



ARCHITECTS  
INTERIOR DESIGNERS  
PARTY WALL SURVEYORS  
TOWN PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Hertfordshire Office  
25 Tudor Hall  
Brewery Road  
Hoddesdon  
Hertfordshire  
EN11 8NZ

t: 01992 469001

f: 01992 469002

London Office  
9 Devonshire Square  
London  
EC2M 4YF

t: 0207 9792026

f: 01992 469002

e: [info@dpa-architects.co.uk](mailto:info@dpa-architects.co.uk)

w: [www.dpa-architects.co.uk](http://www.dpa-architects.co.uk)

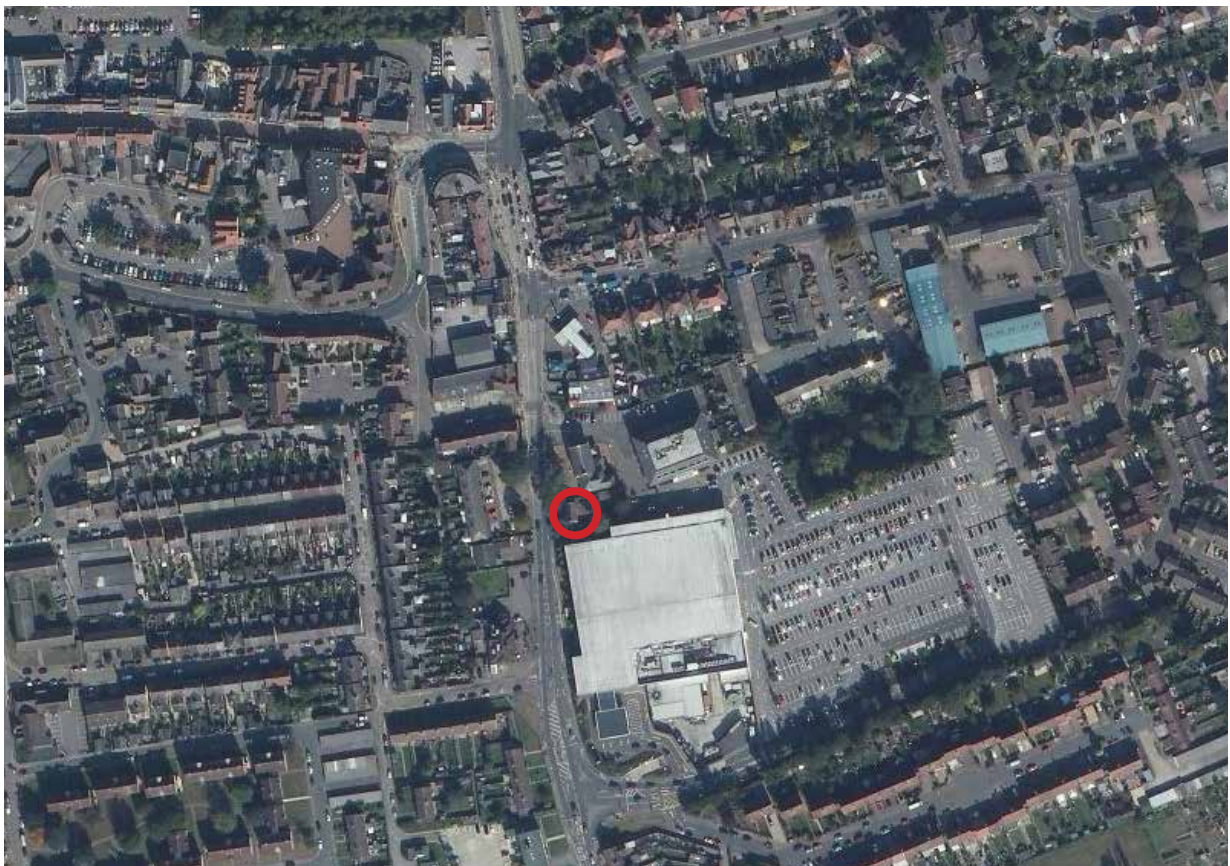
## THRIFT COTTAGE, Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey, Essex, EN9 1NP

**Heritage Statement and Heritage Impact Assessment** to accompany submission of application forms and drawings for Listed Building consent for the demolition of the property

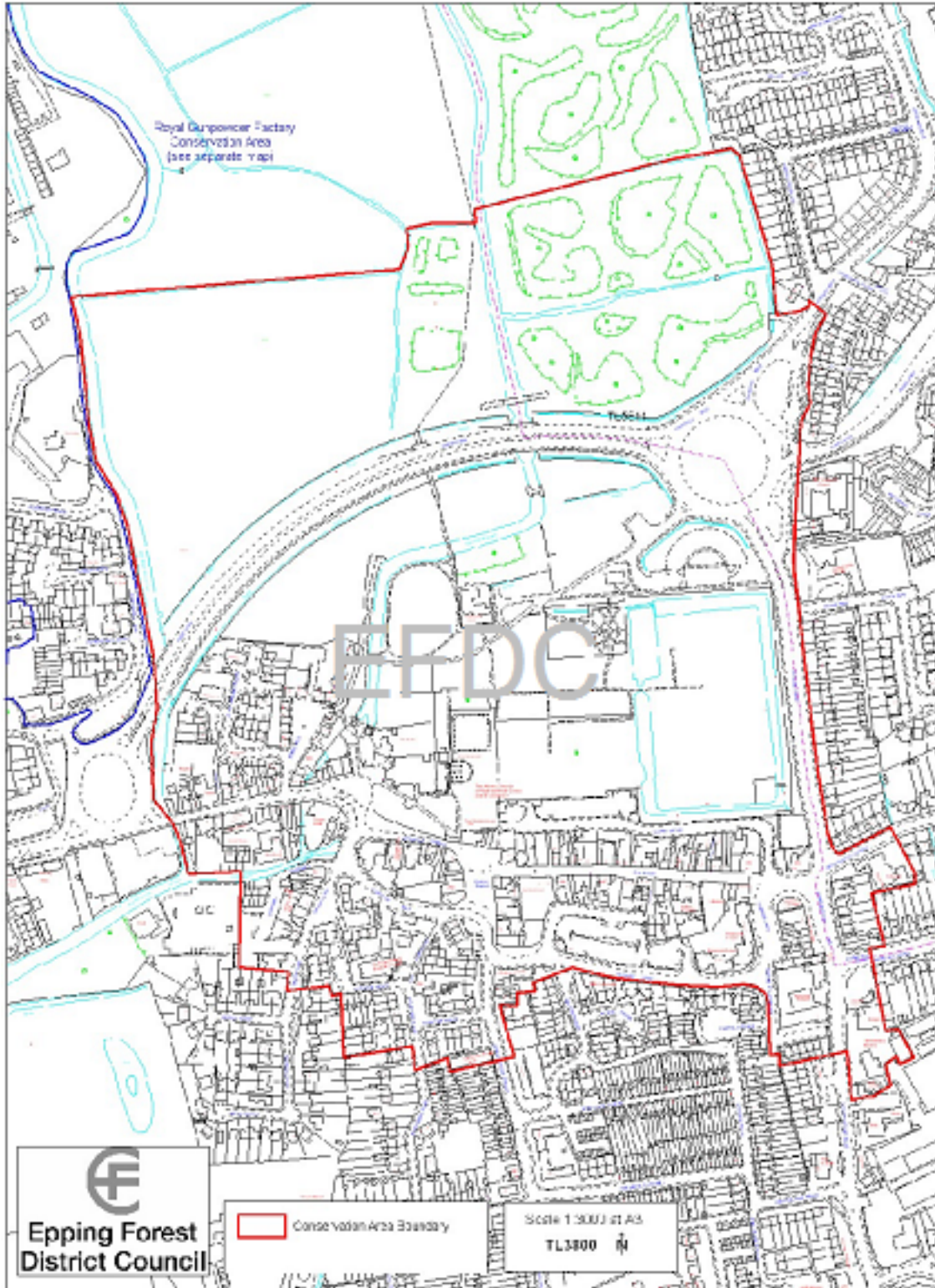




View of Thrift Hall and Thrift Cottage looking north-east across Sewardstone Road (April 2015)



### Waltham Abbey Conservation Area



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(this does not include an exhaustive study of the building type or of buildings in Essex or elsewhere, generally. However, it exceeds the minimum requirement stipulated by the NPPF and associated guidance.

Appendix 3: Summary & critique of Structural and condition surveys;

Appendix 4: Gazetteer and room-by-room notes and photographs (notes made during detailed site inspection and examination of the property on Friday 24th April 2015).

## 1 Preambles

### 1.1

The inspection of Thrift Cottage took place on Friday 24th April 2015. Weather was fair and sunny.

### 1.2

The survey and inspection was limited to a visual inspection of the entire property, using outline plans and elevations provided by DPA architects to identify the layout and general shapes of the building.

### 1.3

No overall measurements were undertaken. This data is available from the DPA architects. The architects' survey is supported by additional structural surveys which are cited in the evidence-base (Appendix 2 of this report). However, in specific instances sample and derived measurement and dimensions are given where a particular comment is being made about the building's structure, fabric or setting, to assist understanding.

### 1.4

The building is on the point of becoming dangerous, however, it was completely accessible for this exercise. The roof space was not entered except by means of a visual inspection through a ceiling trap at the 1st Floor landing (which was sufficient to determine the veracity of the comments and which enabled photographs and notes to be taken).

### 1.5

Photographs (all digital, colour) were taken on 3 cameras, two high specification compact cameras and the third being a Nikon D70 Digital SLR, with a variety of lenses.

### 1.6

Whilst the site is boarded around with partially boarded iron railings fence to the front (west) site boundary, and whilst the majority of the windows and doors have all been boarded over, it is not particularly secure and entry is possible either through the rear door or through holes in the wall fabric and through one of the ground floor rear windows. The site and building have been illegally accessed, it seems, on numerous occasions and sport some desultory graffiti mainly internally. Vandalism including physical destruction of parts of the structure and the internal screen-walls, doors and window frames has taken place. The Victorian fireplaces have been removed in their entirety and the Bathroom fittings have been detached and mainly removed. Lead weights have all been rather carefully stolen from the sliding sash box frames. Although much of this is likely to be incidental, the property is understood to have been vacant since 1997, and for the last 20 years has become increasingly derelict with significant structural movement.

### 1.7

he main roof structure (double-pitch with gable chimnies) and covering has been completely replaced in recent years from eaves / top rail level with new softwood jack-rafters, purlins and collar-ties and ridge board, surmounted by heavy sarking felt, presumably battens, topped by plain clay tiles to the west elevation, and clay pantiles to the east. This exercise has removed a large amount of historic fabric and has unfortunately destroyed a good deal of the technological significance and value of the property. The eccentric loading of the roof does nothing to enhance its stability.

### 1.8

The external walls which look on first impression to be straight, actually manifest significant frame slew towards the south and west, and similar movement and bellying has taken place on the east elevation. Throughout there is considerable and serious cracking, there are numerous holes in the external walls, holes in floor-boarding, signs of separation of the gables structures from the brick chimney structures with a hump in the 1st floor fabric at the landing position.

### 1.9

The 'outshot' accommodation to the South-East corner of the Ground Floor noted on historic plans and on the architects' sketches has been completely demolished and the profile of its former roofline is depicted in the elevational fabric.

### 1.10

The lean-to outshot with slated roof containing the Bathroom accommodation appended to the south gable end is in a severe state with holes in its roof and outward movement of the brickwork walls.

### 1.11

There are 2 modern plastics inspection chambers to the front (west) 'garden' linking a drain which at over 1 metre to invert runs at a slow diagonal from the north-west corner of the site (continuing it appears, from Thrift Hall) at an outward angle towards the south-west boundary wall. The inspection chamber nearest the north-west corner of the cottage is less than 200mm between the base of the cottage wall and the excavation pit for the chamber. This almost certainly will have caused some of the structural failure occurring at that position.

1.12

The site has no trees, although there is self-seeded growth to the south boundary wall beyond which alongside the pedestrian area between the cottage and Tesco there is a modest planting strip with some young deciduous saplings. The gardens are now reduced to rubble, hardcore and waste materials.

1.13

The (2015) Lloyds Pharmacy set within the original curtilage of this cottage, immediately to the east is now separated from the site by a high close-boarded fence with lockable gate/door.

1.14

The convention adopted for making site notes and photographs (where used) has been similar to quinquennial methodology working clockwise, starting with a view north (internally) and from viewing the north elevation (externally).

## **2 Description of the building, summarising its location, condition and the proposal to demolish with an outline of reasons why:**

2.1

Thrift Cottage is a rectangular 2-storey listed building (age is debated but mainly C19th) with duo-pitched roof, clad on the west elevation with machine made dark grey / brown clay tiles. The east roof elevation is clad in unglazed pantiles. The ridge is of half round butt jointed clay cappings. There are two protruding chimney stacks slightly eccentrically located at each gable end. The north one is truncated and topped with metal cowls whilst the south chimney is capped with orange terracotta pots. The pitch of the roof is approximately 43 degrees. The whole house has been externally overclad with beige / self coloured pebble-dash render. There is a central front-porch with duo-pitched roof clad in red clay tiles and supported by 4 white painted timber posts and balustraded rails rising from 2 dwarf walls. The windows are in the main sliding sash. There is a projecting front bay to the right of the central front porch which has later sash windows.

## 2.2

The cottage is aligned on a north-south axis; it has a small lean-to extension at ground floor butted against the full width of the south gable end. This extension is brick built and externally finished in pebble-dash render. A previous single-storey outshot attached to the south-east end of the rear elevation containing stores and possibly more of the kitchen area, has been demolished in recent years. Its low-pitched roofs and supporting wall outlines are visible to this left hand end of the elevation.

## 2.3

The Cottage stands in its own curtilage, the garden having long since been reduced to a surrounding flat area of rubble and detritus. Boundary structures are close-boarded fencing to the south and east, with a high brick wall to the north between the cottage and the adjacent listed Thrift Hall. The front boundary is a partially boarded-up iron railings fence set at the back of the pavement, giving onto Sewardstone Road.

2.4 The cottage is set back from the front boundary by approximately 9 metres. The gap between the cottage and its north boundary wall is approximately 1 metre and between the cottage and the new timber boarded dividing fence separating the cottage from the newly constructed Lloyds Pharmacy is approximately 7 metres. The south wall of the gable lean-to abuts the new dividing boarded fence which separates the cottage from a modest planting margin, a pedestrian link (from Sewardstone Road west to east to link to the entrance to the new Tesco superstore (constructed 2006) and to the square pedestrian area at the rear (East) which houses on its northern side the new Health Centre. Tesco is approximately 15 to 17 metres south of the cottage's south gable wall.

## 2.5

Thrift Cottage is located adjacent to Thrift Hall, both being listed grade II, and located approximately 400 metres directly south from the cross road which lead westwards to Sun Street in the town centre of Waltham Abbey. The cottage site is in the extreme south-east corner of the designated Conservation Area.



## 2.6

The condition of the property is very poor indeed although the replacement roof (1970s-1980s) has prevented weather from entering from above. However, the structural integrity of this timber framed house is largely lost and the building is becoming dangerous. It has been derelict for nearly 20 years and not inhabited since before 1997 (or thereabouts). It has been severely damaged by criminal action, with most windows damaged or removed, fire-surrounds and mantel pieces removed, sash weights removed, internal walls trashed, holes punched through the external wall fabric. Cracks are prevalent in every wall and at the junctions to the brick chimney stacks.

The building is uninhabitable and has no working services or drainage to it.

## 2.7

The proposal is to demolish this building, with a watching brief adding to the recording of this report, where practicable and as required by the Local Authority. The proposal then is to build on the site a suitable replacement, although the proposed use, form, materials of construction et.c are yet to be discussed and decided.

## 2.8

It has become uneconomic and unreasonable to retain the existing building since it cannot simply be repaired and put back into acceptable, legal use even considering possible negotiation towards minimum compliance with the current Building Regulations. Reconstruction would involve retention of perhaps 25% or less of the original structure and fabric of the building, overall, which then reduces its character and value and significance to the point of pastiche.

## 2.9

Whilst it is sad to lose a heritage asset and this proposed action is the last resort, this report suggests that Thrift Cottage's value and significance has been artificially elevated (although not deliberately) and that this record with any further measurements and record taking, photography et.c as required through conditional approval for demolition would be sufficient to retain the record and understanding of this building for historical and community reference.

2.10 Although it can not be used as justification for the 'harm' caused by the loss of a heritage asset (NPPF terminology) nevertheless there is an opportunity to mitigate the effects in an imaginative low-key approach to designing a replacement building, which will enhance the general view and setting of the principal and much more significant Thrift Hall, particularly from the direction of the town-centre looking south-eastwards. The design should seek to provide a visual 'stop-end' to the site (and to the Conservation Area) and create a suitable transition between the Georgian surroundings of Thrift Hall and the contemporary street frontage of Tesco, to the south.

### **3 Statement and critique of the Values and Significance of the Building (including a brief discussion and critique of why it was included in the Listed Buildings Register);**

#### 3.1

The historic values attributed to this building are set out in the listing descriptions (original (1974) revised (2010) and are to do with an assumed, but not proved age of construction which relates to the national policies on listing. An additional criterion is the group value attributed to the supposed links between this cottage and the adjacent Thrift Hall.

#### 3.2

In other words the values are historic, and socio-cultural (the cottage is purported to have been occupied by a caretaker to the adjacent Thrift Hall). There is no suggestion in the archives that the cottage has archaeological value; there is little in the detailed descriptions that suggest that the cottage has anything but low value, technologically. Indeed it is a very weak example of its type or genus.

#### 3.3

It has no architectural qualities (values) or associations whatsoever to share with its superior neighbour Thrift Hall. This report suggests that the cottage was built approximately 100 years after the construction of Thrift Hall, which then raises the question that in the archive descriptions of the property owned (and possibly occupied) by a Thomas Preston, a portion of land had a principal dwelling, with stables, cottage and gardens (see Parish registers). Elsewhere the cottage is described as having 4 bedrooms (sales particulars 1859, mentioned in the revised listing description). This certainly is not that building. However, there is indication on the early maps that a smaller dwelling set back to the furthest point east of the cottage curtilage, could have been ancillary accommodation.

#### 3.4

The evidential values obtaining to this cottage are of a singularly lightweight and 'flimsy' construction as noted in the Epping Forest District Museum's record of viewing / inspection, dated June 1988.

Other evidential values including the evidence obtained by regression analysis of the historic OS and earlier maps suggest a property that may not be anything like as old as is suggested. Although clearly use or is it re-use? of earlier style 'H' and 'L' shaped metal hinges are of some interest. These hinges are superficially planted and can hardly be said to be substantial evidence of the much earlier construction of the building. The building has been re-fitted with windows and doors after significant movement and slew has taken place, historically.

### 3.5

The curious and misleading aspect of the physical remains of this simple timber box-framed construction is that the appearance of the timberwork indicates that it could be of some earlier date. But the poor quality of construction, the lack of substantial sole plates or intermediate rails, the fact that the timber appears to be mainly pine rather than oak, except for the corbelled bracket and beam in the South Parlour, all suggest that the timber in fact might have been re-used from an earlier dwelling or a stock-pile and put up in some haste. There is no evidence of pegging of the morticed tenons which would otherwise suggest a substantive earlier date of say the 16th or 17th centuries.

### 3.6

This report suggests that listing descriptions and the re-assessment against de-listing (English Heritage: Sept-December 2010) make a cogent argument for retention of the building, because of the understandable nervousness of the unsubstantiated proposals to demolish between 2006 and 2009.

However, closer examination of the maps, the evidence-base cited in this report and a very detailed architectural - conservation examination of the property backs-up the structural reports of 2006, 2009 and curiously the visual report of 1988. These conclude that the building is no longer a viable entity.

### 3.7

The property is not substantial, its values are weak but may be recorded by combining this reportage with a 'watching and recording' brief being carried out during demolition. The Group Values attributed to the Thrift Cottage and Hall are weak and not entirely substantiated. The significance of the building against the national dataset is very low indeed. There are many more humble dwellings in the locality and counties of Essex and Hertfordshire which are in better condition and represent the type and taxonomy.

#### **4 Statement of the setting of the building and of the impacts on this setting of recent developments An overview (walkabout) of the Waltham Abbey Conservation Area assisted in the analysis contained in this section.**

##### 4.1

The setting of the building is not just its physical position on Sewardstone Road and its relationship to Thrift Hall, but additionally the setting must comprise the circumstances in which the building and its site are 'experienced'. The term is used in the NPPF and realistically alludes to the 'walkabout' experience rather than the experience which might be derived from academic, professional or 'interested party' research.

##### 4.2

During the latter part of the C19th, some part of the Thrift Hall curtilage and buildings had been occupied by a Thomas Preston who was a considerable land-owner in Waltham Abbey, with properties and farm land mainly in the Sewardstone hamlet, but also to the north. The Parish registers indicate that Preston owned over 30 properties or parcels of agricultural land. After him the occupants of the Hall (c.1863) were a Captain S.B Edenborough and his wife (ref: evidence-base / sources)

##### 4.3

The demolition of armament manufacture related industries' buildings to the east and south-east coyly labelled 'Britannica Works Fertilisers and Insecticides' on the revised O.S map of 1935/8 changed the purpose and the setting of Thrift Hall and the Cottage from being attached to these works (the early 20th century occupants of Thrift Hall were the illustrious (from the India campaign) major-general William Henry Noble(1834 to 1892). He was appointed superintendent of the Waltham Abbey Royal Gunpowder Factory in 1885 and died at the Hall on 17th May 1892.

##### 4.4

Since 2006 this area has been developed to accommodate the new Waltham Abbey Health Centre, the prodigious Tesco superstore, and most recently the Lloyds Pharmacy at the back (east) portion of the Thrift Cottage site. This site illustrated on historic maps was long and thin stretching from west to east, whereas its shape is now more or less square with the Cottage isolated and desultory behind high walls and boarded fencing.

##### 4.5

Approaching the centre of Waltham Abbey from the south along Sewardstone Road, there is a visual blocking of the Thrift Hall which is attractively set within a railing enclosed front 'garden; with a mature pine and deciduous tree to the front.

#### 4.6

The Tesco store whilst nominally attractive in terms of high specification materials, dwarfs the scale, height and material niceties and variations of both Cottage and Hall. To the west is set back over a rather featureless grassy access road sweep, the somewhat lack-lustre early 20th century housing. However, to their north, the buildings address the road frontage again and there is an eclectic mix of Edwardian and 20th century buildings leading to the cross roads, with commercial properties on the west side and villa style semi-detached and detached houses fronting onto the road on the east. The housing along the Farm Hill Road some 100 metres north of Thrift Hall is set back from the road and pavement edges. It is mainly 2-storey to the north with 3 and 4 storey newer apartments which congregate to the north east and wrap back behind the Tesco car park. It is from this car park as the pedestrian approaches the main entrance to Tesco that curious glimpses of the back of both Thrift Hall (brickwork) and Thrift Cottage (rendered pebbledash (now partly shielded by the Lloyds Pharmacy) can be glimpsed. Thus one has come in a full circle.

#### 4.7

There is no visual architectural or historic contiguity whatsoever, to the north and the west (Sun Street) parts of the conservation area, and beyond this the characteristic of the conservation Area changes completely to embrace the splendid parkland environs and historic remains of Waltham Abbey church et.c.

## **5 A review of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), associated Planning guidance and Local Plan policies to put the proposal into context;**

### 5.1

NPPF was introduced in 2012 and establishes the policies by which most planning (and listed building and conservation area (heritage assets) issues must be made.

### 5.2

Paragraph 14 states that development should be restricted where it affects designated assets, as a general precautionary principle. Paragraph 17 contains the core planning principle that planning should “ always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings” .. and should.... “take account of the different roles and character of different areas”. Additionally this section stipulates that planning should...

“ conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance”.

### 5.2

Paragraphs 60 and 61 ...”seek to promote local distinctiveness and....planning decisions.....should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment”. The proposals for the Thrift Cottage site will take these policies into account, and will seek to mitigate the loss of the heritage asset by means of insertion of an appropriate new design which will enhance the setting of the remaining Thrift Hall.

### 5.3

The most relevant part of the NPPF is of course section 12, paragraphs 126,128,129,132, 133 and for the future development of the site paragraph 137.

### 5.4

Paragraph 126 established the concept of ‘buildings-at-risk’, requiring that Local Authorities should recognise these heritage assets as being irreplaceable and seek to conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. Thrift Cottage is on the Essex ‘Buildings-at-Risk’ register. This report sets out to determine the significance of the affected heritage asset and proposes a recording condition to conserve a building that regrettably but justifiably should be demolished.

#### 5.6

Paragraph 128 requires that an applicant should describe the significance of any heritage asset affected including any contribution made by their setting. Additionally it stipulates that the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted. This report responds to and answers this requirement.

#### 5.7

Paragraph 129 requires the Local Planning Authority to assess the impact of any proposal on any the significance of a particular heritage asset, taking appropriate advice from expert sources.

#### 5.8

Paragraph 132 states that great weight should be given to the (heritage) asset's conservation and that substantial harm to or loss of a grade II listed building should be exceptional. This report seeks to answer this requirement. It makes a coherent argument based upon close examination and analysis of the asset, its historic and present setting(s), its values and regrettable condition, its diminished significance. This report suggests that based upon in-depth research and analysis, the Thrift Cottage is no longer representative of the merit accorded to it by the original or revised listings and that its loss, whilst exceptional, is justified.

#### 5.9

Paragraph 133 states that Local Authorities should refuse consent for substantial harm or total loss of a heritage asset unless the following apply:

- (1) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
- (2) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
- (3) conservation by grant-funding or some form of charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
- (4) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use

These 4 tests are stringent but all have been countered since the building became derelict and unoccupied in the late 1990s. The report highlights studies and surveys which set out clearly the appalling condition of the structure and fabric and indicate that the costs for retention or the viability and conservation integrity of re-construction would be out of order. The property has evidently been marketed since 1997 and has changed hands again in recent years, but no viable use for the building has been found and its condition in any case prevents any legitimate and viable occupation. It is not considered that a charitable or public ownership would be of an interest at all. Funding and such options are stretched towards more significant or eccentric projects (e.g the projects adopted by The Landmark Trust).

5.10

Paragraph 137 states that proposals that preserve those elements of the setting (of a heritage asset - in this case Thrift Hall) that make a positive contribution to or better reveal the significance of the asset should be treated favourably.

This report makes an outline case for the potential to enhance the setting of Thrift Hall mitigating to some extent the loss of the Cottage.

5.11

The previously operating Planning Guidance / Planning Policy Statements which remained active have been superseded as from the end of March 2015, including the Practice Guide to PPS 5 (CLG, EH and DCMS, 2010) and the advisory document on the setting of Heritage assets (English Heritage, 2011) They have now been superseded by and commented upon as follows:

**5.12 English Heritage (now 'Historic England') (March 2015) 'Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-taking in the Historic Environment'**

5.13 This note supersedes the 2010 Practice Guide Notes to PPS 5.

5.14 Paragraph 4 states that the understanding of the significance of the affected heritage asset is paramount.

This report has developed such understanding through references and critique of the archaeological evidence presented in unpublished reports held at the HER. The report also establishes and explains the architectural and historical and 'artistic' values of the Cottage in relation to the legislative criteria. The Cottage is an extremely poor example in terms of the significance of its type and it no longer contributes significantly to the modest importance of its neighbour, Thrift Hall.

The Cottage is isolated from the main centre of the designated Waltham Abbey Conservation Area, however, an assessment of the relation of the Cottage and its setting and the impact of its proposed demolition is made elsewhere in this report.

5.15

Paragraph 6: the issues raised here and referring to paragraph 188 of the NPPF have been addressed by early discussion with the Local Authority Conservation Officer and Essex County advisors, prior to this pre-application assessment. The itemised list of stages of tasks/objectives has been methodically applied in the research, survey and actions supporting this report.



5.16

Paragraphs 8,9,10: the nature, level and extent of significance of Thrift Cottage and its setting have all been examined and evaluated in this report.

5.17

Paragraph 11: the level of survey and degree of analysis employed for this report more than meets the 'proportionality' requirement of the guidance and legislation.

5.18

Paragraph 12: all 8 steps recommended here have been assiduously followed in the production of this report. The desk-based assessments have included a detailed review and critique of recent archaeological studies of the site. With regard to step 7, whilst no physical intervention with the fabric of the building was undertaken, enough of the Cottage's structure and cross sectional make-up of the building fabric could be examined visually, to enable detailed notes to be made. These are included in Appendix 4.

5.19

Paragraph 15: There are no additional curtilage structures other than the boundary walls. It is to be noted that the rear outshot has been recently demolished (between 1988 and 2015). Thrift Cottage itself may have been an added curtilage structure to Thrift Hall, but was already separated by a dividing wall by the date of the 1st Ordnance Survey map of 1872. The 1842 Tithe map indicates a separate plot with no cottage on it.

5.20

Paragraph 18: Epping Forest District Museum Service and Waltham Abbey Historical Society publications and web-sites have been consulted during the production of this report.

5.21

Paragraph 21: The HER at Chelmsford has been examined as has Heritage Gateway and the Essex County Records Office archives and its SEAX website

5.22

Paragraph 26: whilst it is always very regrettable to lose a heritage asset physically, sometimes the exercise is necessary because of its dangerous condition. In this case the uneconomical and impractical aspects of re-building the Cottage resulting effectively, in a curio with little historic value and inability to comply with even the most undemanding requirements of the current Building Regulations renders the exercise futile. Public benefit including a more complete understanding of the socio-cultural function of this asset will be obtained through this report and through a recommended 'watching and recording' brief to be carried out during the demolition. These records should be made available at the HER and at the local museum / archives.

### 5.23

The harm (as categorised by the NPPF) is great, but the significance of this harm is very low. It is believed that this report satisfies the requirements of paragraphs 133-139 of the NPPF.

### 5.24

Paragraph 28: the 'Cumulative Impact' is an important factor in the evaluation of Thrift Cottage, since its likely date of construction on site (this report considers that this was after 1842. The entire setting, the visual and functional relationship to Thrift Hall coupled with the radical changes to an inherently poor construction followed by years of deterioration, abject vandalism and theft have all led to a building that now has little value and virtually no significance, in a national or local context. It is acknowledged that condition alone does not justify potential deliberate harm through demolition to a heritage asset, but this report provides more information and analysis to contend that the cottage may have been mistakenly attributed to an earlier collection and relationship of buildings on the Thrift Hall site, rather than the one which actually prevails.

### 5.25

There is no possibility of reversing the damage and the cumulative impact of changes of setting. Conservation at this stage is more appropriately served by better recording which this report establishes.

### 5.26

Paragraph 29: this report contends that the majority of damage and harm to this heritage asset has already taken place, but that its original weak construction predisposed the building to much destructive movement, instability and then desperate intervention through the C20th to make good to stability, fabric and damp resistance. Appendix 4 illustrates, by means of detailed inspection how inappropriate and destructive so many of these measures have been.

### 5.27

Paragraphs 32 and 37: this report is put forward to satisfy the requirements of these paragraphs. A further 'watching and recording' brief may be helpful during the stages of the proposed demolition, to identify parts of the original timber 'box'-frame that at present are still un-exposed, being covered by floorboarding, internal linings and decoration and the planted-on brickwork with pebble-dash render cover .

5.28

Paragraph 34: this report is a 'written scheme of investigation' : the investigation was only verbally discussed with Local Authority officers prior to the work being carried out, nevertheless the methodology, primary and secondary research, analysis and evaluation have all followed the general recommendations and levels of investigation recommended in the English Heritage (2006) 'Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice', and other similar accepted practice formats, sufficient to attain a level of between stage 3 and stage 4.

5.29

Paragraph 38: whilst Thrift Cottage is not pre-eminent as an asset, it deserves as thorough a recording as is practically and economically possible. Therefore this report should be made available, as stated above, to the Local Historical Society, to local archives and the HER at Chelmsford. The context and academic perspective of viewing this report alongside the unpublished reports held at the HER and as cited by English Heritage (now Historic England) in the amended listing description of 2010 is considered to be of assistance to the local community, to local historians and to others who may at some time require to re-assess Thrift Hall, for example, or to amend the descriptors and evaluation set out in the Waltham Abbey Conservation Area character appraisal.

5.30

Paragraphs 41 to 43: these are not considered relevant and the eventualities covered by paragraph 44 unlikely to occur.

5.31

Paragraph 45: the regrettable condition of Thrift Cottage is held to be fortuitous rather than deliberate in this case. Therefore, the condition of the property and its 'impact on viability' ...are held to be 'a material consideration' in reviewing the proposed demolition in a positive light.

5.32

Paragraphs 49,50: it is understood and it has been recommended that in order to comply with the tenets of these paragraphs and with section 12 of the NPPF, that a marketing exercise is carried out by the owner, so that reasonable proof can be offered that the property has little value either in monetary terms, or in terms of viable future reasonable use. Costs have been prepared in the recent past to indicate the excessive level of investment to retain and reconstruct the building, merely to just an adequate standard, and this report provides significantly more information on which to judge that such an exercise would be of little benefit in conservation terms. However, it is a common requirement that such a marketing exercise and the costings should be put to the test for say 6 months.

5.33

Paragraph 52: whilst no justification for the loss of this asset, nevertheless there is an opportunity to enhance the approaches to the designated Conservation Area and more specifically to enhance the setting of Thrift Hall.

5.34

The architects most recently involved with the proposal to demolish Thrift Cottage have expressed a desire to comply with key points in this paragraph. In particular it is recognised that bullet point 3 suggests that new design will be part of a 'dynamic concept' if it is to deal successfully with the 'significance of nearby assets and the contribution to their setting'

**5.35 English Heritage (now 'Historic England') (March 2015) Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: Note 3 : Setting of Heritage Assets'**

5.36 This guide supersedes English Heritage (2010) The setting of Heritage Assets

5.37 Paragraph 2: the issues here are fundamental to the whole case. The information presented by the applicant / owner and advisers in previous applications was rejected by the Local Planning Authority for having insufficient analysis and evidence to justify demolition. In particular the Local Planning Authority required more information (as set out in the NPPF) to create an understanding of (a) the significance of the asset (b) the costs of preserving / retaining the asset and (c) the market attractiveness of the asset.

5.38 This report puts forward the case that the Thrift Cottage is beyond economic and viable repair and use, despite the laudable statements by the Morton Partnership.

5.39 To achieve a usable, habitable building which would be safe to use, in compliance with even the most modest (and negotiated) application of the current Building Regulations in terms of structural stability, fire resistance, thermal performance, acoustic separation, internal access, prevention of damp and moisture ingress, sanitary facilities and drainage, means of escape and so on, the building would in any case require taking down and reconstruction, with so much replacement of structural elements, fabric and alterations that arguably less than 25% of the original building would be preserved. The roof is in any case a total replacement, so that the historic values and evidence of this element have been completely destroyed.

5.40

The C20th century enveloping of the building with cement-based render has accelerated the deterioration of the building as well as destroying its original plastered and boarded appearance. It is an ugly finish

5.41

Following the line of re-construction in this instance and to the degree considered necessary could produce a curio, visually, but this approach to conservation when taken to this extent produces a pastiche and is anathema to conservation policy held by most authorities.

5.42

Paragraph 3: the analysis of the historic, current and possible future setting of Thrift Cottage and Thrift Hall is set out in section 4 of this report and is additionally debated in this section. The curtilages of the two properties were separated by some form of wall, hedge or boundary structure certainly by the time of the publication of the 1st Ordnance Survey (1876), but just as clearly at the time of issue of the earlier Tithe Map of 1842. The Chapman and Andre map (1777) is unfortunately marked at this location with a wide black line extending from west to east across the general area, so it is impossible to tell. The context and character of this area are also discussed in these sections.

5.43

Paragraph 4: the surroundings in which the assets Thrift Hall and Thrift Cottage are 'experienced' (ref: NPPF) have been changed radically most recently by the erection in c. 2006 of the new Tesco superstore (to the immediate south), the new Waltham Abbey Health centre (to the east) and to a smaller extent by the insertion of the Lloyds Pharmacy to the rear (east) of the curtilage of Thrift Cottage. It is not clear when the separate stables block within the grounds of Thrift Hall disappeared. They are depicted on the 1938 amendment to the 1935 O.S. map. The housing to the west side of Sewardstone Road created in the early decades of the C20th combine with the recent developments to reduce the impact of the cottage and the hall in the experience of approaching the town centre, or travelling from it, along Sewardstone Road.

5.44

Only as an isolated historic curio could it be acceptably claimed that the experience of Thrift Cottage as it stands or conjecturally as it could be re-constructed (and of course anything can be reconstructed with some effort) would be of any note. The experience of Thrift Hall is architecturally and visually more complete and of a higher order, being well presented both in terms of set-back within an attractive railing front boundary to a fore-garden and in terms of scale.

This sense of entity is added to the by the visual effect of the wide overhang of the eaves which was a device used in Georgian architecture in particular to emphasise the composition and termination of the principal elevation, with some reference to the role of the capital and frieze of classical architecture. The low slope of the Georgian roof and its quality of Welsh slate add to the quality experience.

#### 5.45

Little can be said for the attributes of Thrift Cottage which is squat and the tiles non-descript, being machine made. The proportions of this west facing elevation of the cottage are not eccentric enough to add so-called rural charm, nor are they generous enough to suggest a coherent classicism related to Thrift Hall. There is no architectural experience of linkage whatsoever, between the two buildings.

#### 5.46

Even the appearance of Thrift Hall reduces the quality of the setting, because whilst the render has been painted white in recent years (photographic evidence from the HER), possibly to reflect an earlier painting scheme, the pebble-dash cover itself, although of some longevity, certainly would not have been the finish of choice for such a pretentious 'villa', scribed white lime rendering being far more likely and in keeping with its status. The rear walls to Thrift Hall are brick, and this accords with the importance given to the setting of the building and the statement of its hierarchy of pretensions. The south boundary wall to Thrift Hall, with its drab white garage or store structures and range of ad-hoc postal boxes looking somewhat like crazed bat-roosting boxes, or bird boxes, does nothing to enhance the setting of the site. Particularly the brightness of the colours of this range is too powerful and detracts from the appearance of the hall. It should be tidied up and redecorated (toned-down) at the least.

#### 5.47

This report suggests that the site is isolated from the major historical centre of Waltham Abbey and from Sun Street, in particular. To the north of Sun Street the setting and indeed the character of the Conservation Area changes radically again and gives onto the extraordinary qualities of peacefulness and historical and archaeological interest in the Abbey grounds.

#### 5.48

It is understood that the Conservation Area Character Appraisal is at draft review and approval stage: it was not available for this study. Therefore this section and the earlier notes attempt to summarise some of the characteristics which are relevant to the study of the setting and location of Thrift Hall and Cottage. These assets are distant from the remainder of the early historical buildings and there is a lack of contiguity in the experience of their setting, as such.

5.49 Paragraphs 5,6 and 9: it should be noted that the pinch-point view of Thrift Hall and Cottage has been an important one historically. There are vague indications that there was some development along the both sides of Sewardstone Road, to the south, even before Thrift Hall can be depicted. On the Warburton (1726) map, it is possible that 'The Limes' (now demolished) pre-dated Thrift Hall. But this is conjectural.

5.50 If the thick wavy dark line on the Chapman and Andre map of 1777 is in fact a drainage ditch or stream linking the various springs and stream to one flowing through the centre of the town, then it aligns with the north edge of the existing east pond, which aligns to the south boundary of the later Thrift Cottage. If all this is accurate, then the building shown to the south of this line, adjoining Sewardstone Road could well be 'The Limes'. This may have been a new name for a much older building. However, all this is conjectural, but the positioning and alignment of the sites is more significant and will be discussed elsewhere. The point here is to illustrate the significance of changes to the experience of the setting since the mid C18th.

5.51 Returning to the C21st, the setting of Thrift Cottage and the Hall is now a sudden experience of change of scale, from the overwhelming domination of the albeit highly specified glazed panel cladding of Tesco. This effect unfortunately adds to the ugliness of the Cottage's appearance.

5.52 The setting of the site when viewed from the nearby road junction to the north again is framed by Tesco and the gaps between the Cottage and the rear Pharmacy and their appearance over the boundary wall linking to Thrift Hall produce a somewhat dis-jointed effect with irritating changes of colour of materials, scale and context.

5.53 There now remains a considerable opportunity to enhance the setting of the Hall and mitigate the loss of the Cottage. This argument can not be used to justify the loss of the Cottage, as is stated elsewhere, nevertheless it raises hopes that a more visually coherent architecture and landscaping solution might prevail. The possibility arises to insert in place of the Cottage a simple but highly specified architectural block (not necessarily with a pitched roof) but with dark colours to contrast against the boundary wall brickwork and to give more accent to the light colour of the Thrift Hall. The proposed replacement building should aim to close the gap currently at the rear of the cottage through which Tesco irritatingly peeps. This will reduce the visual discord and create a better sense of enclosure to the Thrift Hall curtilage. This paragraph is set out to assist future discussion and be the basis of a development brief between the architects and the Planning Authority, and derives from the close study of the setting of these assets.

5.54

With regard to buried assets / archaeological significance of setting et.c, no evidence has been discovered during the research for this report and in the unpublished archaeological papers studied at the HER to suggest anything of value or significance. There is nothing which would justify the retention of Thrift Cottage on these precepts.

5.55

With regard to setting - economic and social viability - the conclusion is offered that a full recording of the Cottage and improvement of the setting of Thrift Hall offers the best means to address this concern It is highly unlikely that the retention of Thrift Cottage would add significantly to the social and economical well-being of the community as a whole.

5.56

Paragraph 10: this refers to 'harm to the heritage asset's significance'.... and to the.... 'capacity of the setting to accommodate change'....Clearly the removal of a heritage asset is of the utmost harm, in theory, and the impact of that harm and loss has to be assessed against the significance of the asset, which has been the focus of this report. Mitigation is found on the suggestions for a development brief put forward in paragraph 5.53, above, and indeed its setting returns towards a pre- 1842 state, when it is suggested by this report, Thrift Cottage as supposedly identified by English Heritage did not exist, at least not in the location identified in their study. Thrift Hall remains the pre-eminent building on this site.

5.57

Paragraphs 11 and 12: the extent of the values and level of significance of Thrift Cottage, per-se are very low indeed: the following notes are put forward in response to steps 1 to 5 recommended in the guidance:

5.58

step (1): this is done in the first section of this report;

5.59

step (2): the settings now make virtually no contribution to the significance of the heritage asset;

5.60

step (3): clearly the demolition of a listed building is regrettable and irreversible and the degree of so-called 'harmfulness' is extreme. However, the values and significance are detailed in this report and the recommendation for additional recording during its demolition will assist future understanding when read in conjunction with this report and with the most recent structural appraisals.



5.61

step (4): 'harm' has been explained, the enhancement of the setting of Thrift Hall is explored and promulgated, by this report;

5.62

step (5): decision and outcomes will be documented and monitored by due process with records kept at the HER and locally, and hopefully on-line.

**5.63 LOCAL PLAN POLICIES: these have been confirmed as those contained in the Epping Forest District Council Adopted Local Plan: January 1998 but as revised and amended in 2006:**

5.64

POLICY HC6 : WITHIN OR ADJACENT TO A CONSERVATION AREA, THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR ANY DEVELOPMENT, OR GIVE LISTED BUILDING CONSENT OR CONSENT FOR WORKS TO TREES, WHICH COULD BE DETRIMENTAL TO THE CHARACTER, APPEARANCE OR SETTING OF THE CONSERVATION AREA.

5.65

This policy has been addressed in the assessment presented in this report. It is not considered that the demolition of Thrift Cottage would be detrimental to the character, appearance or setting of the Conservation Area

5.66

POLICY HC7: WITHIN CONSERVATION AREAS, ALL DEVELOPMENT AND MATERIALS WILL BE REQUIRED TO BE OF A PARTICULARLY HIGH STANDARD TO REFLECT THE QUALITY OF THE ENVIRONMENT. DEVELOPMENT SHOULD:-

(i) BE SYMPATHETIC TO THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THE CONSERVATION AREA IN TERMS OF SCALE, DENSITY, MASSING, HEIGHT, LAYOUT, BUILDING LINE, LANDSCAPE AND ACCESS;

(ii) HAVE TRADITIONAL PITCHED ROOFS AND CREATE A ROOFSCAPE WITH SUFFICIENT FEATURES TO PROVIDE AN APPROPRIATE DEGREE OF VISUAL INTEREST IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE CONSERVATION AREA;

(iii) BE COMPOSED OF FACING MATERIALS CHOSEN FROM THE TRADITIONAL RANGE USED IN THE DISTRICT; (iv) HAVE FACADES WHICH:

(a) PROVIDE AN APPROPRIATE BALANCE BETWEEN HORIZONTAL AND VERTICAL ELEMENTS, AND PROPORTIONS OF WALL TO WINDOW AREA;

(b) INCORPORATE A SUBSTANTIAL DEGREE OF VISUAL INTRICACY, COMPATIBLE WITH THAT OF THE FACADES OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS; AND

(v) WHERE APPLICABLE, BE OF A SCALE COMPATIBLE WITH ANY ADJACENT HISTORIC BUILDINGS

#### 5.67

This report is concerned with the proposed demolition of the Thrift Cottage rather than with new development. Nevertheless these policy principles are generally useful. However, it is true to say that the requirement for new development (in this case the potential replacement building on the site of Thrift Cottage) always to have a pitched roof and be composed of materials traditional to the areas could preclude the imaginative approach to a simple but well designed alternative, using high quality materials. The site is a difficult one, bridging the impact of materials change and massing of the nearby Tesco with the Georgian style of Thrift Hall.

#### 5.68

It is recommended that a sympathetic view be adopted by architects, the owner/developer and the Local Authority to exploring a range of architectural options which might employ alternative approaches. Guidance to this concern has been offered in paragraph 5.53. It should be at the discretion of the local authority and their historic and architectural advisors to explore these alternatives with a view to enhancing the setting and integrity of the remaining listed building Thrift Hall. The policy was adopted in 1998. Many examples across the country of a contemporary approach to small scale architecture can work very well. This report does not endorse the rather formulaic approach of this policy but understands why, given the worst examples in intervention, it had to be drafted the way it was.

#### 5.69

POLICY HC9 : THE COUNCIL WILL ONLY GRANT CONSENT FOR THE DEMOLITION OF A BUILDING IN A CONSERVATION AREA WHERE THE BUILDING DOES NOT MAKE A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE OF THAT AREA, OR WHERE THE REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL PRESERVES OR ENHANCES THAT CHARACTER OR APPEARANCE.

#### 5.70

This report addresses this policy in detail.

#### 5.70

POLICY HC10 : THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GIVE CONSENT FOR WORKS TO THE INTERIOR OR EXTERIOR OF A LISTED BUILDING WHICH COULD DETRACT FROM ITS HISTORIC INTEREST OR ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER AND APPEARANCE.

#### 5.71

The rationale for the demolition of Thrift Cottage has been researched, explored and analysed in detail in this report. Therefore, the policy is accordingly and appropriately addressed.

5.72

POLICY HC11 : THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GIVE CONSENT FOR THE DEMOLITION OF A LISTED BUILDING UNLESS IT CAN BE SHOWN, TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE COUNCIL, THAT THERE ARE VERY EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES AS TO WHY THE BUILDING CANNOT BE RETAINED AND RETURNED TO AN APPROPRIATE USE.

5.73

As for 5.71, this report addresses the concerns expressed by this policy.

5.74

POLICY HC12 : THE COUNCIL WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENT WHICH COULD ADVERSELY AFFECT THE SETTING OF A LISTED BUILDING.

5.75

It is suggested that the principles of future development of the Thrift Cottage site will address this policy. These are provided in paragraph 5.53 of this report.

## **6 Option Appraisal for the Conservation of this listed building**

6.1 Retain the building with minimal structural propping: this would preserve the building as is, but its status and condition are such that this option would merely provide an on-going target for vandalism. The heritage values are too weak and the structure also too weak, physically to make this a viable option: this is not an economically justifiable solution and the market attractiveness of this would be nil.

6.2 Remove the external coatings and claddings to Thrift Cottage, restore the timber framework and consider a scheme for redecoration using lime-render, timber boarding et.c to return the building to its historic appearance, prior to the damaging render application. Make good to the internal structures and finishes and adapt the building to some residential or office use: this is an extremely cost-ineffective option, which would pose significant issue of compliance with the current Building Regulations, and would in turn render the building very unattractive to the open market in terms of asking cost to cover the necessary investment. The heritage value of the Cottage is not sufficient and the location and facilities far too compromised, to make this a viable option, although it is an understandable first resort in conservation terms. Additionally too much of the historic fabric of the building would be lost in this process rendering the values and significance of the building all but meaningless;

6.3 Take down the building and reconstruct along the lines of the actions set out in option 6.2: the conclusions have to be similar to those drawn on option 6.2. The building will become meaningless in historic fabric and significance terms and would continue to present significant if not insurmountable difficulties in satisfying the applicable Building Regulations. It would hardly attract a serious offer to become a standing ruin / or museum piece.

6.4 Demolish the building with due respect to ensuring a thorough recording of it, for the continuing understanding for local people, scholars, historians and indeed for the Local Authority officers concerned with the historic environment: this appears to be the only conclusive feasible option, and this report supports this action.

## **7 Summary and Conclusions: justification for the proposed demolition, including structural condition, conservation deficit and lack of market attractiveness**

### 7.1

The research undertaken to examine this building, its historical and 'architectural' values and significance and the evidence-base examined, both in the secondary sources and archives and in the primary research and investigations on site all lead to the conclusion that the building is a very weak and hugely damaged representative of an Essex style of construction which is far better preserved in hundreds if not thousands of other buildings in the county. Indeed this type of building is represented in counties across England. There is very little merit in its listing, although it is acknowledged that the former links with Thrift Hall in terms of possible caretaker occupancy (although proof of this was not found during this research) are of some interest to the local history and to family research. There is no 'architectural' cohesiveness at all between the style of Thrift Hall and the form and style of the Cottage: this report suggests the much later addition of Thrift Cottage and by the hand of different builders. Indeed the buildings are almost 100 years apart at the given (Thrift Hall) and presumed (Thrift Cottage) dates of construction. Any artistic -architectural value and significance of Thrift Cottage is questionable.

### 7.2

There is a small amount of interest (evidential, historical and communal value) in relating the use of this cottage and more importantly of Thrift Hall by the superintendent staff of the adjacent ammunitions production facilities. This evidence and value can be sustained and preserved in the local historical archives and it is recommended that a detailed search (not found during this research) is made possible by local discussion with members of the public to obtain early 20th century photographs. The Francis Frith County Collection did not reveal any such evidence unfortunately.

### 7.3

The curious and missing element of history, at present is what practical or community values might pertain to the links between this building and the former 'Limes' villa? to which it appeared to be contiguously attached. Again this present research did not reveal anything but oral memory archives in the near future might raise some interest.

### 7.4

None of this interest is diminished by the proposed demolition of the actual building itself. A 'record and demolish' condition on any consent granted would ensure that the building was respected in terms of the modest part it has played during the latter half of the 19th century into the 20th.

### 7.5

The regression analysis of the maps seems to indicate fairly conclusively that in fact if there had been a building on this site prior to the Tithe map of 1842, it was a different building to that which is indicated on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1870.

### 7.6

The present condition of the building and the significant amount of destruction caused by the removal of the rear outshot and the entire replacement of the main roof in the past 30 years, coupled with the pillaging of Victorian fittings such as the fireplace surrounds, internally, plus removal and damage to internal partition walls, and continuing movement and cracking leave a dangerous building which has little evidence and value to offer in the interpretation of the genus in Essex or in the locality and which detracts visually from its setting and more importantly from the setting of Thrift Hall. The buildings have been in separate curtilages (not necessarily ownership) since the turn of the 19th to 20th centuries and possibly well before that.

### 7.7

It is of course possible to retain and re-build any structure. The recent notes by English Heritage (now Historic England) – see correspondence/advice note September 2010 - indicate that such an approach has been suggested and supported by the Morton Partnership. This present report does not seek to argue against such an action in terms of its practicability. However, it has to be asked is it worth it?

The costs of retaining and stabilizing the cottage have been estimated at over £ 148,000 in 2009, exclusive of VAT. This at the time was more than the costs of taking down and rebuilding. The research carried out for this report suggests that even to undertake the former would result in retention of probably less than 25% of original materials including structure, fabric and fittings.

This is considerably less than the 'rule of thumb' benchmark used in many cases by the former English Heritage to justify retention of a listed building. Indeed to replace such an extent of material has the net result of producing a faux-historical entity, the building thus retained has very little historical value.

### 7.8

Although replacement opportunity is not admissible as justification for demolition, in listed building terms, nevertheless in terms of the aspirations of the NPPF and its guidance and in terms of the character and appearance of the Waltham Abbey Conservation Area, there is an opportunity to consolidate and indeed enhance the setting of Thrift Hall, improve its visual appearance, by the substitution on the Cottage site of a modest replacement building. The contextual views looking southwards towards the site along Sewardstone Road, are fragmented and changed by the imposition of the new Pharmacy and by the visual backcloth of Tesco, which although neatly designed with moderately high specification materials, nevertheless peeks through the visual gaps between Cottage and Hall.

The 'pinch-point' perspective obtained travelling north along Sewardstone Road towards the crossroads and then the centre of Waltham Abbey, if there ever was one is no longer obtained by the distractions of the cottage, but by the rewarding and pleasurable set-back and railing fronted fore-garden of Thrift Hall, complete with its mature trees.

### 7.9

If there is a recommendation to be made at this point, it is that these gap views should be filled, the replacement building need not be over dominating if appropriate materials are used and if the building is extended eastwards to close these gaps and to bring some sense of visual containment to the south boundary of Thrift Hall.

### 7.10

Detailed regression analysis of the historic maps, particularly those illustrated in the DWW unpublished report held at the HER and supplemented by further research at the Essex County Record Office gives a challenging view that Thrift Cottage as depicted in the maps is not the Thrift Cottage alluded to in the listed building descriptions. Indeed the Cottage site seems to have been separate from the Thrift Hall site since the early to mid 1700s, if not before.

### 7.11

The sales particulars of 1859 seem to describe a completely different cottage, the north Living Room is not mentioned at all, although conceivably the layout has been modified. The present building shows no indication of having had the 4 bedrooms mentioned in the particulars.

### 7.12

This report contends that the appearance of a building on this site did not occur until between 1842 (date of Tithe Map) and 1870 (date of the 1st Ordnance Survey map). On this latter it is depicted as a small grey rectangle within its own curtilage, although to be fair, owners of Thrift Hall could have maintained the rights to this parcel of land and no doubt would have wished for a humble vernacular cottage to be separated from the classical frontage of the villa, by something such as a hedge or a brick wall.

The interesting point is to mark the alignment of the south boundary of the Thrift Cottage site with the top edge (running vaguely west-south-west to east-north-east ) running across the top (northern) bank of the nearby pond / pool, which remains to this day. The building indicated in the approximate location of the present site on the 1777 Chapman and Andre map is a singular building and could be the Thrift Hall (dated 1767 in the listing description) or could be 'The Limes' (by whatever name it was called at the time), but there is no building to the immediate south of it, and none to the north.

The black thick wavy line could have been a wide watercourse which might align with the above mentioned extant pool, which incidentally appears to have been deliberately created as part of the "pleasure gardens" associated with the adjacent Farnhill House, as mentioned in the Parish Register of that time.

### 7.13

There is therefore some doubt as to the accuracy of the statements / assumptions made by English Heritage in their assessment and recommendation not to de-list in 2010. Research undertaken for this report seems to indicate a poor quality building with very little technological craft value, no architectural value and certainly no architectural empathy or connection with Thrift Hall, and most probably constructed about 100 years later than the Hall. The socio-functional (caretaker) links are interesting but not substantial and certainly are circumstantial to the interest of Thrift Hall, rather than being of prime concern. The Group-values are therefore very weak.

### 7.14

This report concludes that little would be lost in accepting the approaching necessity to take down Thrift Cottage. There is little rationale to reconstruct it and there are mitigating factors which might assist understanding its socio-historical values, whilst allowing for an innovative replacement building.



**7.15 letter from EFDC to the applicant setting out reasons for refusal of consent to demolish**

Refusal LB Consent to Demolish EPF / 2122 / 08

Site Address Thrift Cottage Sewardstone Road Waltham Abbey Essex EN9 1NN

Application Number EPF/2122/08

Site Address Thrift Cottage Sewardstone Road Waltham Abbey Essex EN9 1NN

Property Address NFE Thrift Cottage, Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey, Essex, EN9 1NP. *The demolition of a listed building can only be justified in exceptional circumstances. Having regard to policy H11 of the adopted Epping Forest District Local Plan, and Government guidance as set out in PPG15, exceptional circumstances have not been shown to exist for reasons including the following;- 1) The submitted structural survey, dated 2006, does not adequately address the structural condition of the property and costs associated with repair and restoration. 2) No information is provided to describe the architectural and historic interest of the property. 3) Details have not been provided of any proposals to dispose of the property on the open market, or of consideration of possible alternative uses, for example for offices as approved in 2005.*

**7.16**

Given the paucity of considered structural information (reason 1), the lack of a Heritage Statement

(reason 2) and the lack of proof of testing market attractiveness (reason 3), this is the only response which EFDC could possibly have made. The operating primary legislation viz: Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, supported originally by PPG 15, and later by PPS5 and its Planning Guidance and now by the NPPF and its supporting guidance (March 2015) as reviewed in this report, all combine generally and specifically to require all three issues to be addressed.

**7.17**

The production of a more in depth structural assessment in 2009 (see sources and Appendix 3 of this report) deals with reason (1) This present report deals with all issues in due proportion to the asset's importance.

**7.18**

It remains open to negotiation with the Local Planning Authority as to whether further marketing for a limited period would provide any more substantive proof (item 3) above, or whether in fact there is now a prima-facie case for accepting the rationale for demolition.

**Appendix 1: Listed Building Descriptions (1974), revision (2010) with recommendation not to de-list (2010)**

App 1.1

Listed Building description 1974:

22-MAR-1974: Sewardstone Road (east side) THRIFT COTTAGE (grade II)  
A cottage of early C19, incorporating fabric of the C18, altered in the late C19 and C 20

MATERIALS: Timber-framed with pebble-dash render, which at the rear is applied to weatherboard cladding.

PLAN: simple two room plan on ground floor with outshot to the south

**App 1.2 Advice report from English Heritage (date 17 Dec 2010) with recommendation (date 2nd Sept 2010) not to de-list**

English Heritage (Listing)	<u>Advice Report</u>	17 DEC 2010
	ADDRESS	
THRIFT COTTAGE, SEWARDSTONE ROAD (E), WALTHAM ABBEY		
Parish WALTHAM ABBEY	Case UID: 169867	
District EPPING FOREST		
County ESSEX		
Date First Listed: 22-MAR-1974		
Formerly Listed As:		
RECOMMENDATION		
Outcome: No, do not de-list	Recommended Grade: II	02-SEP-2010
<b>BACKGROUND:</b>		
After examining all the papers on this file and other relevant information and having carefully considered the architectural and historic interest of this case, the item should not be de-listed.		
<b>CONTEXT:</b>		
English Heritage has been asked to assess Thrift Cottage for de-listing as it is claimed that the building was designated incorrectly as a building of the C17 or C18 and that it is structurally unsound. In 2005, Listed Building Consent (LBC) was granted for the conversion of the property to an office, but this was not implemented. A further LBC application (ref EPF/2122/08) for the demolition of the building was refused in 2008, in part because the structural condition of the cottage was not adequately addressed and no proposals for its reuse were provided. The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings has objected to the demolition, and has featured this case in its journal (2009).		
The structural survey of 2009 concludes that the building is 'extremely dilapidated and significant structural movement has occurred' and that 'the condition of the building is such that the costs [of refurbishment] are significantly higher than the cost of rebuilding the property.' However another structural report from the eminent Mark Morton Partnership states that the building is capable of rescue through a more sympathetic approach. However, the Principles of Selection for Designating Buildings makes it clear that the state of repair of a building is not a relevant consideration when assessing its special architectural and historic interest.		
<b>HISTORY:</b>		
The most detailed early map of Sewardstone Road is by Chapman and Andre of 1776 showing some dwellings a short distance to the south of the historically significant town of Waltham Abbey. These may include Thrift Hall and Thrift Cottage. The buildings are identified on the parish map of 1825 (possibly that by JJ Crawter and Sons) when they were owned by Charles Preston. They are also depicted on the Tithe Map of 1842. The first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1870 shows Thrift Hall and the cottage within the walled garden of the Hall on the suburban outskirts of Waltham Abbey. It appears that the cottage is either very close, or attached to a larger villa to its south known as The Limes. The sale particulars for the hall and cottage, dated 1859, state that the cottage had four bedrooms, a parlour, kitchen, scullery and larder, and gardens to the front and rear.		
The date of construction is not clear. A short report by Waltham Abbey Museum following a visit in 1988 postulates that the building dates to the first quarter of the C19, but was remodelled in the		

Victorian period. The cottage retains some earlier timber framing exposed in the rear wall and at the ground floor south-east corner. A door with H-L hinges suggests a C18 date in part. However, the cottage has been altered in the late C19 and C20, including remodelling on the ground floor to form a kitchen and bathroom, and the addition of a front bay and replacement of the roof structure.

Both Thrift Hall and Thrift Cottage were designated in 1974 and lie in the Waltham Abbey Conservation Area. Thrift Hall has recently been renovated, but the cottage, which was once accommodation for the Hall's caretaker, has been vacant since c1997 and has suffered from vandalism. Most of the door and window openings have been boarded over and a rear extension has been demolished. Structural reports have been undertaken on behalf of the local authority in 2006 and by the current owner in 2009.

#### DESCRIPTION:

The current list description is as follows:

'C17 or C18, altered, pebbledash, old tiled roof. 2 storeys, 2 flush 1st floor sash windows with glazing bars. Ground floor C19 bay with 2 light sash window on right, original sash with glazing bars on left. C19 gabled porch'

The recent inspection confirms that the current description of the façade is accurate, although it should be noted that a small outshot with a slated, pent roof was added to the south in the C19 or C20. The building in its current form probably dates from the late C18 or early C19, but may incorporate part of an earlier structure. The asymmetric, gable roof has a plain tile covering to the front pitch and pantiles to the rear, and there are two end stacks, both truncated. The rear elevation comprises weatherboard cladding covered with pebble-dash. Beneath the weatherboard, the timber midrail, studs and part of a door jamb are exposed. The rear extension has been removed, exposing an interior doorway into the rear kitchen and outshot. The main rear entrance lies to the right and there is an original window opening further to the right at ground-floor level, although the window itself has been removed. At first floor there are two flush sash windows flanking a central casement window.

Internally, there are boxed in bridging beams in both ground floor rooms. The fire surrounds have been removed, but the dado and picture rails, built-in cupboards and wall panelling beneath the dado rail remain in the right-hand room. The midrail of the south cross frame remains, and continues, exposed, into the kitchen to the rear. The left hand room has exposed studwork at the north gable end and picture rails. All windows have moulded timber surrounds. At the rear a steep dog-leg stair leads to the first floor. The three bedrooms are plain, and none have their fireplaces. The exposed window frames are all six-over-six sash windows without horns. There are two-panel doors, one with an 'H-L' hinge. The casement window above the stairs, said to be C20 in date, comprises two leaded lights, the top with a hopper opening, and each with 25 stained glass panes. At the centre of both are Coats of Arms with geometric stained glass patterns.

#### ASSESSMENT:

##### CONSULTATION:

The Local Planning Authority and the Ancient Monuments Society and SPAB do not support the de-listing of the property. The owner's agent responded to the initial report asking for the Waltham Abbey Museum report to be taken into account and provided a date for the stained glass in the window lighting the staircase. Where relevant, these comments have been incorporated.

##### ASSESSMENT:

Thrift Cottage was considered to have special architectural and historic interest when it was designated in 1974. Although the current list description gives a possible C17 date for its

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construction, the building is mainly of early C19 date, but incorporates earlier fabric as indicated, by the remnant timber framing at the south gable end and the two-panel door with 'HL' hinge. Thus this vernacular cottage dates to between 1700 and 1840. Most buildings constructed during this period are designated (DCMS, March 2010). The Selection Guide for Vernacular Houses (English Heritage, March 2007) describes them as a conspicuous and much-loved component of the English landscape, regarded as essential ingredients of local distinctiveness. Factors to be considered when assessing a building of this type include the level of alteration and the survival of original fabric. A further significant consideration in this case is the group value that Thrift Cottage has with Thrift Hall.

The current List description acknowledges that Thrift Cottage is altered and there is no evidence to hand which suggests that there have been additional alterations to the building's historic fabric since 1974. It continues to possess early C19 flush sash windows on the first floor and one on the ground floor of the façade, features which attest to its age and add interest. Although there have been later C19 alterations to the cottage, its simple two room plan-form is legible. The cottage was constructed as a humble building subservient to, and contemporary with, the Hall immediately adjacent to the north. This strong architectural, functional, and historic group value with the Hall adds considerably to the interest of the cottage and compensates for the alterations to its fabric and form. The building is in need of restoration, but its condition is not relevant to the assessment of special architectural or historic interest. Thrift Cottage was judged to satisfy the criteria in 1974 and continues to do so today. It should remain on the statutory List, but the description should be amended to correct the date of construction and clarify where the special interest of the building lies.

**CONCLUSION:**

Thrift Cottage continues to have special architectural and historic interest and should remain on the statutory List.

**SOURCES:**

Waters, D W, 'Structural report on condition of Thrift Cottage, Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey, Essex' (unpublished structural report, July 2009)  
 Thames Valley Archaeological Services, 'Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment: BTR Works, Sewardstone, Waltham Abbey, Essex', (unpublished archaeological report, August 2001)  
 The Morton Partnership 'Thrift Cottage, Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey', (unpublished letter to Epping Forest District Council, August 2006)  
 Waltham Abbey Museum, 'Thrift Cottage, Sewardstone Road, (unpublished report following site visit of 1988)

**REASONS FOR DESIGNATION DECISION:**

Thrift Cottage, Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey, a vernacular dwelling of the early C19 with some earlier fabric, should not be de-listed for the following principal reasons.

- \* Architectural: It retains early C19 features and incorporates fabric of the C18. Its earliest plan-form remains legible, contributing to its special architectural interest.
- \* Alterations: This humble building was noted as being altered when designated in 1974 and there have not been further alterations which have affected its special interest since that date.
- \* Group Value: The building has strong historical, functional and architectural group value with Thrift Hall immediately to the north.

### **App 1.3 Listed Building description (2010) revised:**

#### **Legacy System Information**

The contents of this record have been generated from a legacy data system.

**Legacy System: LBS**

**UID: 117682**

#### **Asset Groupings**

This List entry does not comprise part of an Asset Grouping. Asset Groupings are not part of the official record but are added later for information.

#### **List Entry Description**

##### **Summary of Building**

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

##### **Reasons for Designation**

##### **History**

Legacy Record - This information may be included in the List Entry Details.

##### **Details**

SEWARDSTONE ROAD THRIFT COTTAGE

II A cottage of early C19, incorporating fabric of the C18, altered in the late C19 and C20.

**MATERIALS:** Timber-framed, with pebble-dashed render, which at the rear is applied to weatherboard cladding.

**PLAN:** Simple two room plan on ground floor with outshot to the south.

**EXTERIOR:** The cottage has two storeys. The facade has a central, C19 gabled porch with a two light sash window on the right and the original sash with glazing bars on the left. At first floor, there are two, boarded up, flush sash windows with glazing bars, but without horns. The asymmetric, gable roof has a plain tile covering to the front pitch and pantiles to the rear and there are two end stacks, both truncated. Beneath the weatherboard on the rear elevation a timber midrail, studs and part of a door jamb are exposed. The rear extension has been removed, exposing an interior doorway into the rear kitchen and outshot. The main rear entrance lies to the right and there is an original window opening further to the right at ground floor level, although the window itself has been removed. At first floor there are two, boarded-up flush sash windows with glazing bars flanking a central casement window.

INTERIOR: There are boxed in bridging beams in both ground floor rooms. The fire surrounds have been removed, but the dado and picture rails, built-in cupboards and wall panelling beneath the dado rail remain in the right-hand room. The midrail of the south cross frame remains, and continues, exposed, into the kitchen to the rear. The left hand room has exposed studwork at the north gable end and picture rails. All windows have moulded timber surrounds. At the rear a steep dog-leg stair leads to the first floor. The three bedrooms are plain, and none have their fireplaces. The exposed window frames are all six-over-six sash windows without horns. There are two, two-panel doors, one with an 'H-L' hinge. The casement window above the stairs, said to be C20 in date, comprises two leaded lights, the top with a hopper opening, and each with 25 stained glass panes. At the centre of both are Coats of Arms with geometric stained glass patterns.

HISTORY: Thrift Hall and Thrift Cottage are identified on the parish map of 1825 (possibly that by JJ Crawter and Sons) when they are owned by Charles Preston. They are also depicted on the Tithe Map of 1842. The first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1870 shows Thrift Hall and the cottage within the walled garden of the Hall, on the suburban outskirts of Waltham Abbey. It appears that the cottage is either very close, or attached to a larger villa to its south known as The Limes. The sale particulars for the hall and cottage, dated 1859, states that the cottage had four bedrooms, a parlour, kitchen, scullery and larder and gardens to the front and rear.

Thrift Hall was renovated in the early C21, but the cottage, which was once accommodation for the hall's caretaker, has been vacant since approximately 1997. At the time of the inspection, most of the door and window openings were boarded over.

SOURCES: Waters, D W, 'Structural report on condition of Thrift Cottage, Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey, Essex' (unpublished structural report, July 2009) Thames Valley Archaeological Services, 'Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment: BTR Works, Sewardstone, Waltham Abbey, Essex', (unpublished archaeological report, August 2001) The Morton Partnership 'Thrift Cottage, Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey', (unpublished letter to Epping Forest District Council, August 2006) Waltham Abbey Museum, 'Thrift Cottage, Sewardstone Road, (unpublished report following site visit of 1988)

REASONS FOR DESIGNATION: Thrift Cottage, Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey, a vernacular dwelling of the early C19, is designated at Grade II for the following principal reasons. \* Architectural: It retains early C19 features and incorporates fabric of the C18. Its earliest plan-form remains legible, contributing to its special architectural interest. \* Group Value: The building has strong historical, functional and architectural group value with Thrift Hall immediately to the north.

**Appendix 2 : Evidence-base: (1) Historic map regression analysis;  
(2) sources of information / reference et.c.**

This section and the report in general does not include an exhaustive study of the building type or of buildings in Essex or elsewhere, generally. However, it exceeds the minimum requirement stipulated by the NPPF and associated guidance. Ignore the red site boundaries – these apply to the BTR site

**App 2.1 Historic Map Regression analysis:** Thames Valley Archaeological Services, 'Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment: BTR Works, Sewardstone, Waltham Abbey, Essex', (unpublished archaeological report, August 2001). This report is held at the HER, Chelmsford. The report was studied for general information about the site. In particular the maps included in appendix B were very helpful in identifying the site and the discrepancies between the historic evidence and the interpretation put on them by English Heritage in its report of Dec 2010.

Extract from the 1777 Chapman and Andre Map



Thrift Hall and Cottage can not be determined on this map, although the listing description of Thrift Hall indicates that it was constructed approximately 10 years before the printing of this map. The Building adjacent to Sewardstone Road is seemingly too near to be Thrift Hall and is probably the building later named 'The Limes'

Extract from the 1842 Tithe Map





Extract from the 1870 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map



Thrift Cottage (the existing building is shown as a dull grey rectangle)

Pond

Extract from 1896 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map



Thrift Cottage : note the rear (east) outshot had been constructed by this date. It appears that the Thrift Hall stables (3-sided building behind the cottage) were also extant.

**App 2.2 sources of information / reference : these are as per the acknowledgements at the front of this report.**

The Epping Forest District Council Planning Department's on-line history of planning applications and decisions since 1974 were examined and this enabled an initial focus to obtain on the issues of concern, permissions, granted, conditions established, and refusals decided.

The Essex County Records Archive on-line 'SEAX' web-site was also instrumental in setting the parameters for historical and archaeological archival research.

In addition the following sources and reference works and reports (as listed) were reviewed in detail, in the production of this report:

- Archaeological Data Survey sources – Waltham Abbey Historic Towns Assessment Report;
- britishhistory online (Victoria County History: a History of the County of Essex);
- B.S 7913: The Principles of the Conservation of Historic Buildings;
- Dictionary of national biography 1885-1900, vol 41;
- [discovery.nationalarchive.gov.uk](http://discovery.nationalarchive.gov.uk);
- DRH Associates (2006) 'Structural inspection of existing Property' letter sent to D.Padolino (this report was copied to EFDC and stamped EPF/2122/20-08 in relation to an application to demolish Thrift Cottage);
- English Heritage (22067) 'Understanding Historic Buildings: a guide to good recording practice'
- Epping Forest District (Waltham Abbey) Museum (1983) Thrift Cottage Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey –unpublished report;
- Francis Frith Collection of County Photographs and maps (on-line);
- Historic Environment Record (HER), Chelmsford: 2 photographs of Thrift Hall and Cottage, dated approximately 1985, plus access to the data base and to unpublished reports; [historyhouse.co.uk](http://historyhouse.co.uk): including
  - o Essex Almanac 1866,
  - o Post Office directory (1874)
  - o White's Directory of Essex 1848
  - o White's Directory of Essex 1863
- HMSO (1990) Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- Ordnance Survey : maps (in the TVAS report and at the County Records Office)

- Planning Policies: including:
  - Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 15 (superseded) by:
  - PPS 5 (2010) Planning for the Historic Environment, with its supporting
  - Historic Environment Practice Guide, superseded by:
  - NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) (2012), supported by:
  - English Heritage (March 2015) 'Historic Environment Good practice Advice in Planning'
    - Note 1: The historic Environment in Local Plans
    - Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-taking in the Historic Environment
    - Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets
- Thames Valley Archaeological Services (Aug 2001) 'BTR Works, Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey, Essex: an archaeological desk-based assessment (Steve Preston) – unpublished report held at the HER
- Waltham Abbey Historical Society publications and website
- Waters, D.W (July 2009) 'Structural Report on the condition of Thrift Cottage, Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey, Essex- unpublished report, made available by DPA architects.

### **Appendix 3: Summary and critique of Structural and condition surveys;**

#### **App 3.1**

It is noted in some reports that the staircase is not the original one, or at least not in the original position. Additionally, a semi-circular arch at ceiling level 'at the foot of the original staircase' is mentioned in the Epping Forest District Museum service report on their property inspection and visit on 29th June 1983 .

There was however no visible evidence at the time of this inspection to suggest another location for the arch or the staircase other than perhaps a slight ragged painted line across the ground floor through/cross passage ceiling at the suggested location.

Much damage has been done to this part of the building. However, close examination of a dado rail in the north Ground Floor North Living room reveals a straight cut and possible doorway trimming to the rear lobby, which may indicate that indeed the staircase rose eastward from halfway along the through passage, and that entry to the rear kitchen area was via the North Living Room. The partition at First Floor level does not reveal the necessary doorway and the circumnavigation which would have been required to access the front of the Cottage at First Floor level.

(a transcription of the Waltham Abbey Museum's service is included below and was sourced from The DWW unpublished structural survey, appendix B, dated 2009.)

#### **App 3.2 Transcription of Epping Forest District Museum report, dated 29th**

**June 1988:**(some texts cite 1983 as the date of this report – the copy of the document was unclear about these dates and indeed parts of the report are undecipherable, hence the ???? marking.

' Thrift Cottage, Sewardstone Road, Waltham Abbey

A small house, detached of 2 storeys with entrance at centre of front.

Tenant claims that the fireplace in left (i.e. North) Ground Floor room (?????) has medallion with letters 'JJ ??? and fireplace???? built .

Possibly...on the basis of this it was claimed, by Arthur ??? and about ??? in late 1950s that the cottage was built by the well-known local builder John Francis Wortley active in ???. Tenant firmly believes that the building is Victorian.

The light (and frankly flimsy) timber construction is not characteristic of J.F.W's work, however. Nearly all beams and joists et.c. are concealed or boxed-in; but 2 short lengths of squared timber are visible in the right (South) ground floor room. The window at front (west) of this room is an addition (replacing original window). Other windows remaining are sashes (original).

Original central, centre entrance (altered) stairs at rear (east). Hall has plain semicircular arch at original foot of stairs. Chimney stacks at either end (north and south). Extension to south and at rear. These extensions built out over garden and included kitchen and loo which have discharges into brook, now culverted, concrete covers culvert.

Ceiling joists removed at time of visit, claimed to be criminal joists. c 100mm diameter for simple flat face for ceiling/

Property to Thrift Hall and Thrift Cottage, all owned by Charles Preston, and in 1778 the area not titheable, so no details for property. Visited 29th June 1983/ 8 on behalf of EFDM

### **App 3.4 DWW Design Consultants (2009) 'Structural Report on Condition of Thrift Cottage'**

(C.J. Jennison) to instructions from Mr M. Ingrao. This is a far more substantial report.

#### App 3.4.1

Significant structural movement has occurred and there is significant rotting to the timber studs. The general recommendation was that the building be de-listed and the building demolished..... "the site could then be re-developed with a building more in keeping with the local area".

App 3.4.2 This report agrees with this conclusion and recommendation

#### App 3.4.3

The structural report also concluded that the cost of carrying out the repairs would be very high and economically not viable, and again this report agrees with that conclusion .

#### App 3.4.4

The report by DWW is accurate for its date and concurs with the general findings of the survey and inspection carried out for this report – see Appendix 4. DWW concludes that the property has no viable future and this report concurs with that conclusion

## **Appendix 4: Gazetteer and room by room notes and photographs**

THRIFT COTTAGE, Waltham Abbey : SURVEY NOTES (inspection and notes made on Friday 24th April)

These notes have been included to contribute to a level 3 survey ('Understanding Historic Buildings' methodology) to assist in developing an understanding of the fabric and structure of the Cottage. Some evaluation of the historic significance is provided in this text. Discussion is contained in the section 4 of this report.

### App 4.1

General comment: the 2 storey pebble-dashed cottage is oriented on a North-South axis running parallel with Sewardstone Road, with the main (front) elevation facing this road, facing west. The site is generally flat and level with the surrounding paved areas. There is a short fore-garden, now rubble covered with a railing boundary fence and gate (part-covered in ply boarding). The north boundary which separates Thrift Cottage from Thrift Hall consists of a 2 metres high Flemish bonded multi-coloured brick wall which sweeps down towards the front corner of the house. This is topped by tile creasing with brick-on edge coping. The rear portion (east end) of this wall the original height of c.1750mm has been extended in recent years by approximately 850mm bringing the overall height to approximately 2.8 metres from ground level.

### App 4.2

The rear (east) and south boundaries have a close boarded fence with a small access gate / panel leading from the rear yard of Lloyd's Pharmacy.

### App 4.3

The front garden south boundary is a moderate height brick built wall (Flemish bond) which is severely cracked and bowed, with self seeded brambles and other tree growth attached to it.

The roof is duo-pitched with 2 gable stacks one at either end, central to the ridge line. The overall building is a simple rectangular box, with the remnants of a small lean-to extension on the south gable. A projecting outshot (single storey) to the rear (east) has been demolished in recent years.

### App 4.4

The south chimney is rendered (dash) with terracotta cowls, and cement flashing to the roof slope, the north chimney similar but rising only about 400mm from the ridge with metal air vent cowls.

### App 4.5

Roof finishes are unglazed clay pantiles to rear(east) with plain clay tiles to west, with clay ridge cappings cemented into place.

App 4.6

Plastics guttering mounted on softwood eaves fascia to east side, with ogee c.i. gutter and c.i. rwp to the west (rwp is in south-west corner)

**EXTERNAL INSPECTION:**

App 4.7

North Elevation (gable end): this is entirely pebbledash rendered. The cheek and main chimney stack structure projects outwards from the general line by approximately 75-100mm. Holes have been broken through at one or two locations and these reveal timber framing (corner posts) with internal wooden lathing and plaster, and externally applied metal mesh supporting pebbledash render. There is considerable bowing and twisting in this wall and there are significant fracture lines close to ground level at the north-west corner adjacent to which a recent inspection chamber has been excavated and installed. The left hand side of this elevation has an area of projecting render from a projecting plinth zone, which extends to the level of the string course (from the east elevation). There is damage to the top of the wall where at the junction of the western slope to the chimney. There is a hole at the right hand bottom corner and brackets indicating the previous position of a rainwater downpipe (missing).

App 4.8

East (Rear) Elevation: pantiled roof, the whole roof probably re-roofed in the 1980s, but possibly more recently. The rear elevation is multi-layered. There is some evidence of a timber sole plate at ground level, supporting small section timber posts, but mainly this has been replaced with a few running courses of stock and light engineering bricks. At the left hand side there is a rising wall of stock yellowish brick rising to First Floor rail level (approx 2.0 metres above g.l.). The rail is approx. 125mm in depth x 150mm width (cross section) Presumably tenoned into this (no pegging) are regular timber stud-posts (approx. 110 x 75) at approx. 700mm centres, with lathing and plaster on the inner side. Externally there is softwood painted shiplap boarding (possibly over more lath and plaster).

App 4.9

The exposed inner surface of the rear extension outshot (now demolished) is profiled against the left hand end of this wall. There appears to have been a central wall to this running west to east with a staggered roofline either side of a projecting wall. This could in fact indicate that the right-hand (lower portion) might have been added at a later date and butted up to the outshot. This would have acted as a 'porch' to the now boarded-over rear external door which is visible internally and leads to the Ground Floor lobby. This door has a timber lintel and portions of its architrave (timber) remain as does the door (visible internally). A horizontal painted softwood door-hood boxing is planted over the shiplap boarding indicating a more recent alteration, possibly in say the 1950s.

#### App 4.10

Access to the interior currently is through the left-hand doorway (no door or framing remains, only a softwood timber lintel which would have been internal to the outshot).

#### App 4.11

At the southern end of this elevation is the east wall of the mono-pitched lean-to which provides some of the internal lobby and the Bathroom on the gable end. This lean-to is Welsh slated (roof) with brick walls, the roof having a pitch of approx. 25 degrees. There is structural failure and holes to the roof and the south end flank wall leans towards the south.

#### App 4.12

To the right (north) of the original rear doorway is stretcher bond common brickwork itself planted over the shiplap boarding and to the right and above this is wire mesh supporting thick pebbledash cement render with a projecting string course band running from just to the right of this door at approximately First Floor floor level horizontally to the north east corner of the cottage.

#### App 4.13

The Ground Floor window between the external doorway and the North-East corner was previously a sliding sash. The sashes have been removed but parts of the boxing remain and include a pulley wheel (steel) and some evidence of weight cords. This is evident on the south jamb, but not on the north. There is no cill member, and some loose lead sheet has been placed here to protect the cill area, but this is largely ineffectual now. There is a large hole through the wall in the North-East corner. There are airbricks at ground level. There is evidence of significant rot and beetle attack to the sole plate, where it exists and to the corner and intermediate studding-posts. Some of the ground level 'plinth' brickwork has been replaced by concrete (possible thick cement render over the brickwork). This appears to provide evidence of progressive failure of the damp resisting qualities of the construction and is piecemeal intervention typical of a parsimonious maintenance attitude to the building. All of this external 'botching' has been undertaken throughout the early to mid years of the 20th century.

#### App 4.14

At a hole in the First Floor zone, in the North-East corner there is evidence of shiplap boarding beneath the pebbledash render.

#### App 4.15

The First Floor zone of this east elevation is completely rendered (over the shiplap boarding). There are 3 windows in this part of the elevation which have been boarded over.



#### App 4.16

These window-frames are painted softwood, much decayed and they project through the construction from the interior to the external face of the render, indicating that they may have been extended with surface mounted fillets at the time the render was applied.

#### South Elevation (gable end)

This is entirely rendered above the lean-to Bathroom extension. There is cracking abutting the chimney position indicating structural movement and failure.

#### App 4.17

West (Front) Elevation: this is entirely rendered and indicates considerable outward bowing on the eaves in the centre. Internal inspection shows evidence of historic slewing of the whole wall framing towards the south. The eaves project approximately 275mm and support a cast iron ogee profile gutter draining to a cast iron rainwater pipe on the right-hand (South-West ) corner of the main hose.

#### App 4.18

Adjacent the left hand (north) corner of the house is a large panel of plain rendered cement in a rectangle approximately 1 metre i height and 700mm in width.

#### App 4.19

There is a central projecting duo-pitched roofed, porch hood supported by two sets of posts rising from a base plate (timber) fixed on top of low brickwork (8 courses) rising walls. These are coped with painted canted render. The side balustrades have 4 turned painted softwood balusters . The front apex to the porch is a bracketed A-frame in painted softwood with a central crown post/ The roof tiles are small format red clay tiles and the roof is capped with saw-tooth clay ridge tiles. The porch floor has unglazed black and red quarry tiles in chequer-board patter. The front door is a 4-panel Victorian style door (now boarded up) the glass has been broken. The lower panels are fielded and raised. The external architrave is modestly moulded with a bull-nosed corner. 1 step entry with a timber threshold.

#### App 4.20

To the left of the porch as 1 window at Ground Floor (boarded). To the right is a projecting bay, approximately 800mm projection by 2.2metres width, this, too is fully boarded. It has a flat roof cover of leaf with 2 rolls, all of which rather surprisingly remain in situ. To the right-hand end of this elevation the south lean-ton but joins the gable end and this can be seen clearly by a break in the render.

App 4.21 the lean-to are sliding sash, but of different periods (see internal inspection commentary). The window in the lean-to appears to have been a simple square casement, but only remnants of the outer frame remain.

App 4.22 The windows run through the wall construction and may have been added to by external fillets. These external fillets / architraves, have some reeded moulding.

### **INTERIOR INSPECTION. GROUND FLOOR:**

Entry via the previously internal doorway on the left hand side of the east elevation

Rear Connecting Lobby:

App 4.23 the upper panels of a 6-panelled door (painted). The door is hinged with butt hinges, but the panels are slightly moulded and may be a repositioned original door.

There is an iron pintel-hook at an upper level adjacent to the door leading into the main body of the house, indicating the former presence of an earlier door.

App 4.24 East wall is of painted brick (approx. 250mm thickness) (replacing the original timber studding).

App 4.25 South wall (painted brickwork) is lower as a consequence of the extended slope of the lean-to roof. It carries a high-level shelved twin cupboard (white painted) to the left, with no doors, and to the right adjacent the narrow doorway to the Bathroom is a full height shallow cupboard with planked doors (original) to this extension, and label hinges.. There are internal shelves to this door and coat hooks.

App 4.26 West wall is the most interesting with canted portion to left and right forming a symmetrical semi-alcove to the front Parlour. This wall of timber post construction approx. 100mm square onto a timber sole plate (much decayed by damp and beetle attack)., Lath and plaster to both sides. There is significant cracking at the cant angle to the left hand side and this extends to lateral cracking at ceiling level, indicating structural failure at First Floor level.

App 4.27

There is a broken rooflight allowing weather penetration, to a plaster-boarded ceiling. Two cross beams (20th century) span to the outer brick wall. Severe cracking here showing instability to the carrying function for the upper gable wall of the house and a large opening to the South-East corner of the lean-to, with a straight jamb. Indicating a previous entrance to the now demolished outshot. Solid floor, much rubble.

### **Bathroom (southern-most space on the Ground Floor):**

App 4.28

North wall is painted brick external walls with lath and plaster to either side of the adjoining chimney in the original gable.

App 4.29

East wall to the Bathroom has been painted over but in part is close boarded.

App 4.30

South wall is painted and plastered brickwork, featureless.

App 4.1

West wall contains a square format window opening, window originally a case-ment, now removed.

App 4.32

Decayed decorated plasterwork all round with a framed and boarded door (early 20th century) in the east elevation. Solid floor and sloping plaster-boarded ceiling.

### **Staircase Lobby and Through / Cross passage**

The Lobby extends from the west-to-east through/cross passage and is at right angles to it. The front door is at the west end.

App 4.33

North wall has largely been broken away by vandalism but this wall which extends the length of the cross passage is lightly timber framed with lath and plaster (intact to the west of the central internal doorway) with stray pieces of horizontal and vertical light planking to the east end nearest the staircase.

App 4.34

East wall carries the lower part of the dog-leg timber staircase which is narrow and has 6 winders leading anti-clockwise upwards to 5 straight risers to the First Floor Landing. The north wall portion of the staircase is made up of an imported 4 panel cupboard door? The right upper panel is curiously shorter than the left one, but it is difficult to obtain a decision on why this is so, because of considerable over painting. The remainder of the wall at the upper level is decorated lath and plaster and is uneven. The east wall including the portion containing the staircase is lath and plaster with brickwork to the exterior.

#### App 4.35

The side cheeks to the staircase carry out-of alignment angles timber boarding (painted). These run downwards until they meet the original rear entrance door architrave. This is a Victorian period doorway and the 4-panel door has a surface mounted latch/lock box. The top 2 panels (originally glazed) are now boarded, and the lower two are beaded-in flat panels. These panels have split. The underside of the staircase at the vertical return of the plastered soffit is board up and could not be inspected.

#### App 4.36

South wall is a painted brickwork partition wall, plastered and painted on this side. It contains the original open to the internal lobby; this opening retains the remnants of the 6-panel door.

#### App 4.37

West wall: this is a timber stud partition wall, over which a timber beam runs axially from the lobby passage area towards the south wall of the house, but not entirely in alignment with it. This beam is noticed in the South/West Parlour. The wall is canted as it reaches the cross passage. There is damage to its fabric. The bottom portion of the wall carries vertically boarded dado planking surmounted by a simple bull-nosed edged strip which continues towards the floor at the right hand end.

#### App 4.38

The through passage wall wraps around and becomes the south wall; of the through-passage. It contains a door centrally located to provide access the South Parlour. The dado rail continues along this wall but the area below is plain painted / decorated plasterwork with a plain timber painted skirting.

#### App 4.39

The ceiling is plain decorated but there is a line of plaster in a straight line which could indicate the position of an arch mentioned in the Epping Forest District Museum Services report from 1983/8 (see section 13 of this report). The floor is solid concrete strewn with rubble and detritus.

### **North Living Room: this room extends the full width of the Cottage:**

App 4.40 North wall: central chimney breast projecting into the room. The fireplace surround (possible cast-iron given its ghosted image in the wall paper) and the fire surround have been presumably criminally removed.

App 4.41

The chimney opening has a relieving arch of brick with a bolted steel spreader plate and the chimney structure is of brick. To the left is a decorated wall with a flat section skirting, then flat decorated wall, then simple moulded dado rail (painted) then flat decorated wall, then picture rail then flat decorated margin wall then ceiling (no cornice). To the right of the chimney breast similar wall but the area above dado has been cut away revealing 2 corner and 2 intermediate timber stud posts approx. 110 wide by 80mm deep, beyond which strangely decorated lath and plaster (internally).

App 4.42

East wall: similar to above with large hole in left hand bottom corner through to exterior. Window sashes removed but partial retention of the box frames and the internal architraves present.

App 4.43

South wall: left half removed and severely damaged so giving onto the lobby and through/cross passage.

Very flimsy and thin construction (overall wall thickness c.80mm) with now removed thin posts and lath and plaster surfacing. Note the vertical and horizontal timber boarding to the passageway side of this partition wall. Centrally the doorframe with simple moulded architrave remains but door removed. Victorian latch-plate evidenced on west jamb to the west side of the doorway.

App 4.44

Note the staggered dado rail with clean-cut line approx. 650mm from the north-east corner of this room. Possibility that this indicated a previous doorway position, but now back to back with the dog-leg staircase. The door frame carries a surface mounted 'H' hinge at the upper part of the jamb with a combination of 'H/L' hinge and butt hinge at the bottom. These are surface mounted and do not look convincingly historic, but more an act of desperation to counter the insipient movement of the structure of the house. They are crudely mounted against the architrave whereas an historic hinge would be set within a cut recess or against the basic frame with the architrave oversailing. The proportions of this door are Victorian / 20th century

#### App 4.45

West wall: similar and largely featureless with clear indication of slewing towards the south. Central window previously with sliding sashes (boxing is extant but sashes removed) 3 panes wide, 6-over-6 pattern as indicated by the position of glazing bar mortices to the meeting-rails and top and bottom rails.. Pulley wheels (steel) still in casing. Moulded architrave in place and adjusted to the slew. Indicating an insertion at a later date than the construction of the Cottage. Below the dado rail to the right (north) of the window position the internal surface has been broken out to indicate that stud framing has been covered with internal horizontal timber boarding behind which the stud can be detected and lath and plaster to the external face. There is a small area with brick noggin between the timber studs at low level to the right hand side of this area.

#### App 4.46

Ceiling plain but a curiously positioned cross beam (boxed in) at 1/3 span with steel anchor plate and bolt in soffit at half span (possibly indicated structural failure. Unable to examine the top side of this member. (refer to Structural Engineers' reports.

### **South Parlour:**

#### App 4.47

North wall: this wall (lath and plaster on studding) gives onto the through/cross passage and contain the central door way. The moulded architrave remains with a latch keep on the left (west) jamb, but the door has been removed. The proportions are Victorian. The wall format is flat skirting followed by flat square format painted dado panels with regular muntins, topped with a simple moulded dado rail inexpertly jointed at the right hand canted wall corner, followed by plain decorated wall, with high-level picture rail fixed at a skew, indicating that the building had been constructed some time before the mouldings were put in place. Above this rail a small zone of flat decorated wall and then the ceiling (no cornice). There is a timber cross beam at the top of this wall and an interesting timber corbel-bracket in the north-west corner supporting this beam, This bracket and the beam appear to be of oak, whereas most of the timber studwork and framework to the Cottage is of seasoned pine.

#### App 4.48

East wall: the canted left and right hand ends form a symmetrical recess in this wall and are as such an interesting feature. Another boxed in cross beam is located to the south of half span and there is some oversailing of a north-south beam above this wall with significant structural cracking where the wall cant occurs.

App 4.49

South wall: the same format with a centrally located projecting chimney-breast and the visual evidence of a now removed (stolen?) tall fireplace surround (probably cast iron Victorian). The splayed cheeks to the actual fireplace contain small rectangular glazed red ceramic tiled panels but everything else has been removed. To the right of the chimney-breast is a deeper recess to the original external wall of the cottage. Within this recess has been fitted at a late date, glazed door upper doors with shelving behind, an intermediate shelf and below this at just above dado level timber panelled doors. The cupboard contains the incoming gas, electricity supply pipework. The hinges on these doors are butt and the upper glazed doors have mock medieval tracery work.

App 4.50

West wall: this wall contains the later constructed projecting square format bay window with a boxed-in beam supported the wall above the opening. The bay window construction appears to be constructed at the same time that the dado panelling was installed. The dropped cill of the double window is only about 250 mm, above the flat top of the skirting. There is a large boxed in mullion separating 2 tall sliding sash window with 4-over-4 glazing pattern. These windows interrupt the picture rail and terminate just below ceiling level. The glazing support artificial leaded lights. The moulding to the sash windows is a refined lamb's tongue profile. However the moulding of the sash frames betrays rounded scribed machine cut arises which defined the basic window as a replacement from a date later than the mid 1970s.

App 4.51

The ceiling is otherwise flat and decorated and the floor is solid with detritus everywhere as for the rest of the property.

## **INTERIOR INSPECTION: FIRST FLOOR:**

### **Staircase and First Floor Landing:**

App 4.52

North wall: this is a lightweight partition as elsewhere, probably lath and plaster on slight timber studding.

App 4.53

East wall (over the staircase): this is dominated by the rather trite early 20th century pseudo coloured glass hopper-over-fixed light staircase window. It is perhaps telling that those who have elected to remove the genuine Victorian fire surrounds have left this piece in place. This demonstrates some level of artistic judgement for the criminal involved. The pattern is 25-over-25 with margin lights to each and there is a central faux shield to the centre of each sash.

App 4.54

South wall: this is a plain decorated lath and plaster partition wall interrupted only to accommodate the simple door to the south bedroom. There is no door. The proportions are Victorian.

App 4.55

West wall: this is a partition wall as elsewhere containing a door into the West Bedroom.

App 4.56

The ceiling appears to be decorated plasterboard. The floor is original with warped and humped levelling to its wide floorboards (softwood)

### **North Bedroom:**

App 4.57

North wall: this has the projecting chimney-breast in the north-west corner rising full height with no distinguishing features. There is a plain skirting.

App 4.58

East wall: this is also very plain but contains an original sliding sash (6-over-6) within its boxed frame and architraving. There is an angled cut out to the left hand jamb and to the sash-weight box. The pulley wheels are plastic.

App 4.59

South wall: plain with skirting and containing a simple doorway and a 2-panelled door (possibly original). The panels, however, appear to be constructed of 3-ply wood sheet. The latch and lock box is surface mounted as is the keep on the architrave.

App 4.60

West wall: plain –no features, decorated, plain skirting

App 4.61

Ceiling- plain; possibly plasterboard painted otherwise lath and plaster. Floor wide softwood timber floorboards

### **South Bedroom:**

App 4.62

North wall: houses the doorway to the stairway landing. No door. But upper and lower 'H' hinges surface mounted planted on the architrave. Skirting and plain decorated walls above.



App 4.63

East wall: skirting and wall as elsewhere at this level – all plain. 6-over-6 sliding sash and frame still in place. Late Victorian in style and construction. Steel sash cord pulleys.

App 4.64

South wall: much rather unimaginative graffiti on plain painted wallpaper over lath and plaster backing. Plain skirting. The floor and ceiling dip downwards significantly to the North-East corner and several floorboards are missing. Chimney-breast eccentrically placed right of centre has been robbed of its fire surround which was comparatively tall within the proportions of the room. Recess to the right of the chimney-breast has been filled with a clothes / storage cupboard with high level shelf. Doors missing.

App 4.65

West wall: plain decorated wall above simple plain decorated skirting. Window to right of centre. with 6-over-6 sliding sash window with nosed ovolo moulded glazing bars – heavily encrusted with paint layers. Traditional Victorian thumb-catch surmounted on top of lower meeting rail. Steel sash cord pulleys.

App 4.66

Ceiling: decorated plasterboard or lath and plaster, Floor: wide floorboards as described elsewhere. The exposed floor joists run at approx. 450 centres, and are approximately 125 x 80 mm chamfered in some places.

**West Bedroom:**

App 4.67

North wall: plain with patterned wallpaper and artificial painted skirting.

App 4.68

East wall: as above. In south-east end the door is 2-panelled with butt hinges and modest moulded architrave. The panels are missing. The latch/lock box is surface-mounted.

App 4.69

(South wall: plain)

App 4.70

West wall: plain. Window comprises 6-over-6 sliding sash as elsewhere. Strangely the pulley wheels are an early plastic rather than steel (see above), indicating early 20th century replacement. Part of the lower box casing to the right-hand jamb (north side) has been cut out at an angle, presumably removing the panel to relieve the sash of its lead weight.

**ROOF SPACE: this was accessed visually but not physically.**

App 4.71)

centre to the duo-pitched roof. Either side of the brickwork is lath and plaster walling (this may be original)..The roof slopes are approximately 43 degrees. Most of the structure from the ceiling joists upwards appears to be mid 20th century with rectangular regularly spaced jack rafters, supported by very slight intermediate purlins, with one or two pieces of wind bracing. Cross collar ties at the end of the roof, with strap hangers at 3 metre intervals, and a summer beam at centre span running axially north-south. The sarking is heavy building felt and this is fixed under (presumably) battens and the pantiles and plain tile covering.

App 4.72 Looking South:

the brickwork chimney stack is placed forward (westward) from the centre-line of the ridge and appears to have replacement lath and plastered gable walls to either side.

App 4.73 General External heights of Cottage:

The height from Ground Level to the rear string rendered course is approximately 2.3 metres. The height to the eaves is approximately 4.7 metres. Pitch of the roof is close to 43 degrees.

App 4.74 Tesco building:

Height to eaves box gutter is approximately 7.5 metres with the projecting box gutter fascia being approximately 450mm depth. The roof is flat. The wall cladding is a cyan translucent glazed panel system. The roof projects several metres onto long pilottis near to the public entrance facing north towards the pedestrian area and across to the Health Centre.

App 4.75 Lloyds Pharmacy:

Height to eaves is approximately 3.2 metres with a roof pitch of approximately 50 degrees. The walls are buff coloured rustic finish in stretcher bond. The roof covering is dark grey fibre cement slates.

App 4.76 Thrift Hall:

Height to soffit of 450mm overhanging eaves is approximately 5.5 metres. Roof pitch is approximately 32 degrees with a Welsh slate covering. The front (west facade) is white painted render. The side elevations and rear elevations are of yellow and brown stock brickwork. Windows to the south wing are multi-paned sliding sash 8-over-8, whilst the main hall has Victorian pattern windows with margin lights – all sliding-sash 6-over-6.

Photographic Survey to accompany report of 4th May 2015



The immediate environs of Thrift Hall and Thrift Cottage

Photographic overview of Conservation Area



## Rear Connecting Lobby & Bathroom

to n/west corner



west partition wall



to stairway lobby doorway



east wall



s/east corner



Bathroom doorway



bath corner



east from bathroom



s/west corner



lobby view north

## Staircase



winders and side planking



irregular filler panelling

### Central Through Passage and Lobby



trashed partition wall to corridor



rear door



doorway to rear lobby



broken lath and plaster



view of n/west corner



through-passage



soffit to stairs



from room towards through-passage



### North Living Room



towards through-passage



north chimney breast



east window wall



studding detail



chimney breast



towards stairs



view south



west window wall

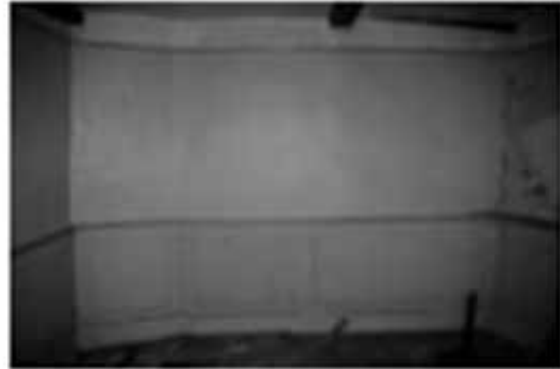


detail

## South Parlour



North wall with corbel bracket to LEFT



East wall with dado panels



south wall with fireplace and corner cupboards



west wall and bay window



fireplace tiling



recess cupboards to RIGHT of chimney breast



replaced widow frame with modern machined moulding



dado detail to RIGHT of bay

**North Bedroom**



west and north wall



east (window)wall



south and west walls

**First Floor Landing**



multi-paned staircase window to east wall

## South Bedroom



north wall



east (window) wall



south wall and fireplace



west (window) wall



window detail in South Bedroom

## West Bedroom



West, north and east walls



s/east corner and door



south wall



window details in West Bedroom



**Roofspace**



Looking NORTH



Looking SOUTH

## EXTERNAL PHOTOGRAPHS of THRIFT COTTAGE (and Thrift Hall)

### North Elevations



Thrift Hall and part Cottage



north wall of Thrift Cottage



North wall of Thrift Hall looking towards Tesco and Thrift Cottage

view to south wing of Thrift Hall thro' railings



North Elevation from fore -garden of Thrift Hall



East Elevations



LEFT end



RIGHT end

view north from rear (east) curtilage of Thrift Cottage



original rear door, internal studding and collapsing brick with render over



outline of original rear outshot showing stepped opposing roof pitches



detail at First Floor intermediate rail



cross section view through ext.wall at rear



view south towards Tesco



view northwards showing gap between Thrift Cottage and new Lloyds Pharmacy, with Thrift Hall beyond



view west along pedestrian paving showing gap between Tesco and Thrift Cottage



west (front) elevation



corner of north dividing wall between Thrift Hall and Thrift Cottage



Porch

Footnote: these photographic reductions are for identification and illustrative purposes only. Larger resolution photographs are filed with the author and may be made available upon request for record-keeping purposes, by permission of the owner and architects.



