

Conservation Consultancy Advice

451	Case ref. no:	Y18/1296/FH and Y18/1297/FH
Property Address:	Lower Court, Shuttlesfield Lane, Ottinge	
Proposals:	Erection of extension to be used as an entrance hall to join the main dwelling and existing garage, erection of external walls to the existing garage and boiler room to allow the garages to be used as a utility room, use of part of the existing barn as a boot room along with the erection of a porch to the existing barn, installation of gates in existing boundary walls along with the installation of a tennis court and an external swimming pool and detached pool house building	
Application Type	Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent	
Agent:	BDB Design LLP	
General Comments Operative Conditions?		
Listing / C/A?	Grade II, AONB	
Date Consult Received:	24/10/2018	
Date Comments Sent:		

Comments:**1- General & Historic Building Description and Significance:**

Ottinge is a dispersed hamlet located astride the Elham Valley Road between Elham and Lyminge, about 1km north-east of Lyminge. Lower Court is located on the south-west side of Shuttlesfield Lane about 150m south-east of its junction with Elham Valley Road, here called Canterbury Road.

The property sits in a large garden plot with a frontage directly onto the lane but the property is essentially 'C' shape on plan with a generous south-east facing garden frontage flanked by a pair of projecting wings to either side of the main range.

A range of single storey barns and outbuildings extends south-west from the house with those closest to the house is partly converted to garaging and car ports (the south garages) and beyond this there is a barn. Close by the house on its north-west side there are further outbuildings forming a courtyard, originally a farmyard. A long low range, also garaging (the north garages), extends back from the lane and is close by the north-west elevation of the house, separated by a driveway with planting between the two buildings. Another two storey hall defines the south-west side of the former farm courtyard with a further cottage on the north-west side completing the quadrangle, which is separated from the lane by a high wall.

The gardens are laid out as a series of "rooms" with lawns and hedge spaces extending north of the garden

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for the house and all laid out within old flint walls, to the west of the house and south west from the farm courtyard. This was possible originally a large kitchen garden area.

To the south-east of the house, lawns stretch away south and east from the garden frontage towards a drainage ditch that separates the home garden from further areas that stretch down to the Nailbourne. The rest of the property is laid out as parkland extending away to the south and west up to the Elham Valley Road.

The property is generally brick built with Kent peg tile roofs and dates to from 1707 with extensions built in 1825 and remodelled in 1927.

The outbuildings (garages and barns) appear to be c18th and are generally built in flint with brick detail and Kent peg tile roofs. The brick built hall over on the south-west side of the farm courtyard appears to be more modern – part of the 1927 works.

2- Development Proposals:

- Erection a new pool house and an open air swimming pool, with associated paving in the south-east part of the former kitchen garden
- Provision of a hard surface tennis court with fencing within the existing boundary wall to the north-west side of the former kitchen garden
- New tractor roadway crossing the kitchen garden, with new access gated openings in the north-west and south-west boundary walls of the kitchen garden
- Erection of a glazed entrance link between the rear of the house and the garage block to the north-west of it (across the existing driveway)
- Extension of the existing north garage block towards the south-west with an attached pyramidal roofed entrance room
- Porch extension to the north hall on its south-west side
- Erection of a new porch at the junction with the south garage block with the adjacent barn

3- Comments:

This is a substantial and attractive house that has been extended significantly in the early c19th and remodelled in a most attractive way in the 1920s. Part of the appeal of the property is the arrangement of external spaces which are defined by the original (1701?) flint wall, but have been crafted into a series of external “rooms “ in the 1927 campaign of works.

The history of development of the property is complex. Clearly the northern courtyard was the farmyard court and the area to the south-east of the house always the garden frontage. Examination of the KCC historic maps demonstrate that the area that now has the character of a large walled kitchen garden was mostly a 1920s creation formed out of the amalgamation of three plots of land (one possibly a smaller kitchen garden). Nevertheless, the character is there and this character can be seen on the 1929 map with enclosing walls and a series of paths and a vine house on the south-east side. This all forms part of the setting of the Listed Building and given the extent of the proposals, I can see that there is a need to better appreciate the character of these spaces.

My initial concerns are that the character of these spaces and in particular the hedged enclosures on the south-east side of the garden area will be obliterated by the pool house, pool and large areas of hard paving. I am particularly concerned at the arrangement of the proposal which is set at 45 degrees to the prevailing layout of all the buildings and boundaries on site. This in itself could be harmful to the character but this is hard to determine without a site visit.

The new tractor driveway again might affect the character of the spaces and will involve the loss of some

historic wall fabric. The importance of this, again, needs to be assessed on site.

The south extension of the north garage block seems ok but I am more concerned at the pyramidal roofed extension attached to its corner. This is not a traditional vernacular roof form and might be better treated as a simple hipped roof extension out from the existing garage range. There is a need to reconsider this part of the design.

The proposal seeks to remove vehicle access from between the house and the north garage block. This is a worthwhile objective and the closing link entrance is a simple glazed box – this seems a good solution.

The boot room extension is shown as a flat roofed brick box with a veranda type entrance. This is not unobjectionable in principle but I wonder whether it would be better with a pitched roof as suggested on the Design and Access block plan.

The design of the pool building is quite traditional with an arcaded front to the south and east sides and weatherboarded the other sides – are these oak or black stained boarding? My main concern here is the orientation of the building relative to the rest of the building complex. The roof design might be improved by having a less exaggerated “flare” at the eaves so that the building blends in better with its surroundings.

4- Recommendations:

That before final recommendations are made that a site visit is arranged so as to better appreciate the nature of the north-west garden areas and whether the diagonal orientation of the new pool house, pool and paving is of concern or not.



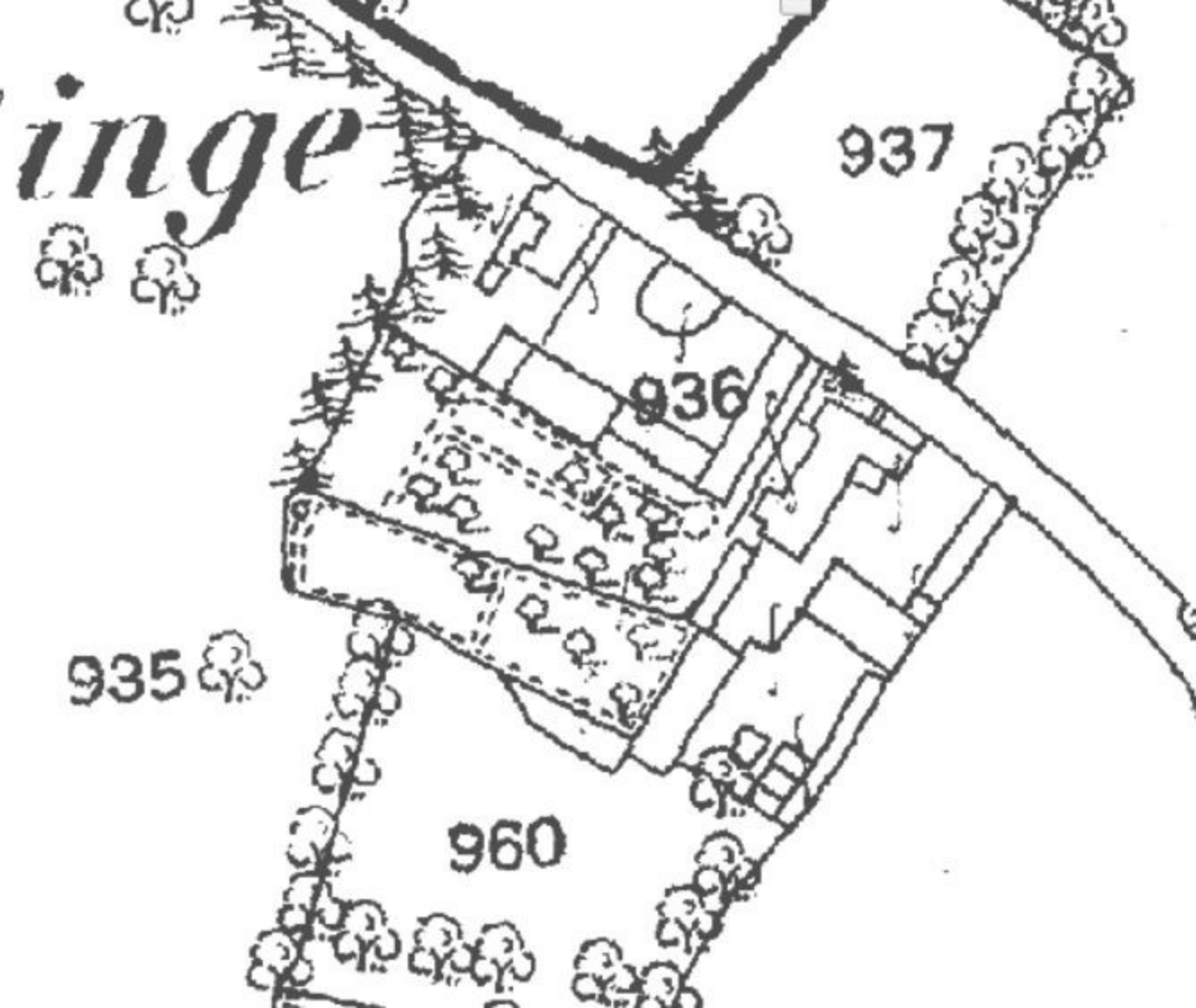
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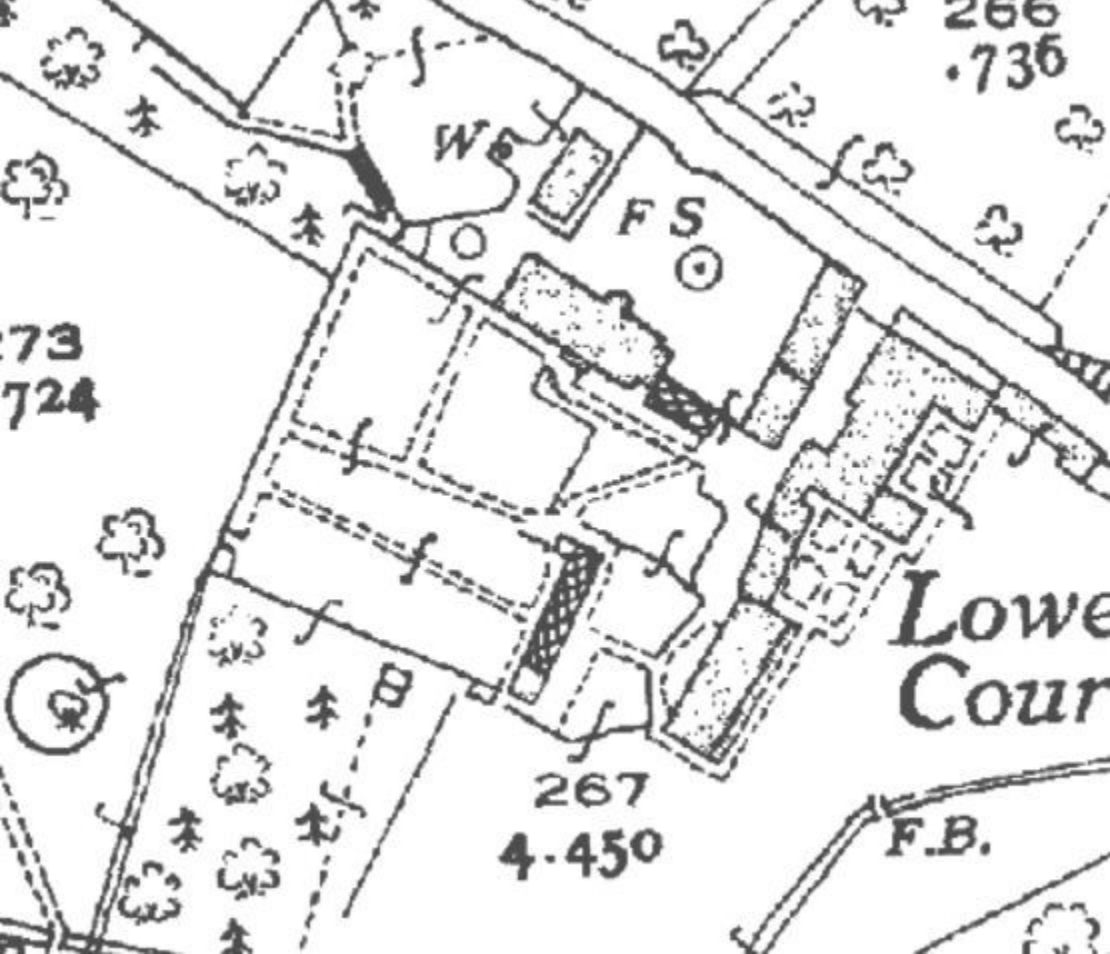
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