

**ARCHITECTURAL ASSESSMENT/
CONSERVATION REPORT**
on

**Auburn House,
Malahide, Co. Dublin.**

for Kinwest Ltd



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The following report was prepared as part of the submission for planning permission to the Protected Structure at Auburn House, Malahide, Co. Dublin. It was a visual survey and architectural assessment of the buildings, and was prepared for that purpose only.

1.2 The building is a Protected Structure, as defined by the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act, 2000. It is listed under the currently applicable Fingal County Development Plan 2017-2023 as follows:

| RPS No. | Structure name | Street Address | Description |
|---------|----------------|---|--|
| 0448 | Auburn House | Dublin Road (R107) Auburn, Malahide, Co. Dublin | Late 18th or early 19th century house, outbuildings and walled garden. |

1.3 This report was prepared by Sheehan & Barry Architects, who are a Grade One accredited conservation practice under the RIAI system of conservation accreditation.

1.4 The purpose of the report is to examine the house, outbuildings and walled garden in detail and to report on the architectural features and general architectural qualities of the building in the context of its' status as a Protected Structure within the definition of the Planning Act 2000 and to assess the impact of the proposed planning application.

2.0 DESCRIPTION & HISTORIC BACKGROUND

2.1 The structure is situated off the Malahide Road opposite the grounds of Malahide Castle Demesne on the road leading into Malahide Village in north County Dublin. The complex consists of a 5 bay three storey (including an attic storey) over basement dwelling with later single storey ballroom wing with a fine rear stableyard. Also located within this small estate is a separate walled garden with ancillary structures previously converted to residential use but retaining the original walls and garden structures pertaining to the walled garden. The estate retains the same entrance position as is indicated on the 1907 and 1829-42 survey which is formed of a rendered convex flank walls leading to lower pedestrian gate piers with wrought iron pedestrian gates flanking raised main entrance piers. All are topped with plain stepped granite cappings. The wrought iron gates appear to be of relatively recent installation or substantially restored. The entire ensemble forms a 'gentleman's estate' of notable quality and interest.

I refer to Turtle Bunbury's excellent history of the estate. He notes that the Crawford family had become land owners in the Auburn area, having originated in Fermanagh where they were prosperous merchants. The house was constructed c. 1779. One of the Crawfords had married into the Vernon family of Clontarf Castle and the house was likely constructed to mark this marriage.

In 1845 the house moved into the ownership of William Donnelly. Donnelly had been appointed to the position of Register General of Marriages. Donnelly made a number of improvements to the estate and Bunbury notes that it was likely the corner towers were added to the walled garden at this time. Indeed their castellated romanticism owes more to the 19th century love of the gothic or 'gothick' taste and than to any academic medieval revival and certainly not to the late 18th century adherence to the classical ideal. Donnelly passed the house to his son in 1879 who was also called William and who was secretary to the Lord Chief Justice of Ireland John Gore, later the 1st Baron Annally. Into the 20th

century and the house had passed into the ownership of the Murphy family. It was at this time that the commission to add the present ballroom to the side of the house was made.

The architect was Richard Orpen, brother of the famous society portraitist, Sir William Orpen. Orpen was a successful architect with a large number of commissions specialising more in the addition and alteration of existing buildings than in large new works. The new wing was designed as a Billiard Room. This explains its essentially internalised plan with a large rooflight to give even light for this pursuit, popular with the prosperous Edwardian era home owner.

Later in the 20th century The Murphy family sold the house to Sir Geoffrey Thompson who had been a distinguished soldier in the Second World War followed by a senior position with Arthur Guinness & Co. After his passing the house was purchased by Dr. Daniel McCarthy, a distinguished engineer. In 1996 Auburn was bought by Ulick & Mary McEvaddy who carried out a thorough conservation programme under the auspices of John Deaton of Deaton Lysaght Architects. This has left the house in an excellent state of preservation, retaining its original character and features.

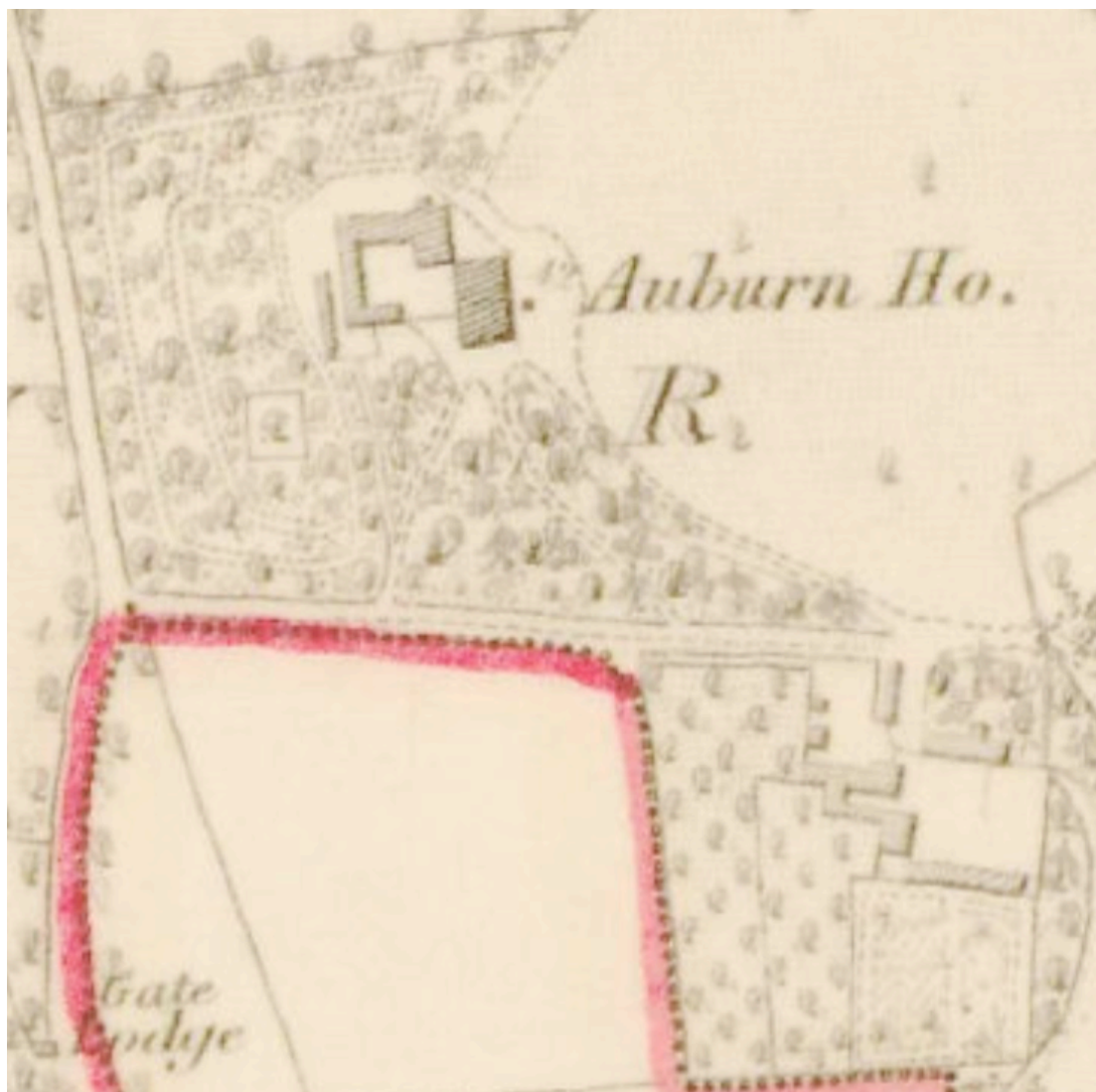
The stable yard was also maintained with recent roof works ensuring that the fabric has remained in good general condition. No particular works were carried out to the interior which is generally dilapidated. They do not contain significant examples of intact equestrian joinery or fittings. Rather, there are some fragments of typical t+g sheeted timber detailing and doors and some finishes such as flag stones which should be accessed and where possible re-used in any refurbishment. The exterior facing into the yard retains the beautifully made and proportioned metal windows and original stable yard doors with masonry of coursed and squared limestone with fine brick dressings to all opening. It is not known where the stone was quarried but its warm brown hue is reminiscent of the warmly coloured sandstone found at nearby Newbridge House in Donabate. The stone oxidises to a particular rose hue which may be characteristic of a higher iron mineral content.

The structures in the corners of the old walled garden require some repair and stabilisation and an examination of how they may be conserved and appreciated while remaining safe to access or view will be needed as part of any detail conservation tender. More detailed analysis is included later in this report.

2.2 Historic Mapping.



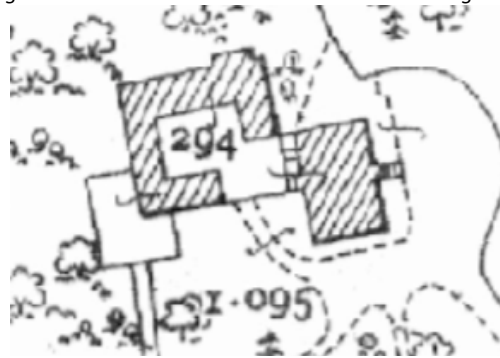
The map from the survey of 1829-42 indicates the house (above) as a rectangular block with steps to the forecourt with the stable yard to the rear. Note that the estate was more substantial at that time extending into the lands currently occupied by the houses at Abington.



Detail (above) of the 1829-42 survey from the Ordnance Survey indicates the houses a rectangular block without porch and with the stable yard substantially as found today. The rear woodlands are laid out in paths as 'pleasure grounds' for walks close to the house and were likely specimen planted. Similarly the walled garden structures are clearly indicated and their format and disposition survive largely today. The corner bastions do not appear on the survey. The corner towers are not indicated which is consistent with the suggested mid 19th century date following on from its transfer into the ownership of William Donnelly.



The 1888-1913 survey indicates the estate to include principal dwelling, stable yard and attendant walled garden structures. Note that the estate was large enough to have two lodges, neither of which is extant.



Detail above (1888-1913 survey) indicates the main (Auburn) house with slight projection where the porch was added and stable yard largely unchanged.

Detail (below) of the walled garden indicates the group of courtyard structures with the corner bastions or towers indicated at top and bottom left hand corners of the enclosure. The Billiard Room wing is not yet indicated but would have been added shortly after the date of this survey.



2.3 Current Situation

The building is occupied and continues to be used as a dwelling. The courtyard buildings are not used except for storage purposes. The courtyard dwellings within the walled garden and associated structures are not included within this application but remain in residential use and are all well maintained.

The lands are zoned as residential subject to the terms and guidelines of the currently applicable area plan, zoning etc as may apply.

2.4 Elevations of Auburn House

The principal elevation of Auburn House is a 5 bay two-storey plus attic over basement. The house is rendered with lined ashlar effect in an ochre coloured aged render with raised quoins supporting a plain frieze below a bracketed eaves with steeply pitched natural slate roof with large tri-partite pedimented dormers. Windows are vertical sliding timber sashes of 9 over 6 configuration at main (ground floor) level with 6 over 6 pane configuration at first floor. A large open porch off a flight of granite steps leads to the original front door-case. The porch is of triumphal arch form with paired pilasters framing an archway. The keystone itself supports a family crest straddling the cornice and frieze which in turn supports an open balustrade. There is no known architect attached to the original design. It is notable that the spacing between the windows to the right (Dining Room side) is wider than the spacing to the left (Drawing Room side). This might suggest the hand of a gifted amateur rather than one of the leading architects of

¹ Maps all sourced and procured from official OSI website.

the era. It could also be as simple as the client deciding during construction that they wished for a larger dining room and the plan was 'stretched' to accommodate this.

Embedded within the porch is the original entrance doorcase which is both urbane and metropolitan in that its ionic form with engaged columns framed by sidelights and engaged ionic pilasters is reminiscent of the typology found in so many of the Dublin town houses of the period. The pilasters to the side appear to have been recently restored. The fanlight is of simple circular form surrounded by a concave reveal embellished with swags and floral embellishments. The entire effect is gracious and sophisticated. A modern glazed pair of outer doors conceal the original inner panelled door behind.

Windows are framed with raised moulded architraves. Plain friezes adorn the first floor window, each centred with an armorial cartouche. The form and scale of the dormer windows suggests a remodelling contemporaneous with the insertion of the porch and the addition of the billiard room wing. The form and detail of the front elevation gives Auburn a somewhat unusual overlay of styles with an 18th century core superimposed by a late 19th / early 20th century refacing. The demonstrative porch and dormers allied with the applied detail gives the house a somewhat urban quality, now more redolent of a patrician villa than a gentleman's estate in the country. The effect is however very impressive and speaks of the confidence of all the occupants.

The later wing of 1907 is attributed to Richard Orpen and makes no attempt to echo the style or proportions of the original house. The junction between the house and the wing is somewhat awkwardly handled with the new wing abruptly joining the corner of the main house and leaving little separation with the side window. The wing is constructed with a mixture of a squared and coursed limestone in rock faced masonry and what appears to be a cast block formed of reconstituted stone. This masonry supports a bracketed eaves and steeply pitched natural slate roof with prominent raised skylight centred on the entrance door. This door is brought forward to form a shallow projecting porch with a widening set of steps. A canted bay balances this otherwise rather austere facade with a modern replacement timber window. A tall chimney stack, also in rock faced masonry, terminates the end gable. The effect is robust, distinct and masculine, befitting of a billiards room that was an almost exclusively male preserve in the early

20th century. In terms of its potential to unbalance the original classical facade it is mitigated by reason of its deep set back.

The north and south facing side facades of the main dwelling are interesting in that both contain blind windows to the main (ground floor). The fenestration of these elevations exhibits some architectural ordering in that, windows to the ground and first floors are lined up, their spacing avoids a proportional balance. The south facing elevation that contains the window to the Drawing Room is interesting. It shares with the principle east facing facade, the applied architraves and armorial cartouches to the first floor window friezes. The render is also ashlar scored. The placement of the chimneypieces and stack on this elevation is again surprising, as the architectural logic would lead to placing the chimneypieces on the spine wall with flues directed to the central stack. However examination of the plan shows that the disposition of the hall to staircase hall mitigated against the use of the central spine wall as a location for the chimneypiece in the small rear reception room. This lends this elevation a somewhat awkward composition although the general quality of materials, finishes and the unifying embrace of the deeply bracketed eaves brings some continuity with the main elevation. The position of the entrance avenue would suggest that this was always a house to be seen on the angle.

The possibility arises that the original configuration of the south elevation was paired windows to either side of the composition that has been adjusted internally but retained the blind window to achieve some sense of balance. Conversely the original plan may

never have resolved the consequential awkwardness externally unless the blind window was inserted.

The fenestration to the north facing elevation is essentially symmetrical although the windows vary slightly in size. A modern smaller sash has been inserted. This facade is rendered with a light harling rather than the ruled ashlar effect render of the south facing facade suggesting that this north facing elevation was always a secondary facade whereas the principal elevation and south facing sides were intended to be viewed as the driveway swept up to the front door.

The rear (west facing) elevation exhibits something of a split personality reflecting its bisection into stable yard facing to the left and a more public facing zone to the right. Thus, that part of the west facing elevation that is outside the yard retains a sense of order and architectural ordering with the main stair window strongly and clearly displayed. Once within the stable yard smaller service windows are located suggesting that the 'service elevation' found in all but the most formal of country house compositions is located here. A modern conservatory providing a rear access has been constructed here. This is accessed via modern stone steps from the yard.

The overall impression therefore is of a very sophisticated and urbane villa overlaid with the aggrandising embellishments of the later 19th / early 20th century but in a manner than retains a sense of architectural confidence and propriety.

2.5 The Stable Yard

The stable yard is located to the immediate west of the main house. It forms a U shape with a wide opening to part of south side the where a tall connecting stone wall completes the enclosure of the yard. This is broken only by an access gateway set under a stone archway framed by stone piers. The wrought iron gates appear to be modern but are very well executed and may be restorations of an older design or a complete restoration of original gates. A single storey connecting structure links the yard structure with the house. This is not as refined in its design and materials and appears to have undergone later alterations although it is extant in plan on the 1829-42 survey.

The facades of the three sided stableyard buildings are beautifully proportioned and detailed and a suitable compliment to the sophistication of the house. The walls are constructed of a particularly attractive coursed and squared sandstone with wide brick dressings. These form tall stable doors with fanlights below a low upper or attic floor where the windows are placed low in the section, with the upper floors being used for hay stores and basic accommodation for the stable yard staff. The windows are particularly fine cast iron diamond paned fixed lights with upper vent lights formed of centre pivots. To the south facing elevation of the north range, the stone is mixed with the upper section above the fanlights have a distinct rust tinge and being cut more finely. The stone is very similar to the facing stone used at Newbridge House in Donabate. Most of the other stone is a blue / grey limestone and slightly less refined but still coursed and well finished. Above the attic floor windows a projecting soldier course unites all three ranges with a small brick 'frieze' of three courses above this placed just below the eaves.

Large coach doors are interspersed with the stable doors. Most single doors are vertically aligned with attic windows above giving the elevations a strong sense of architectural order and harmony.

The roof has been refurbished with modern cut timbers and roofing felt and natural slates. Modern large dormers are ranged to the rear facades which are very plain and functional. The rear facades being of part rendered coursed rubble stone.

The interior of the stable yard structures is in a somewhat dilapidated condition. Some elegant joinery details survive with fine wide board sheathed doors with fine beaded joint lines and some stone flagged finishes. There is very little in terms of surviving stable box divisions or ironmongery.

The south range of the stable yard retains some internal masonry divisions with remnants of fireplaces surviving to the upper level. This suggests that this range was used more for residential accommodation for staff working on the estate than for direct equestrian use.

The central (west) range is formed of large open storage areas with coach house doors which suggest that range is where the coaches were stored with attic store areas above.

The north range has a remnant of a small staircase to the east end of the range which is one of the few elements of early joinery extant. The attic floor is a large open storage space. This range was the most likely range to be used for stable accommodation.

2.6 Walled Garden

The walled garden survives largely intact as a form although the majority of the original space is not included within the subject application. The remaining area, which forms part of this application, is approximately one third of the original and is located to the west of the walled garden. It is enclosed with stone walls of coursed limestone rubble with no defined capping detail. To the north and west side of this portion of the walled garden there is a wide drainage ditch that is bridged by a metal bridge at its pedestrian access point to the north side. The internal planting within this portion of the garden is a mixture of informally planted mature trees and orchard planting. Reference to the earlier survey plans suggest that the subject section of the walled garden was original separated with orchard planting to the south and more picturesque planting to the north.

The north and south corners of the west side wall of the walled garden are enlivened by corner bastions. These likely date from the mid 19th century when the ownership passed to the Donnelly family. These bastions are very similar in form with a large arched open sided store area above which is an open sided and part castellated viewing platform accessed by a wide set of granite steps. Archways are formed of brick with masonry being a mixture of stock brick and some rubble stone all rendered in a rough cast.

In the private part of the walled garden (which does not form part of the application site) another one of the other towers survives and has been restored for use as a small room. These surviving corner features are interesting gothic revival belvederes and picturesque additions to the garden. A small pet cemetery is also extant within the garden containing largely plain recycled stone but two well-carved and charming headstones are extant. Pet cemeteries are typical features of the Irish country house garden with that at Powerscourt, Co. Wicklow being probably the best known.

2.7 The Entrance gates and Walls

The entrance to the demesne is located at the Malahide Road opposite one of the entrances to the Malahide Castle estate. It is formed of rendered masonry walls finished with simple granite capping with pedestrian and vehicular gates frames by plain square piers which are taller to the vehicular entry point. The gates are made of wrought iron and appear to be of modern design or recent restoration.

Reference to the old maps confirms that the entry is located as it was in at least the 1829-42 map. A gate lodge was located to the left of the main entrance but this is no longer extant.

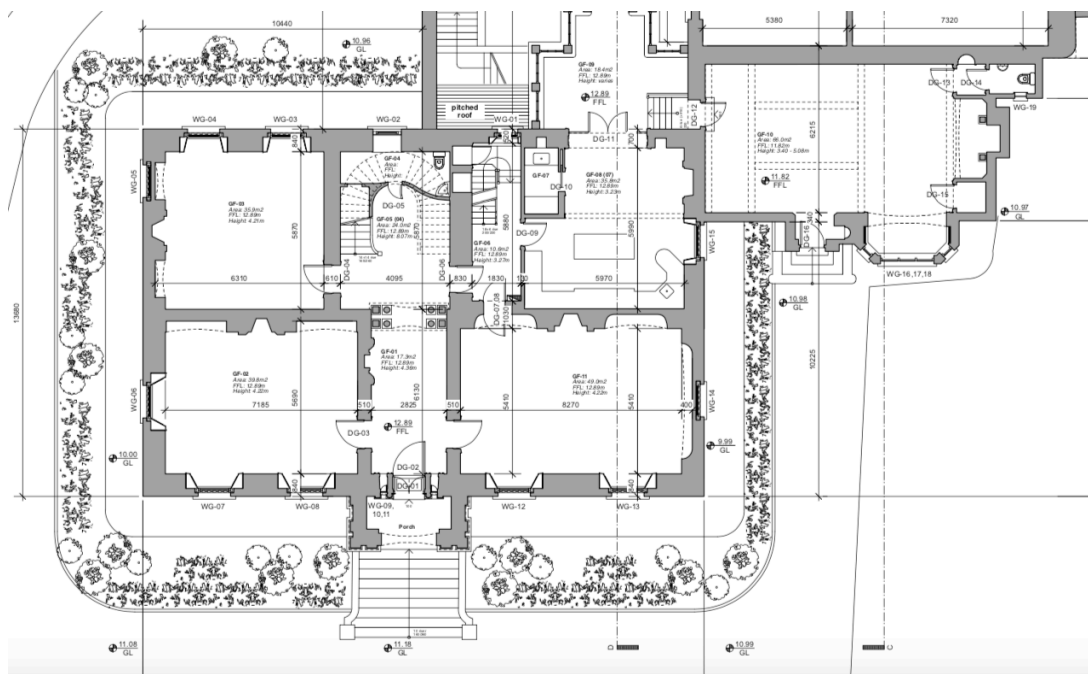
3.0 INTERIOR

3.1 GENERAL

The original layout survives, largely intact and is of particular quality and interest. The principal floor is accessed via a wide hallway with chimneypiece to the left. The joinery is original with a superb front door with rear horizontal sheeting and original lock. The joinery to the door casing is refined and intact and includes panelled shutters to side lights, pilastered door joinery with an enriched architrave to the fanlight. An original hook for the security chain survives.

The ceiling is enlivened by an enriched bracket cornice with an armorial frieze.

3.2 GROUND FLOOR - The Entrance Hall: Of particular note is the transition from entrance hallway to staircase hall. This is handled by the use of an archway supported on quatra-style ionic columns, the outer columns being circular with the inner columns adjacent to the walls being square. The armorial decoration is repeated in the frieze which in turn supports a moulded architrave and plain keystone to the archway. The effect is one of compressed grandeur. The detailing is consistent with the later 18th. century construction date (1779).



Ground Floor Plan - existing.

3.3 The Staircase Hall: The staircase hall is placed slightly offset to the entrance hallway allowing for a more generous proportion. This timber staircase is placed within a semi circular plan with the large half landing window set on axis within the space. Statuary niches enliven the journey to the first floor. The joinery of the stair itself is very elegant, being comprised of attenuated barley sugar twist balusters and a widened bottom step with columnar newel post. With three balusters per tread and scroll decorated end treads the effect is refined and almost feminine.

The plan places the principle reception rooms to either side of the entrance hall with the Drawing Room to the left and the Dining Room to the right. The Dining Room is fully 1.1m

longer than the Drawing Room. In the hands of a more recognised designer this would likely have been resolved thus avoiding the slight asymmetry of the front elevation. The rooms however are both superbly decorated with excellent joinery and plasterwork.

3.4 The Drawing Room: The drawing room retains all its original features with excellent panelling joinery to window linings and original architraves, skirtings and dado mouldings. The over door has delicate relief carving and an enriched acanthus leaf cornice. The ceiling is plain apart from an acanthus leaf centre rose with an enriched plaster cornice and decorated frieze with foliate swags and floral motifs. The chimneypiece is a columnar design in Connemara marble or similar with a brass insert frame and register grate. A pair of otherwise plain camber headed alcove recesses are located to either side of the chimneypiece. Excellently maintained, the room presents an intact and unified aesthetic of the period.

3.5 The Dining Room: This is the room with the grandest proportions within the house. As with the Drawing Room the plasterwork is restrained but elegant with a decorated frieze of intertwining floral swags and enriched cornice and an acanthus leaf centre rose adorning an otherwise plain ceiling. Three shallow curved and arched recesses are located, one to either side of the chimneypiece and the largest to the end wall, concealing a blind window on the outer wall. As with the Drawing Room, the chimneypiece is columnar with brass framed insert and register grate. The stone here is a dark grey white veined marble but the design is similar to the Drawing Room. Original joinery including excellent window architrave, reveals and shutters compliment the overall aesthetic. No dado rail is extant, perhaps to work better with the many curves of the three alcoves.

3.6 The Sitting Room: located to the south west corner of the plan off the staircase hall, the Sitting Room is the smallest of the three principle reception room but, as with the others, retains features of interest and quality. A pair of curved and arched alcoves, similar in form to the Dining Room are placed to either side of the chimney piece. These feature a delicate plaster shell to the head of the alcove. As with the other reception rooms, the walls absorb the fireplace resulting in no projecting chimney breast. Thus the alcoves act to articulate the three principal rooms defining the fireplaces while retaining a clear run for the cornices around the entire room. The cornice is delicate with leafate detail and enrichments but the frieze here is plain, acknowledging this room's more informal function and lower position in the hierarchy of reception spaces within the house. The rose is acanthus leaf here also. The chimneypiece is inlaid stone on white marble in the manner of Bossi. Joinery here is also excellent and original. The dado is used here sparingly and returns on itself rather than entering the recesses to either side of the chimneypiece.

3.7 Other Rooms: the secondary or service staircase adjacent to the main staircase survives and is a good example of the simpler but still considered joinery of secondary areas of a house of this quality.

This hallway leads to the modern kitchen which has been formed of what may have been service rooms in the original plan understanding that the principle kitchen was originally located in the basement level. There may originally have been a house-keepers room or butlers pantry in this corner of the house servicing the dining room. A modern large opening has been formed which leads to the modern conservatory added approximately 20 years ago. Steps lead down to the 1907 Billiard Room.

3.8 Billiard Room (known today as the 'Ballroom'): The Billiard Room is located at a half level below the floor level of the main house. As the present connection is via the modern conservatory, it may be reasonably presumed that there was a connection of sorts which previously connected the new wing with the main house. Billiards would be a very male pastime in the early 20th century so it would seem likely that the men of the house would have retired to this space, much in the manner of a smoking room. It is unlikely that they would have circulated to this room via service rooms so some sort of service passage or

back hallway would likely have existed to connect this wing. This would have been incorporated into the modern kitchen.

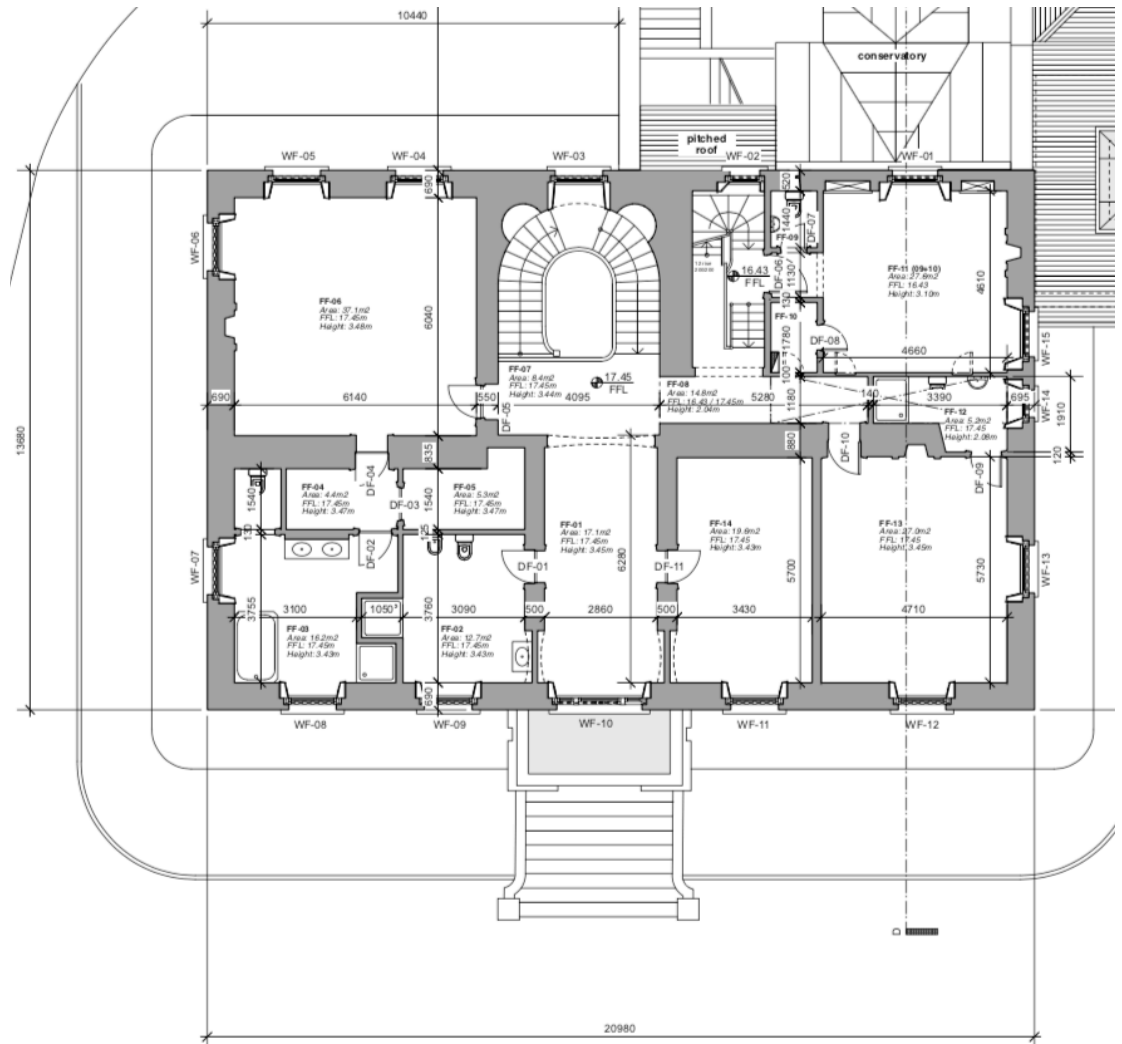
Internally the room is centred on an angle nook style fireplace with a segmental archway echoing the segmental barrel vault of the main ceiling. This is supported off expressed segmental curved beams which divide the ceiling into three areas with the larger central bay housing the rectangular cupola skylight. A canted bay window is placed to the east facing (entry) wall. The chimney piece is polished hardwood and is typical of the Edwardian era with a pair of elongated carved composite columns which support the high cornice allowing for an integral over-mantel mirror to be part of the composition.

Modern paint effects create a dado panelling taking away from what was originally a plainer and more masculine space. Apart from the egg and dart moulding incorporated within the architrave applied to the curved roof beams, the detailing is quite austere with the timber chimney piece forming the decorative focal point. A further small element of decoration is the ceiling of the cupola where a cast rose and intertwining leafate border give a definition to the otherwise plain ceiling. Non-glazed sections of the cupola wall use chevron t+g sheeting.

The entrance door is set within a lower porch where a small semi-circular alcove is located to the right upon entry from the outside.

Modern wall and ceiling paintings give a more domestic and celebratory quality to the interior which, when constructed, was more likely a darker masculine orientated space suitable for the game of billiards.

4.0 FIRST FLOOR



First floor plan - existing.

4.1 Staircase & Staircase Hall (FF-07 & FF-01) : The staircase leads up to the Staircase Landing with a continuous swept handrail. Decorative plaster is a straight run cornice without embellishment and a flattened leafate ceiling rose. The window to the staircase half-landing retains fine joinery with excellent 4-part panelled shutters and panels.

A wide archway leads to a landing which reflects the entrance hall below. The landing is dominated by the large Wyatt window, again with a straight run cornice. There are two ceiling roses, in acanthus form which seem recent or restored as this space likely would have had one rose only originally.

4.2 Principal Bedroom (FF-06) : The largest bedroom located on the south west corner of the house has a centrally located chimneypiece and would likely have been one of the principal bedrooms within the old first floor layout. It retains a refined straight run

cornice without embellishment. The ceiling rose is an acanthus leaf type. An elegant marble chimneypiece with finely carved central tablet featuring an urn filled with fruit.

The limestone insert is also carved with corner rosettes and fluting. Joinery is extant on all three windows with panelled shutters and reveals and original architraves. The room retains its skirting and dado rail which reflects the scale and quality of this room.

4.3 Secondary Bedrooms: Rooms FF-13 and FF-14 are smaller rooms which appear to retain their original scale and form with timber chimneypieces with metal inserts of art nouveau style which likely date from the early twentieth century works. Both rooms feature simple straight run cornices and acanthus ceiling rose. Good window joinery to match the other first floor windows survives as do original skirtings and dado rails.

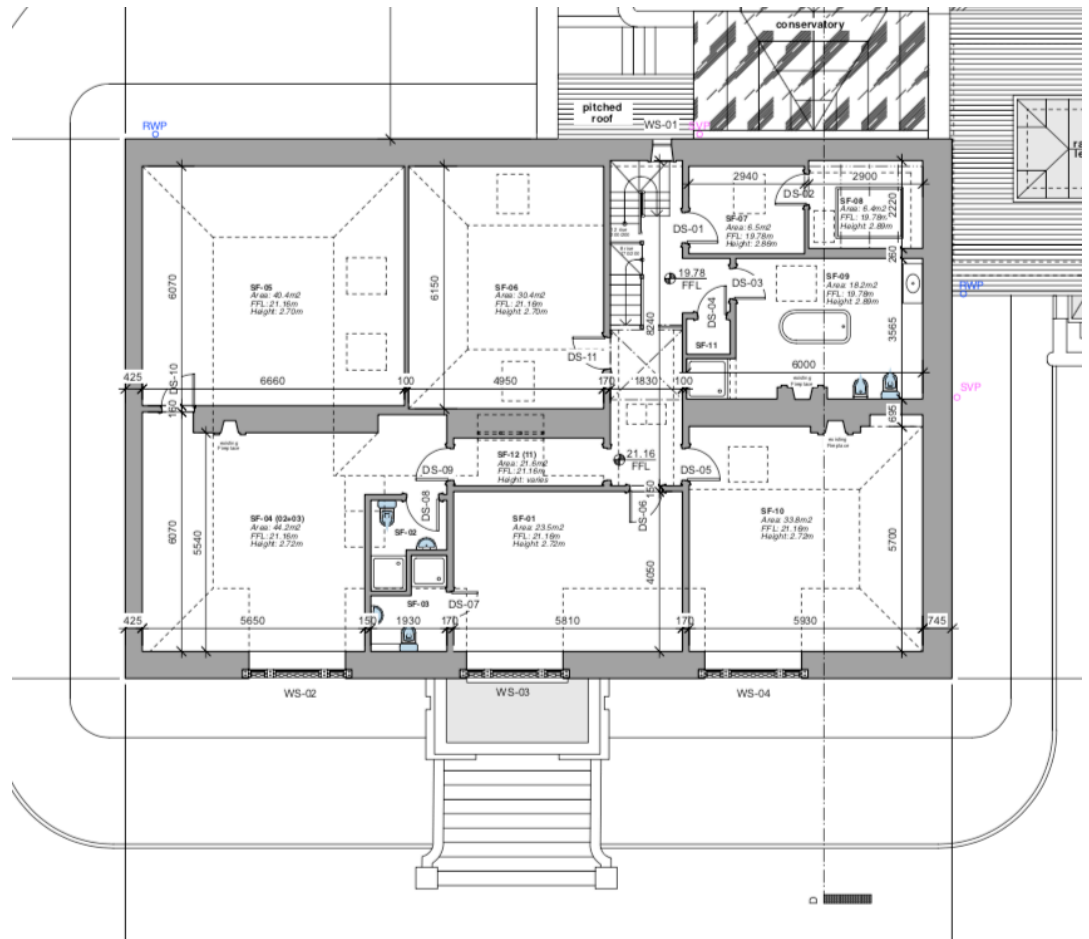
4.4 Secondary Staircase FF-08 : This is the service staircase and is an important piece of original joinery allowing immediate comparison with the adjoining principal staircase. The balustrade is formed of a mixture of plain square section and turned timber balusters, which, although less elaborate, are still of quality with hardwood handrails and turned newel posts.

4.5 Study FF-11 : An unusual feature of the house is a room at half landing level located off the secondary staircase. This is a room of quality with an Edwardian varnished hardwood chimneypiece with raised over mantel and art nouveau insert. Window joinery is of good quality and the room has a simple straight run cornice. This room may have been a housekeeper's room being located off the service staircase.

4.6 Other First Floor Rooms (FF-02; FF-03; FF-04 and FF-05) : A large original room to the south east corner at the front of the house has been subdivided into bathrooms and smaller storage rooms of modern character but retaining good joinery to windows and an interesting alcove with arched reveal in bathroom FF-02.

5.0 Second (Attic) Floor

5.1 The secondary staircase continues from the mezzanine level room described at FF-11 upwards to the attic level which is formed of a series of rooms housed within the roof space and which is largely plain in character. Apart from the three large dormer windows located to the front the rooms at this level have a very internal quality typical of secondary bedrooms.



Second Floor (Attic) plan - existing.

There are a small number of very attractive metal art nouveau chimneypieces distributed across the rooms. Original architraves and panelled doors survive also. Rooms are covered with plain plaster ceilings. A number of smaller en-suite modern bathrooms have been installed.

6.0 Basement

6.1 General: The basement of Auburn House retains a number of original or early features of note and largely retains its original layout with a suite of service rooms designed for wine and fuel storage, or for laundry or dairy use. The large former kitchen survives, as does a large amount of original stone flagged floor.



Basement Floor Plan - existing. Storage rooms are located at the top of the plan beside the rear steps.

6.2 Rear Storage & Service Rooms (BM09, BM10 & BM11). A series of three vaulted under-croft stores are located to the rear and are accessed off the rear basement external access staircase. These lead then to a back hallway and lower stair hall (BM-08 and BM-07 which lead to further storage and service rooms now acting as modern utility or laundry areas.

6.3 BM-01 and BM-06 (Inner Hallways). These rooms allow access to all the principal basement rooms and retain fine quality squared stone flags as a floor finish. Arched opening connect adjacent circulation areas. Cornice work is evident in the inner hall (BM-01) which appears to be a recent introduction.

6.4 Former Kitchen (BM-03) : The largest room at the basement level is located to the south-east corner of the basement. Its identification as the former kitchen is based on the survival of a large granite fireplace opening large enough to have housed a range oven and its proximity to the surviving run of food stores, pantries and wine stores.

A modern cast stone chimneypiece with a modern stove has been installed to the left of the older granite fireplace and appears to have been recently installed. Also likely of recent installation is the deep straight run cornice which would not normally be expected within a basement service area. Plain shutters are extant on the windows.

6.5 Rooms BM-04 and BM-05 : These rooms plus a small lobby area have been formed of a large single original space and serve now as the modern boiler room and a small office area. Windows retain plain shutters but no architraves or other joinery.

6.6 Room BM-06 : This room is now used as an office space and is likely to have been a house-keepers or butlers room originally noting its proximity to the kitchen and its retention of an original plain limestone chimneypiece. Straight run cornice work, as with other areas within the basement appears overly elaborate for the service floor and is likely of recent installation.

6.7 Rooms BM-02; 16; 17; 18; 19; 20 and 21: This suite of small rooms located to the front north east corner for the basement survives as a set of food and wine stores and food preparation. The wine bins are located within rooms BM-16, 17 and 18 while rooms to the front were likely used to hang meat. Room Bm-21 retains a large timber and metal spring device hung from the wall and ceiling which was designed to assist in churning butter. Floors are finished with square quarry tiles.

7.0 ARCHITECTURAL ASSESSMENT

7.01 External Character

This building is a fine example of late 18th century domestic architecture typical of the Georgian period, with interesting late 19th/ early 20th century alternations to the front façade including a new entrance porch and front steps and new enlarged dormer windows. Further embellishment was added in the form of window architraves and friezes embellished with armorial plaques. The roof form may also have been adjusted. This gives Auburn a grandeur and unified aesthetic which gives the house an interesting blend of late eighteenth century form overlaid with late 19th century alterations. This produces a somewhat archaic form with its bracketed cornice and high pitched roof more typical of houses of the early 18th century. All this combines to give Auburn an urbane quality redolent of a villa constructed for the aspiring merchant class rather than the more established land owning gentry.

The stable yard retains a deliberately picturesque quality with all original doors and windows surviving giving this small scale yard particular interest.

The walled garden also survives largely intact with most original structures surviving in that part of the compound not forming part of this application and retaining interesting romantic garden structures in the eastern part of the walled garden.

The entrance gates, piers and flanking walls are extant and in their original position. While unspectacular in character they none the less add to the totality of interest. Overall Auburn House, its curtilage structures and attendant grounds add up to form a gentleman's estate with all its principal elements intact and largely well maintained. Moreover the quality of what survives deserves a rating of at least Regional Importance under any reasonable interpretation of the NIAH ratings criterion.

7.02 Interior Character

The interior of the principal dwelling is of particular quality and interest with relatively little alteration. It has benefited from excellent recent conservation and maintenance. The interior retains consistently high quality features such as excellent joinery and decorative plasterwork alongside features such as marble chimneypieces. The plan retains its essential integrity with all principal rooms extant and retaining their relationship to each other.

8.0 THE PROPOSED SCHEME AND IMPACT STATEMENT

8.01 The lands at Auburn are zoned for residential development subject to detailed guidelines set out in the Local Area Plan.

The development proposals in so far as they affect the Protected Structure and its curtilage structures, attendant grounds and its overall setting are summarized as follows:

- A. Retention of the main house as a single dwelling; new railings to enclose grounds.
- B. Conversion of the stable yard into 4 new dwellings.
- C. Construction of a community use building within a portion of the walled garden.
- D. Construction of residential units within the lands forming the present grounds of Auburn House.

8.02 A - Retention of the main house as a single dwelling: It is proposed that the house be retained as a single dwelling. This is clearly the least impactful possible use. If works are required to maintain and refurbish the house, this should be subject to the normal guidelines of good conservation practice. Where and if any alterations are proposed in the future then the local authority should be consulted to determine whether such works fall within the threshold of Section 57 or Section 5 works or where more significant alterations might be proposed then a separate and specific planning application would be required.

However as the present proposal is to retain the house in single residential use, this must be regarded as a positive conservation impact.

It is proposed to redefine the area around the house setting out clear demarcation of the lands apportioned to Auburn House & stables and the remaining amenity lands. It is proposed that this demarcation be defined using traditional metal 'estate' fencing similar in form, height and style to that indicated below. This should be black finished metal fencing to the design and height indicated or similar. It should be maintained such that no additional visual barrier between the original house and its newly defined attendant grounds and the amenity lands adjacent is inserted or added. Planting should not be added which reduces the visual connection between Auburn House and the designated amenity lands to the front elevation side (west facing) of the house.



Estate fencing of the type proposed for the boundary to the front of Auburn House.

8.03 - B - Conversion of the stable yard into 4 new dwellings: The proposal is to convert the present stable yard formed of three ranges along with a connecting store building to create four own door dwellings.

This conversion divides the present layout into four separate dwellings. This sub-division works broadly with existing sub-divisions within the stable yard. Dwelling 1 is located within the south range of the yard and adjoins the proposed dwelling 2 (central or west range) utilizing an existing party wall line. The present walled in service yard forms the proposed private open space for this dwelling. The second dwelling utilizes the west or range and is located between existing internal walls.

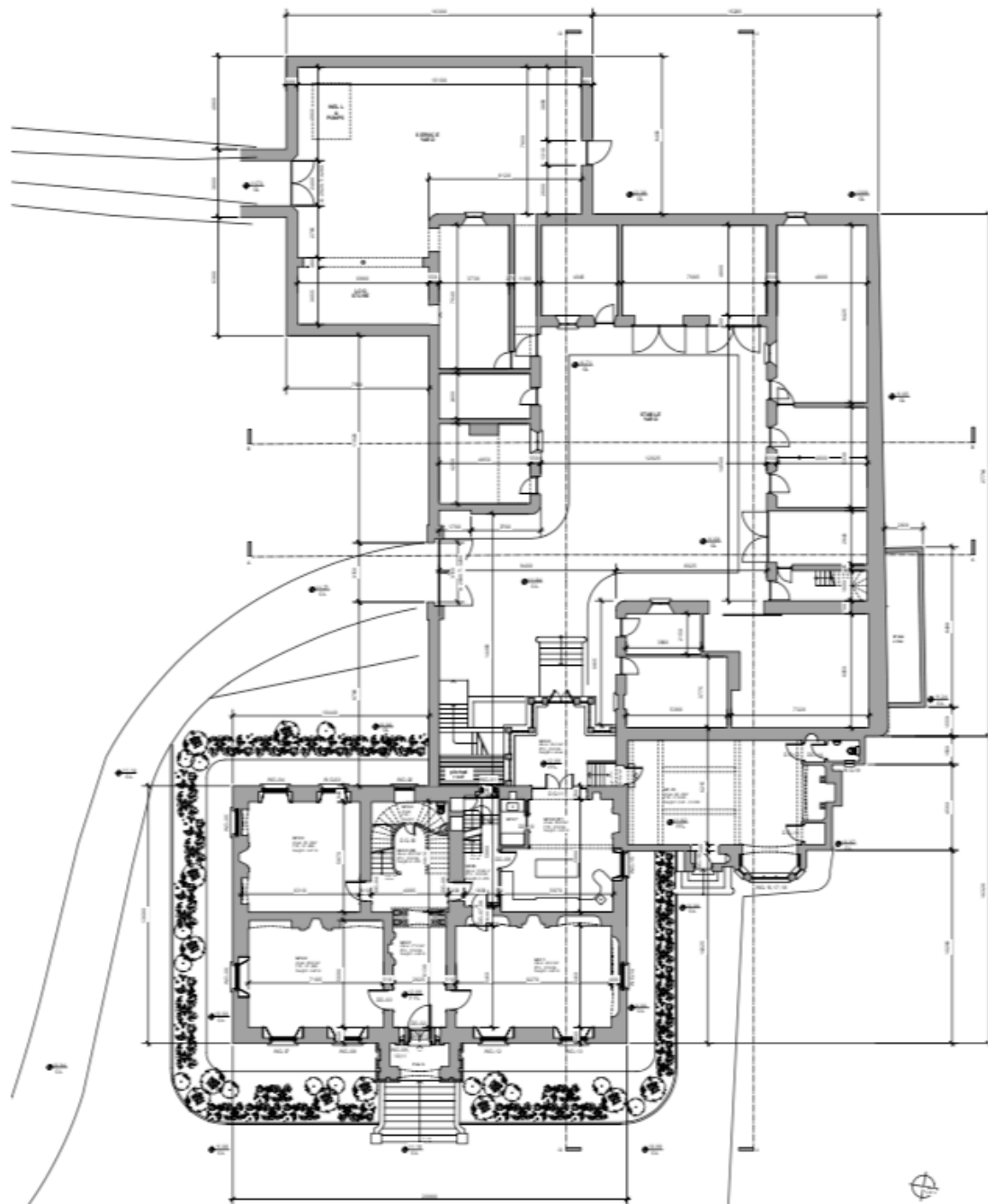
The third dwelling is located at the west end of the north range with the fourth at the east side of the north range. This incorporates part of the single storey connecting building which is located between the 1907 Billiard Room wing and the stable yard ranges. Within the north range therefore there are minor adjustments to the present internal sub-divisions in order to make the internal plan work. It is proposed to create private open space to the rear of each dwelling by erecting garden divisions to the same building line as the present masonry walls of the service yard to the rear of the south range of the stable yard.

At first floor level it is proposed to remove the new dormers to the rear of the roof section and to replace them with conservation style roof lights. It is not proposed to add any extensions to the stable yard with the exception of the conversion of the current covered open sided log store (off the corner of the south range).

It is proposed that there will be no new openings to the stable yard elevation and that all existing doors and metal windows will be retained and conserved. It is proposed that existing doors will be retained with glazed screens inserted.

Internally it is proposed that the fragments of existing early joinery will be used as a generator for the detailing of joinery elements such as the use of the refined t+g sheeting extant in small areas of the stable yard and that finishes shall be respectful of the existing character of the stable yard.

Impacts: the conversion of the buildings into four dwellings does not overwhelm the present buildings in terms of scale or large additions. It retains the key conservation elements and character of the most important design elements ie. the picturesque treatment of the elevations within the yards. It conserves the materials and finishes. There is a clear change of character from the historic use of the buildings for coach house use and equestrian use to residential use. The conservation impacts, in the context of the zoning of these lands for residential use may be reasonably seen as neutral in terms of the conservation impacts on these curtilage structures.



Survey Plan - existing - indicates the current layout of the stable yard to the rear of the main house and notes the existing service yard to the rear of the stable yard.

8.04 C. Construction of community use building within a portion of the walled garden



Walled Garden : Note the red line is the application boundary. The corner towers are located at the top and bottom corners of the walled garden and are shown as small rectangles on plan. The new entrances to the walled garden are located to the south of Block 8. This is the only significant intervention into the existing walls.

The erection of a community use building at the southern tapering end of the walled garden should represent a modest impact upon the character of the space as all principle trees are conserved and the proposal includes replanting which seeks to reestablish the orchard character to the southern section of the garden while retaining the more open recreational character to the northern end where the present pedestrian gateway is located. The design of the proposed community room is clearly simple and contemporary in form. The building and its associated flanking walls does not attach to or impact upon the original stone walls and the use of brick clearly delineates it from the principle material used in the existing structures which is coursed limestone rubble although some brick is found in the corner ornamental garden towers. It sets back from the adjacent walls and is also designed to preserve a visual connection with the southern corner tower.



The proposed community use building (north elevation) to be positioned within the southern portion of the walled garden - this entry elevation faces into the orchard type section of the walled garden. Note the flank walls do not join with the existing walls and are terminated retaining the integrity of the original walls. A view through to the corner tower is also facilitated.

It is noted that the two corner bastions added within the walled garden are likely mid 19th century picturesque additions and form part of the curtilage structures and historic character and interest of the walled garden. As such careful provision should be made as part of any development to ensure that they are conserved and restored (where appropriate) and made safe where and if there is risk. The existing pet cemetery should be recorded and the surviving headstones of quality conserved and, if necessary, repositioned for their safety within the confines of the walled garden.

It is also noted that the proposal includes the insertion of two new entry points into the walled garden from the long western wall. This wall is of coursed random limestone rubble. Here the proposal is to provide for a modest breach in the wall to facilitate pedestrian access to the walled garden as an amenity and service only access to the new community use building. It is noted that the entry points would be defined by modest piers and it is recommended that these be constructed using salvaged stone gathered from the removed sections of the wall, stabilized with brick where required in the manner of the present entrance to the walled garden from the northern end of this section of the walled garden.

Structural Considerations: Lisa Edden (Conservation Engineer) of CORA Consulting Engineers has carried out an initial structural review and report. This forms part of the submitted documentation and should be referred to for more detailed recommendation and structural conservation requirements for the walls, corner towers and other structures.



The present understated entrance to the walled garden on the north side of the walled garden.

With the carefully considered landscaping proposed, a strong sense of the character of the space will be retained and consolidated, perhaps with the retention of some of the existing orchard character or replanting with typical orchard specimens.

The present small but charming pet cemetery stones should be recorded and relocated safely within the space so that this feature, characteristic of the Irish country house should be retained, albeit relocated within the space for practical reasons.



External view from outside the north west corner of the walled garden showing the curved corner of the mid 19th century corner tower.



Internal view of the corner tower at the north western corner of the walled garden - this and the equivalent corner tower at the south west corner to be stabilised and repaired so that they are safe and conserved as a landscape feature within the walled garden.

Impacts: The character of the walled garden is modestly altered by this intervention and in that sense can reasonably be characterized as a modest change of character in conservation terms. However with careful design, landscaping and respect for the context those negative impacts should be mitigated. The conservation of the walls and corner towers together with a rejuvenation of the internal planting represent conservation gains.

The introduction of a community facility impacts upon the least characterful portion of the surviving section of the walled garden and will benefit the overall development as well as introducing a degree of oversight. The design of the proposed structure is clearly contemporary in form and does not attempt to compete architecturally with the materials and forms of the existing structures. The scale is relatively modest and the design manages views to the south corner tower.

Overall, the opportunity to maintain and restore the structures within the garden i.e. the walls and corner towers represents a conservation gain. The impacts of the proposed new entrance and the new community building should be manageable.

8.05 D. Construction of residential units within the lands forming the present grounds of Auburn House.

The lands at Auburn are zoned for development subject to the detailed provisions within the relevant Development Plan. The purpose here is to examine how development can take place in the context of these lands and the setting they provide for the Protected Structures. We can examine how the impacts of such development can be mitigated such that the context, character and setting of the historic Auburn House and its attendant structures is least impacted.

To that end, the proposed layout and its impact on the lands is examined:



The above plan clearly shows the proposed layout and the original Auburn House and stable yard at its centre. The view field to the east of the house has been adjusted and designed to retain a strong sense of the landscape setting of the house and lands.

Reference to the historic mapping indicates that Auburn was historically approached via a meandering driveway through woodland which brought visitors up to the entrance forecourt of Auburn House from the south east without revealing the house prior to actual arrival. The viewpoint and setting of the house appears historically to have been a pastoral landscape context rather an overtly formal landscape. The lands at Auburn

were not sufficiently large to allow for grand gestures of informal and romantic tree plantings in the manner of larger estates such as Carton. However the immediate front field to the east of the entrance of the house would have likely had a considered planting of trees designed to create a pleasing vista from the front of the house rather than towards the house as the entrance driveway had not afforded any such opportunities.

The lands to the immediate west of the house are indicated in the 1829-42 survey layout as having pathways and were likely laid out as woodland walkways with a suitable variety of tree planting and interesting specimens to allow for the occupants and their visitors to take a pleasing stroll close to the house. It is understood that the present planting is overgrown and has some poor specimens that now require felling or significant intervention. It will require replanting to re-establish a viable woodland context and it is noted that this is proposed and will include the re-establishment of pathways. This must be regarded as a positive conservation impact.

Development is proposed in the areas indicated on the layout plan. These are concentrated on parts of the present lands which are less directly visible from Auburn House or in any areas away from any natural view fields or historic landscape planting.

The open lands to the east of the house are retained in large part while it is noted that development is proposed in two small low-rise clusters to the immediate north and south of the open lands in front of the house and also along the eastern periphery of the open space. The typology and form of these clusters is derived from the traditional clusters of secondary or service buildings which relate to each other to form courtyards. These courtyards can be both strictly formal as found in more architecturally managed demesnes such as the great Gandon designed courtyard at Carriglas Manor or the more informal and organic typologies found across Ireland where clusters of farm buildings relate in a more informal manner.

The impact has been mitigated by the opening out of a gap in the peripheral line of development so that the view field is acknowledged and extended. The density, disposition and nature of new mature tree planting will be crucial in mitigating these impacts together with a considered treatment of boundaries and hard landscaping elements. An access drive is proposed to be located along the eastern periphery of these open space lands. It is understood that this will be landscaped in such a way as to minimise a visual hard edge.

Development is proposed in the lands to the right of the original entrance driveway after one enters the estate from the present entry point. It has been noted that the form and scale of the proposed development could have an impact on views from the Malahide Road. The tree lined access road into Malahide is formed of the Malahide Castle Demesne to the right and consistent mature tree planting to the left. This gives a high amenity value to this route and reinforces the traditional landscape setting and woodland context to this access route. It is therefore noted that the existing belt of mature planting will be maintained and where required, managed and replanted with suitable species understanding that some older specimens may need replacement owing to condition. The proposed development in this area has been modified in design development to address concerns over views through the mature planting and this has provided mitigation of visual impacts. The maintenance and upkeep of the woodland setting to the Malahide Road and the woodland planting to the left of the old access drive is central to retaining as much of the context and character of the landscape which in turn provides an appropriate setting for the principle and curtilage Protected Structures on the site.

The retention and maintenance of the old entrance and gates is also to be welcomed.

Impacts: The proposed development has been concentrated on those lands within the Auburn estate which will have least visual or character impacts on the setting of the main house and stable yard.

The retention of a large open area to the east of the main entrance front of Auburn House is vital to retaining the sense of the house within its attendant landscape and the use of low height and low density dwelling clusters where most closely located is to be welcomed. The design of the low-rise clusters is carefully calibrated to reduce intrusion into the view field which, allied with upgraded planting, will achieve a high retention of landscape character. The development represents an opportunity to introduce new tree planting which will manage views in the same manner that traditional demesnes manage views.

It is noted that the angle of the retained view fields is similar to the existing view fields so that there will be a sense of landscape opening out away from the house. This is consistent with the former character and the informal setting indicated on the historic mapping. Although the development of the lands clearly represents a change in the essentially rural context, the proposals have taken care to provide for a lower scale of impact, in the context of the residential zoning. Subject to the detailed design of boundaries and the careful management of existing and new woodland planting (which are covered under separate special reports and designs), the setting and landscape character of the principal Protected Structure can be maintained.

9.0 CONSERVATION AND METHODOLOGY NOTES

9.01 Survey and Record:

A detailed survey and analysis of the structures has been undertaken. Using the historic analysis in conjunction with the measured and photographic survey we have recorded the building as found. Works should be carefully recorded during the construction period ensuring that a proper document of the process is created. The location of any new services should be recorded for handover so that future maintenance or upgrade can minimise impacts upon any historic fabric. To that end, a system of room, window, door etc numbering or codification should be used consistently.

9.02 Protection:

It is vital that as part of any tender package for permitted works, a detailed schedule of methodology for the protection of architectural elements, fixtures and fittings should be prepared. Appropriate, stable and properly executed protection methods should be established so that where, for instance, a staircase is protected during works this should be done in a manner which is both durable and also not harmful to that being protected. Protection should be breathable and not encourage condensation.

9.03 Storage: as well as a full and comprehensive inventorisation, a strategy for safe storage during works should be established for any items that may need to be temporarily removed off site. All items once identified should be protected as appropriate and stored in a safe location during works. This location should be secure and preferably in the same complex or local to the subject structure. be noted Safe storage areas should therefore be identified as a part of the preliminary works documentation and a system of labelling established for any removed items.

9.04 Condition Survey: To aid the condition survey it may be necessary to open up areas for analysis and examination. Where this is necessary, opening up is to be done with great care and follow certain guidelines.

(a) Opening up must be the absolute minimum required to facilitate examination. It should be noted that a comprehensive survey of existing services should be established using non-invasive methods as a first resort. These methods can include metal detection, resistance detection etc. As a second resort limited reversible opening up can establish pipe runs for services by lifting selected boards, ideally those that have been used before for inspection purposes and are therefore screw fixed.

It should be core philosophy for works within a Protected Structure that existing survey and historic services plans (where available) be used to guide and direct investigation. Ideally, the upgrading of services should be directed where existing service installation paths are located, avoiding the disturbance of previously un-opened areas unless there is a direct safety consideration wherein the use of an existing survey pathway could lead to a high risk of leakage, over-heating or damage to the existing adjacent fabric or is a contradiction of current best practice, industry and regulatory safety standards.

New services should be routed via less impactful underfloor, attic, service or basement spaces thus minimising impact to fabric. This approach should be used according to best practice and current safety standards.

Opening-up works must only be done where the present condition is such as to give cause for concern that deterioration was or is occurring behind covered areas or where areas of potential historical or architectural merit are covered with later unsuitable

works, subject to approval. Where this applies, opening up should be minimal and exploratory such as to establish what material (if any) is covered. Micro-drilling or fibre-optic camera technology or other minimally invasive methods should be prioritized. A photographic record of any areas opened up is required.

Identification of existing service routes should be carried out using non-invasive survey methods and opening up restricted to the absolute minimum where non-invasive methods are not effective or possible. As with all other opening up for investigative purposes, removed material should be carefully stored for reinstatement. In all cases before any opening up the area should be photographed and recorded in detail to aid reinstatement.

Opening up in areas of architectural significance should be avoided and only contemplated where absolutely necessary or unavoidable. The opened up material must be set aside for reinsertion even if the opening up is minimal.

Where and if it is proposed to alter, restore or make good inappropriate, damaged or failing mortar, brickwork, stonework or render, then a detailed visual and constituent analysis is to be carried out to ascertain the quality of the masonry; the characteristics and constituents of the original mortar; the bonding detail; width of joints; joint profile, texture and colour of the pointing; and the nature, condition and build up of rendered surfaces.

9.04 Intention:

Where an application is to add to, alter, conserve and restore a Protected Structure the intention should be to retain the maximum amount of original fabric and to do only those works which are necessary to do this.

9.05 Methodology:

Where materials are to be replaced, restored or altered, the materials used will be alike. Where plaster surfaces are disturbed for opening up purposes they shall be reinstated as found. Thus, where modern plaster walls require patching modern compatible material would be used. However, should repair be required to a surviving lath and plaster wall or ceiling, this will be repaired using lath and plaster in compatible form and material. This principle will guide and inform the detailed specification of works.

Structural alterations within the retained protected structure shall be confined to those interventions, which are necessary due to decay or deterioration of the existing fabric or those alterations to allow the building to function as a modern residence.

In conducting the works, the following guidelines will be adhered to:

(a) All interventions will be subject to the appropriate statutory approvals prior to commencement.

(b) It is to be a guiding principle that the maximum amount of original material is retained wherever interventions are proposed.

(c) Where interventions are made the method of construction and materials used will be as far as possible compatible with the existing building. Interventions should always be reversible as far as possible, and carried out without causing significant disruption or damage to the fabric and finishes of a building.

(d) In some cases original materials or methods of construction may have led to structural or decorative problems.

In repairing these areas, the repairs shall use the same materials as the original construction where available but shall have regard to sound building techniques such that the original problem or defect is remedied and avoided.

In these cases this approach shall be considered only as long as it does not impact on the historical or architectural integrity of the building.

(e) When replacing materials they should be like for like e.g. stone repairs should be made in the same stone if available or as close a match as is attainable. The exception to this may be if the original stone is so unsuitable for construction purposes that a more durable stone of otherwise similar colour and texture could be considered but always subject to statutory approvals.

(f) Where interventions are necessary in modern materials they should be discreet and not overwhelm the original construction both in terms of scale or construction detail and should be clearly distinguishable from original work.

(g) Where original material has to be removed, it should be set aside for careful reinstatement, unless a restoration scheme has specifically been permitted by the statutory authority which seeks to return a building or part of a building to a particular style or period covered or altered by later interventions. If that later material is not then required it should be recorded.

(h) Services: where services are to be introduced, upgraded or modernised this should be done using the minimum intervention possible. Services routes should where possible be confined to the minimum number of rising duct locations and distributed within rooms via methods which disturb the existing fabric as little as possible. Services should be routed in discreet locations where intervention in the existing fabric is minimised and where original routes previously inserted can be utilised. It may not always be appropriate to insert modern services should they disturb finishes or fittings unduly or alter the architectural or design character of a space, finish or fixture. In this case more discreet alternatives should be sought or non-invasive, portable or removable alternatives sought. Services drawings and specifications must be carefully prepared and approved prior to any works and then monitored and co-ordinated with architectural and conservation proposals. Their installation must be carefully recorded to aid future works thus allowing minimum disturbance should these services require repair etc at a later date. Ease of access for future maintenance must be considered at design stage.

Services must where possible be designed for sustainability taking into account the best available technologies.

9.06 Sequencing of works

Tender documentation for permitted works should set out a proper sequencing of works to allow for the minimum disturbance of the fabric and to support best practice.

9.07 Site personnel

Site personnel, contractors, sub-contractors and specialists should only be employed or asked to tender for works where they have appropriate expertise and experience of works to historic or Protected Structures. Tendering contractors should be selected on the basis of reasonable comparable experience so that an equal standard of expertise can be managed within any tendering process.

9.08 Samples

Before works proceed or materials, finishes or techniques are installed they should be subject to the approval by the design team of samples furnished well in advance. A schedule of required samples should be included at tender stage.

10.0 CONCLUSION

10.1 Summary

Auburn House and its associated stableyard, together with the walled garden and the small estate which surrounds the house, represents a significant heritage asset. There are few small estates of this type that survive and especially in the Dublin region. Therefore the development of these lands must be handled in as sensitive a manner as possible. Development in its nature will always represent a change in character to some extent. However, the mitigations have been carefully considered.

The selection of lands which do not impact upon the setting of the house has been prioritized and the quantum of preserved woodland, open space to the front of the house and key assets such as the portion of the walled garden and the preservation of the demesne character of the original entrance driveway contribute to retain significant heritage value. The principal Protected Structure must be maintained as part of any development and the proposal to retain the house in single use represents the least impact upon the intact interior and historic character. The careful conversion of the stable yard represents an opportunity to find an appropriate alternative use for this formerly service orientated adjunct to the main house.

The retention of the walled garden character offers an asset that, together with the proposed community building, will preserve the essential character of this special space and is to be welcomed. The corner feature towers are to be conserved which is also beneficial.

Overall and in the context of the relevant zoning, the design of the development has given careful and due consideration to the heritage character, context and value of the house and lands at Auburn.