upper end of the tiered walled garden complex are assessed to have the greatest capacity for the kind of development proposed, which we find would result in only negligible less than substantial harm to the architectural and historic values of the listed walls, whilst representing the 'optimum viable use' of the site in a manner which should be capable of supporting and encouraging its ongoing conservation and progressively enhancing the understanding and presentation of the heritage asset as a whole.

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1. Introduction and Methods

- 1.1 This report has been commissioned by Sir George Cave, to assess the impacts of the proposed redevelopment of land located within the Walled Garden at Sidbury Manor, Sidbury, Sidmouth EX10 0QE (figure 1). Development will comprise the 'change of use of land to accommodate 3no luxury cabins for tourist accommodation in the walled garden'. An East Devon LPA application is currently live (18/1078/FUL) proposing three '*contemporary timber summer houses within the walled gardens... intended to provide diversified income to the estate from the no substantially underutilised kitchen / pleasure gardens*' (Bondstones, Planning Statement)
- 1.2 The Council's Conservation Officer has commented as follows:

In line with curtilage law it is considered that the walled garden fulfils the criteria in terms of ownership, ancillary use and pre 1948. The walled garden can be seen on the historic OS maps dating back to 1889/90 and is clearly part of a planned landscape.

These substantial walled gardens are a major feature within the gardens in conjunction with the rest of the garden, arboretum and terraces. Bounded by high red brick walls with feature copings, the gardens are located on two levels with an existing orchard on the lower garden and what appears to be a recently planted wild flower garden. Below this are located the glasshouse/service areas to the garden, constructed in brick with slate roofs, more formal terraces and tennis courts. A series of brick steps link the various levels of the garden. There is reference to Sidbury Manor and the walled garden in Pevsner.

HOW WILL PROPOSED ALTERATIONS AFFECT HISTORIC CHARACTER OF BUILDING AND ITS SETTING:

This application relates to the change of use of the walled garden to accommodate 3no. luxury cabins within the garden itself. Whilst the Planning Statement recognises the walled garden as a heritage asset it does not appear to define it as a curtilage listed structure. There is some reference to the walled garden, but sadly no detailed statement of significance relating to the heritage asset or any comment relating to its significance and therefore the impact of the proposed changes on this significance. It is appreciated that the cabins will not in themselves affect the garden structure/walls etc, but it is considered that they will have considerable impact on the enjoyment and appreciation of the walled garden as a curtilage structure within the wider Sidbury Estate. A statement of significance relating to the walled garden is considered necessary to fully appreciate the heritage asset and to enable and ensure an informed decision.

The walled garden and the surrounding gardens and wider Estate are a significant feature providing the parkland setting to Sidbury Manor and whilst the cabins would not be visible from the main house, the walled garden is an integral part of its historic context and development. The gardens appear to be relatively intact and cared for and there is no objection to exploring options for diversification to provide additional income for the Estate. However, in this instance the siting of 3no. luxury cabins is at odds with the significance of the walled garden and will

have considerable impact on its contribution as a heritage asset not only within the Estate, but also locally and nationally. The proposal needs to be balanced against the significance of the heritage asset, see need for Statement of Significance above, and weight given to the conservation of the garden.

It is noted that an objection has been submitted by the Devon Gardens Trust and that the gardens are considered to be of not only local significance but of national importance.

- 1.3 In conclusion the Conservation Officer has identified unacceptable harm to the significance of the walled garden and recommended refusal of the application.
- 1.4 This report seeks to provide appropriate the expert assessment of significance and impact requested, on behalf of the applicant. It is based on an assessment of historic OS and Tithe award mapping, supplemented by basic HER and bibliographic research and a site inspection. The assessment has been prepared by Daniel Ratcliffe MA MClfA¹ trading as 'Statement Heritage'. Daniel has 19 years of professional experience of the assessment of the historic environment in connection with proposals for development, during which time he has served as both Cornwall County Archaeologist and (for Historic England) Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Devon and Cornwall. Daniel led Cornwall Council's Strategic Historic Environment Team from 2014-2017.
- 1.5 Desk based research and analysis for this project has been informed by ClfA 2014 standards and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment and has involved:
 - Consultation of Devon County Council Historic Environment Records.
 - Consultation of large scale (1:2500) historic OS mapping of the site published between 1880-1995 (supplied by Groundsure Insights)
 - Consultation of the National Heritage List for England.
 - Documentary and archive research.
- 1.6 Field work was undertaken on 27th September, 2018 by Mr Ratcliffe. Fieldwork comprised an inspection of the gardens and surrounds internally and externally with sufficient photographic and written records made to understand the impact of the proposed works.
- 1.7 The significance of heritage assets referred to in this document have been assessed with particular reference to the approach detailed in *Conservation Principles* published by English Heritage (now Historic England) in 2008. Setting impacts to designated heritage assets have been assessed according to 'The Setting of Heritage Asssets' (Historic England 2017a). Further guidance has been taken from *Making Changes to Heritage Assets* (Historic England 2017b).

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2 Site Description and History

2.1 **The proposal site:** is located at (see Figure 1) and proposes the erection of three freestanding wooden structures within two walled garden enclosures together comprising around 5 hectares. The walled garden constitutes the historic open kitchen garden enclosures of a larger complex of walled gardens built on a hillside to the north of the Victorian Sidbury Manor. For the purposes of this assessment the walled garden enclosures on the hillside are assessed together and have been given identifying letters A-F as shown on figure 2. Together with the Manor itself, a Gardener's House, Stable Block Arboretum and their surrounding Lawns the walled gardens form part of the core of a wider designed landscape around the house known as Sidbury Park.

2.2 **Geology:** The site is underlain by bedrock of the Sidmouth Mudstone Formation, one of the 'Mercia Mudstones' formerly known as the 'Keuper Marls'. Marl is a source of lime which, when applied to the soil raises its pH value, stimulating bacterial activity and releasing nutrients (Rippon *et al* 2006)

2.3 Designations:

2.3.1 SIDBURY MANOR INCLUDING CONSERVATORY AND SCREEN WALL TO WEST was Listed Grade II (NHLE 1287577) in 1973. The List Description reads:

SIDBURY 1. 1633 Sidbury Manor including conservatory end screen wall to west SY 19 SW 12/308 II 2. 1879 by David Brandon. Restrained successful free handling of Jacobean and French Chateau motifs. Large 2 storeys and attics red brick country house. Ham stone quoins, window dressings, and decorative carving of high quality. Plinth, band between storeys, modillion cornice and parapet, with panels of turned balusters raised at one point in strapwork lunette. Steep pitch gable end slate roofs, finely carved neo-Tudor and Jacobean chimneys clustered. Ball and mitre finials on gables and at parapet ends. East entrance front has slightly asymmetrical arrangement of rectangular bays and slender octagonal tower. Large mullioned and transomed windows, carved panelled aprons and strapwork decoration to parapets. Upper register of tower has elaborate stone panels, dog and griffin gargoyles and pointed leaded roof decorated with 3 finialed gables. The whole crowned by ornate weathervane. Grand frontispiece entrance, stone faced with shaped gable surmounted by lion and finial. 1st floor window flanked by strapped composite pilasters, elaborate carved entablature and strapwork over with ball and spike finials. Large porch with paired pilasters, fluted bases, rosettes in necking. 4-centred arched side windows. Heavy carved entablature with strapwork parapet. Double panelled and glazed door under 4-centred moulded arch. South west garden front is in part symmetrical with E group of gabled bays but there is a further bay to west and a tower wing with single storey extension set back with large conservatory in right angle. Fenestration similar to entrance front but with canted bays. Cornice etc returned. Gables have stone coping and ball and mitre finials. End bay has oriel 1st floor west side, the ground floor opened in 2 bay arcade to south and west, diamond block piers and plain piers with heavy foliate capitals, 4-centred arches. Arcade is repeated on inside wall of conservatory which has stone faced front: large mullioned and transomed windows articulated by pilasters, strapwork parapet. Glazed roof supported by cast iron columns with

good foliate capitals inside. The tower is square with steep pitch hipped French roof, ornamental guard rails around top and weathervane. West end of single storey extension has large canted bay, the strapwork parapet carried over from conservatory, A brick screen wall extends to west with coping. Tuscan columned doorway, dentil cornice to entablature, mitre finials on blocking course. Interior has full height staircase hall with arcade to ground floor and on 2 sides of 1st floor. 2 flight oak staircase with finely carved strapwork balustrade. Coved compartmented ceiling. Library with finely carved oak book cases with niches surmounted by urns. Sidbury Manor is set in fine park to north west of village.

2.3.2 FORECOURT RAILINGS, GATES AND PIERS OF SIDBURY MANOR were separately listed at GII in 1973, the list description reading

SIDBURY 1. 1633 Forecourt railings, gates and piers of Sidbury Manor SY 19 SW 12/308A II 2. Railings with scrollwork panels and finials surrounding forecourt of east entrance front of Sidbury Manor. Early C18 style. Double gates swept up to side and centre, ornate dog rails. Piers flanking gates and at corners of forecourt red brick with stone dressings, stone caps and ball finials.

2.4 **Curtilage:** The Conservation Officer for East Devon Council identifies the walled gardens as lying within the curtilage of Sudbury Manor in their comments on the current application. We concur with the opinion of the officer that the gardens meet the legally established tests for identifying curtilage structures for Listed Building purposes, noting particularly: their physical layout as part of the immediate designed landscape of the house; their common ownership with the house both historically and at the date of listing; and their ancillary use or function both historically and at the date of listing (see Historic England 2018,4).

2.5 **Summary of Historic Development:** Sidbury Manor was built in 1878-9 to designs by David Brandon (NHLE 1287577) for Sir Stephen Cave, Paymaster General in Disraeli's cabinet of the 1870s (Fisher 1999, 10). The building replaced an older medieval manor house c.500m to the south on the site of the current 'Home Farm' (Devon HER reference MDV10771). Comparison between the Tithe Map for Sidbury and the 1888 OS survey demonstrates the extent of the reorganisation of the estate from the 1870s onwards alongside the construction of the new house, with the older hedgerows being thinned to leave only scattered trees and roads reconfigured as private estate roads, resulting in a rather late example of the characteristic naturalistic *picturesque* landscape of the English landscape garden developed by designers such as Brown from the mid 18th century onwards.

2.6 The 1888 1:2500 OS plan (historic maps Appendix 1) illustrates the core of the parkland, defined by a stone walled enclosure within which lay the main house (figure 3i), stables (fig 3ii), an arboretum and formal lawns (figure 3iii), and the terraced rectilinear walled gardens (figures). This core area displays more of the eclecticism characteristic of 19th century designed landscapes first introduced by Repton including more formal terraces and exotic arboreal planting in a more *gardenesque* style.

2.7 The 1888 plan shows these walled gardens in a form still recognisable today consisting of 6 bilaterally symmetrical enclosures through which runs a central axial path, with an artificially terraced and unenclosed formal lawn at the foot of the gardens.

2.8 Comparison of enclosure A (figure 4 and 5) between the 1889 and 1905 OS plans demonstrates the works undertaken by Walter Cave FRIBA in 1899 to create a Rose Garden (Patrick 2009). Cave's work appears to have reconfigured existing ornamental gardens within this space, with a

gridded layout of small beds replaced by two large rectangular rose beds to either side of a central tank of white marble and Portland stone in which was originally a fountain, the southern boundaries of the garden and the steps connecting it to the terraces above and below being ornamented with piers and balusters of Ham stone. Cave is understood to have laid the lawn below out as a bowling green.

- 2.9 The 1958 OS plan shows the gardens following their occupation during the Second World War by a girls residential school. During this period the lawn below the gardens was hard-surfaced as a tennis courts (Lady Cave *pers comm.*)
- 2.10 The Cave family returned to Sidbury Manor in 1958 following the passage of the Cave Baronetcy to Sir Charles Edward Coleridge Cave in 1957 (www.thepeerage.com/p7972.htm#i79715 and Lady Cave *pers.comm.*). It is understood that the lower vegetable garden (enclosure E) was converted to lawn and orchard during Sir Charles' lifetime, whilst the upper vegetable garden (enclosure F) was operated as a Christmas Tree plantation (Lady Cave *pers.comm.*).
- 2.11 The estate passed to the late Sir John (1958-2018) who is understood to have moved to Sidbury with Lady Carey Cave in 1998. During their tenure the upper garden was cleared of Christmas trees, ploughed and converted to pheasant pens (Robert Hatterell² *pers.comm.*). More recently restoration works have been undertaken to the Rose Garden, which has been laid with raised beds of similar proportions to those depicted in 1888, whilst the lower lawn has had the mid 20th century hard surfaced courts removed and lawn re-instated. Within the vegetable gardens simple geometric wildflower beds have been sown to the west of enclosure E, turf restored to enclosure F and the central axis within the same enclosure has been enhanced with an avenue of crab apples.
- 2.12 **Site survey and interpretation:** A basic photographic record of the walled gardens (commensurate to 'Level 2' as defined by Historic England) was made on 27/09/2018 from which the illustrations to this section have been drawn. Interpretation of the functional spaces of the garden was very much aided by Lady Carey Cave and Estate Gardener Rob Hatterell who gave generously of their time and knowledge of their work within the garden over the past two decades.
- 2.13 *Enclosure A* (The Rose Garden) (figs 4 and 5) is the lowest formal terrace of the garden in use as part of the ornamental pleasure gardens of the house. It has been very successfully restored in recent years, with a geometric layout of beds laid out with abundant and rich planting. The garden overlooks the formal lawn below and the park beyond and is backed by the distinctive apricot coloured bricks that form the walls of the gardens. The garden serves to establish bilateral symmetry of the entire walled complex with its central tank of 1899 and the steps and balustrading of its central axis.
- 2.14 A door set within the steps of the upper steps of Enclosure A leads to a subterranean set of rooms beneath the central areas of *Enclosures B* and *C* serving as the furnace and fuel storage rooms (fig 5 ii and iii) for the hot houses (fig 6) that were originally built against the walls of Enclosure B above. Rob Hatterell reports that the surviving remains of these structures and more ephemeral remains observed over the years in the form of plant framing and wiring suggests that the western house produced peaches, whilst the eastern house provided the 'cold feet – hot

² Estate Gardener interviewed by DJR 27/09/2018

tops' conditions required for the growing of vines. The remains of the brick built wall and bed foundations of these structures survive. The southern face of the bricks of the wall dividing enclosures B and C shows frost damage to facing bricks and has evidence of the original roof line of the glasshouses (see fig 6ii).

- 2.15 *Enclosure C* (fig 7) is currently largely laid to lawn with symmetrical large foundations of glasshouses first shown by the OS in 1905 and so considered to be part of George Cave's alterations. These building remains show no sign of having been connected to heating systems and may have functioned as Alpine Houses.
- 2.16 *The narrow enclosure D* (fig 8) contains two north facing building ranges facing north built as lean-to structures against the lower wall. The eastern range is interpreted as offices and work rooms, with a central open fronted cart store, whilst the western range as bothies. The enclosure has an informal gravel surface and features a modern raised bed to the east in use as a flower garden and surviving original cold frames to the west.
- 2.17 Stone steps in poor condition (fig9 i) lead up to *Enclosure E* the lower productive garden. Significantly higher than the gardens below, allowing for uninterrupted sunlight from the south, the garden is laid out to a mid-twentieth century orchard to its east and a more modern wildflower *parterre*. It seems unlikely that the garden has suffered from ploughing since the secession of vegetable growing, with its turfed over pathways clearly evident as sunken routes between the raised levels of the former productive beds. Two large disused brick-built water tanks survive to west and east along the garden's southern boundary. There is some evidence of structural but probably long-established cracking to the walls in places and the walls retain many metal and wire supports for *espalier* fruit trees and other climbing species.
- 2.18 A further set of decaying stone steps lead to the upper productive garden *Enclosure F* (fig 10) which is again approximately 2m higher than its immediate neighbour. Enclosure E is entirely laid to grass, with little or no earthwork evidence of the path layout shown on historic mapping, as might be expected given its history of pine tree cultivation and pheasant penning, which can be assumed to have involved significant upper ground disturbance. The structural form of the walls matches that of Enclosure E, with two further overgrown water tanks to its southern wall (fig10 iii). The central axis of the enclosure has been recently emphasised by the planting of an avenue of crab apples. The garden has surviving gateways (fig) to its western boundary connecting it to the arboretum, whilst a presumably originally similar gateways has been widened to allow access to modern vehicles.

3 Assessment of significance.

- 3.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (MHLG 2018, Glossary) notes that the significance of a heritage asset derives from its value 'to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historic'.
- 3.2 The 1990 Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas Act) defines the 'special interest' of Listed buildings more precisely as their 'architectural and historic' interest.
- 3.3 The NPPF notes that heritage assets may be 'designated or non-designated' (NPPF2018, Glossary). Whilst the conservation of non-designated heritage assets does not attract the 'great weight' accorded to designated heritage assets subject to planning determinations (ibid, p 193).

For the purposes of this assessment we take the architectural / artistic and historic significance of the garden to be of primary relevance to the 'special interest' of the Listed assets of the site, whilst the archaeological significance of deposits below the ground of the site to be subject to the provisions of the NPPF dealing with non-designated heritage assets.

- 3.4 Historic England's Good Practice Advice Note in Planning 2 'Managing Significance in Decision Taking' notes that historic impact assessments should seek to assess the *'nature', 'extent' and 'level'* of the significance expressed by a heritage asset.
- 3.5 The ***nature*** of the **historic artistic and architectural** significance of the walled garden complex at Sidbury Manor lies in their association with the Cave family and the Sidbury Estate, illustrating the wealth and influence of the family from the late 19th century onwards, and also in their illustration of landscape design and gardening practices from the late 19th century to the present day. Walled gardens were important to the functioning of an estate both in economic terms (in providing food for the family and household) and in terms of displaying best practice in estate management to visitors. As a late example the degree to which the gardens were intended to impress by their scale, complexity, efficiency, technological advancement and order should not be underestimated.

The ***extent*** of this significance is to be found in the degree to which the garden complex remains functionally legible, for instance in the survival and generally good condition and completeness of the walls; of the survival and documentation of the structural components such as furnace room, water tanks, glass-houses and bothy tier and especially the formal architectural elements of the lower 'Rose Garden' Terrace. The extent of the historic and architectural value of the garden is limited where original fabric and uses have been lost, for example where glasshouse superstructures have been lost, in the cessation of fruit and vegetable cultivation, in alterations to the eastern gateways of the upper gardens and in the loss of path legibility in upper garden F.

The ***level*** of the site's historic significance is generally highest where the original use and arrangement of the enclosures are most clear. Whilst the lower ornamental terrace A and the lawn below constitutes something of a modern reconstruction combining elements of its original 1879 and modified 1899 designs the historic significance of these formal areas of the garden is very high. As one moves up and along the central axis of the garden, the disused remains of the hot and alpine houses in Enclosures B and C, along with the largely complete furnace rooms below and the surviving bothy / office tier D still well illustrates the technologies of and investment (both in terms of capital and human labour) of fruit and vegetable growing in the late 19th century and is assessed as retaining high to very high historic value. The overall level of the historic significance of the vegetable gardens is slightly lower with the current planting schemes of Enclosure E providing a (relatively) low maintenance approach that preserves some legibility of original form and axiality leading to our assessment of its medium to high architectural and historic value whilst the loss of the legibility of the historic path / beds within Enclosure F leads to our assessment of its medium historic and architectural value.

- 3.6 The ***nature*** of the site's **archaeological** value lies in the degree to which future investigation or development may reveal evidence of currently unknown evidence of its form, function and significance. .

The **extent** of this value lies within surviving original buildings and the remains of buildings and their fixtures, particularly those related to the support and husbandry of specific plants; and in below ground remains which may indicate the arrangement of planting beds and pathways, the transmission of heat from the furnaces and the distribution of water to and from the surviving tanks. Within the two uppermost vegetable enclosures (E and F) the archaeological interest of the gardens lies in the surviving water tanks, in the espalier wiring of the walls and in the survival of paths and bed layouts below modern turf. There is a significantly greater potential for features in open areas of the garden to survive within the less disturbed lower enclosure E than in the upper enclosure F where soil appears more disturbed since the cessation of vegetable gardening in the early-mid twentieth century.

The **level** of the archaeological interest of the gardens is that remains would be of regional interest in terms of informing our understanding of a regionally important garden.

- 3.7 We would observe that the immediate **setting** of the walled gardens comprises the surrounding arboretum, and formal lawns and the structures of the inner park, namely Sidbury Manor, the Gardener's House. From these locations little beyond the boundaries of the garden is visible, being concealed as the result of a combination of the rising ground on which it is located and its high walls.
- 3.8 In their submission to the current planning application, the Devon Garden's Trust attest to the 'national significance' of Sidbury Park gardens. Whilst acknowledging their substantial expertise in respect of the gardens of Devon, and that they have included Sidbury Park within their own 'Gazetteer of Parks and Gardens of Local Historic Interest', this register is not given any formal planning weight beyond the general provisions for heritage assets within the East Devon Local Plan and we would note that the park does not currently benefit from inclusion on Historic England's Statutory Register. The national Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest is now part of Historic England's National Heritage List For England, was established in 1988 and contains 1640 designated sites. Sites are identified according to published criteria, with those pertaining to rural designed landscapes available at <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/dpagsg-rural-landscapes/heag092-rural-landscapes-rgsgs/>. Once designated the conservation of the significance of Registered sites attract similar planning weight ('great weight') to other designated heritage assets under the NPPF, although not benefiting from additional statutory protections comparable to the requirements and penalties associated with the Listed Building and Scheduled Monument Consent regimes.
- 3.9 The publication of Historic England's selection criteria for Parks and Gardens allows the significance of Sidbury Park against them to be roughly assessed. The 9 criteria used are outlined on page 20 of the document: 5 criteria relate to the date and rarity of candidate sites, with a further 4 'additional' criteria. The date and rarity criteria are as follows:
- *Sites formed before 1750 where at least a significant proportion of the principal features of the original layout is still in evidence*
 - *Sites laid out between 1750 and 1840 where enough of the layout survives to reflect the original design*
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- *Sites with a main phase of development post-1840 which are of special interest and relatively intact, the degree of required special interest rising as the site becomes closer in time*
 - *Particularly careful selection is required for sites from the period after 1945*
 - *Sites of less than 30 years old are normally registered only if they are of outstanding quality and under threat.*
- 3.10 Sidbury Park falls squarely within the date range of the third criteria (1840-1945) indicating that 'the degree of special interest' of the park would need to be relatively high in order to meet the requirements.
- 3.11 This leads us to consider the 'additional criteria' as follows: *Criteria in italic; Assessment in Bold*
- *Sites which were influential in the development of taste, whether through reputation or reference in literature. **No such associations are recorded for Sidbury Manor which, as a very late example of a park of this design is evidently more 'influenced' than 'influencer'***
 - *Sites which are early or representative examples of a style of layout or a type of site, or the work of a designer (amateur or professional) of national importance. **This criteria is not evidenced by the current research on the garden.***
 - *Sites having an association with significant persons – the gardens of John Milton (Milton's Cottage, Chalfont St Giles, Buckinghamshire, registered Grade II); Jane Austen (Chawton House, Faringdon, Hampshire, registered Grade II); and Gilbert White (The Wakes, Selborne, Hampshire, registered Grade II*), for instance, are registered – or historic events (Boscobel, Shropshire, registered Grade II, where Charles II was concealed in the Royal Oak in 1651, where the contemporary garden survives as well as the successor to the Royal Oak). **The historic associations of the garden with the Cave family are not considered to meet this criteria.***
 - *Sites with a strong group value with other heritage assets. **This criteria is arguably met, although it is considered unlikely given the dates and level of designation of the assets concerned that this would be considered evidence of National Importance alone.***
- 3.12 Given the above considerations our assessment is that the overall significance of Sidbury Park is as a landscape of **County to Regional** importance, albeit one that makes important contributions to the **setting of Listed Buildings** (see further below).

4 Impact and Policy Assessment

- 4.1 NPPF Chapter 16 sets out the national policy objectives in regards of the determination of application affection heritage assets at P192 being that:
- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
 - b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
 - c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.*

- 4.2 The NPPF seeks to ensure that heritage assets are conserved according to their significance for instance requiring that ‘great weight’ to be accorded to the conservation of designated heritage assets and their settings³.
- 4.3 ‘Substantial harm’ to GII assets and their settings should be ‘exceptional’ (NPPF P194a) p196 states that *‘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.’*
- 4.4 NPPF P197 states that ‘the effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.
- 4.5 NPPF P198 requires that *Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible*
- 4.6 In considering the assessment of the proposals at hand we would draw particular attention to the NPPF’s emphasis on *the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation*. As noted in the Devon Garden Trust’s consultation response *‘not all walled gardens are viable for their original purpose’*. In such circumstances, as here at Sidbury, where restoration of the gardens to their original productive use would be wholly uneconomic, alternative sustainable sources of income, and alternative and sustainable management regimes are required in order that the cultural significance of these important heritage assets can be maintained.
- 4.7 The existing stewardship of the gardens by the Cave family, particularly over the past 20 years is demonstrable in the restoration of the lower lawn and Rose Garden, in the maintenance of the Bothy tier and in the careful planting schemes and lawned maintenance of the upper and lower vegetable gardens, which emphasise the axiality and historic paths of the gardens. The gardens are made periodically open to the public on advertised dates, releasing the public good of this private stewardship.
- 4.8 However, this conservation work is assumed to have been undertaken entirely at private cost, with no revenue having been raised from this originally economically important complex. Clearly public policy would support the development of an ‘optimal[ly] viable use... consistent with [the] conservation’ of the gardens. This would be supplementary to the public benefits identified separately by the applicant’s agents in terms of the national and local policy support given to the diversification of rural land based businesses.
- 4.9 The ongoing maintenance costs of an asset of this type are evident, not just in the costs of ongoing horticultural maintenance, but in areas of ongoing decay around the structures (figs) such as areas of settlement / subsidence cracking and the decay and weathering of stone steps and brick faces. Professional advice on the diagnosis and rectification of these faults lies beyond the scope of the current report, and it is assumed the client will address such issues as part of

³ Defined in the NPPF as ‘the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced’

ongoing maintenance of the estate. For the purposes of this assessment the identification of such issues demonstrates that realisation of an optimal viable use for the structure will only serve to encourage such maintenance issues to be addressed in addition to providing funding for the same.

- 4.10 Having identified the *in principal* justification for a viable alternative economic use of the land we move to consider the specific impacts of the proposals as detailed on the supplied plans (fig) and associated documents.
- 4.11 The proposed units are essentially reversible timber structures not requiring any deep foundations. The units are to be set away from the wall structures, in order to ensure there is no direct impact on the listed structure. As such they meet the first principal of reversibility in regards to making changes to heritage assets. Should the need for the development change in the future the units may be removed without lasting visual damage to the site.
- 4.12 The modern design of the structures utilises natural timber boarding, a material which should harmonise with its surroundings, whilst the single storey height of the structures and their placement towards the rear of the enclosures minimises their visibility from outside the enclosures. Figures 9ii and 10ii demonstrate that the rear of the upper enclosure has inter-visibility with only distant points within a relatively small area of the far extents of the park to the south west of the garden and the 'borrowed' farmland landscape beyond. From these points the development will have a minimal visual impact on the appreciation of the garden's form, ensuring that its 'setting' – or the degree to which it can be appreciated from the landscape – will not be any more than negligibly altered.
- 4.13 Enclosures E and F have some sensitivity to the introduction of new masses within the garden areas. However, it is considered that the small mass of the buildings, compared to the remaining open volumes of the spaces will ensure that the sense of open space in both enclosures will be maintained. The importance of the broad bilateral symmetry of the garden complex to its design values is noted, and in this respect the two units within the upper enclosure 'F' are less harmful.
- 4.14 It is also noted that the upper gardens are considerably less sensitive to this kind of development than any of the other enclosures within the walled complex, whilst still offering the opportunity to screen the development from the most architecturally and historically sensitive locations in the park.
- 4.15 As explained above the conservation of the archaeological values of the buried deposits of the garden carry less planning weight than do the architectural and historic values of the setting of the walls. Nevertheless the potential of ground disturbance associated with the development to affect the archaeological significance of the site identified above is acknowledged, with potential direct impacts resulting from the installation of drainage and service runs, and of the installation of a 'biodisc' type sewage processing plant within the garden which we are informed is anticipated to require a 2m x 2m x 2m excavation. As we consider the archaeological potential of the upper enclosure F to be less than that of enclosure E we would advise that less harm will result in this area from these types of works than in the garden below, where it would also be important to ensure that any works re-instate existing earthwork profiles representing the historic path network. There remains some potential for remains of garden paths and other deposits relating to the historic garden to be encountered which we feel could be adequately mitigated via an archaeological watching brief during these works. We have discussed the

potential for the 'biodisc' tank to be installed within one of the existing disused water tanks of the garden which is likely to be achievable without disturbance to the structure itself and will minimise disturbance of less disturbed ground, whilst potentially providing an opportunity to better understand the construction of these features.

4.16 In terms of the NPPF we would summarise the impacts to architectural, historic and archaeological values of the garden through the siting of the holiday accommodation units within the garden to be towards the very lower end of 'less than substantial' whilst we would assess this very minimal level of development as the potential 'optimal viable use' of the heritage asset (per NPPF 196) securing an ongoing economic use which will support its medium to long term conservation.

4.17 We would identify further opportunities to enhance the conservation of the garden, which may be sustainably explored by the clients in the event of consent for the development being granted might include: ongoing monitoring, repointing and repair of the walls and steps of the garden; provision of interpretive material (perhaps attached to the exterior of the cabins) illustrating and explaining the significance and history of the garden and estate; and re-instatement (subject to Listed Building Consent) of the eastern gateways to the garden using the patterns of those surviving to its west.

5 Conclusions.

5.1 This assessment has explored in some detail the significance of the walled garden complex at Sidbury Manor, finding it to be largely contemporary with the laying of out of the wider *picturesque* parkland and construction of the house in 1878-9.

5.2 The garden forms part of an 'inner park' comprising an arboretum, and lawns in more *gardenesque* and formal styles. The walled complex includes a formal pleasure garden, reconfigured in 1899 and again in the past 20 years, in addition to the remains of hot and alpine glasshouses, two well preserved ranges of bothies and offices, and the two main productive vegetable and fruit garden enclosures in which development is proposed.

5.3 These enclosures, at the upper end of the tiered walled garden complex are assessed to have the greatest capacity for the kind of development proposed, which we find would result in only negligible less than substantial harm to the architectural and historic values of the listed walls, whilst representing the 'optimum viable use' of the site in a manner which should be capable of supporting and encouraging its ongoing conservation and progressively enhancing the understanding and presentation of the heritage asset as a whole.

6 Bibliography

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7 Figures

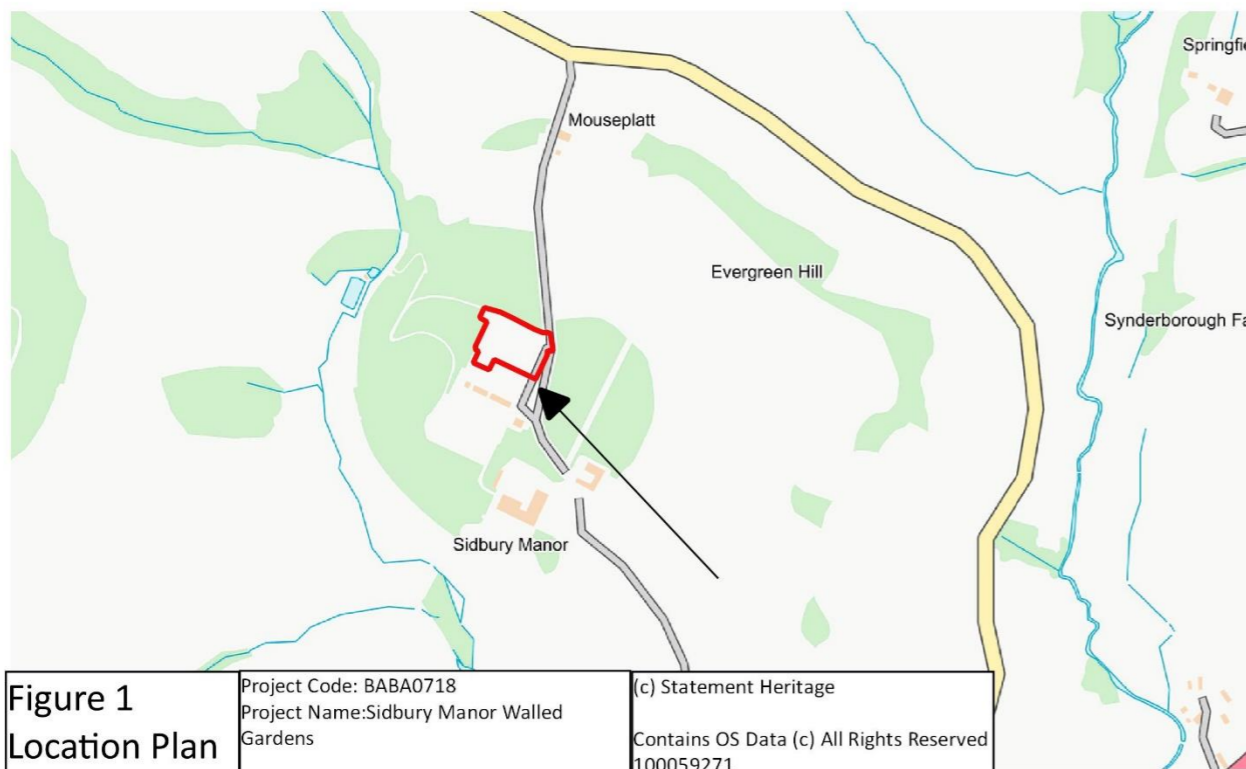
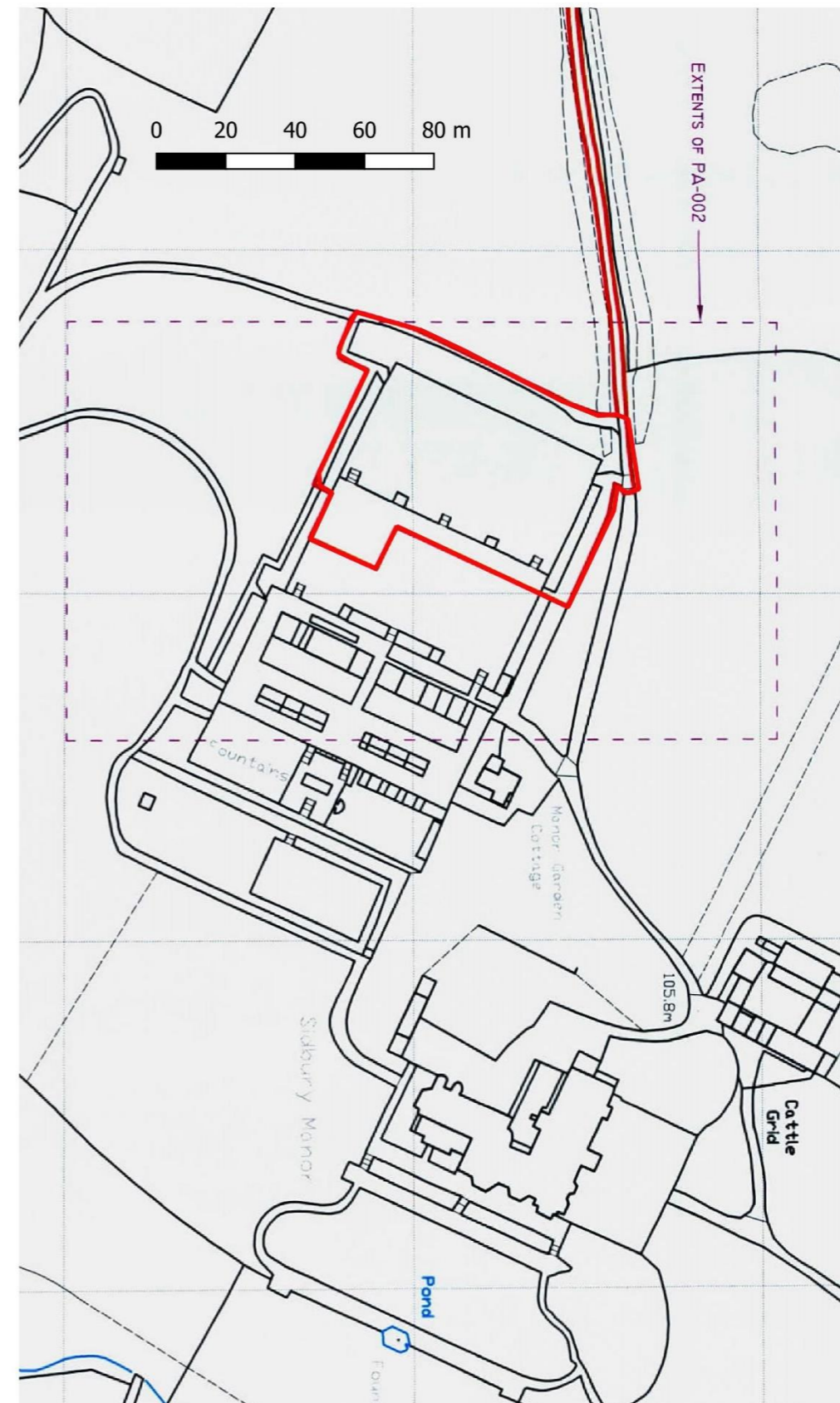
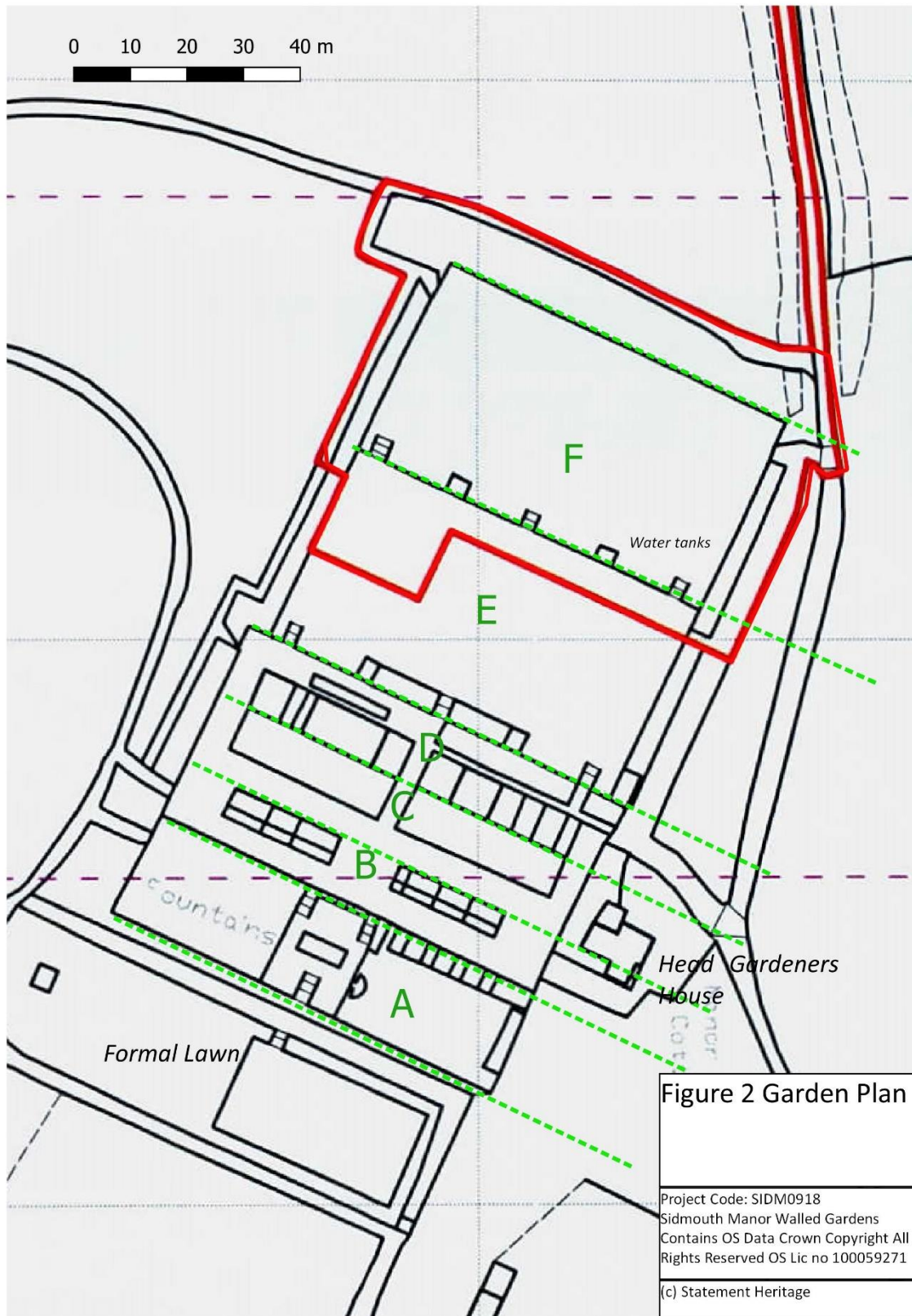


Figure 1 Location Plan	Project Code: BABA0718	(c) Statement Heritage
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i) Sidbury Manor, East Front



ii) Sidbury Manor Stables, South Front



iii) Formal Lawn to south of walled garden complex

Figure 3 Site Photos

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Sidmouth Manor Walled Gardens
All photos (c) DJR 27/09/2018

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i) Enclosure A looking east from centre , recently restored formal pleasure gardens



ii) Terrace A looking east



iii) Enclosure A looking south from central steps

Figure 4 Enclosure A

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i) Enclosure A from the lawn below showing the steps establishing the central axis of the complex. Note that the upper terraces are not visible from outside the garden.



ii) Access to furnace room



iii) Furnace hearth

**Figure 5 Enclosure A
(continued)**

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i) Enclosure B hot houses - looking west



ii) Terrace B looking east - note decayed brick facing

Figure 6 Enclosure B - Hot houses
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i) Enclosure C - western side



ii) Enclosure C Eastern Side



iii) Looking south from Enclosure C

**Figure 7 Enclosure C -
Alpine Houses**

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*i) Enclosure D - eastern side.
Offices*



*ii) Enclosure D Western Side -
Bothies and cold frame*



iii) Bothy - detail.

Figure 8 Enclosure D - Bothies

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i) Steps from 'D' to 'E' Note decayed stone and cracks to brickwork to right (east)



ii) Looking SE across enclosure E. Note sunken paths.



iii) Looking east across enclosure E towards orchard

Figure 9 Enclosure E - Lower vegetable garden

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i) Looking NE across enclosure F. The proposal would introduce two single storey cabins set closely parallel to the wall to rear. Note widened entrance in east wall.



ii) Looking S along modern crab apple avenue on central axis



iii) Water tank set against southern wall of Enclosure F

**Figure 10 Enclosure F
- Upper vegetable
garden**

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